

CHTA UPDATE



June - August, 2017





CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

CHTA Update

JUNE – AUGUST, 2017

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NOTE FROM THE CEO FRANK COMITO

CHTA's Future Tied to Relevance, Financial Viability, and Capacity to Deliver

In their groundbreaking 2013 book *Race for Relevance*, Harrison Coerver and Mary Byers describe five radical changes which associations must address in order to be relevant, survive and thrive in the future. These are:

1. Overhauling the Governance Model and Committee Operations
2. Empowering the CEO and Enhancing Staff Competence
3. Rigorously Defining the Member Market
4. Rationalizing Programs and Services
5. Building a Robust Technology Framework.

As CHTA continues to redefine itself, these change areas have been and must continue to be part of our mindset. Four years ago CHTA's volunteer leadership set a revitalization course. Members and partners were surveyed and interviewed. We underwent an indepth introspection of who we are and what kind of organization we hoped to be. From that emerged a revamped CHTA, guided by a three-year strategic plan, a roadmap which concludes next spring.

When we look at what we set out to do and how far we've come during that time, it's clear that we've 'raced to relevance' and have become a better organization. But the race is a marathon and we've only just begun. Simply, there is so much more to do to achieve the incredible tourism potential which our region has, and that requires a deeper and broader commitment from our industry.

Over the coming month, CHTA's volunteer and staff leadership are embarking on a series of activities culminating in an Executive Committee retreat. We will assess the results of our efforts to tackle the more than 70 goals and strategies which are embedded in our strategic plan. We will review the dozens of activities which emerged during that time requiring our attention which were not part of our strategic plan. Members will be invited to have their say through surveys and interviews.

We will not shy away from addressing the hard questions about CHTA's relevance, financial sustainability, and its future. I urge you to take seriously your role and ability to help influence CHTA's and tourism's direction by freely providing feedback and sharing your ideas. Beyond that, we welcome your personal engagement and leadership.

With the dedication and support of our CHTA staff and volunteer leadership we've endeavored to shape an organization which is more relevant to our member's and industry's needs and has the financial resources and human capacity to deliver that relevance.

Please take a few minutes to review this Member Update. We welcome your constructive feedback and continued support.

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT KAROLIN TROUBETZKOY

Daring to Be Bold

“Begin, be bold and venture to be wise” - Horace

Dear Members:

Throughout my term as your President and together with our dedicated group of volunteers and staff, we have strived to take our organization to new heights. We have pressed forward, guided by a strategic plan and the good counsel and wishes of you, our members.

We’ve dared to be bold, building upon CHTA’s solid foundation, while challenging ourselves to do things differently as well and move into new realms.

Sir Royston Hopkin aptly described CHTA, during his inspiring keynote address at the Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF), as a *“university without walls,”* recalling how, through friends and business colleagues he’d met at our “university”, he has been able to develop lifelong relationships, shape his own thinking and effect everlasting change. Today, his Spice Island Beach Resort in Grenada is rated one of the best in the world.

At CHIEF this year we pushed the envelope by taking on the topic of welcoming to the Caribbean the LGBTQ community, which is a powerful untapped vehicle for economic development, social inclusion and vital to the global competitiveness of regional tourism destinations. We challenged ourselves, our industry and the broader Caribbean to adopt welcoming policies and practices to ensure that inclusion remains a vital part of our industry and allows our visitors, stakeholders and destinations to fully benefit from this.

CHTA has boldly championed the hotel industry in the face of disruptive changes. From our research, communications, training and advocacy on the sharing economy, OTA and TripAdvisor challenges, to the environmental and health challenges of climate change and Zika, CHTA has held fast to its objective of being “one voice” and a valuable resource for all stakeholders in the region, to create a safe and fair playing field in which we can all benefit and grow.

In June, we carried out an ambitious endeavor with less than six months’ preparation when we brought three concurrent Caribbean events to Miami: the *Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF)*, *Taste of the Caribbean* and the brand new *Caribbean305* cultural and culinary celebration. This allowed many members, for the first time, to attend all three events and experience a new side of their industry. It was a hit and showed us the incredible potential for growing this, and perhaps even taking it on the road.

As we test new approaches to our events, we’re developing CHTA’s signature event – *Caribbean Travel Marketplace*. Next year’s Marketplace in San Juan will have a vibrant new look, more buyers and exciting new activities that will strengthen the links between all industry stakeholders. We listen closely to our hotels and tourism enterprises to understand which buyers they would welcome to meet and we listen closely to our buyers to deliver to them the exciting and varied spectrum of businesses that make up our Caribbean tourism product.

Perhaps our most ambitious undertaking is in partnership with the Caribbean Tourism Organization. Jointly, through CARICOM, we’ve called for a sustained regional tourism marketing and development initiative to CARICOM Heads of Government. This has been no small undertaking, and after two meetings with the CARICOM

Heads of Government, we have agreed on a framework for advancing this. You can read more about this in the Advocacy section of this *Member Update*.

The *Update* will provide you with a further indication of the breadth and depth of work we are doing. We welcome your constructive feedback and ideas, and, of course, your ongoing investment in your CHTA membership.

On a separate note, as many of you know, Patricia Affonso-Dass from Barbados was elected President-Elect of CHTA at our June Annual General Meeting. She will assume the post of President in January, 2018. We are excited about the energy, commitment and focus which Patricia will bring to CHTA and wish her great success. I also wish to acknowledge Alberto Abreu from the Dominican Republic whom I've appointed as a Regional Vice President. We are pleased to have Alberto return to the Executive Committee, having served on it before.

I was most inspired recently by well-known syndicated columnist David Jessop's article entitled; [CHTA's High Profile on Regional Issues is Welcome](#), in which he commended us on several of our recent initiatives. I encourage you to read it. The unstated deeper message in Mr. Jessop's column lies in the capacity of the business community to be an agent for positive change. This is our mandate since we do indeed boldly champion your needs.

Sincerely,

Karolin Troubetzkoy
President

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

IMPORTANT CHTA DATES AND LINKS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- September 6-8, 2017 [Climate Smart Sustainability Tourism Forum](#), St. Kitts and Nevis
- September 12 – 14, 2017 [Executive Committee Retreat](#), Turks and Caicos
- October 10 – 13, 2017 [CTO's State of the Industry Conference \(SOTIC\)](#), Grenada
- November 27 – 29, 2017 [UNWTO / World Bank /Jamaica Government Conference](#), Jamaica
- January 29-30, 2018 [CHTA Committee/Board Meetings](#), Puerto Rico
- January 30 – February 1, 2018 [Caribbean Travel Marketplace](#), Puerto Rico
 - ✓ August 10-31, 2017 [Early Registration](#)
 - ✓ November 14, 2017 [Appointment Requests](#)
 - ✓ January 5, 2018 [Deadline for Special Hotel Rates](#)
- May 16 – 18, 2018 [Caribbean Hotel & Resort Investment Summit \(CHRIS\)](#), Miami
- June 20-22, 2018 [CHTA Committee / Board](#), Miami
- June 22, 2018 [CHTA Annual General Meeting](#), Miami
- June 22-24, 2018 [Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum \(CHIEF\)](#), Miami
- June 22-26, 2018 [Taste of the Caribbean](#), Miami
- June 23, 2018 [Caribbean305](#), Miami

CHTA EVENTS

CARIBBEAN TRAVEL MARKETPLACE 2018

Under the leadership of Karen Whitt as Chair of the Caribbean Travel Marketplace Governing Committee and with the support of outgoing Chair Warren Binder, the CHTA team held a brainstorming session to identify ways to enhance the event beyond the continued outreach for increased buyer participation. We will also increase MICE buyer attention, a new component which was added last January. The results of the 2017 attendee survey provided added feedback into areas of improvement.

As a result, we have launched a fresh and vibrant event from a modern look to the event logo, to energizing the activities within the schedule with the objective of strengthening the connectivity between all industry stakeholders. We have also incorporated a theme – *“Caribbean Experiences: Adventure, Culture, Love and Wellness”* that will be featured in the communications, event activities and suggested for our members to have programs and activities related to it.

The added and improved components of the event include:

- Spark Speed Networking Session: to facilitate additional connectivity with buyers for our small and independent hotels.
- Pre-opening Cocktail Networking Get-together: provide an opportunity for all attendees to network prior to the official start of Marketplace.
- Caribbean Experiences on the Selling Floor: based on the feedback received about the Wellness Lounge we aim to secure additional sponsors that will facilitate lounges related to the event theme.
- How to Marketplace: webinars and videos prior to the event where we will share tips and go over the tools that will enhance our member's participation at Marketplace.
- Opening Celebration: while keeping the protocols, making the opening less formal and more engaging.

CHTA continues to expand and prioritize its buyer outreach from major and new markets, to MICE buyers and specialized tour operators. For the traditional and specialized tour operators, CHTA is making arrangements with experts on key markets to be targeted, specifically from Central and South America in addition to Europe and other emerging markets. For MICE buyers, CHTA is working with the Puerto Rico host committee to develop a program of activities for these buyers to facilitate appointments with suppliers but also an opportunity to experience the different venues and activities for these buyers in Puerto Rico. We encourage CHTA members to share the event information with their buyer contacts and reach out to us should you have a prospect you would like to be invited to the event.

CTM 2019

Jamaica had intended to host the event in 2018, however since they will be hosting the UNWTO conference at the end of the year, they expressed that 2019 was a better option. We have continued discussions with the Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association and the Jamaica Tourist Board and are aiming to finalize arrangements soon. Discussions have been held with interested other potential host destinations for 2020 and beyond.

CHTA SERVES UP A SUCCESSFUL CHIEF/TASTE/CARIBBEAN305 COMBO

A total of 596 attendees joined us in June for CHIEF and Taste of the Caribbean with both events posting record attendance participation (CHIEF 329 delegates representing 182 companies and Taste with 267 delegates and 15 national culinary teams).

Other successes from combining these two events include:

- Facilitating engagement between different representatives of our hotel and allied membership as a result of combined networking opportunities.
- Exposing Taste participants to topics relevant to the industry they represent.
- Expanding Taste' awareness and recognition among our members.
- Slightly reduced expenses by consolidating some of the activities.

The first edition of Caribbean305, the consumer festival linked to Taste of the Caribbean, exceeded expectations with our culinary teams, representing 16 Caribbean nations, showcasing the food, culture and people of the Caribbean in a festive environment to a crowd of almost 1,000 attendees, including South Florida diaspora and prospective visitors. While there are some logistical matters to improve along with a sustained financial formula, we are excited about Caribbean305 being another core event in our calendar, one that will allow us to feature the cuisine and culture of our member nations and the diversity of our accommodations and experiential offerings.

In 2018, these three events will remain in Miami and will take place during the period of June 22 – 26. We encourage members to include CHIEF and Taste of the Caribbean in your budgets for 2018 as these events provide educational and training resources in the areas of operations, environmental sustainability, sales & marketing and food and beverage for you and your teams.

ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS ACTIVITY

HEADS OF GOVERNMENT ENDORSE FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL TOURISM MARKETING/DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

CHTA and CTO moved closer towards formalizing a regional public-private sector effort with support from the highest levels, which if successful could set the stage for a new era of tourism in the region. At the CARICOM heads of Government meeting in Grenada in July, the heads of Government endorsed the following recommendations:

1. Broaden engagement in the regional initiative to all Caribbean jurisdictions.
2. Create an independent public-private sector body to guide the development and management of a sustained regional tourism marketing and public relations effort
3. Support the creation of public-private sector funding streams to sustain a regional tourism marketing and development initiative especially targeting the areas of human capital development and the creative industries
4. Endorse the establishment of a challenge grant funded jointly by the public- and private sectors to support implementation of short-term initiatives.
5. Fast-track adoption and implementation of travel facilitation measures to stimulate economic growth, specifically:
 - Expanding Caribbean participation in UNWTO sanctioned Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) Program
 - Finalizing the Multilateral Air Services Agreement to support open skies
 - Streamline and harmonize visa policies
 - Establish a single domestic space for Immigration clearance at the first point of entry
 - Adopt a uniform and effective system for the collection and actioning of entry/departure data

CHTA and CTO are organizing efforts to take the initiative to the next level. This includes broadening consultation and securing support to fund three key consultancies aimed at detailing plans for the initiative: (1) Governance and Management; (2) sustained funding sources; and (3) marketing plan.

Since last February, CHTA and CTO have gotten input on the framework from their leadership, national hotel and tourism association representatives, Ministers and Directors of Tourism, the region's major brands, major developers, and representatives for multi-lateral organizations.

All consultations have resulted in expressions of strong interest and support for being part of a process to develop, manage and sustain a Caribbean tourism development and marketing initiative

CLIMATE CHANGE POSITION REINFORCED; INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

Last June the Board adopted a resolution at its meeting reiterating its previous position in support of the Paris climate change agreement. This position was conveyed publicly and in communication with the United States government. Through CAST, we have also drafted an MOU which once finalized can be a document which the NHTAs and other tourism stakeholder organizations in the Caribbean and in the U.S. can sign on to pledging their support for policies and practices which minimize the environmental footprint and promote sound energy practices.

US-CARIBBEAN STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT ACT MOVES TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

Following up on the enactment of the Act last December, CHTA joined its partner Washington-based organization Caribbean Central American Action which organized a series of consultation sessions with US and Caribbean Government and private sector interests. CHTA advocated that tourism must be well considered in US policies and programs, arguing its economic importance both to the region and the US economy. CHTA has corresponded with the US State Department commending their initiative on this and their intention to create an ongoing dialogue on strategic matters as directed by the Act.

BRINGING MEMBER CONCERNS RE TRIPADVISOR AND OTAs TO THE FOREFRONT

- Over two years ago CHTA commenced discussions with Expedia regarding member concerns about excessively high commission rates. Expedia committed to improving servicing and lowering rates. Research which CHTA undertook early this year confirmed improvements have been made.
- Recently, members have complained about the approach taken by Expedia to list non licensed, nontraditional hotel accommodations on their website, alongside hotels and not differentiating the type of accommodations. Suggestions have been made to Expedia to address this with added differentiation of type of product. Mandatory local licensing should be a prerequisite for any listing as well.
- Rate parity concerns and deceptiveness to consumers have also been raised about Expedia and its many affiliate networks most of which they own. Listing lower rates and undercutting existing rate arrangements without a hotel's approval is a growing concern. CHTA asserts that a hotel should be asked permission whether affiliates of Expedia should be allowed to showcase their resorts on their websites.
- We have and will continue to conduct member training around channel management and direct business.
- Late last year a growing number of members brought to CHTA's attention problems which they were experiencing with TripAdvisor. These centered around escalating fees with questionable justification, difficulty in resolving unsubstantiated negative reviews, and poor servicing. CHTA brought these concerns to senior management at TripAdvisor, who agreed to look into them. Meanwhile they established with CHTA a procedure where unresolved complaints could be brought to CHTA's attention, which would refer them to management for resolution. Members were notified and several complaints have been forwarded to date.
- To better tackle these issues affecting members, CHTA is finalizing plans as follows:
 - Training and Member Education – in two areas – (1) contract – understanding and points of negotiation; (2) distribution channel options (we would do these as separate webinars and also look at how we can dog and pony them onsite at destinations).
 - Advocacy – drafting two separate communications, one to TripAdvisor, one to Expedia – outlining ongoing concerns by members in the areas of: escalating costs; content control; listing control; commission and fees justification; rate parity; accommodation listing eligibility.
 - Research – to continue to ascertain the extent of the problem and advance solutions
 - Support Servicing to Members – serving as a liaison with TripAdvisor and Expedia to help broker a resolution to reported problems; and sharing helpful information to members.

ZIKA THREAT DIMINISHED:

CARPHA CALLS FOR CONTINUED DILIGENCE; TRAVEL ADVISORY STATUS REVERSAL BEING ADVANCED

Working with CARPHA since last fall, which was monitoring and anticipating a considerable drop in reported Zika cases this year, CARPHA released a statement to that effect last May. With new data in hand showing a decline in Zika, CHTA has appealed to CARPHA to request that the US Centers for Disease Control and their counterparts in the UK and Canada reconsider the travel advisory which is in place for the Caribbean. CARPHA is following up.

EXPOSURE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TOUR OPERATOR ARRANGEMENTS

Concerns have been brought to CHTA's Board about increasing exposure which hotels are experiencing with International Tour Operator contracts and practices. Matter of frivolous and unsubstantiated illness claims by ITO customers and inflexible contracts with ITOs, particularly regarding rate adjustments due to unanticipated tax increases and exchange rate swings, are points of concern. CHTA's is looking at ways to address this with an initial step being to develop a training workshop to walk members through the typical tour operation contracts so that members are aware of points of vulnerability as well as points of possible negotiation.

SHARING ECONOMY: MORE DESTINATIONS MOVE TOWARDS REGULARIZATION

We continue to counsel associations and jurisdictions to engage the sharing economy, particularly working with groups like Airbnb, while also advocating to regularize it through taxes, higher standards, data sharing and collaboration and engagement. The following activity has occurred in recent months:

- More jurisdictions are moving to regularize the sector. A survey conducted by CHTA in the spring revealed that out of 18 jurisdictions responding; only two are taxing and regulating the sector. However, 11 were working toward this. Thirteen NHTAs were working with Government on the legislation/regulations, with six of them reporting that they were 'very involved'.
- Sharing economy has been one of the key topics of discussion which CHTA has had in recent destination visits, with both public and private sector representatives.
- A 'solutions oriented' session on the sharing economy was presented at CHIEF in June.

CHTA BEGINS TO BROACH LGBTQ

With CHIEF serving as the backdrop, an engaging panel of experts made a compelling case for our industry and CHTA to play a regional leadership role in advancing policies and business practices aimed at tapping into the lucrative LGBTQ market while creating a more welcoming environment in the region. A task force is being established to develop a priority work plan for CHTA. Areas of focus will be: (1) information and resource compilation and sharing; (2) marketing and diversity training for staff; and (3) advocacy. Details will be worked out over the coming months.

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY WILL HELP SET DIRECTION

We've received a good response from members to a training needs assessment survey sent out last month. Results have been tabulated and are now being analyzed by the People Development Initiative. This will set the stage for priority focus areas for training going forward.

SPRINGBOARD CARIBBEAN TRAINING OFFERINGS STATUS

The rollout of our partnership agreement with Springboard Caribbean late last year is beginning to accrue benefits to our members and National Hotel and Tourism Associations. To date, over 200 persons have participated in the various Management & Leadership workshops and HACCP training being provided to CHTA members at a discount by Springboard. The feedback we've received from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. CHTA entered into a training agreement with Springboard Caribbean after having reviewed their track record and affiliations attesting to their capacity to deliver the highest standard of training for our members at an affordable price. Coming this fall we will launch a new online and onsite course offering - *"Building High Performing Hospitality Managers."* An outreach has been made to all the NHTAs regarding this and other course offerings and discussions are underway with several associations to tailor some of the training onsite.

HOSPITALITY ASSURED BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM LAUNCHES

Over the next year 30 businesses in ten countries – Anguilla, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and the Turks & Caicos Islands will receive technical assistance as well as assessment services through a grant which the Caribbean Tourism Organization has received from the Caribbean Development Bank. CHTA is assisting with the project.

Hospitality Assured was created by the Institute of Hospitality (U.K.) specifically for small-mid-size businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector to improve service quality. Through a guided process with management and staff, the program is designed to promote a culture of quality, service excellence and continuous improvement

driven by international standards and certification, in order to strengthen the business performance and overall competitiveness of tourism enterprises in the region. Over 40 Caribbean tourism-related businesses participated in the program several years ago when it was first introduced. Testimonies from participating members and additional info can be found at: <http://www.hospitalityassuredcaribbean.com>.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

On June 2nd, 2017 the following CHIEF Awards were presented during the joint Opening Ceremony for CHIEF and Taste of the Caribbean 2017:

- Business Operations – St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association
- Sales & Marketing – Aruba Tourism Authority
- Social Responsibility – Hyatt Regency Trinidad
- Environmental Sustainability – Bucuti & Tara Resorts
- In addition to these, CHTA also presented the Industry Awards. The winners were:
- Caribbean Allied of the Year - Edward “Eddie” Weitz, CMHS, Edward Weitz, Inc
- Caribbean Association Executive of the Year – Lisa Hamilton, US Virgin Islands Hotel & Tourism Association
- Caribbean Employee of the Year – Obrian Forde, Jus’ Sail Ltd.
- Caribbean Supervisor of the Year - Marcia Rhoden-Morris, The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel

CHTA ICON OF HOSPITALITY AWARD ESTABLISHED

On July 13th, 2017 CHTA awarded to Mr. Heinz Simonitsch C.D. the CHTA Icon of Hospitality Award. This is the association’s highest recognition, intended to inspire and celebrate the careers and lives of extraordinary men and women in the Caribbean hospitality industry whose work stands the test of time and who have carved out a place of honor in our industry’s history. Mr. Simonitsch will be recognized at an upcoming CHTA event.

SMALL HOTELS MANUAL

We are looking to update CHTA’s Small Hotels Manual, based upon interest expressed by members through the People Development Initiative. This valuable tool for small hoteliers is currently outdated. The plan is to review the existing manual, identify areas where updating and improvements can be made, and identify possible sponsor support.

YOUNG LEADERS COUNCIL

After the June Committee meetings, the idea of a Young Leaders Council arose. The idea is to potentially match young leaders with experienced mentors. This mentor-mentee concept would potentially meet twice a year for professional development discussions and social interactions. This will help develop and promote Caribbean talent. Further investigation will be conducted as how to better develop the concept and identify potential mentors.

EDUCATION FOUNDATION UPDATE

CHTA has now assumed management of the administration and operations of the Foundation, under the guidance of the foundation’s Board of Trustees. Tracy Bell was contracted to provide the support services and has hit the ground running. Following is an overview of key foundation activities:

- The Foundation successfully raised approximately US\$100k from the generous support of the CHTA member hotels during the NY Times Travel Show in January 2017 and the Caribbean 305 auction and raffle. This was combined with the outstanding corporate contributions from Interval International and Virgin Holidays, forming the basis for this year’s scholarship awards.
- The Foundation plans to increase the fundraising potential and administrative effectiveness in 2018 by allowing online bidding

- The new bidding format will widen the fundraising opportunities beyond the attendees of the NY Times Travel Show and be marketed to participants of former auctions and a select database of interested caribbeantravel.com followers
- The online bidding functionality will also allow for additional fundraising efforts throughout the year.
- CHTA has recommended several new Trustees who have been appointed, specifically Patricia Affonso-Dass and Brian Frontin. There are still Board vacancies and we are seeking interested volunteers to serve.
- The Foundation recently announced 35 awards for this academic year from a candidate pool of over 70 new applicants and 12 returning candidates. In total, these 35 scholarships amount to over US\$150k in awarded scholarships.
- The Foundation begins working with the CHTA People Development Sub Committee to determine the criteria and sourcing to fund internationally recognized certifications for industry professional. These shorter courses will provide immediate, tangible results for the industry due to the nature of their tailored and specific coursework.

MARKETING

CARIBBEANTRAVEL.COM IMPROVEMENTS GENERATING MORE SITE TRAFFIC

Travel Log Added - Building on the website changes made earlier, new content is being added to the site on a weekly basis through the Travel Log, which is a blogger network comprised of a group of prominent travel writers including Melanie Reffes, Brian Major, Bob Curley, Gay Nagle Myers and Sarah Greaves Gabbadon. These have been the main contributors, and others are welcome to submit articles for consideration.

A Hot News section has been added, showcasing festivals and events, unique destination offerings, special promotions, and tidbits about some aspect of the Caribbean. This is an opportunity for PR agencies from around the region to upload press releases.

Content Updates - We continue to strive for the most current and relevant product content on the site which will assist in optimizing search ranking. Requests for content updates and new uploads based on NHTA/CHTA membership has been sent through AEs and member hotels are invited to periodically review the information on their site for updating.

Banner Ads and Premium Placement Opportunities Now Available - CHTA and CTO have also formalized a partnership with the Digital Travel Network, a subsidiary company of Simpleview, to sell banner ads and premium placements on Caribbeantravel.com. DTN, will manage the entire process from end to end, including sales, trafficking, tracking and billing, and CHTA/CTO will share in the revenue with the intention of re-investing the profits into driving traffic to the site. An official announcement and kick off of the program will be distributed shortly.

FLIP.TO AND CHTA PARTNER TO BRING NEW PROMOTIONAL SOLUTIONS TO MEMBERS

Flip.to has agreed to a partnership with the CHTA which brings an innovative social media marketing platform built to offer promotional solutions to hotel members and DMOs by tapping into the social media following/friend network of visiting travelers. The platform has been successfully adopted by other destinations and showing great business generation results. CHTA/Caribbeantravel.com will benefit from the aggregation of content and a revenue share. Flip.to will build the necessary infrastructure at no upfront cost.

TRAVPRO MOBILE/TRAVEL RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP TO BROADEN TRAVEL ADVISORS/AGENTS REACH

We are formalizing an agreement with TravPro Mobile and Travel Relations to create travel advisor awareness and education of the broader region and facilitate travel agent database management and marketing. The opportunity includes special member offers for hotels and DMOs to invest in their own educational programs, marketing outreach and database management tools. Members will benefit from exclusive rates and package deals. The partnership allows CHTA to build and maintain its own travel advisor database. It creates a revenue share once TravPro Mobile/Travel Relations generate enough new business to recoup their initial investment.

SEEDS FOR MINI-CHIEFS BEING SOWN

Over the past several months we've started to bring value-oriented partners into National Hotel and Tourism Association (NHTA) and Destination Marketing meetings, to companion with our CHTA visits. These have occurred in Puerto Rico and St. Maarten where sessions were presented to local NHTA members on topics important to generating revenue. Looking ahead, CHTA is facilitating pre-conference educational sessions at JAPEX in Montego Bay on September 24th and is working with Haiti to bring a session there in October. Among the partners being featured on panels offering tips and best practices on monetizing social media and data analytics are STR, MasterCard, Flip.to and Adara. As we continue to refine this, the idea is to bring more of this type of training to the destinations.

TRIPMATE/TRIP ASSURE TO SWEETEN THE POT FOR HOTELS TO OFFER TRAVEL INSURANCE

TripMate/TripAssure has improved its previous offer of revenue share to participating hotels based on a percentage of the value of each policy sold. Details are being worked out and will be shared with members shortly. TripMate/TripAssure offers a battery of comprehensive trip insurance options to be implemented into the booking path on the website of member hotels.

IMPROVING CHTA'S IMAGE AND PERCEPTION

Following up on a recommendation at the June Board meeting, we are beginning a process to look at how we can improve the image and perception of CHTA. A CHTA brand vision, strategy, and marketing plan outline is being developed to redefine our image, approach and messaging to our members and nonmembers alike. An outline of the strategy and plan will be discussed at the September Executive Committee retreat.

STEPPING UP PARTNER/SPONSORSHIP OUTREACH

With the combo events to June behind us and the sponsorship potential of bundling the events evident, we are taking a new approach to sponsorship/partner development. New opportunities and formats are being defined for CTM, and bundling to include Caribbean Travel Marketplace (CTM), CHIEF, Taste and Caribbean305. New CTM packages are now being rolled out.

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We wish to welcome those new members who have joined the association this year:

ALLIEDS

A La Turca Textiles
Allin Interactive
Anderson Fabrics Inc
Association of Bahamas
Marinas
Avendra, LLC

Azingo Hospitality LTD
BCV Social
Callund y Compania Ltda.
Carnival Corporation & PLC
Caulco Inc.
Chefs Helping Chefs, LLC

Commercial Laundry Equipment
Company, Inc
coralrange, LLC
Destination Travel Network
(DTN)
Elite Airways

Gharieni USA
Hospitality Advisors Group
Ilike Organic Skin Care
Inter-Brand Inc.
International Finance Bank
Inventory Smart
Iredale Mineral Cosmetics, LTD
Jus' Sail Ltd
KayFlo
La Bottega
Ludwig & Co
Luxury Weddings Worldwide
Maestro PMS

Miles Partnership
Morris Caribbean Publications
MYdrap Inc.
OTA Insight
Peachtree Call Center
Platinum Services Limited
Playstudios
Powerstar-ISS
Protect A Bed
Revmac T/A Avvio
Skin Kare Industries Rx Clinical
Soleil Toujours LLC
Star Group International

The Medici Group
The Orbiter App
Travel Market Report
TravelWeek Group
TripCraft
Tropigas de Puerto Rico
Urban Solar, Inc
VB Cosmetics Inc.
World Class Installations INS
Worldwide Catering Supplies
Worth International
Communications Corp.

HOTELS

Anise Resort and Spa
Beach Enclave
Crown Point Beach Hotel LTD
Deja Resorts
Hyatt Place San Juan City Center
Keyonna Beach Resort
Mangos Jamaica
Silersands
St. James Guesthouse Federation Drive

NEW DATABASE-MEMBERS ONLY ONLINE PORTAL LAUNCHING

The new members' database has been fully functioning on the administrative backend of the site for a couple of months. All billing is now processed via this platform and new member contacts are now added via this new dashboard which is active for all members of the CHTA team. August will see the launch of our Members Only portal on the front end. With this launch we will be asking all members to update their profiles where they will be able to add company logo, employee images as well as add updated contact information on their teams. This sets the stage for significantly improving and broadening our communication to members and all tourism stakeholders.

MEMBER BENEFITS

As reported at the Membership Committee meeting in June, benefits can be viewed under three tiers:

1. Benefits for Business Development/Marketing

- The Springboard Caribbean partnership has been rolled-out and we are evaluating the future trainings that will be offered based on feedback from survey sent to membership. This partnership has a revenue share component for CHTA.
- Tripmate Travel Insurance benefit for hoteliers is available and the company is actively pursuing prospects. CHTA published a video tutorial to better explain the program and this has been included several times in the monthly newsletter and can be viewed on YouTube.
- CHTA has been approached by a couple of companies interested in putting together a group health insurance and pension program for members. Additional research on these companies as well as benchmarking study of other associations who offer this benefit is underway before a formal RFP is released.
- There are a few other companies interested in entering into revenue share models with CHTA that are currently being internally evaluated. These would lead to additional benefits offered to members.

- Membership, as part of outreach to brands, will explore possibility of negotiating an ‘industry rate’ with major corporate businesses for members only. Initial work on prospecting companies and planning outreach has begun.
2. Program Benefits
- The Caribbean Clean Energy Program (CARCEP) online benchmarking tool that aids hotels in measuring their energy consumption and serves as a resource for actions to minimize costs has been live on our website since June. Seventy-nine hotels, as of early August, are registered to use the tool and CARCEP is running workshops to teach hoteliers how to use this valuable resource.
 - Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA) / Tropical Shipping: Disaster Relief Preparedness Seminars continue to run. Each year a variety of destinations are selected and are offered a half-day workshop with representatives from the private and public sectors that examine the threats (natural and man-made disasters) that could potentially impact economic activity.
3. Benefits of Engagement
- CHTA Members Only portal as mentioned previously will be made open to members any day. With this development, Members will have more complete profiles and opportunities to search through member only information in a more user-friendly format.

ENGAGING CHAINS/BRANDS

As was decided in the Membership Committee Meeting in June of 2017, a Brands Task Force has been activated with the purpose of discussing and defining CHTA’s outreach and engagement with Corporate Brands and Chains and branded hotels throughout the region. The task force is currently developing a draft value proposition and action plan to be presented at the Executive Committee retreat in September.

GOVERNANCE

One of the discussions had at the Membership Committee meeting in June was the proposal to reactivate the Constitutional Review Committee and revisit the recommendations put forth a year earlier, considering the initial concerns which were raised. This initiative, which goes hand in hand with the task of engaging the corporate brands and chains, will be brought forth at the Executive Committee retreat for next steps.

OUTREACH TO NATIONAL HOTEL AND TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS

Throughout the second and third quarters of the year, CHTA CEO and team members have traveled to several member destinations:

- Puerto Rico – CHTA briefing with PRHTA members; data presentations by MasterCard and Adara; courtesy meetings with PR Port Authority, PR Tourism Company; media briefing
- The Dominican Republic – CHTA/Asonohores meeting with leadership; attendance at DATE; identified common ground issues to work on; set stage for MOU signed at June Board meeting;
- St. Thomas-St. John – CHTA briefing and keynote by President at USVI AGM; courtesy meeting with leadership.
- British Virgin Islands – CHTA briefing with members; individual meetings with leadership; meeting with Minister of Tourism and Director of Tourism. Strong interest in sharing economy and our counsel in that area.
- St. Croix – CHTA briefing at AGM; consultation with Board; individual meetings with several leaders.
- St. Maarten/St. Martin: CHTA attended SMART this year where relationships were reengaged and a workshop was provided to delegates that spoke of the vast resources found within CHTA. CHTA also invited strategic partner, MasterCard, to present for the delegates—providing the additional exposure to the company that is working on positioning themselves as a data resource on consumer behaviors for hoteliers.
- Jamaica – Presentation at JHTA AGM; consultation with leadership.

Destinations we would like to visit this year pending scheduling and budget are: Haiti, St. Kitts, Suriname, Aruba, Bonaire, and Martinique.

STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIP WITH ASONAHORES

An MOU has been signed between ASONAHORES in the Dominican Republic and CHTA that will strengthen the relationship between these two associations in a number of areas. Priority areas include: data/information sharing; energy efficiency; advancing a regional approach to health and wellness tourism. The agreement outlines a number of other areas including: training; advocacy support for the development of a DR DMO type arrangement; regional transportation matters; Haiti; culinary development; and possible marketplace hosting in 2020 or beyond.

ACTIVATING AND REACTIVATING DESTINATION TIES

As part of the Memberships growth goals, advancements have been made in three destinations that have either been idle in the association for some time or are being considered as new destinations for the first time.

- Haiti: Outreach has been made to the association and engagement has been well-received by their Board of Directors. Trip is being planned in late October where CHTA will highlight the direct benefits that can be offered to the destination and individual hotel members.
- Martinique: President recently traveled to the island and further engagement has been made with both private and public sectors. The association has been presented the information that is needed to be formally recognized by CHTA and follow-up is being done to plan for a trip before the end of the year.
- Cartagena: Through engagement with IHG at the regional level and particularly with the GM of the Intercontinental Cartagena, who is a current Board Member of Cotelco-Cartagena (the regional chapter of the national association in Colombia), CHTA has laid out the next steps for this association to be recognized as a new member association. Trip is being considered for early October where CHTA will present the association and the benefits that will come with joining to Cotelco-Cartagena as well as their individual members.
- Cuba: Progress was being made to formalize our relationships as they are creating an association. Given the recent changes in US policy, this remains uncertain.

COMMUNICATIONS

CHTA WEBSITE UPDATES

The CHTA website has been updated to provide a cleaner and easier to navigate user experience. Further updates are being worked on including:

- Integration with new membership database
- Addition of social media walls on the site
- Incorporation of event website to the main CHTA site

CHTA NEWSLETTER - CALL FOR CONTENT

Our upcoming newsletters for the third and fourth quarter of 2017 will cover the topics of Digital Marketing (September), Money/Luxury (October), Holidays (November) and Year in Review (December). [Click here to download](#) our editorial calendar for 2017. CHTA members and strategic partners that meet with the following criteria are invited to contribute an article to our newsletter:

- Articles must be educational in nature, not promotional. No company information or boiler plates should be added to your article.
- Articles must provide insight into a topic related to the topic of the month, to the Caribbean or a country within the Caribbean, and the tourism & hospitality industry.
- Maximum 400 words ready for distribution (reviewed and edited). Please provide a title for the article.

- Article to be provided in an editable Word document format.
- CHTA will provide an appropriate image to go along with your article if needed.

SOCIAL MEDIA

User following on all CHTA social networks has seen steady and organic growth, with minimal monetary investment, confirming that the content provided on social is hitting the mark. Social media engagement during CHTA events greatly boosts reach on all platforms, particularly on Twitter and our quickest growing platform, Instagram. CHTA will incorporate the use of a new Social Board that includes all of our most active platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

- CHTA Events Social Reach
Overall the results obtained on digital during our three June events remained strong. CHIEF's numbers remained the same as last year, while Taste's online engagement numbers dropped slightly. We believe the drop in active posts using the hashtag was due to the large amount of live streaming taking place on both Facebook and Instagram from the National Culinary Teams. A very good development we will continue to encourage.
 - CHIEF
Total Reach: 1,513,987
Total Unique Reach: 651,863
Post Count: 672
 - Taste
Total Reach: 483,793
Total Unique Reach: 237,499
Post Count: 221
 - Caribbean305
Total Reach: 208,532
Total Unique Reach: 76,897
Post Count: 412
- The Caribbean Social Star Program
The overlapping of CHTA's Miami-based events CHIEF / Taste / Caribbean305, caused the Caribbean Social Star Program to be postponed until Q4 of this year. The program's objective is to provide local social media training and support to our National Hotel and Tourism Associations. This training can then be given by the associations to their local members as an added member benefit. Next steps will be to define the training schedule, criteria for participants and platform to be used for this training.
- Photo Challenges
Photo Challenges have proven most effective on Facebook and Instagram and been very effective in boosting engagement. In celebration of Earth Day, the week of April 17-21, 2017 we carried out a CHTA Green Week Photo Challenge, which generated the following results:
 - Total Reach: 354,107
 - Total Unique Reach: 129,783
 The next upcoming photo challenge is the #CHTAHolidayWeek17 Photo Challenge which will take place December 11-15, 2017.

WEBINARS

CHTA and CAST have an upcoming webinar on how climate change impacts life below water, our coral reefs in particular, and what are the available solutions for coral replanting. [Click here to RSVP](#) for this free webinar taking place Wednesday, August 30, 2017 at 10:00 AM (EST). Upcoming webinars that are currently in the works are Sneak Peak Caribbean Travel Market webinars, and Strategic Partner Educational webinars.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

In conjunction with Marketplace Excellence, CHTA has increased its profile in the region and industry in the past months. Below are the highlights of our public relations efforts from January – June 2017:

- Media Placements 387
- Media Impressions 176,223,494
- Advertising Value \$1,251,007
- PR Value \$3,749,421

CAST

CHENACT PROJECT WRAPS UP....NEXT PHASE BEING DEVELOPED

CHENACT is winding down with the primary activity now being the finalizing of reports and demonstration projects in Jamaica and The Bahamas. CHTA is working with the IDB on a next CHENACT phase which would broaden hotel participation in the audits and demo projects to additional countries. The next phase is also being designed to add a sustained revolving fund type of financing offering into the project. With financing or the lack thereof being one of the key shortcomings in supporting investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency by hotels, having this need addressed in a new CHENACT would help. CHTA and IDB have been discussing partner support for this phase with representatives from the EU, a Canadian Government fund, and with the US Agency for International Development supported CARCEP project.

CARCEP ENERGY BENCHMARKING TOOL FOR HOTELS NOW ONLINE

As reported in the Membership section of this Update, the tool is online through CHTA's website and a growing number of hotels are using it. This is part of the broader project offerings through the US Agency for International Development project being managed by Deloitte in cooperation with CHTA. CARCEP is conducting energy efficiency workshops in 7 countries, having completed them thus far in Antigua, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. Energy audits are also planned, as are demonstration projects and other education and training activities. To use the tool, [click here](#).

CAST INCORPORATION BEING FINALIZED OUT OF BARBADOS

Articles have been submitted to the Barbados authorities and awaiting approval. This will allow us to begin to explore avenues for EU and other international funding to support CAST activities. A similar process will begin with filing for US nonprofit status once matters are sorted out regarding the consolidation of several CHTA corporate entities into one, based out of the U.S.

CLIMATE SMART AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PROJECT

CTO has received funding from the Caribbean Development Bank to conduct this project. CHTA is a collaborating partner. The primary objective is to support the tourism sector's resilience to climate variability and climate change and associated impacts, while also contributing to the sustainability and global competitiveness of the industry. Expected outcomes will allow CTO and CHTA to draw upon the research to support advocacy efforts and industry positions on issues identified as sustainable tourism development priorities. The project will also assist the industry and CHTA members with training to help them mitigate the effects of climate change on their business. CHTA has been involved in helping to shape aspects of the project. This month two RFPs went out to support the research and management of two key project areas: a sustainable tourism consultancy and a tourism disaster risk management consultancy. CHTA/CAST will be part of the selection process.

PARTICIPATION IN CTO CLIMATE SMART FORUM IN ST. KITTS

CHTA is participating in the forum, with Denaye Hinds attending on our behalf, St. Kitts – September 6th -8th. The forum will include discussions on the Climate Smart and Sustainable Tourism Project, providing input into the development of the project, its content, and its outcomes. The Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Awards will

also be presented at the forum. Several CAST governing board members are assisting with the judging. For more information, [click here](#).

DISASTER READINESS WORKSHOPS COMPLETED

Led by The Caribbean-Central American Action (CCAA) group and Tropical Shipping, in cooperation with CHTA and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), destination workshops were conducted. Theme was "Building Community Resiliency through Strategic Private Public Partnerships". Workshops held in: Puerto Rico, Guyana, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Lucia, and the Cayman Islands.

TOOLKITS BEING DEVELOPED

Several CAST members are developing practical toolkits which members can use, providing useful information to support their efficiencies and minimize waste. The toolkits will be available through CHTA's website and will focus on the areas of: waste management; solar energy; wind energy; lighting & controls; and FOG (fats, oils & grease) management for restaurants.

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEAN UP DAY

Set for September 22, CAST is organizing a regional clean-up with focus on waste management. This will be supported by a social media campaign and postings.

CSHAE AND NATIONAL HOTEL AND TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS

ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS RETREAT

President, Stacy Cox has programmed an association Team Building retreat to develop a foundation to work on strategies to complete the top three CSHAE Advocacy Issues that affect the Caribbean as a whole. There will be intense meetings with the CHTA Executive Committee to identify and discuss priority areas that will be developed into practical applications and short term goals.

PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS

The Association Executives in the past months have been concerned with three top advocacy issues: (1) Sharing Economy; (2) Taxes and fees; and (3) Crime. Here's an overview of activity in these areas:

SHARING ECONOMY

- Sharing Economy – CHTA with CSHAE gathered information via a survey in which 18 associations responded, providing CHTA with an indication of progress or lack thereof being made in the region to tax, regulate and engage with the sharing economy platform and hosts. CHTA resent its resource guide to the NHTAs, emphasizing the section which outlines a public-private sector path towards regularization.
- A second survey – to be distributed this month will seek to determine how Associations are collecting data on the activity and performance of host properties. It will also explore options for possible inclusion of the host properties as association members and how that might be treated in terms of dues, services and engagement.

TAXATION AND FEES

A main issue of concern for the executives has been the escalating fees that TripAdvisor have assessed hotels. Developments in this area are described in the Advocacy section of the Update. Two other surveys have been requested by Executives to gather information for their respective countries and to better understand how to evaluate the charges that Governments are proposing. One is a Sin Tax survey and the other is the Tourism Taxation survey which includes utilities as well. Info in these areas is being gathered with the view to share the information at the CSHAE Retreat and also in January 2018 for those that will not make it in September. An outreach has also been made to all NHTAs to update the tax and utility information provided to CHTA annually.

CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

The associations continue to wrestle with how to address crime. The main discussion is how to deal with it on island with the government, the police and other community interests. Executives are sharing best practice infrastructure and studies to better guide their local efforts. See links [here](#) and [here](#).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions? Comments? Feel Free to Contact Us

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- [Jim Hepple](#), Finance Chair
- [Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace](#), Advocacy, Co-Chair
- [Stuart Bowe](#), Advocacy, Co-Chair
- [Karen Whitt](#), Marketing Committee and Marketplace Chair
- [Bill Clegg](#), Membership Chair
- [Denaye Hinds](#), CAST Co-Chair
- [Karolin Troubetzkoy](#), CAST Co-Chair
- [Patricia Affonso-Das](#), People Development
- [Richard Kahn](#), CHTAEF, Chair