



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

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**MATT COOPER NAMED CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER,
VANESSA LEDESMA PROMOTED TO CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
FOR CARIBBEAN HOTEL & TOURISM ASSOCIATION**

THE CARIBBEAN (Jan. 29, 2015) – The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA), in a move to strengthen its management team, has created a new post and named marketing and media executive Matt Cooper as the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) for the association and, at the same time, promoted long-time Director of Operations and Events Vanessa Ledesma to Chief Operating Officer (COO). The announcements were made by Frank J. Comito, newly named CEO and Director General of CHTA. Cooper will start his new position on March 16, 2015.

Cooper will work with Comito and the CHTA staff to grow the membership base, develop new strategic partners, attract corporate sponsors, reenergize existing CHTA events and introduce new events that meet the needs of CHTA’s entire membership comprised of over 600 hotels and 300 allied members.

“Matt Cooper’s experience in developing successful and innovative marketing campaigns for individual destinations and hotels coupled with his vast knowledge of the region will provide a positive impact on the growth of CHTA, especially with partnerships and marketing,” said Comito.

“Matt Cooper has been a true friend to the Caribbean as he has worked to promote our properties and destinations to the travelling public and travel agents who sell vacation getaways,” said Emil Lee, president of CHTA. “We are confident that the new executive team of Frank

Comito, Matt Cooper and our stalwart Chief Operating Officer Vanessa Ledesma, will move CHTA forward,” he added.

Cooper’s career has spanned 20 years in the Caribbean where he has successfully created cross-platform media partnerships between the region’s private and public sector tourism entities and leading media brands including *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Bon Appetit*, *Brides*, *Smithsonian* and *Travel Agent Magazine*.

Cooper has been an allied member of CHTA for more than 15 years and has served on the board of directors since 2009. He helped create CHTA’s first strategic partnership with a media company – *Travel Agent Magazine* – and brought other media brands to the table to sponsor Caribbean Travel Marketplace through the years. He also serves on the Board of Trustees for the CHTA Education Foundation (CHTAEF).

Cooper is executive director of travel for Z-Media, Inc. where he most recently created a partnership with *Brides*, the Jamaica Tourist Board and the Jamaica Bridal Expo. He also signed Sandals Resorts to be the destination wedding and honeymoon sponsor for the 3rd Annual *Brides Live Wedding* event. Additionally, he orchestrated two years of partnership with the Puerto Rico Tourism Company’s major consumer brand campaign in *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Bon Appetit*, *Brides* and *Vogue*.

Previously, Cooper worked seven years at *The New York Times* where he held the position of account manager. He negotiated sponsorships for Caribbean destinations and complimentary booth space for CHTA Education Foundation at *The New York Times Travel Show* to conduct the silent auction to raise money for scholarships for Caribbean nationals. Cooper was a three-time President’s Circle Award winner for sales excellence while at *The New York Times*.

Cooper spent four years with *Travel Agent Magazine* where he helped create co-op and education programs for travel agents to become certified specialists of the Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, Aruba, Sol Melia and Palace Resorts among others.

Cooper began his career at Sandals Resorts where he spent three years in public relations and promotions. He also was part of the launch team at Allegro Resort’ Royal Hideaway in Playacar, Mexico where he helped develop marketing campaigns, public relations plans, brand brochures and collateral materials.

He has created travel show sponsorships in the Latin American market for Ecuador, Peru and Brazil.

Cooper holds a BS in Journalism from Florida International University. While at FIU, he was the editor of the school newspaper.

Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association

The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) facilitates the full potential of the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry by serving members' needs and building partnerships in a socially responsible and sustainable manner. CHTA is 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 MasterCard, Interval International, OBM International, HVS, 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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