



BDC BUSINESS BUZZ

ACCOMPLISHMENTS ADVERTORIAL: FOURTH QUARTER 2009



TRADE PROMOTION T&T takes Cuba

For yet another year, Trinidad and Tobago made its presence felt at the Havana Trade Fair, capturing an award for its booth design and composition for the second consecutive time.

"This time around, the interest in local products was higher than usual as there was an expectation that one of the major Cuban distributors would positively start communication with T&T companies," said Nathali Richards, Export Promotion Officer, Business Development Company Limited (BDC).

The 27th edition of the Havana Trade Fair, which is one of the most important and largest trade fairs in Latin America, took place from November 2 - 7, 2009. One thousand, two hundred and seventy companies from 54 countries participated in the trade event, which facilitates negotiations, business exchanges and meetings with Cuban professionals and companies as an entry point into the Cuban marketplace.

BDC, the country's official trade promotion organisation, has been co-ordinating T&T's delegation since 2007. At the November fair, it facilitated the largest delegation of 45 representatives from 24 companies. They included Automotive Components, Chemplast Caribbean, Eniath's Printing Company, Eximbank, Genethics Pharmaceuticals, Global Marketing, Graphics Limited, Hitech Services, John Dickinson & Company, MDC-UM, Oscar Francois, Physicians Pharmaceuticals, Printing and Packaging Industry Council, Republic Bank Havana, Sacha Cosmetics, Saffire Engineering, Trinidad Aggregate Products, Trinidad Tissues, Tobago House of Assembly, Tourism Intelligence International, and T&T Manufacturers' Association.

"Automotive Components manufactures and exports automotive batteries throughout the Caribbean, except to Cuba and therefore we participated in the mission to look at the possibilities there," said Subash Ranjitsingh, the company's Marketing and Sales Director. At the moment, the potential for market penetration by local products in Cuba is on the rise.

"Cuba is a larger market than the rest of the Caribbean collectively. The market is opening up and the development and investment that is taking place there is quite substantial," noted Cheryl Balkaran, Marketing Manager, Trinidad Aggregate Products, another exhibitor in the T&T Pavilion.

From all reports, members of the T&T delegation were able to capitalise on this potential.

"The fair was very informative and we have identified several customers with which we are currently in negotiations, with a view to set up distribution channels in Cuba," Ranjitsingh said.

"What the Trade Facilitation Office there did was to arrange business-to-business meetings between local and Cuban businesses within our respective industries. That was where the true business generation came from," Balkaran said.

These meetings were one of the highlights of the Havana Trade Fair. Others include a reception hosted by T&T Ambassador to Cuba His Excellency Lester Efebo Wilkinson; a group meeting with the Honourable Antonio Carricarte, First Vice Minister in Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment; T&T's National Day, where the T&T Pavilion was officially launched; and the fair's awards ceremony, where T&T copped a top prize.

Representatives from major Cuban import companies meet with Daniel Fuller, Export Sales Executive, John Dickinson & Company, right, and the company's Managing Director George Haloutte, second from right.



Brian Awang, CEO, Eximbank, left, shares a moment with His Excellency Lester Efebo Wilkinson, T&T's Ambassador to Cuba, Mrs. Wilkinson, and Clarry Benn, Chairman, Eximbank.



Marcelle Cromwell, Sector Secretariat's Industry Specialist for Printing and Packaging with Henry Tang Lee, Managing Director, Global Marketing. Tang Lee shows off his company's certification of participation at the Havana International Fair.



Peter Lewis, Export Manager, MDC-UM, right, in a meeting with major Cuban import companies.



Cheryl Balkaran, Marketing Manager, Trinidad Aggregate Products, second from left, interacts with visitors to her booth.



The Trinidad and Tobago Pavilion: A view from above.

TRAINING A Quarter for Training Success

For the final quarter of 2009, the BDC's highly respected Training Unit chose to focus its energies on conceptualising and implementing training initiatives that aim to improve the efficiency and productivity of companies. To launch this new focus, the organisation met with its clients at a stakeholder forum and networking event called *Meeting Communities, Impacting Productivity, Transforming the Economy*.

Held on October 30 at Auzonville Plaza Conference Centre, Tunapuna, the event boasted a four-hour forum on Cash Management with certified financial consultant Lloyd Ince. This initiative was geared towards individuals who are directly responsible for cash management or whose decisions impact the cash management strategies used by the firm.

Creating A High Performance Coaching Culture was the main highlight for November. International author, consultant and motivational speaker Thomas Crane facilitated this workshop, during which participants were challenged to embrace coaching as a method of communication designed to enhance both individual and team effectiveness in achieving performance objectives.

Held on November 10 - 11 at the Courtyard by Marriott, Port of Spain, the fully subscribed seminar underscored the power of coaching as a potent leadership and management tool, especially with the emergence of a younger, more inexperienced workforce.

The Training Unit's December high point was *Optimising Employee Performance - A Supervisor's Guide to Success*, held from December 1 - 3 at the Courtyard by Marriott. Using an experiential approach to learning, facilitator Kathleen Stroud-Mohammed demonstrated how optimising employee behaviour requires thoughtful strategy to ensure the organisation fully utilises its human capital effectively. Supervisors were also reminded that their success is measured by how well they get the work done with and through others. This requires a constant calibration of People, Processes and Performance.

MEET THE CLIENTS BDC expands its client network

In the last quarter of 2009, the Business Development Company Limited (BDC) expanded its already impressive client base through a series of events aimed at not only promoting its comprehensive range of products and services, but also evaluating T&T's prevailing business climate. The best way to do that: Meet The Clients.

The organisation hosted a series of activities all over the country that brought together existing and potential clients, allowing them to network, and exchange ideas and experiences with the dedicated BDC team, whose mission is to foster the progressive development of the local business landscape.

These events included *BDC South Week* held from September 14 - 17 in San Fernando; *Breakfast with the BDC: Promoting Quality & Innovation* on October 23 at the Paria Suites Hotel, La Romain; *Breakfast with the BDC: Promoting Financial Products* on November 6 at Gaston Courts, Chaguana; and *Cocktails with the BDC* on December 11 at its Scarborough, Tobago office.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Mentorship Programme enters Cycle 3

The BDC's highly successful Business Mentorship Programme entered its third cycle last November when nine participants were matched with respected local businessmen for nine months of coaching, counselling and the exchange of knowledge and expertise. The third series was officially launched on November 18 at the organisation's Port of Spain head office.

The Mentorship Programme began in August 2007, its aim being to expose aspiring entrepreneurs to the know-how and experience of accomplished professionals through the process of mentoring, thereby assisting in building their capacity to effectively lead their businesses. The programme has, to date, transformed the operations of over 30 local companies.

For the current cycle, "mentees" are being challenged to identify and prioritise their current business needs, and develop an action plan to successfully address them. The mentors and the BDC team will then be monitoring and evaluating the plan, its execution, and measuring its effectiveness.

In addition to one-on-one meetings with their mentors, the mentees will also be benefiting from BDC-hosted training seminars on finance, human resource management, marketing, and strategic management. The BDC also has an online Mentorship Network, which operates under the same principles. Find out more at www.bdc.co.tt.



Mentors and mentees in the current cycle of the BDC Mentorship Programme are shining examples of success as they pose for a group photo with the BDC's Business Development Officer Camille James, front row, right.



BDC's Senior Business Development Officer Pat Govia delivers presentation at Breakfast with the BDC: Promoting Financial Products.



Feature Speaker Curtis Manchoon, left, presents a participant with a token of appreciation at Breakfast with the BDC: Promoting Financial Products.



Participants in Breakfast with the BDC: Promoting Quality & Innovation, left, chat with BDC Vice President Annelie Joachim and President Albert Chow.



Participants make their contribution at Breakfast with the BDC: Promoting Quality & Innovation.



A cross section of participants at a workshop held during South Week.



Workshop facilitator Bernard Campbell of Intelligent Business Advantage, left, is greeted by BDC's Business Development Officer Crisen Maharaj during South Week.



Clients at Cocktails with the BDC, left, chat with BDC's Senior Certification Officer Shirley Ann Noel and Trade Assistance Manager Damie Sinanan.



Senior Business Development Officer Dedan Daniel, left, talks with a client during Cocktails with the BDC.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Trinidad

January 28 - 29
Managing Performance: A Strategy for Increased Productivity
\$2,875 VAT Inclusive

March 2
Corporate Governance

March 15 - 17
Recruitment Matters: Finding the Best Fit for your Empty Seats
\$3,450 VAT Inclusive

Tobago

February 17 - 19
Financial Management for Non-Financial Managers
\$3,500 VAT Inclusive

March 9 - 11
Process Mapping
\$3,500 VAT Inclusive