



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

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**CHTA LAUNCHES STRATEGIC PLAN TO GUIDE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS
WITH NATIONAL HOTEL & TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS, PUBLIC SECTOR**

THE CARIBBEAN (April 11, 2016) – Under the leadership of President Karolin Troubetzkoy and CEO and Director General Frank Comito, the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) has developed a Strategic Business Plan with a bold new vision to lead the organization over the next three years.

The plan consists of seven strategic objectives with the core goal of increasing engagement within the membership and National Hotel and Tourism Associations (NHTAs), and strengthening collaborative efforts with synergistic organizations throughout the public and private sectors, including the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) with which CHTA jointly operates the Caribbean Tourism Development Company (CTDC).

The strategy represents the collective input of CHTA members who have participated in meetings, focus groups and surveys to help the organization's leadership identify key priorities of the membership. Objectives include:

1. Advance positions to protect and enhance tourism through advocacy and unified representation.
2. Strengthen CHTA role as an essential marketing and business development resource for members by providing access to information, forums, exchanges, revenue generation and cost-saving activities and best practices.
3. Drive personal and professional growth throughout the Caribbean through human resource development.
4. Promote policies and best practices to safeguard the environment.
5. Increase data and intelligence for members as a resource of Caribbean tourism-related data with the tools needed to effectively use the information.
6. Enhance the organization's membership base via relevant value propositions.
7. Operate a fiscally responsible and future-oriented organization.

“The Caribbean has tremendous opportunity for growth and the framework we are putting in place today will ensure our members’ ability to fully capitalize,” said Troubetzkoy.

“In order to ensure the long-term competitiveness of our regional tourism industry, we must recognize excellence in our people, businesses and organizations, develop our future leadership and share best practices for others to emulate,” said Troubetzkoy.

According to member feedback, the annual Caribbean Travel Marketplace is recognized by members as the single most valuable marketing and networking event of the year. This year CHTA broadened its tour operator and wholesaler participation in the event and brought hoteliers together with global marketing experts in a series of training sessions designed to help hoteliers increase their selling power.

CHTA is evaluating ways in which to ensure the long-term relevance of its flagship event and building upon this year’s success while increasing the value and awareness of other vital events. These include the Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF) and Caribbean Hotel Investment Conference, and the annual Taste of the Caribbean culinary competition where members can strengthen and establish supplier relationships and enhance food & beverage programs.

Beyond its event offerings, CHTA is improving overall engagement and interaction among members, NHTAs, partner organizations and stakeholders, encouraging members to adopt an omni-channel marketing approach utilizing every vehicle available including social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube.

CHTA will provide revenue generation and cost-saving opportunities for members and be a clearinghouse for best practices throughout the region. “We here at CHTA and by extension, our NHTAs, see the close collaboration with our public sector stakeholders nationally and regionally as a critical requirement to fully maximize our region's tourism potential,” said Comito, noting: “We were encouraged by the remarks of the Rt. Hon. Perry Christie, Prime Minister of The Bahamas, at the opening ceremony for Caribbean Travel Marketplace earlier this year and his call to public-private sector collaboration and action to the region.”

Advocacy will continue to be a primary focus of CHTA as the organization develops and implements a regional tourism advocacy agenda with a broad buy-in to address issues including the new accommodations sector through organizations like Airbnb and VBRO, energy costs, the ease and cost of travel to and within the region and other matters which challenge CHTA members. The organization also will liaise with NHTAs to support advocacy efforts on local and regional issues.

“Whether we are talking energy efficiency, sustainability, climate change, cost of operations, lack of capital for enhancement or growth, airlift, taxation, visa restrictions, human resource development or health concerns, many of these issues affect every single one of our businesses and require our focus,” noted Comito.

One of CHTA’s goals is to be a clearinghouse for industry-related information and research via a *Knowledge Center* and *Tourism Data Center* to arm both allied and hotel members with vital information as the repository for statistics, best practices and benchmarking data to help them make informed marketing decisions.

The organization will enhance and broaden alliances with regional and international stakeholders on key advocacy issues and engage other allied organizations. The Tourism is Key advocacy program, launched in 2010, will be revitalized in collaboration with NHTAs with an enhanced focus on the development of the region’s human resources, increasing support for scholarships and training opportunities through the CHTA Education Foundation (CHTAEF).

CHTA will also provide additional support to NHTA executives, staff and volunteer leadership to help them become more effective agents of change in conjunction with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives (CSHAE).

“We must also enhance efforts to safeguard our natural resources via collaboration with a broader range of stakeholders in and outside of the tourism industry who share a vested interest in environmental sustainability,” Troubetzkoy added.

Through the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST), CHTA will serve as a first-step resource to tourism enterprises in the area of information and education for the implementation of green initiatives. The objective is to drive tangible results by developing strategic partnerships to ensure a cohesive solution to sustainability within the region and identify additional sources of funding and technical support.

At the center of its CAST efforts, CHTA will support the ongoing work of the Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action (CHENACT) program and other initiatives to create more energy efficient tourism enterprises and promote public policies which encourage sustainability practices.

“Our resolve must be unwavering as the decisions we make now will affect us for generations to come,” Comito said.

Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association

The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) is a federation of 32 National Hotel Associations, with more than 600 member hotels and over 300 allied members. CHTA is the largest representative of the private sector in the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry. We are the voice of the Caribbean hospitality industry for the development of the region in the highly competitive and sophisticated environment of international tourism. Today, tourism is widely recognized as a pivotal industry in the economy of the region – and CHTA functions as the common denominator for this industry in a region of diverse nationalities, languages and styles, identifying mutual problems and marshaling the resources of the active and allied members to devise solutions. CHTA represents all facets of the hospitality industry with more than 600 member hotels and over 300 allied members.

CHTA, including the events staged by the association, is supported by Strategic Partners AskMe Inc., Clear Channel Airport Division, Interval International, JetBlue Getaways, MasterCard, OBM International, Tambourine and TravelZoo.

For more information, visit <http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com>. Follow CHTA on Facebook [Facebook.com/CaribbeanHotelandTourismAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanHotelandTourismAssociation) and Twitter [Twitter.com/CHTAFeeds](https://twitter.com/CHTAFeeds).

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