

Making Wage Growth Work: The Art Source, Inc.'s Model for Thriving on an Island

A Bold Blueprint Linking Pay, Performance, and Local Prosperity

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EINPresswire.com/ -- As Hawai'i prepares for minimum wage increases in 2026, The Art Source, Inc. (TASI), [parent company of Pictures Plus, Plus Interiors, and CocoNene](#), is not adjusting course — because it already operates differently.



“

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*Kent Untermann, Founder of
The Art Source, Inc.*

Rather than managing wages as a fixed cost, TASI has built a compensation model grounded in operational equity: aligning company performance directly with employee wage growth through transparent metrics, shared goals, and incentive-based compensation across all levels of the organization.

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A Model Built on Performance, Transparency, and Alignment

Since 2022, TASI's average hourly wage has increased from \$30.58 to \$42.87, a 40% gain over three years, with a minimum goal of 5% wage growth annually. This approach positions TASI to consistently beat the average inflation by 2–3 percentage points, ensuring employees not only keep pace with rising costs of living but steadily grow their financial well-being over time.

In high-performing months, the impact is immediate. In November alone, the employees on the operational equity program earned an average \$10+ per hour in additional, incentive-based wages.

“When the company performs well, the ‘average wage issue’ becomes a non-factor,” Untermann

noted. "Everyone wins."

Why Buying Local Goes Further

As a Hawai'i-based manufacturer, The Art Source, Inc. keeps more economic value on-island. Approximately 45% of every dollar spent with its companies goes directly to people living and working in Hawai'i — across designing, producing, selling, installing, and administering products locally.

At a time when durable goods manufacturing represents just 0.44% of Hawai'i's GDP, TASI accounts for roughly 5% of the state's durable goods manufacturing output, underscoring the outsized impact one locally committed company can have.

Investing in Skilled Jobs — and the Future of Hawai'i Manufacturing Beyond wages, TASI continues to invest in innovation and workforce development, creating skilled [career paths in product development, design, engineering, fabrication,](#) and installation — roles that are increasingly rare in Hawai'i's economy.

In Hawai'i, creating well-paying jobs that foster innovation and support both individual and company growth has far-reaching impact. This strategy helps retain top talent, improve quality of life, reduce Hawai'i's brain drain, and drive sustained growth across a more diversified economy.

This approach is also central to the company's long-term succession planning. With no intention to sell or offshore operations, the family ownership has chosen to reinvest in employees — the people who have helped build the company — rather than extract value and exit.

"Manufacturing in Hawai'i is hard," Untermann said. "But we believe there's a way to make it work — it's to build smarter, fair systems that allow people to prosper here in Hawai'i."



TASI's Plus Interiors brand: Thoughtful designs for Hawaii homes - cabinetry designed, built, and installed



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About The Art Source, Inc.

Founded in 1986 by Kent and Lori Untermann, The Art Source, Inc. is a Hawai'i-based [manufacturing, design, and retail company that began as Pictures Plus](#) at the Aloha Stadium Swap Meet. Today, the company operates multiple brands under its corporate umbrella, including its legacy brand Pictures Plus, Plus Interiors and CocoNene allowing it to grow and respond to evolving consumer needs through shared core competencies.

Uniquely positioned as both a manufacturer and retailer, The Art Source, Inc. creates customized products for the home, including framing, closets and storage systems, cabinetry and kitchen design services, interior doors, décor, and specialty items. Through its portfolio of brands, the company serves three distinct markets: Hawai'i residents, the visitor market, and the construction and commercial sectors. The Art Source, Inc. also partners with nationally recognized brands such as California Closets and Cleaf, bringing premium products to Hawai'i while leveraging local manufacturing, retail, and logistics expertise.

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