

EYE ON SERVICES



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CEO's Message Service SMEs serious about exporting



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We at the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Service Industries (TTCSI), feel strongly that the services sector can play a major role in our country's diversification efforts. The data shows that the sector employed over 85% of the Trinidad and Tobago labour force in 2017, but only accounted for an estimated 8% of export earnings in that year. In 2018, it contributed 58% to real Gross Domestic Product (GDP). That means there is still tremendous scope for the Services Sector to not only boost its contribution to this country's GDP; there is major room for growth in export earnings.

This is why we at the TTCSI embarked on the **GATEWAY to Trade (G2T) Trinidad & Tobago Accelerator Export Readiness Programme for SMEs**, which is designed to develop the export capacity of Trinidad and Tobago's Services Sector companies.

We focussed on firms with demonstrated potential to trade internationally and drew them from those sub-sectors believed to have the greatest potential for generating export earnings, namely **Business & Events Tourism Services, Business & Professional Services, Energy Services, and Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Services**.

The 22 companies which graduated from this rigorous programme—four firms in Business & Events Tourism Services; five firms in Business & Professional Services; seven firms in Energy Services; and six firms in Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Services—are moving aggressively to put into practice all they have learnt and seeking opportunities abroad. They also are networking with firms locally to strengthen their economic prospects at home.

We recently went even further and created an online platform for services sector companies to be able to showcase their work, allowing for peer-to-peer and business-to-business transactions, as well as networking among firms here at home. The platform, National Services Exporters Portal of Trinidad and Tobago (NSEP), also makes it easier for international firms seeking local partners to find the T&T firm that could be the perfect fit for them.

At the TTCSI, we are doing our utmost to give the Services Sector every possible advantage as our country seeks to rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic and chart a future where our economy is resilient—surviving and thriving regardless of the shocks thrown at it, because our companies are resilient and competitive, too.

Those two elements—resilience and competitiveness—are priorities for G2T graduates, as we see in this edition of **Eye on Services**. We continue to map the journey of these firms and share their experiences, if we are to become a nation of exporters it is critical for us to build a community of like-minded individuals.

A sincere thanks to Senator the honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, Permanent Secretaries Ayleen Alleyne – Ovid and Frances Seignoret, Neville Alexander, Senior Economist and Candice Lakhansingh, Director, MTI; our partner State Agencies – ExporTT – Dhanraj Harrypersad and Ashmeer Mohamed and EXIM Bank – Navin Dookeran for their support and commitment towards building a resilient services sector in T&T.



The G2T journey

For many of the G2T graduates, the idea of exporting their services to other countries had been under consideration for quite some time; the challenge was how to go about making that a reality.

This was the case with Servus Limited which operates in the Business & Professional Services sub-sector. Senior Manager Alvin Morton revealed they had been considering exporting their services since 2019.

"The G2T/Services Go Global project from TTCSI proved to be exactly what we needed to help us on our journey to becoming a services exporter," Morton observed.

"We are always looking for ways to enhance and develop our business holistically," says Nadia Clifford Maingot, General Manager of BAC Customs Brokers Company, which also operates in the Business & Professional Services sub-sector.

"We've been interested in expanding our operations into the regional and international markets, so when the opportunity arose to participate in a programme like this, we jumped at it."

Sandra Parmesar, Director at Online Technologies Ltd., which operates in the ICT Services sub-sector, admits they had never thought of exporting their services, and their involvement in the Programme was "divine intervention".

"TTCSI had sent an email detailing the G2T Programme's content, which sounded to us like a Master's Program in exporting services," Parmesar recalls.

"We reached out to one of the senior trainers who encouraged us to register, while warning us that it required dedication and hard work. It was the best decision we made."



For Allison Demas, Founder and CEO of Media Insite Ltd., G2T fit in neatly with their strategic objective to be a net earner of foreign exchange.

"We have been exporting our services for quite some time, but our export earnings only accounted for 40% of our revenue before we entered the Programme," Demas explained. "We felt it was important to increase that percentage and earn more foreign exchange."

For several of the companies operating in the Energy Services sub-sector, the G2T Programme was in alignment with their plans for expansion, which for them was an imperative.

General Manager at Epic Maintenance Ltd., Vishnu Balgobin, uses words such as "synchronicity" and "serendipity" to describe their G2T journey.

"It was important for us to be able to move into the wider Caribbean region with our services—not just Guyana and Suriname because of the upstream developments there—but also other Caribbean islands dependent on the services we provide.

That was our focus at the start of 2020, just before the pandemic began," Balgobin stated. "So, as we were strategizing on how to expand our market reach, the opportunity to enter the G2T programme came up." CEO of Sadhna Petroleum Services Company Ltd., Denise Ali, like her colleagues in the Energy Services sub-sector, pointed to the challenges the local sector was facing, which was compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Even before the pandemic, things were tough because of the closure of Petrotrin, as well as the shrinkage of opportunities in the local energy sector," Ali points out.

"We began looking at business opportunities outside of T&T, mainly in the region. We've been operating in Suriname for at least 15 years, and had done projects in Guyana long before their major oil and gas finds, so in terms of expansion, those were two markets we felt we could dive deeper into. For that, G2T has been invaluable."

"I saw the need for our company to venture out of Trinidad and Tobago and export our services to other markets.

However, our company had never exported its services before and had no clear idea of how to go about it, so G2T was very timely for us," says Shamfa Phillips, Manager at Phillips General Contracting Ltd. "Now, G2T is a vital part of a strategy to make that happen."

Even large players in the Energy Services sub-sector like Damus Limited felt the need to explore what the G2T Programme offered, as Vice-President for Business Development and Company Director, Stuart Mahabir, reveals.



"We saw it as a means to enhance our export marketing strategy, and to expand our sales regionally and internationally," Mahabir says. "We are very pleased we made this decision.

The export plan we had to create during the programme is what is guiding our current expansion plans now."

Rachel McSween, Sales & Marketing Manager at Mount Irvine Bay Resort—a major player in the Business & Events Services sub-sector—had previous experience with similar programmes earlier in her career. Even though she took up responsibility for G2T mid-way through, her prior experience helped her catch up fairly quickly. She convinced the executive management team at the hotel to stick with G2T, which she describes as an excellent opportunity.

"Everything about this programme was attractive for me and I was determined that Mount Irvine Bay made it to the end," McSween says. "The promotion of service industries is a beautiful concept, and I am glad we were a part of G2T."



Pandemic **highs** and **lows**

While the COVID-19 pandemic impacted all the services sub-sectors, for some companies it was tough-going, while for others it proved to be a fairly profitable time. For all G2T participants and graduates, the pandemic would prove to be a master class not only in survival, but adaptability, innovation and resilience.

For BAC Customs Brokers, the pandemic helped them enhance the services they provide daily, General Manager, Nadia Clifford-Maingot, explains:

"We had to adapt our operations to meet the changes and demands made by the agencies we work with in the logistics business, for example customs, airlines, freight-forwarders, shipping lines, and so on. They were making changes to their operations and working hours because of the pandemic, and we had to adapt to everyone's new procedures and schedules.

Some of those changes were for the better because we got things done much quicker, as much of the work was done online, as well as via email and over the phone."

Servus Limited was kept busy during the past couple years of the COVID-19 pandemic as one of the frontline companies engaged in facilities sanitisation, but as Alvin Morton notes, like many other companies, they tried their best to redeploy their resources as far as possible.

"We took a decision to do the best we could, in order to keep our staff engaged and employed with us, even if it meant cutting salaries," Morton explained, pointing to both Servus' custodial and facilities management staff.

He also noted that the company functioned as a hybrid workplace long before the pandemic. As a first responder organisation in the event of a national disaster, Servus needed to have resilience elements built in so it could help other entities get back on their feet quickly in such circumstances.

"Prior to the pandemic, we already were exploring the potential of online training, as our customers came from all over the world—Eastern Europe, South America, Africa, South-East Asia, among others—and this was how we delivered our services to them," Founder & Managing Director of North West Maritime Ltd., Derek Walcott recollects.

"When the pandemic hit in 2020, we were already positioned to offer online training across the board. We just had to ramp up our training offerings, moving from one or two online options to include all our courses that didn't need the practical component," Walcott explained.

"So while others downsized, we increased the number of employees and trainers we had onboard. For us, it was an opportunity for growth."

Manager of HR & Corporate Services at Micro Software Designs Ltd., Monica Ramdial, recalls that MSD's IT innovations for some of its clients in the financial sector were critical to ensuring its own survival, as well as theirs.

"Some of our smaller clients, like credit unions, needed to respond immediately to the environment by providing mobile and online banking capability to their members," Ramdial notes. "We found solutions and strategies for the challenges they faced in this regard, offering them express services.

We even went so far as to ensure our long-standing clients could survive, choosing to break-even on the services we offered them, so they could serve their customers and clients as effectively as possible."



Other ICT Services companies, such as Media Insite and Coded Arts, were among those for whom the pandemic brought bumper business.

"As unfortunate as the pandemic was, it turned out to be a major boon for us," says Brian Perry, Managing Director of Coded Arts.

"Many of the studios the international companies were using had to close their doors because of the lockdowns.

We already operated with a hybrid workplace/remote working model and were able to facilitate those companies in need of the digital services we provide, at any time of day or night."

"We actually excelled at exporting our services during this period," Perry added.

Allison Demas at Media Insite says they saw productivity levels increase during lockdown, when everyone was working remotely, even though at first, the pandemic was a slight business continuity challenge for them.



Pandemic highs and lows (continued)

"It is ironic that during the pandemic proved to be some of our best years for revenue generation," Demas observes.

"We were able to gain more clients during the height of the pandemic.

Because it was big news, communications departments especially turned to us, as a media monitoring company, to help them keep abreast of the news regarding COVID-19, not just in T&T, but also the rest of the region."

Their colleague in the ICT Services sub-sector, Managing Director of Proudfoot Communications Ltd., Andrew Proudfoot, says they have been working remotely since the height of the pandemic, and continue to do so even as restrictions have been lifted.



"There were some challenges," he admits, "in terms of getting business done in the early days of the pandemic, as many people were only just beginning to embrace digital innovations and starting their own digital transformations in their organisations."

"Many places did not have online banking set up, or ACH bank transfers and other electronic commerce options, and those were critical for the survival of many businesses, including ours," Proudfoot notes.

"Businesses wishing to move their businesses online came to us to build their e-commerce sites, but when it came to obtaining payments from clients, and even maintaining basic communication, it was challenging initially, especially as so many people closed their offices."

Companies operating in the Energy Services sub-sector had a tough time of it during the pandemic.

"We had begun to look at rationalising our workforce following Petrotrin's closure, and when the pandemic came, it forced us to tighten our belts even more," says Denise Ali, CEO of Sadhna Petroleum Services Company Ltd.

"We began working a 3-day work week and are still operating with that schedule because we're not back to a level where everyone needs to come into office five days a week.

In addition, we adopted a hybrid workplace model, so a lot of work is being done remotely.

The pandemic forced us to streamline our business, so our operations are much leaner and more mobile than before," Ali says.

"The pandemic had an impact on our sales, which led to us having to downsize a bit and even retrench some of our workers," admits Stuart Mahabir, Damus Limited's Vice-President for Business Development and Company Director.

"There were several months during the height of the pandemic when we even had to adjust salaries for some of our permanent workforce, just to keep the cash flow at a manageable level, and the company operational. In fact, our sales still have not recovered to pre-COVID levels, so we are working on remedying that."

Manager at Phillips General Contracting Ltd., Shamfa Phillips, disclosed that they, too, faced financial challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.



"Many of our projects were either postponed or cancelled altogether. It was a really tough time with our finances declining, and employees having to be let go," Philips recollects.

"Many of our development plans were set aside because of work projects that had to be side-lined. And like many other companies, we had to undergo some restructuring to ensure that we survived."

"The lockdowns were especially tough because sometimes we are called out on an urgent assignment, which could fall during the curfew period, and it was challenging get the special permissions and exemptions to ensure our technical teams could get to and from the assignment without any complications," recalls Vishnu Balgobin, General Manager at Epic Maintenance Ltd.

For Ludmila Tackoor-Addo, Managing Director at Non-Destructive Testers Ltd., ensuring they held on to their technical staff during the pandemic was crucial.

"We were lucky that we managed to retain all our highly trained technicians during the height of the pandemic," Tackoor-Addo reveals.

"During the second lockdown, our business was able to open up a bit more because many of the services required were urgent. So, we still had sufficient business to carry us forward."



Key lessons learnt



"The most important lesson for me was how important customers are to the success of your business. That was really brought home to me when I had to clarify BAC's value proposition," says Nadia Clifford Maingot, General Manager of BAC Customs Brokers Company.

For Sandra Parmesar, Director at Online Technologies Ltd., getting the fundamentals of export marketing to communicate their value proposition was extremely important. "I learnt how to say what my company does in simple, practical language so that anyone can understand the genuine value-add," Parmesar says. "And we learnt how to do an 'elevator pitch'—basically sharing that information in two minutes or less."

"I learnt a lot more about selling digitally," says Rachel McSween, Sales & Marketing Manager at Mount Irvine Bay Resort. "I am now very conversant with Zoom and all those other digital communication and marketing technologies, which were so important to business survival during the height of the pandemic, and which remain important even now."

"One of the key lessons we learnt," says Shamfa Phillips, Manager at Phillips General Contracting Ltd., "is that exporting takes a great deal of planning and collaboration. To achieve that goal, you must plan meticulously and not give up on it. It is possible, even if it takes a while to materialise, but planning and a collaborative effort are crucial to achieving it."

Founder & CEO of Media Insite Ltd., Allison Demas, concurs with Shamfa Phillips on the issue of planning and having a strategy to achieve your exporting goals.

"We now know and understand the importance of doing our own market research to determine if that new market is viable for us, and whether there are other potential clients to target, and coming up with a strategy to be able to gain business from other clients in that particular market," Demas notes.

"One thing that was critical for us was being able to clearly identify whom we serve. Exactly who are the clients we want to target in the respective export markets? What exactly is our offering? What are our clients' pain points for which we can provide solutions? Those are a couple of the questions we asked ourselves as we defined our export mandate."

"The G2T Programme really opened my eyes to the importance of doing proper market research on the countries to which you wish to export your services," acknowledges Andrew Proudfoot, Managing Director of Proudfoot

Communications Ltd. "You really have to know what you're going into, who you're targeting, who you want to reach, and what your possible outcomes are."

Ludmila Tackoor-Addo, Managing Director at Non-Destructive Testers Ltd., also learnt the importance of market research, a critical component when creating one's export plan.

"Developing our export plan in a formal, structured manner was crucial for us," Tackoor-Addo observes. "It gave us an itemized listing of action items to tackle one after the other, thus ensuring that we will have all action items completed to achieve our goal of services exporting."

Damus Limited's Vice-President for Business Development and Company Director, Stuart Mahabir, was philosophical on the key lesson Damus learnt while undergoing G2T training.

"Failing to plan is planning to fail," he points out. "During the exercise of creating our export plan, we were able to determine exactly which energy services we would focus on and the kinds of projects we would undertake going forward into export markets."

We've distilled down the export services we have on offer into a format that allows me, when I meet with a potential buyer of those services, to make a concise, impactful and appealing business pitch."

Brian Perry, Managing Director at Coded Arts, found the whole process of documenting your strategy via the export plan, fascinating.

"It was an eye-opener for us," Perry admits, "because we are a team of creatives, software engineers, and animators, none of whom has any formal business school background or training. Through the G2T Programme, we came to shift our focus from solely targeting investors, to actively pursuing a comprehensive strategy for capitalising on opportunities in other markets, with our export plan as our guide."

"The most important lesson the pandemic taught us was the importance of remaining lean and being agile, flexible and adaptable as a business, not restricting ourselves to our core, but focussing on servicing the needs of our customers," says Vishnu Balgobin, General Manager at Epic Maintenance Ltd. "That led to an expansion from our core business to closely related services."

Although we are primarily installation specialists, we found ourselves getting into logistics and moving more into our clients supply chain, in order to add more value to them as we supported them with our services solutions."

For Derek Walcott, Founder & Managing Director of North West Maritime Ltd., a reminder of creativity was key.

"One of the most important lessons we learnt was how creative we are as a people," Walcott says. "We found a way to bring our services to people, using ICT innovations. Whereas before, people physically came to us, or we went to them to deliver our services, the pandemic saw us assuring our customers that they could now access our training modules right in their own homes."

Basically, we moved the simulators and other training packages from the classroom to the computers and personal devices of our students, wherever in the world they were located."



Advice to future cohorts

There is a consistent message from G2T Cohort 1 to all future cohorts: "Commit to the Programme. Attend all the sessions. Stick with the Programme. Do the assignments. Make the sacrifice, because it is worth it..."

"Come on the Zoom classes five minutes before and pay attention in class. Don't be afraid to ask questions when you need clarification. When they are available, listen to the recordings of all your lectures and sessions. Be sure to participate in the group events."

Do your homework as soon as the session is over for the day AND hand it in immediately," is the advice from Sandra Parmesar, Director at Online Technologies Ltd.. She urges future cohorts to take full advantage of the G2T training.

Like Sandra Parmesar, Andrew Proudfoot, Managing Director of Proudfoot Communications Ltd., Allison Demas, Founder & CEO of Media Insite, and Stuart Mahabir, Company Director at Damus Limited, all urge future cohorts to take the G2T Programme seriously.

"Attend all the sessions. Do not skip any," Andrew Proudfoot counsels. "Do all the assignments they give you and ensure you submit them on time."

"Many of those assignments you are given in Phase 1 form a component of your export plan, and you qualify for Phase 2 based on the quality of your export plan," Allison Demas notes. "So, invest the time. Stick with it."

"If you really want to benefit from the programme as means to increase the sales and profits of your business, you must commit to it," advises Stuart Mahabir.



"I found that those companies that went through the programme with me and really committed, attended the lectures, did the homework assignments, and really participated in an active manner, are the ones that benefitted the most and made it into Phase 2."

"Focus on what you want and maintain the will to do it," is the wisdom Alvin Morton of Servus Limited wishes to impart.

He reports that his company tried to implement, as far as possible, what they were learning under G2T as they learnt it, thus ensuring organisational transformation got underway, and he says the process is still ongoing.

"TTCISI's CEO, Vashti Guyadeen, advised us at the start of the programme to write down the reason why we are doing it and to place that on a vision board where we could see it clearly," he recalls.

"She told us to keep looking at that 'Why?' statement on our vision boards, especially as we progressed to the middle stages of the programme, so that we would be reminded of the reason we chose to go on this G2T journey."

Nadia Clifford-Maingot, General Manager of BAC Customs Brokers Company, and Derek Walcott, Founder & Managing Director of North West Maritime Ltd., each had a special message for small business owners:

"G2T is a great programme for business owners—especially small business owners—who want to expand into the regional and international markets.

At every stage, you learn the importance of documentation; how to pitch your business to customers; and are taught the critical steps needed to enter new markets.

The facilitators take time to work closely with you on your export plan and really mentor you. It is an opportunity you don't want to miss, especially since it is free at this point in time.

Take advantage of that. Stick with the programme right to the end because you and your company will benefit."

"If exporting is your goal, in order to achieve it, you will need to be dedicated and disciplined, as well as flexible and capable of dexterity. You will need to make a culture change," says Derek Walcott.

"Work with your coaches—you couldn't get a better team to work with as you undergo the G2T training, learning how to create an export plan and preparing your business to be a services exporter."

For both Ludmilla Tackoor-Addo, Managing Director at Non-Destructive Testers Ltd., and Monica Ramdial, Manager of HR & Corporate Services at Micro Software Designs Ltd., teamwork makes the dream work.



Advice to **future cohorts** (continued)

"Your company definitely needs to have a dedicated team working on the G2T Programme," asserts Ludmilla Tackoor-Addo. "This is not a programme you can do solo."

A solid team is critical. Also important is disseminating the information being learnt—from management, to technical to administrative divisions—because it must trickle down throughout the organisation."

"Get as many of your work team members involved in doing the G2T Programme, especially the executive leadership team, and all those involved in operational aspects of the business," Monica Ramdial urges. "It is important to have as many levels involved as possible—that is, the strategic, technical and operational."

That's because both a top-down and bottom-up approach are needed to identify your business objectives, and determine where you want to be, as well as to create a realistic export plan to help grow your business internationally."

Shamfa Phillips, Manager at Phillips General Contracting Ltd., agrees: "Do the work that is required, get people in your organisation involved, and have fun while you are implementing the necessary changes to ensure the company can achieve the goal of becoming a services exporter."

It is so important to implement as you go along while doing the programme, no matter how small the change may be.

Everything you learn, try to find a way to incorporate it in your operations so you get closer to that goal of exporting."

"Go forth boldly but be wise and strategic" is the key message Energy Services sub-sector operators, Denise Ali, CEO of Sadhna Petroleum Services Company Ltd., and Vishnu Balgobin, General Manager at Epic Maintenance Ltd., chose to leave with future G2T cohorts.

"Don't be afraid to venture out," encourages Denise Ali, "but be aware there are risks to going after opportunities in new and unfamiliar territories. So, while you're developing a road map to help you enter new markets, it is equally important to develop an exit strategy in the event of unfavourable changes in market conditions."

"You will be getting good advice, and excellent coaching along with great templates to guide you, but these are meant to augment what you already know about your business," Vishnu Balgobin says.

"Take the guidance but remember that you are the one who knows your business best. Learn to marry those two things well and you will be successful."

Vishnu Balgobin also advises future G2T cohorts to take nothing for granted when they are pursuing their services exporting goal, especially when it comes to crossing all the T's and dotting all the I's.

"You don't want to find yourself in problems when you are already in the market, such as not meeting the regulatory requirements or having the right licensing to be able to operate there,"

Balgobin cautions. "Make sure you've done the research and have enough market intelligence, along with a comprehensive plan addressing all aspects of the business. Don't leap before you look; look a couple times well BEFORE you leap!"

Rachel McSween, Sales & Marketing Manager at Mount Irvine Bay Resort, and Brian Perry, Managing Director at Coded Arts, highlight the networking opportunities inherent in a programme like G2T, opportunities they say should not be overlooked or underestimated.

"Be alert to the networking opportunities you can tap into, both with the subject leads, and with your fellow participants," urges Brian Perry. "You may be able to learn a great deal about overcoming challenges to services exporting from your colleague firms, just as they may be able to learn from you."

"This is not just a one-shot deal," declares Rachel McSween. "You must take this programme very seriously. Give the G2T Programme 100% of your effort, because this can actually open many doors for you that will lead to the opening up of further opportunities."

She illustrates her point, thus: "In my cohort, one of the participants got a huge deal with a South American country, which was facilitated by that state's ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago. That was made possible because of the G2T Programme, so, you never know where this could lead..."



Making the **vision** a **reality**

Entrepreneurs by their very nature are big dreamers, and there can be no bigger dream than exporting your services (or goods) to the world and doing so profitably and competitively. Graduates from the G2T are no strangers to dreaming big, and willingly shared their visions for the future of their respective companies.

Business & Events Tourism Services



Rachel McSween, Sales & Marketing Manager at Mount Irvine Bay Resort, credits her G2T mentor for opening her company's eyes to the breadth of opportunities available to them in their services sub-sector.

"We will be the preferred service provider for romance, leisure, corporate and events tourism in the next five years, with a broader range of clientele at our property," McSween affirms.

The award-winning Mount Irvine Bay Resort is Tobago's most historic property and internationally recognized as Tobago's leading resort. Sitting on a 154 acre beach-front property, it features 80 rooms, suites and cottages, an 18-hole golf course, various dining establishments, and meeting facilities that can accommodate groups of up to 200 people.

Mount Irvine is a World Travel Awards Winner for Best Golf Hotel and Destination Weddings & Honeymoons Best Caribbean Destination 2017-2020.

Business and Professional Services



"By 2027-28, Servus will be at least a third bigger than it is now, with significant operations in maybe three or four other countries," predicts **Alvin Morton of Servus Limited**.

"We will be the standard by which other companies measure themselves, and the one looked to as a trusted advisor.

Servus Limited exists to do just that – serve the needs of companies when it comes to their buildings and related facilities.

The Servus team has extensive experience in managing a diverse range of business facilities – including those in the energy, financial, and airline sectors – and currently manages over 2 million square feet of prime commercial and residential properties across Trinidad and Tobago. Our services are all-encompassing enabling our clients to focus on their core business.

We are in the business of resilience, and as such, we will be sought after for what we do, making others resilient by extension."

He added: "We believe that we are here to serve others, and service to others is the best thing that Servus can and will be doing."



Nadia Clifford Maingot, BAC Customs Brokers, says the company will be a global brand and household name—the go-to company for anyone wishing to move cargo anywhere in the world.

"If anybody wants anything moved from any part of the world to another part of the world, they can just say BAC Customs Brokers can get this done for you, without you having to worry," she says.

"Basically, we'll be serving more customers and companies within the regional and international markets—that's where I see our company in the next five years."

B.A.C. Customs Brokers Company ("B.A.C.") was founded by the late Bury A. Clifford in November 1956 and is now owned and operated by his sons, Desmond Clifford and Earl Clifford. B.A.C. provides customs brokerage, shipping and logistics services to any type of business.

We offer solutions to enhance the efficiency of any organization's supply chain system, from coordination with suppliers to timely delivery of cargo.

All jobs are executed safely and in accordance with industry specific standards and procedures. B.A.C....Your Navigator in the World of Trade!

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Energy Services



My vision is that we will be the regional leader in the installation and fabric maintenance business, and I believe we can do it three years—five years is much too long,” declares **Vishnu Balgobin, General Manager at Epic Maintenance Ltd.**

“We will be moving aggressively to make this a reality because we’re already on a good trajectory, especially with our path refined by our exposure to the G2T Programme.”

Epic Maintenance Limited (Epicm) is part of the WFL group which began operations in 1979. WFL provides integrated mechanical services, contributing to the development of the industrial sector in Trinidad & Tobago and the Caribbean.

Epicm was borne out of an industry need for a reliable fabric maintenance services provider to support asset integrity and energy conservation.

Epicm provides end-to-end fabric maintenance solutions, including, inspection, blasting, painting, insulation (cryogenic, thermal and acoustic), refractory, fireproofing and access systems.

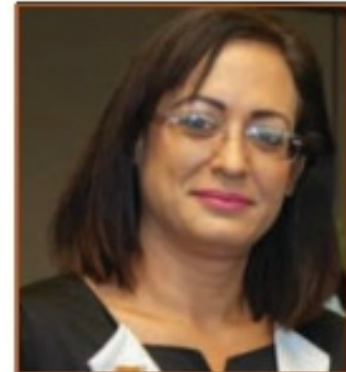


“I see us using online marketing and promotion more and more to engage with our clients. I also see us growing our export sales over the next few years by partnering with the right businesses and firms in our target markets,” **Damus Limited’s Vice-President for Business Development and Company Director, Stuart Mahabir**, shared.

“We are looking at Guyana and Suriname as key markets for us now and the immediate future, and have begun to explore opportunities there,” he added.

Damus boasts over 48 years’ experience providing high quality fabrication, construction, and mechanical maintenance services to the energy services sector in Trinidad and across the wider Caribbean.

This ISO 9001:2015, Safe To Work (STOW), and ASME NBBI ‘R’ Stamp certified company provides onshore and offshore energy sector corporations with solutions that include tank EPC, plant construction, fabric maintenance, subsea structures and pipelines, as well as specialized maintenance services such as ASME BPVC R-stamp pressure vessel repairs, bolt torquing, pressure testing, pump repairs, and vessel internals repairs.



“We’ve already begun to take steps to roll our export plan, and are exploring opportunities in Guyana and Suriname,” says **Ludmilla Tackoor-Addo, Managing Director at Non-Destructive Testers Ltd.**

She emphasizes that over the next few years they will focus on the wider Caribbean region but are not limiting their scope.

“There are opportunities in the US market for our type of service offerings,” she notes, “and we also will be pursuing those. The US wasn’t on our radar before, but because of our G2T exposure, we realise we can make a go of it there as well. It is possible.”

Strategically located in south Trinidad, Non Destructive Testers Limited (NDTL) has been supporting the country’s and wider region’s oil and gas sector for the past 30 years, offering a range of inspection, testing and heat treatment services to the petroleum, petrochemical and other energy related downstream industries.

We work closely with our clientele to provide the necessary advanced and conventional inspection support required to maintain the integrity of welded structures, components, and in-process piping.

Making the **vision** a **reality**

Entrepreneurs by their very nature are big dreamers, and there can be no bigger dream than exporting your services (or goods) to the world and doing so profitably and competitively. Graduates from the G2T are no strangers to dreaming big, and willingly shared their visions for the future of their respective companies.

Energy Services *(continued)*



Shamfa Phillips, Manager at Phillips General Contracting Ltd., has big dreams for her company. "In the next five years, we will be a large-scale organisation functioning under a hybrid workplace model, offering diverse services, and operating regionally and internationally," she affirms.

"We will be operating in Guyana and Suriname, as well as in the USA—specifically Florida, and New York. At present, we are looking into opportunities the Middle East and hope to be operating there as well, in five years' time," she added.

For the past 35 years, Phillips General Contracting Limited (PGCL) has been providing a range of electrical and instrumentation services to Trinidad and Tobago's energy sector including preventive maintenance solutions, testing & calibration, nitrogen gas purging, and training and development, the latter, in tandem with our sister company, PGCL Workforce Development Centre.

Our tagline highlights our continuous commitment to our customers over the years, "Quality Guaranteed Through Competence".



For **Denise Ali, CEO of Sadhna Petroleum Services Company Ltd.**, a more diversified portfolio of services is in her company's future.

"In five years' time, I see us establishing a longer term contract base in Suriname, even securing a lease on-land," she predicts. "For Guyana, I see us working with independent energy operators on land, once that country diversifies to include on-shore operations, apart from the off-shore energy activity, which is dominated by the transnational energy companies at present."

Ali added: "I also see us exploring opportunities within the region, in the area of renewable energy, and even outside of the energy sector itself, in terms of food security and smart farming."

We have over 20 years' experience in the local and regional energy sector providing 'cradle-to-grave' turnkey drilling services - from exploration, development, production, to the workover of wells, and including services such as location and access road construction, well design, and project management of drilling programmes. We also offer rig maintenance and system design for rig certification. We seek to optimize the value for our clients without compromising safety and industry standards.



In the vision shared by **Derek Walcott, Founder & Managing Director of North West Maritime Ltd.**, he hopes to expand his company's services and open branches in at least three other Caribbean countries. In addition, a couple of his company's future goals also are closely tied to the Caribbean integration movement.

"We want to establish Vocational Qualifications at the national level and the wider Caribbean. In fact, we have been working with the NTA (National Training Agency) on creating a certification and licensing regime for officers or top management personnel working in oil and gas services vessels," he revealed, noting that T&T's graduates should be able to receive their certification and accreditation right here, but have it recognised everywhere.

According to Walcott, it should be much easier for well certified and accredited maritime training graduates to work throughout the Caribbean. The intention is to partner with Government and the Caribbean authorities to establish a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) for maritime training graduates.

This way," Walcott says, "we will have the free movement of qualified people throughout the regional industry."

North West Maritime Ltd. (NWM) is a training and environmental response management services company accredited by the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Services Division of Trinidad & Tobago. With over 14 years' experience, we provide the best in practice marine and educational opportunities.



Making the **vision** a **reality** (continued)

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Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Services

codedARTS



Although Coded Arts has been using both hybrid and remote-working models, **Managing Director Brian Perry** is hoping to put down some physical, bricks and mortar roots in the not-too-distant future.

"Our objective in the next five years is to have our own facility, not just mere office space, with multiple divisions throughout the company tasked with various projects. For example, one division will deal with outsourcing for our respective services, while another department handles the international clients.

We also envision a department dedicated to working on our internal, cultural and fun, creative projects," he explained.

"We want to expand and grow our team and bring on more creatives who are excited to work with animators and programmers," Perry adds. "We have been losing too many of our creative sector people to other countries, and it is my hope that Coded Arts can give them a reason to stay here."

Coded Arts is a boutique outsourcing and game development studio based in the Caribbean. We offer services from asset outsourcing and consultation, virtual digital platforms, game development and consultation.



"It is our intention to become one of the main service providers for enterprise web development, serving large companies and conglomerates," declares **Andrew Proudfoot, Managing Director of Proudfoot Communications Ltd.**

Proudfoot Communications Ltd. has dedicated more than twenty four years to providing premium website design and development, online marketing, and web hosting services.

While that makes us one of the premier full-service digital marketing agencies in the Caribbean, what's more impressive is that our earliest clients are still with us today – a testament to our commitment to excellent customer service and quality work.



For **Monica Ramdial, Manager of HR & Corporate Services at Micro Software Designs Ltd.**, the sky is the limit with their newly developed web-based application. She notes that during the pandemic, the firm had clients who opted to use foreign service providers, only to return to MSD to receive the quality service they had enjoyed before.

"I not only see us regionally, but also in the North American market," she says. "We did our due diligence on working with ATM, Mastercard and other electronic financial entities, and it is just a matter of time before our software gains a foothold internationally, starting with the US market."

Micro Software Designs Limited (MSD) is a dynamic, world-class provider of fully integrated, real-time, on-line software solutions for the financial services sector. MSD operates in 11 countries in the Caribbean and Central American region with a core customer base of 110+ financial institutions.

These include credit unions, micro-finance lending agencies, building and loans associations and other financial services organizations. Incorporated in 1984, MSD has over three decades of

Making the **vision** a **reality** (continued)

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Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Services



Director at Online Technologies Ltd., Sandra Parmesar, sees her company's bespoke cloud-based software, Prophix, becoming the number one choice for firms needing to manage their corporate financial performance, in the markets they intend to target over the next five years.

"We expect to expand into the wider Caribbean, and Guyana, as well as North and South America," she notes.

"In fact, we already we are exploring the possibilities in Guyana. Prophix already has proven itself in the Energy, Banking, Media, and Corporate Support Services sectors in Trinidad and Tobago, and some of our Caribbean neighbours, and we are confident it will be taken up in other markets."

Corporate performance management software provides a platform via which a business can improve its financial health. With automation of processes such as Reporting, Budgeting, Forecasting, Dashboarding and Analysis, businesses can easily monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) relative to corporate objectives.

Our software and support services provide live data in graphs, dashboards, and personalized reports, allowing for easy, fast, and more accurate analysis of such information.



"I am hoping that in five years' time, we are at the stage where 80% of our revenue is from export earnings, and we are a net earner of foreign exchange," **Founder & CEO of Media InSite Ltd., Allison Demas,** revealed.

Demas also affirmed: "Media InSite Ltd. will be the global leader in monitoring Caribbean content. We will have clients from all over globe. We will be the number one agency for Caribbean media content."

Media InSite is a pioneering media monitoring agency serving business, government, and NGOs. Founded in 2011, we create new and innovative ways to monitor paid, earned, and owned media across the Caribbean. We track, measure and analyse media mentions of brands, their competitors, organisations, and industry topics. We also track and measure advertising placements and competitive advertising activity.

We offer the Caribbean's most comprehensive monitoring of offline, digital and social media content - unavailable from any other company - making us the global leader in Caribbean media intelligence.



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