



The T & T Foresight Project

NIHERST

Sector Foresight
Project:

TOURISM

Chapter 3:

**Overall T&T 'Best
Bets'**

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& Ian Ivey**



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1 Introduction

Altogether thirty-five first draft 'Best Bet' opportunities were developed at the five sector workshops – biotechnology, creative, food and beverage, manufacturing, and tourism - held during the last two weeks of July 2006.

Some of these 'Best Bets' offer greater commercial prospects for Trinidad and Tobago than others. In addition, there is a degree of overlap between 'Best Bets' in one sector with those in other sectors.

In this Chapter we have built a more detailed overview for what we consider to be the 'Best Bets' that offer the best prospects for the Tourism Sector. It should be pointed out that the 'Best Bet' descriptions and the associated indicative roadmaps in Chapter 3 are still relatively skeletal and have not been subjected to any in-depth analysis. Each is essentially a collation and expansion of the ideas put forward in the workshops that has been put together using a simple format that provides a platform for building more substantial business investment cases for each that will be reported in Chapter 4 of this project.

2 Picking the best of the 'Best Bets'

The original 'Best Bets' developed at the sector workshops were reviewed with key stakeholder parties in order to determine which of the first draft 'Best Bets' might offer the greatest opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago.

Part of that process including a critical review of the first draft 'Best Bets' by a T&T based 'peer review' group that included the following people:

- Mr Ronald Ramkissoon – Republic Bank
- Mt Nicholas Galt – CEO of TCS
- Mr Bernard Dulal-Whiteway – CEO of Neal & Massy
- Professor Denise Thompson, University of T&T
- Ms Joan Feriera – CEO of the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce
- Ms Maureen Manchouck – President of NIHERST
- Ms Joycelyn Lee-Young – Registrar of NIHERST
- Dr John Soo Ping Chow – Business Development Manger, e-Teck
- Mr Maurice Moniquette

Also present were:

- Dr Keith Nurse – Creative Sector Research Team Leader
- Dr ColinDale Marcelle – Tourism Sector Research Leader
- Dr Larry Placide – Food & Beverage Sector Research Leader
- Dr Nick Marsh – NEXT Corporation
- Mr Ian Ivey – NEXT Corporation

In addition to this 'peer review', the various 'Best Bet' opportunities were also discussed with the sector team researchers, key players in the investment and banking sector, other specialist T&T stakeholders, and several offshore specialists and investors.

As a result of these review and discussion processes, the following overall 'Best Bets' have been chosen as being those which offer the best potential commercial prospects for T&T.

They are somewhat broader in focus than many of the original 'Best Bet' descriptions. The rationale for this is that different entrepreneurs and investors will see different potential opportunities within any one 'Best Bet'. Focussing too narrowly at this stage of the project may close out some potential areas that could be of interest.

We believe the following expanded 'Best Bet' options are built around areas that align well with growing global niche market opportunities and which could also be realistically commercialised in some form or other to the benefit of T&T.

3 Best Bet 1

3.1 Title: 'Small country, big passion'

3.2 Description

An immersion experience offer built around the unique and multifaceted T&T cultural and ethnic groups. The aim is to connect with the things that make life interesting and fun in T&T – in cuisine, culture, music, sport, lifestyle, and leisure activities.

The key is to use existing resources more effectively, rather than having to invest huge sums of money, by being smart. Thus the offer is largely built around the people of T&T, their culture, and a significant increase in home-stays.

3.3 Rationale

- There is a growing market internationally for cultural immersion experiences that are highly customised down to individual or small group level.
- Specialist operators supplying such experiences are springing up around the world in response to the growing demand.
- These types of tourist are not interested in mainstream tourist experiences but want to get inside the culture.
- This means staying in local B&B's or with families as part of the experience.
- Tourist industry participants estimate up to 10,000 rooms suitable for B&B and home stays are potentially available across T&T.

3.4 Target Markets

- Predominantly aged over 30 and up to 70 years of age, middle and upper income earners in wealthy economies such as Germany, the UK, the USA, Japan, and Australia.
- People who are prepared to rough it to some extent.
- People who care about global diversity and unique cultural differences.
- People who have an interest in 'world music'.
- People who are prepared to accommodate a bit of edginess to their experiences.

- People who genuinely want to connect with real people who live in the country and learn more about their way of life and cultural diversity.

3.5 The Market Offer

- A 'pick 'n mix' type of offer with tourists being able to choose from a wide range of 'Trini' options and customise them to suit their own needs and expectations.
- Organised packages typically from 5 – 15 days (but not limited to these time frames) which cover either Trinidad or Tobago or a combination of both which take visitors into people's homes, lives, to a steel pan base, to steel band concerts, to local cuisine experiences, to a rum shop, to the 'rough side of town', to a cacao farm, to a 'Mas' costume shop, to a local sport event, shopping, a community outdoor meal experience, to chutney, soca, rapso music venues, etc.
- Self organised options with a network of B&B or home-stay opportunities that can be booked over a website along with details of local attractions and experiences – a sort of online 'Lonely Planet' with travel and accommodation booking options online.

3.6 What we have

- The T&T people who are a major attraction for their humour, creativity, and friendliness.
- A wide range of natural and cultural attractions.
- A unique ethnic mix with strong fusion influences.
- Unique music and cultural offers including steel pan and other music genres.
- Unique T&T cuisine and places to experience it – restaurants and home environments.
- A range of living environments from city to village to country to beach.
- A range of festivals including Diwali, Carnival, Eid, Christmas, etc.
- Entertainment venues from higher class to more edgy situations.
- Steel band centres.
- Shops and markets of all types.
- 110 B&B rooms available now and potentially up to 10,000 available.

3.7 What we need

- Year round attractions that provide a chance to experience local culture such as how to roast corn on a coal pit, how to make a tassa drum, steel pan, bake in an outdoor oven, make roti, bene ball, sugar cake, and tie die.
- Building a T&T B&B network along with the necessary 'Trini-host' training and accreditation.
- Building an online information and booking portal for local and family accommodation that provides a whole range of 'pick 'n mix' customisable options.
- Upgrading place-to-place transport links – e.g. by properly identifying official transport operators, such as taxis, for foreign visitors.
- A go forward strategy.
- Reduction of criminal activities throughout the island and encouragement of tourist friendly attitudes as a national goal.

3.8 Best Bet Roadmap Considerations

Timing	What?	How?	Who?	By when?
Initial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify who are the likely key stakeholders Determine who will lead the project Determine investment needs and sourcing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Consensus Consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project group of 5 – 6 key people Commercial / govt Commercial / govt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 1 mth By 3 mths By 3 mths
1st 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose target markets and the offers to be made Develop a marketing strategy Finalise a 'Trini Host' accreditation programme for home stays Finalise a virtual portal and e-commerce function Identify and contact potential offshore alliance partners Finalise a strategy for identifying official public transport vehicles Develop 5 – 15 day itinerary suggestions with a range of options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and assessment Use offshore examples Website design Market research Cooperative process with back up law Market research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market researcher / commercial Educators + govt. Website designer Market researcher Legal, govt, and operators Market researcher / commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths
2nd 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected agencies visit T&T to view offer E-networks set up to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 300 additional B&B rooms accredited and available First 1000 tourists visit – value US\$2,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 8 mths By 8 mths By 12 mths By 12 mths
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 10,000 tourists visit Value US\$ 20,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 2 End of yr 2 End of yr 2 End of yr 2
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 20,000 tourists visit Value US\$ 40,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 3 End of yr 3

Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer • E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers • 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available • 30,000 tourists visit • Value US\$ 60,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus • Database and output management • By inspection and appointment • Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial + govt • e-Marketer • Commercial + govt • Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of yr 4 • End of yr 4
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer • E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers • 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available • 40,000 tourists visit • Value US\$ 80,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus • Database and output management • By inspection and appointment • Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial + govt • e-Marketer • Commercial + govt • Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of yr 5 • End of yr 5

4 Best Bet 2

4.1 Title: 'The Sports Capital of the Caribbean'

4.2 Description

There is already a significant sports related tourism business developing in T&T – largely due to the efforts of entrepreneur Michael Phillips. The Soca Warriors success and high profile at the 2006 FIFA World Cup has raised the country's profile around the world. This 'Best Bet' aims to build on that interest and expand it into a range of other sporting fields.

4.3 Rationale

- The Soca Warriors participation and success at the FIFA World Cup was built not only around the games themselves but the passion of the players and supporters.
- They became favourites in a number of countries and were adopted by the people of Scotland, for example, as the team they wanted to back.
- The government is also investing heavily in new sporting facilities in the country.
- More athletes and even more supporters are travelling around the world to attend special events that not only are about the sport but also the place they are held.

4.4 Target Markets

- Competitive and recreational sports competitors who have the desire to participate in offshore events form a whole range of countries.
- The even greater number of supporters and enthusiast who follow such sports.
- The particular groups that might be targeted include cyclists (road and mountain), golfers, divers, sailors, Rugby 7s teams, volley ball teams, and cricket players.

4.5 The Market Offer

- A mix of one-off but well scheduled major events timed for maximum attraction throughout the year plus other sporting activities that can be enjoyed at any time of the year.
- A premier annual event built around 5 weeks of cycling and MTB activities and race events plus a 'Trini culture' experience.
- Other events such as Rugby 7s, cricket, and volley ball that are on an annual basis at different times of the year.
- All year around events such as golf, sailing and diving.

4.6 What we have

- High profile sports players like Brian Lara, the SOCA Warriors.
- Velodromes, trails, hills and rural roads for cycling.
- The Savannah for team sports events.
- Sports stadia (existing and new) for big game events.
- Established diving and sailing venues.
- The culture, creativity, and ethnic experiences of T&T.
- The cuisine, natural, and lifestyle attractions.
- Experience with organising and running sporting events at an international level.
- A window of opportunity post the FIFA World Cup.
- At least one entrepreneur who is developing sport based tourism as a business.

4.7 What we need

- An overall plan and strategy built around one major and other secondary sport events that boost tourism.
- Promotion of the events internationally using channels that connect most directly with the right niches e.g. for cycling events through bike shops, cycling focussed web site (e.g. cyclingtv.com) and 'blogging' groups, specialist TV channels, and news releases.
- Develop a major event into a national asset with residual benefits and a spin off for local industries over 10 years – transport, security, food and beverage – to generate revenue, positive publicity with a niche activity.
- Create a positive focal point for T&T people locally and regionally to aspire to the top level in the sport e.g. the WI Cycling Team
- Increase the overall popularity, which will increase the marketing value of the athlete as a product and create better financial possibilities for the individual and the fraternity.
- Create permanent and temporary employment in areas such as coaching, merchandise and sales and repairs.
- Develop specialist lines of clothing.
- Encourage the manufacture of memorabilia.
- Establish the brand name of the major event.
- Become self-sustaining through advertising and merchandising.
- Develop a home-stay network based around 'Trini Host' accredited B&B s that provide accommodation for competitors, supporters and enthusiasts to complement the already scarce hotel room resources available – up to 10,000 rooms could be available in the country (over double the current number of hotel rooms) but they need to be linked into a central database and virtual booking system.

4.8 Best Bet Roadmap Considerations

Timing	What?	How?	Who?	By when?
Initial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify who are the likely key stakeholders Determine who will lead the project Determine investment needs and sourcing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Consensus Consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project group of 5 – 6 key people Commercial / govt Commercial / govt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 1 mth By 3 mths By 3 mths
1st 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose target markets and the events to be developed Develop a marketing strategy Finalise a 'Trini Host' accreditation programme for home stays Finalise a virtual portal and e-commerce function Identify and contact potential offshore alliance partners Finalise an event calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and assessment Consensus approach Use offshore examples Website design Market research Consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market researcher / commercial Educators + govt. Website designer Market researcher Commercial + govt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths
2nd 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select the first major event and marketing approach E-networks set up to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 300 additional B&B rooms accredited and available Bookings for first event underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 8 mths By 8 mths By 12 mths By 12 mths
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First major event run plus several secondary events and all year round sport development E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 5,000 sports tourists visit Value US\$ 10,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event management Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 2 End of yr 2 End of yr 2 End of yr 2
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd major event run plus a number of secondary events and more all year round sport development E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 15,000 sports tourists visit Value US\$ 30,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event management Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 3 End of yr 3 End of yr 3 End of yr 3
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3rd major event run plus a number of secondary events and more all year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> round sport development E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 30,000 sports tourists visit Value US\$ 60,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 4
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3rd major event run plus a number of secondary events and more all year round sport development E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 40,000 tourists visit Value US\$ 80,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event management Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 5 End of yr 5

5 Best Bet 3

5.1 Title: Eco-tourism – ‘Let Your Senses Be the Guide’

5.2 Description

An eco-tourism offer that is aimed at the growing demand globally for packages built around themes that focus on the protection and preservation of the environment and traditional ways of life. It is not a mass-market product and is aimed more at individuals or small groups who are part of the growing global niche adventure tourism sector.

5.3 Rationale

- The environment and its protection is rising on the agenda of many upper and middle income earners in the developed economies.
- More people are beginning to realise that mankind's impact upon the planet is creating a lot of damage to the environment.
- So there is an increasing desire to travel to places where nature is still relatively unspoilt and where there is still some degree of harmony between people and the surroundings they live in.
- There is also a growing interest in projects which aim to save endangered species and locations

5.4 Target Markets

- The cultural and eco-tourist who seeks to interact intimately with the environment and the people living in proximity.
- These are likely to be middle and upper income earners predominantly from the world's developed economies – European countries, North America, and perhaps Japan.
- Many will be Baby Boomers and Generation X (over 35 years of age and up to 70).
- Many will also likely be part of what is known as the ‘cultural creatives’ – people who have a greater passion about the world and what's happening in it.
- Most will be highly educated people – typically with tertiary qualifications.

5.5 The Market Offer

- 5 – 10 day eco-immersion packages – up to 14 days if both Trinidad and Tobago are to be visited.
- Multi-faceted offers that might include hiking through rainforests, swimming in the Argyle waterfalls, visiting the Asa Wright bird park, swimming at the beach, reef diving and snorkelling, a visit to a conservation centre for neo-tropical animals, camping in the wild, etc.

- Ancillary offers might include cuisine experiences based around exotic meats derived as a sideline to conservation programmes and which help fund them, also leather products made from their skins, etc.
- A chance to visit coffee and cacao plantations would also be part of the offer.
- Another part of the offer would be experiencing traditional village life, community based experiences, and the country's unique cultural and cuisine mix.

5.6 What we have

- A wide range of natural and cultural attractions.
- Established eco-ventures such as the Asa Wright bird sanctuary which already attracts international specialist interest.
- Natural experiences such as rainforests, waterfalls, beaches, and offshore reefs.
- Cultural experiences such as pan yards (steel pan music), chutney music, mas.
- Exotic foods such as Indian, Creole, etc.
- Unique plantation crops such as coffee, cacao, aniseed (Pernod).
- A well-developed herbal sector based on local resources which have unique applications – such as bois bande, seamoss, etc.
- Specialist operators such as Banwari Tours who have developed skills in this type of tourism.
- Fascinating characters in the Steel pan and Mas area, and in the conservation and species preservation area – such as Dr Gary Garcia from UWI.
- Potentially 10,000 rooms throughout both islands that could be used as home stays and add to the accommodation base needed to cater for growth in the sector.

5.7 What we need

- Harmonisation between stakeholders.
- The right promotional channels – cost effective as advertising is expensive – need Internet and e-network development.
- Empowered groups that have responsibilities and make a profit – a common interest in satisfying and meeting (exceeding) tourist expectations.
- Conservation centres and breeding programmes to build stocks of animals.
- Proper interpretive centres – interactive centre.
- Interlinking of cultural with the eco-network to lend completeness to the concept.
- A branding and marketing strategy.
- Develop a home-stay network based around 'Trini host' accredited B&B s that provide accommodation for competitors, supporters and enthusiasts to complement the already scarce hotel room resources available – up to 10,000 rooms could be available in the country (over double the current number of hotel rooms) but they need to be linked into a central database and virtual booking system.

5.8 Best Bet Roadmap Considerations

Timing	What?	How?	Who?	By when?
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1st 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose target markets and the offers to be made Develop a marketing strategy Finalise a 'Trini host' accreditation programme for home stays Finalise a virtual portal and e-commerce function Identify and contact potential offshore alliance partners Finalise a strategy for identifying official public transport vehicles Develop 5 – 15 day itinerary suggestions with a range of options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and assessment Use offshore examples Website design Market research Cooperative process with back up law Market research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market researcher / commercial Educators + govt. Website designer Market researcher Legal, govt, and operators Market researcher / commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths By 6 mths
2nd 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected agencies visit T&T to view offer E-networks set up to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 300 additional B&B rooms accredited and available First 1000 tourists visit – value US\$2,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 8 mths By 8 mths By 12 mths By 12 mths
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 10,000 tourists visit Value US\$ 20,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 2 End of yr 2 End of yr 2 End of yr 2
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available 20,000 tourists visit Value US\$ 40,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus Database and output management By inspection and appointment Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial + govt e-Marketer Commercial + govt Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of yr 3 End of yr 3

Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer • E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers • 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available • 30,000 tourists visit • Value US\$ 60,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus • Database and output management • By inspection and appointment • Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial + govt • e-Marketer • Commercial + govt • Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of yr 4 • End of yr 4 • End of yr 4 • End of yr 4
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend agencies visiting T&T to view offer • E-networks built further to connect regularly with agents and end consumers • 1000 additional B&B rooms accredited and available • 40,000 tourists visit • Value US\$ 80,000,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus • Database and output management • By inspection and appointment • Through marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial + govt • e-Marketer • Commercial + govt • Marketer + commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of yr 5 • End of yr 5 • End of yr 5 • End of yr 5

6 *The Next Steps*

In Chapter 4 of this project, these overall sector ‘Best Bets’ will be developed to a much higher level to enable the finalisation of a business investment case for each one.

The process of building these cases will include more detailed consultation with key stakeholders to test and refine the assumptions made, the building of 5 – 10 year financial projections, a more detailed roadmap, and the identification of key players, both on and offshore, who would be required to help realise each ‘Best Bet’.