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BCSP
Belize Coalition of Service Providers

Development of National Policies for ICT and E-Government

Wednesday, November 20th 2013

The Government of Belize is giving focus to the economic potential and further development of Belize's Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Sector. GOB, through Ministry of Finance in partnership with the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology, has retained the services of consultants from the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) to develop and assist in the implementation of a National Information & Communication Technology and Innovation Policy and Strategy as well as an E-Government Policy, Strategy and Plan of Action.

The goals of the **National ICT & Innovation and E-Government Policies** are to outline a policy framework in the form of prescriptive guidelines for Belize that support the gradual development and effective utilization of world-class ICT-based innovation capabilities.

Dr. Colin Young, Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology and Public Utilities highlighted the significance of the policies noting, *"For a developing country like Belize, effective implementation of ICT policies is a precondition to the emergence of a strong market economy."*

Young also stressed GOB's firm commitment, commenting *"The directorate of Government is serious. If we want to transform the way we do business, this is the only way to go."*

CTU lead consultant Dr. Anelee Babb translated the impact e-government has for the average citizen,

"Do you like standing in lines? Do you like trying to find information and don't know where to find it? You call 5, 6, or 7 different offices, and they send you somewhere else. What

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL POLICIES FOR ICT AND E-GOVERNMENT
(CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

we're looking at doing is making the access to information easier."

Babb also noted the challenges that come with facing change, but where ICT is concerned change is something Belize must embrace and cannot afford to avoid. Belize was ranked 123 out of 142 countries on the 2012 Global Competitiveness Index Report. That ranking shows us falling behind mainly due to our low level of innovation and technological readiness.

Dr. Colin Young
CEO, Ministry of Energy, Science & Technology

Dr. Analee Babb
Lead Consultant, CTU

"If we want to transform the way we do business this is the only way to go." – Dr. Colin Young

The policies and strategies are expected to be drafted by April 2014. A ceremony to launch the drafting of the national policies held on Wednesday, November 20th at the Belize Biltmore Plaza was well-attended by Government officials and representatives from the private sector, including representation from the ICT sector.

Developing in tandem with this is the formation of a Belize ICT Association. The BCSP continues to hold planning meetings with ICT sector members who consider the drafting of these national policies as a progressive step for the development of the sector, strengthening of the economy, as well as promoting innovation in the area of Information and Communications Technology.

From left to right: Jovan Guerrero, Global Marketing; Sue Courtenay, BCSP; Winston Aspinall, BTL; Abraham Teck, SMART; Kimano Barrow; Hero Balani, BELTRAIDE; Mark Noble, BELTRAIDE; Dalwin Lewis, and Joaquin Urbina, UB.

From left to right: Leroy Almendarez, BCSP; Judith Linares, (MESTPU); Juan Carlos Namis, EData; Etienne Sharp, Alternative Networks; and Jovan Guerrero, Global Marketing.

Belize ICT Association
Full steam ahead

Tuesday, November 26th 2013

The founders of the Belize ICT Association came together again at the BCSP Conference Room to tackle an ambitious agenda. The highlight of the meeting was a dialogue with representatives of UB including Dr. Joaquin Urbina, Dean, Faculty of Science & Technology, Mr. Randolph Dominguez, Director, Information & Communication Technology, and Mr. Dalwin Lewis, Chair, Department of Information Technology. The conversation was mutually beneficial leading to a greater understanding of the needs of the private sector in terms of the knowledge and skills necessary to drive this highly technical sector. UB also benefited from discussions on how the private sector could assist by shaping meaningful student internship experiences, providing mentorship, and continuing dialogue.

The participants finalized the association's mission and vision, considered various options for the registration of the association, reviewed the legal framework and membership structures of sister ICT associations in the Caribbean, discussed the associations logo and webpage presence including membership application form and membership categories.

The meeting ended on a positive note with the participants identifying key activities the interim board would undertake during the first 12 months of forming the association. Dr. Leroy Almendarez, Consultant to the BCSP will develop a resource mobilization plan to assist the fledgling association with identifying the necessary resources to execute the activities identified.

Belize Medical Tourism Association clarifies its role in the development of the Medical Tourism Sector in Belize
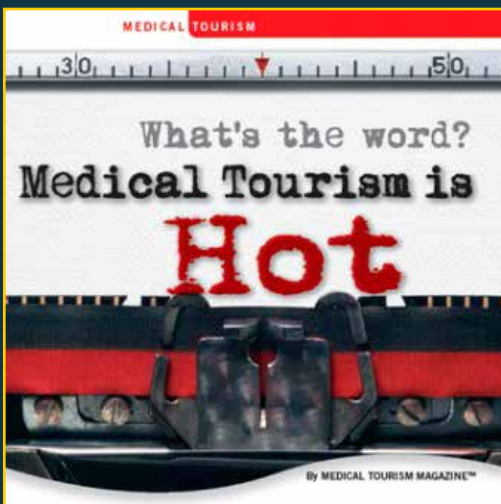
Wednesday, November 20, 2013

A meeting transpired between Michael Singh, CEO, Ministry of Trade, Investment Promotion, Private Sector Development and Consumer Protection and the Belize Medical Tourism Association at BCSP Conference Room. The meeting was called by the Board of the Belize Medical Tourism Association to primarily clarify the role of local medical practitioners and the association itself in the development of this sector. The CEO assured the Board that any incentives programmes developed would equally benefit local/existing medical practitioners/facilities. He stressed that BELTRAIDE's position is to encourage investment in this sector and to encourage foreign investors to partner with local providers. The CEO recently returned from attending the World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress in Las Vegas and de-briefed the Board on his trip and advised them of upcoming initiatives. He also promised to facilitate links with the Medical Tourism Association (USA)so that they may provide the Belize association with support.

Belize Represented at World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress

Thursday, November. 14th, 2013

MEDICAL TOURISM
What's the word?
Medical Tourism is Hot
By MEDICAL TOURISM MAGAZINE™

Belize was represented at an international medical tourism event, the World Medical Tourism and Global Healthcare Congress. This year the congress was held from November 3rd – 6th in Las Vegas, Nevada. Attending on behalf of Belize were the Minister of Health Hon. Pablo Marin; Minister of Trade, Investment Promotion, Private Sector Development and Consumer Protection Hon. Erwin Contreras; CEO, Ministry of Trade, Investment Promotion, Private Sector Development and Consumer Protection Mr. Michael Singh; and BELTRAIDE's Business Development Officer Ms. Noriko Gamero.

The annual congress is hosted by the Medical Tourism Association (http://www.medicaltourismcongress.com) with the objective of creating a location for stakeholders in the medical tourism industry to meet, network and learn about developments. The agenda included a number of keynote addresses from leading industry professionals as well as forums on a range of topics, such as Risk Mitigation & Management Policies and Practices for International Patients and Destination Branding.

Vision & Mission Statements: New Associations taking shape

Tuesday, November 26th 2013

On 13th and 14th November core group members from the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) and Spa and Wellness (S&W) sectors met respectively at BCSP headquarters to continue their efforts in the formation of these two important new service sector associations. At each meeting the respective groups fine-tuned the Vision and Mission statements which will guide their new associations.

What comprises a Mission or Vision statement? What is the difference between the "Vision" and "Mission"; and why is each critically important in its own right? These are key questions not only for these new associations but for any business or organization to ask.

Both vision and mission statements are fundamental and vital to strategic planning and both serve important but different roles in crafting a roadmap for success. Yet, there exists a great deal of confusion regarding the difference between the two. Simply put, a Vision is *"Where you want to go"* and a **Mission** is *"How you get there"*.

VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS: NEW ASSOCIATIONS TAKING SHAPE
(CONT. FROM PAGE 3)

A Vision Statement:
- Defines the optimal desired future state of what an organization wants to achieve;
- Provides guidance and inspiration as to what an organization is focused on achieving in the long term;
- Expresses the guiding purpose of the organization;
- Is written succinctly in an inspirational manner that makes it easy for all to repeat it at any given time.

A Mission Statement:
- Defines the present state or purpose of an organization;
- Answers three questions about why an organization exists:

1. **WHAT** it does;
2. **WHO** it does it for; and
3. **HOW** it does what it does.

- Is written succinctly and comprised of a few sentences.

A clear Vision and Mission Statement can:
- Strengthen the organization through a unified sense of purpose.
- Provide clarity for improved decision-making and planning.
- Enhance relationships and team-building through a shared understanding of priorities.

As organizations grow and change, these statements may also evolve and change but they must always be firmly in place and in the collective "mind" of the organization. With their vision and mission clearly outlined these core groups for ICT and Spa & Wellness now have in place beacons to guide them, and vital tools to guide their directions.

BELIZE INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (BICT) ASSOCIATION

Vision

To establish and champion Information and Communications Technology as an industry sector for socio-economic development in Belize.

Mission

To create an effective network between Information & Communication Technology (ICT) professionals, the government, researchers, and industry partners and facilitate their cross-disciplinary collaboration in the development of ICT in Belize.

BELIZE SPA AND WELLNESS ASSOCIATION

Vision

A holistic spa and wellness lifestyle using traditional healing and naturally grown products.

Mission

The mission of the Belize Spa & Wellness Association (BS&WA) is to promote a healthy lifestyle, support the economic advancement of its members, encourage the use of traditional healing and local products, while embracing Belizean hospitality, and promoting education, training and advocacy.

Vision is "Where you want to go" and a Mission is "How you get there"

Outsource2LAC 2013: Belize - Nearshore Destination
Thursday, November 21st, 2013

Belize was represented at the Latin American and the Caribbean Outsourcing and Offshoring Summit, Outsource2LAC 2013, held this year in Buenos Aires, Argentina on November 20 and 21. The Belize delegation was comprised of representatives from the BELTRAIDE and two private sector companies, Clear Call Belize and Ready Call.

Hosted by the Integration and Trade Sector of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Argentinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Fundacion Exportar, the Trade Promotion Agency of Argentina, the summit, now in its 3rd year, has shaped into the foremost outsourcing and offshoring event in Latin America and The Caribbean.

This year's summit was attended by over 500 buyers, providers and industry experts from around the world, all of whom have interest in the region. The objective of the event is to provide these regional and international stakeholders with a meeting place

OUTSOURCE2LAC 2013: BELIZE - NEARSHORE DESTINATION
(CONT. FROM PAGE 4)

Belize, BELTRAIDE's aim was to showcase the country as one such nearshore destination in the global offshore outsourcing industry. Indeed Belize is poised to take advantage of the benefits it offers such as:

- Feasible business travel distance
- Synchronization of business hours
- Real-time communication
- English and Spanish as primary and secondary languages

But while communication and travel proximity are indeed two factors which attract international companies to the region, Belize must pay keen attention to the other competitive issues such as innovation, talent; business savvy, internet rates, and the high degree of technical skills sought after by the global outsource market.

and an opportunity for service buyers and suppliers to learn about current trends in outsourcing and to identify business opportunities.

Where outsourcing is concerned, cost is not the only determining factor in the selection of a service provider. In previous years, outsourcing by North American companies to India, China and Hong Kong had been the norm. Now, in the present global economic climate, many of these businesses are realizing the benefits of nearshore outsourcing. In representing

REGIONAL SERVICES INDUSTRY NEWS

The Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) Launches Services of the Caribbean (SOCA)

Tuesday, November 19th, 2013

The Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) launched the Services of the Caribbean (SOCA) today at the 37th Annual Conference on the Caribbean and Central America in Washington DC, United States.

SOCA is an initiative that arose out of the concerns by stakeholders within the services sector, who are lobbying for CARICOM to expand the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI/CBERA circa 1983) trade preferences to include trade in services, a statement from the TTCSI said yesterday. At the launch, TTCSI will explain the new SOCA partnership with other regional private sector interests and DC-based advocacy firm, Manchester Trade, to create new opportunities for CARICOM-US trade in the services sector.

Since its establishment by the TTCSI, American Chamber of Commerce of Jamaica (AmCham Jamaica) and American Chamber of Commerce of T&T (AmCham TT) have joined the initiative with several other regional private sector firms and institutions expressing support and interest, the TTCSI said.

Speakers at the event included Nirad Tewarie, CEO of TTCSI and Chairman, Services of the Caribbean (SOCA), Becky Stockhausen, Executive Director AmCham Jamaica and Co-Chair SOCA, Sally Yearwood, Executive Director Caribbean Central American Action, Nicholas Galt, Chairman Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America (AACCLA), Stephen Lande, President Manchester Trade José Raúl Perales,

Executive Director AACCLA /Director Americas, US Chamber of Commerce.

TTCSI's CEO, Nirad Tewarie, who is also the chairman of SOCA said: *"While the benefits that the CBI has brought to-date cannot be underestimated, an expansion into services would definitely take into consideration the structure of CARICOM economies, which are heavily skewed toward services trade, and the importance of services to these countries."*

He said that the economies of the Caribbean are heavily dependent on activity in the services sector. Therefore, with many Caribbean countries facing crippling national debt, expanding trade with the region's largest external trading partner, the United States, is a surefire means to recovery.

THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO COALITION OF SERVICES INDUSTRIES (TTCSI) LAUNCHES SERVICES OF THE CARIBBEAN (SOCA)

It is with this in mind, he said: *"Upon renewal, stakeholders would like to see the expansion of these trade preferences to include trade in services. Thus, to help achieve this goal the TTCSI is spearheading the initiative, SOCA."*

SOCA is a multi-year programme to develop, design, and implement a policy and business advocacy campaign to promote the enhancement of the United States CBI/CBERA circa 1983 preference programme, with an expansion into the services sector.

This initiative will also publicise the existence of a vibrant Caribbean services industry, which has the capability of supplying services across all modes to the United States and even to third countries through US intermediaries.

In addition, Tewarie said the industry can work for or with US companies in furnishing services to the region.

Source: Trinidad Express

Caribbean Ministerial Summit: Universal Healthcare Pushes Forward

Monday, November 4th, 2013

Countries on the path toward universal healthcare in the Caribbean must consider historical, social and economic content to promote a larger social dialogue, a senior official with the World Health Organization told government policymakers from around the world, Sunday, at the 6th World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress, Nov. 3-6, 2013 in Las Vegas. Speaking before the Global Ministerial Summit, James Fitzgerald, acting director of the Department of Health Systems and Services at the Pan American Health Organization, said every country in Latin America can do something to move toward universal healthcare and help people live longer and prevent families from falling into poverty following illness.

Universal healthcare refers to coverage in which all legal residents are covered for basic services. No one is excluded as long as they are citizens in the location covered, such as all residents of Jamaica, or all people in the city of Puerto Plato in the Dominican Republic. *"Universal healthcare can ensure all people have access to needed services, such as prevention, promotion, curative, rehabilitation, and palliative care,"* said Fitzgerald, who presented **"2013**

World Health Report: Research on Universal Health Coverage," before some 50 ministers and related government officials from Caribbean and Latin America.

Cradle-to-Grave Medical Care
West European states have cradle-to-grave medical care for all of their citizens — and all residents of those states go to their graves, on average, later than Americans, even if only by a year or two. *"Across the globe, it's challenging to provide access to quality health services that people need without risking financial hardship,"* said Renée-Marie Stephano, president of the Medical Tourism Association. *"The arguments for improving access and affordability have never been stronger for an emerging healthcare movement to step forward and allow reforms to take root."* Fitzgerald said from explicitly defined benefits packages to reforms of public health service provisions, there is not one single model for attaining universal health coverage.

Authorities from North, South and Central America and the Caribbean agreed on a series of joint actions after PAHO deliberations last month in Washington, D.C., to improve national health systems, advance toward universal health coverage, and work with other sectors to improve social, environmental and economic conditions that impact personal health. *"We have agreed as countries that universal*

Caribbean Ministerial Summit: Universal Healthcare Pushes Forward
(Cont'd from page 6)

healthcare is something which we must be able to achieve and it is something which is a right for our people," said John Boyce, minister of health in Barbados."

Varied Approaches; Shared Focus
In Latin America, approaches vary from country to country, but studies note that ensuring quality coverage reaches poor and excluded populations has been a shared focus. *"However, inequality in health is persistent in the Americas,"* said Fitzgerald. *"We still have a fundamental problem in the region concerning quality of care."* Gross Domestic Product per capita has increased significantly from 1980-2012 in the region. But, for each US$ 100 generated in 2010 in the Americas, US$ 5.6 went to 20 percent of the poorest segment of the population. He said poverty can be distributed among countries in the region, translating into poor health,

specifically poor infant mortality rates in Bolivia and Haiti compared to high margins in Chile and Cuba.

Legal Frameworks
Fitzgerald said 34 countries in the region have made commitments to protect the right to health through international human rights treaties and 19 have constitutional provisions that guarantee access to healthcare within the national jurisdiction. Several countries including El Salvador, Peru, Columbia, Brazil, Ecuador and Jamaica are scaling up reform efforts to achieve universal healthcare through legislation. *"Legal frameworks are supporting universal healthcare,"* he said. *"Enforcement of legislative and regulatory frameworks that protect and promote the right to healthcare is necessary in moving toward universal healthcare."* Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and

Uruguay are improving efficiencies by pooling mechanisms. Many others, like Costa Rica, Chile and Brazil are reviewing financial mechanisms to better align with health objectives. *"Information is the key,"* said Fitzgerald. *"Countries are beginning to translate linkages at the global and national levels toward the right to health."*

Other speakers addressed rising healthcare and insurance costs facing Caribbean nations including Hon. Dr. Faud Khan, Minister of Health for Trinidad and Tobago, and Michael Singh, CEO of the Belize Ministry of Foreign Trade.

Posted by Joe Harkins
http://www.medicaltourismcongress.com/blog/caribbean-ministerial-summit-universal-healthcare-pushes-forward/.
(Source: carib-export.com)

CAIPA to Build Capacity and Strengthen IPAs Regionally
Thursday, November 21st, 2013

The 4th Annual General Assembly of the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA), which was held under the theme '*Towards an Enhanced Foreign Direct Investment Strategy: Strengthening our Foundation and Honouring Regional Excellence*', commenced on November 21, 2013 with participation from

Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) across the Caribbean. Addressing the gathering was a panel of IPA officials, including Michael Singh, Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Trade and Investment for the Government of Belize.

During his brief and spirited remarks, Singh emphasized a need for more to be done regionally by way of promoting the Caribbean as a trade and investment destination. Ronald Theodore, President of the CAIPA, also echoed that sentiment. *"The shared objective"*, said Theodore, *"can be achieved by member countries working together to build capacity through training and research development"*. Also in attendance was Paul Wessendorp, Chief of the Investment Climate Division at UNCTAD.

CAIPA's goal for the event was the development of a Strategic and Sustainability Plan, a four-year course of action to enhance regional cooperation in investment promotion, strengthen the capacity of the investment promotion agencies to attract investment projects, reduce costs through collaborative efforts in information gathering and information monitoring systems,

CAIPA TO BUILD CAPACITY AND STRENGTHEN IPAS REGIONALLY
(CONT. FROM PAGE 7)

as well as actively promote information exchange amongst its nineteen members. Additionally, the two-day AGM focused on several laudable accomplishments over the past year, including training of its members by the World Bank in investor facilitation, the procurement of investment tracking software and regional efforts at joint investment promotion with the attendance at a hotel investment conference in Miami.

The Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) plays an integral role in utilising donor funding in aiding the growth of the private sector within the region. Represented by Christopher Lewis, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Caribbean Export and Chris McNair, Manager, Competitiveness and Innovation; mention was made of Caribbean Export's support to

CAIPA and the IPAs of the region. According to McNair, CAIPA has to take a critical look at its future since its financial resources, supported under the 10th Economic Development Fund (EDF) by the European Union, comes to an end in 2015. Members of the organization, he said, *"need to strategically figure out what is CAIPA, what is the vision and how they are going to sustain that idea as a long-term objective"*. The Association was therefore lauded for its efforts to develop such a Strategy for the next 5 years with a focus on sustainability.

For additional information about CAIPA please contact Suzette Hudson, Senior Investment Promotion Advisor, Caribbean Export Development Agency *shudson@carib-export.com*. *Source: Caribbean Export*

Three Regional Firms Win Investor of the Year Awards

Friday, November 22nd, 2013

▲ From left to right: RIYA Awardees Brian Kearney, Qualfon Guyana Inc – winner of the Foreign Investor of the Year Award; Ms. Diomares Musa, VP, ARS Humano – winner of the local investor of the year award and overall RIYA 2013 winner; Mr. Charles Kirkconnell, CEO, Cayman Enterprise City – winner of the Special award.

The inaugural Regional Investor of the Year Award was held at the Radisson Fort George Hotel & Marina before a host of invited guests, including members of the private sector from Belize. The event, part of the 4th Annual General Assembly of the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA), was held in recognition of the contribution of foreign and local investors to the Caribbean. Receiving the award for Foreign Investor of the Year was Qualfon Guyana Inc., a business process outsourcing and call center service provider based in Georgetown, Guyana. Vice President of Marketing and Product Management Brian Kearney accepted the award on behalf of Qualfon. The values-driven company, he said, is not just about

business but also about a passion for improving the lives of people in the communities they serve.

ARS Humano, a privately held health insurance company in the Dominican Republic, was awarded for both the Local and overall winner of the Regional Investor of the Year. Marketing and Corporate Development Vice President Diomares Musa, in accepting the awards, said she is honoured that the work of ARS Humano over the past fourteen years is being acknowledged by the Caribbean Export Development Agency and CAIPA.

Cayman Enterprise City, led by Chief Executive Officer Charles Kirkconnell, was the recipient of the Special Award. CEC is a Special Economic Zone compliant with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank. Located in the Cayman Islands, the company offers jurisdictional and tax benefits, as well as access to global markets.

The first Regional Investor of the Year Award was an overwhelming success, with 34 applications from 10 Caribbean territories. The initiative was a collaborative effort between CAIPA and Caribbean Export Development Agency. Many of the investment projects submitted for the Award will be used as success stories by Caribbean Export and CAIPA to promote the region for investment in the upcoming year.

For additional information about CAIPA please contact Suzette Hudson, Senior Investment Promotion Advisor *shudson@carib-export.com*

Source: Caribbean Export

Caribbean Export Development Agency will be publishing a Call for Proposals for the Accelerated Procedures and Regular Procedures of their Direct Assistance Grant Scheme (DAGS) within the First Quarter of 2014.Eligible applicants may obtain the full details of the changes for the next Call for Proposals at *http://www.carib-export.com/grants/call-for-proposals.*

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

▶ Belize Spa & Wellness Association founders meeting on Wednesday, December 4th 2013

▶ Belize Audio Visual Association (BAVIA) meeting on Tuesday, December 10th 2013

▶ Belize Information and Communication Technology Association founders meeting on Thursday, December 11th 2013

▶ Association of Real Estate Brokers of Belize (AREBB) meeting on Friday, December 13th 2013

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