

# TheBigDay.com sells its travel branch to Azumano

TheBigDay Travel will retain links with original company  
**PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL - DECEMBER 1, 2006**  
**BY [Aliza Earnshaw](#)**  
**BUSINESS JOURNAL STAFF WRITER**

A decision to create a travel business helped honeymoon registry [TheBigDay.com](#) double its revenue in two years.

Now the small 4-year-old company is handing over its thriving travel division to a new company owned by Azumano Travel Services Inc., the Portland-based travel giant that employs 250 people and sells \$210 million worth of travel per year.

The new company, TheBigDay Travel, will have more capacity to sell travel registry services created by TheBigDay.com than the small company was able to sell on its own.

At least, that's what co-founder and president Michael Cottam is counting on, based on his company's experience with another large travel company. A partnership struck up a year ago with Pleasant Holidays LLC, a \$500 million travel wholesaler headquartered in Southern California, has brought TheBigDay.com deals to create two "co-branded" honeymoon travel registry Web sites: one for Outrigger Hotels in Hawaii, and another for Pleasant Holidays.

Selling travel packages itself is what helped TheBigDay.com more than double its revenue in two years, from \$3.5 million in 2004 to an expected \$9 million, or a bit more, by the end of this year.

The company that started as a gift registry service now gets two-thirds of its revenue from selling air tickets, hotel stays and other travel extras to honeymoon and anniversary couples who register their dream holiday at TheBigDay.com.

Cottam and his co-founders Terry Beard, owner of Beard's Frame Shops, and Tonkon Torp attorney Dan Skeritt, are betting that the alliance with Azumano Travel will accelerate growth still faster. "It's hard to forecast, but we hope to double our revenue next year," said Cottam.

Though all of the travel business TheBigDay.com built up will now belong to the joint venture, Cottam and his partners will get an undisclosed portion of that revenue, in addition to fees they charge for the honeymoon registries they build.

The partners hope for big growth from creating new honeymoon and "romance" travel registries for companies Azumano can introduce to TheBigDay.com: airlines, hotel chains, cruise companies, even government travel bureaus in countries trying to boost tourism.

The most exciting new trend is now booking travel not just for the honeymoon or anniversary-celebrating couple who opens a registry, but also promoting travel packages for their various friends and family members.

The average party Princess Cruises books for its "Tie the Knot" wedding package is 28 people, said Sho Dozono, CEO of Azumano Travel. By promoting group packages along with honeymoon travel, companies working with TheBigDay Travel "could get not just one honeymoon couple but 26 more people. That's a big increase in business."

*[aearnshaw@bizjournals.com](mailto:aearnshaw@bizjournals.com) | 503-219-3433*