



A3H Recommended Best Practices

ACTIVITY DESKS Prior to signing up an agency do a little research. Remember it is not a “great new distribution channel” if they don’t pay you. Also make sure you are not paying them to compete with your web business. This is true for a web only activity website. Just say, 'no', unless the website is selling other travel related products, e.g.: air, room and car. Here are seven recommended steps to take *prior* to signing up a new account. Diversity of distribution channels is a sign of a healthy business.

1. Go to <http://hbe.hawaii.gov/documents/search.html> and make sure the business is a registered business in the state of Hawaii.
2. If the agency is not a hotel, resort or cruise ship, go to <http://pvl.hawaii.gov/pvlsearch/app> to ensure the business is also licensed in the state as an Activity Desk, (AD#). Please note a Travel Agent license (TAR#) doesn’t preclude the requirement for an Activity Desk license. If the business is booking air/room/car *and* activities they are required by the state to have both.
3. Regularly read the Communication Folder entitled, “Who’s Paying Who’s Not?” in the A3H Pono Rez system. Feel free to post a message requesting payment history on a particular agency. PLEASE NOTE posting messages is intended for CEO/Upper Management/Owners. The contents of these folders are not intended for outside of A3H Membership.
4. Do not work with an agency that is not licensed in the state. If it’s a Hotel, Resort or Cruise Ship, be sure they are also registered in the state of Hawaii before deciding to work with them. If you decide otherwise, do so, on a referral basis only.
5. For Hawaii licensed Desks, A3H recommends a commission of *no more* than 25%. Many successful providers are paying just 20% commission. For those agencies without a physical location that are strictly on the internet, A3H recommends a commission of no more than 10% if anything.
6. Don't allow any activity company to go past 30 days without making immediate contact. Once an activity company starts paying you late, and if your reminder calls to pay within 30 days are being ignored, change their "voucher" status to "referral" status so you are guaranteed to get paid. Once you have changed them to referral status, consider lowering their commission to help pay you back faster & to cover processing costs. Alert other members to your situation in the Communications Folder.
7. A3H recommends its members utilize the **A3H Standardize Contract**. Feel free to modify as needed to fit your business model. This contract which protects your interest as a business owner, CEO or General Manager are being used by *many* members statewide and accepted by most agencies.

BUSINESS BASICS The following nine basic business practices serve as reminders on how to keep it simple.

1. Make it your goal to *exceed* your customer’s expectations.
2. Focus on what YOU do and do it *very* well. Do not focus on your competition. Pay attention to them but focus on your products outstanding and unique qualities. Find your niche and market that niche.
3. Consider a goal of “no-discounting” and “no timeshare gifting”. A one-price policy for all your customers promotes price integrity and gives your products its proper value/price ratio. It also increases your direct business as it eliminates customers shopping around for the “best price”.
4. Your *first* customers are your employees. Take good care of them and they are more likely to take good care of their customers and your business. Consider paid vacation with longevity, offering full time employment when possible, etc.

5. Register your business name as your website, www.companyname.com. Make sure your website is secure, (https) and also mobile friendly. Go to www.websitegrader.com and fix those things which are holding your site down.
6. Allow customers to purchase directly on your website with “real time” bookings. A3H’s Pono Rez system offers a simple, sophisticated, secured & PCI DSS Compliant solution with tools which plug directly to Google Analytics.
7. Set up a Google Analytics or some other system which analyzes the traffic and habits of visitors to your website.
8. A3H supports incentives created to stimulate a stagnant sales force. However, A3H recommends members not promote or compensate "other" businesses' employees in an effort to gain competitive market share. Such promotions and incentive create unnecessary added cost of doing business and challenges to our industry that are undesirable.
9. Reconcile your bank statement monthly & review your receivables semi-monthly. I know for most this is too basic.

CULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES Members should set the example by being caretakers of our natural environments and our guests. Here are 9 easy suggestions to improve the cultural and environmental friendliness of your business.

1. Include in your marketing materials a statement regarding the company's environmental policy.
2. With your daily operations take into consideration and be respectful of environmental, economic and socio-cultural impacts.
3. Along with A3H, be vocal in supporting sound environmental issues, particularly in the areas utilized by your business' operations.
4. Train your staff in conservation and preservation of both the physical environment and host culture. Be sure that they educate your guests whenever the opportunity presents itself to be good stewards.
5. Keep tours to designated roads and trails and abide by the rules and regulations of the natural areas visited.
6. Provide efficient use of natural resources, such as water, energy and building materials. Use low-impact, energy efficient technologies utilized in operations: e.g., fluorescent or other low-energy lighting, renewable and sustainable building materials, rainwater showers, composting toilets, solar hot water and PV Panels.
7. Reduce, reuse and recycle.
8. Buy Local, when possible purchase locally produced or organically grown by local farmers and ranchers.
9. Share the host Hawaiian culture where ever possible with our visitors. Be a gracious host.

ASSOCIATION KNOWLEDGE Members should educate themselves about the history of A3H as well as where the association is today. Learn who your island representatives are on A3H’s Executive Board. Here are 6 easy steps:

1. Go to http://www.a3h.org/pdfs/THE_BATTLE_FOR_BOONDOGGLE.pdf and read the article, Boondoggle. It is an entertaining story which poignantly depicts the beginnings of our organization.
2. Go to <http://www.a3h.org/contact.html> and become familiar with your island’s representatives.
3. Schedule a new member orientation with the Executive Director. In this meeting you’ll come to understand all the benefits available and the services provided by your membership. Go to: www.a3h.org/MyCalendar.html to view the Executive Director’s schedule.
4. Participate in A3H’s collective marketing programs.
5. Attend the annual meetings held on each island.
8. Read and post to the communications folders. PLEASE NOTE posting messages is intended for CEO/Upper Management/Owners. The contents of these folders are not intended for outside of A3H Membership.
6. If you do discount, support the A3H by participating with the A3H Gold Card and extend your very best discount through this program. Consider selling Gold Card for your own site, earn \$7 per card sold.