

## April News Brief 2009

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### **New Member Profile**

Dan McGuinness and his partners opened ISW Studios on St. Thomas about 2 years ago. Dubbed the "Caribbean Recording Studio for Serious Artists," this 5500 square foot creative haven features 25 rooms offering full service studio capability combined with the most advanced audio and video recording and editing technology available. Some of the rooms are a percussion room (starring a Yamada C7 Grand Piano), audio suite, digital studio, Midi production rooms and more. Artists who've recently used the studio include Pro Style Band, Tony Romano and Grammy Award winning drummer and Virgin Islands native Dion Parsons. In addition to the studio, ISW can arrange for private jet and limousine transportation, exclusive villas, full meal service at the studio in the full-service kitchen or personal chef service at the villa. For information on ISW Studios visit [www.iswstudios.com](http://www.iswstudios.com), or call 714-7771. Check them out for your next recording project.

### **SIZZLING SAMPLER PROMOTION UNVEILED**

To capitalize on travelers looking for summer and fall deals, the Department of Tourism has introduced the newest destination promotion, Sizzlin' Sampler. The package includes a complimentary fourth night free, \$300 air credit, \$50 worth of certificates for attractions and a \$50 dining certificate. In addition, the DOT has taken steps to encourage retail spending by offering a coupon booklet valued over \$500 to those who book the offer. Hotels participating in the Sizzlin' Sampler include: The Westin St. John; The Buccaneer, Carambola Beach Resort & Spa, Chenay Bay Beach Resort, Club St. Croix, Colony Cove, Company House Hotel, Divi Carina Bay Beach Resort, Frederiksted Hotel, Hibiscus Beach Resort, Holger Danske Hotel, Hotel Caravelle, King Christian Hotel and Sand Castle on the Beach on St. Croix; Anchorage Beach Resort, Best Western Carib Beach, Best Western Emerald Beach; Bolongo Bay Beach Resort, Crystal Cove, Marriott Frenchman's Reef, Pavilions and Pools, Point Pleasant Resort, The Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas, Sapphire Beach Resort, Sapphire Village, Secret Harbour Beach Resort, Windward Passage Hotel and Wyndham Sugar Bay Resort & Spa on St. Thomas. The Sizzlin' Sampler applies to new bookings only. Reservations for this promotion can be made through a number of tour operators, including Apple Vacations, BookIt.com, Certified Vacations Group, Cheap-Caribbean, Classic Vacations, Costco Travel, Enjoy Vacations, Expedia Inc., Island Resort Tours, Libgo Travel, The Mark Travel Corporation, MLT Vacations, Orbitz Worldwide, Pleasant Holidays, Total Vacations, Travel Impressions, Travelocity, US Airways Vacations and Vacation Express. Less than a week after the offer hit the marketplace, more than 300 packages were sold. The offer is valid for bookings March 31-October 15, for travel April 15-October 31, 2009. Hopefully this is a sign of a profitable summer for members.



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## CMI CORNER

**-Chicago Sales Blitz**—This sales mission is scheduled for April 20-22, 2009. In addition to visits to top travel agencies, trainings for Apple Vacation and Gogo reservations agents are scheduled. Participants will also take part in a mini-trade show and travel agent reception. Contact DOT's Sales Manager Lo'an Sewer ([lsewer@usvitourism.vi](mailto:lsewer@usvitourism.vi)) or Andy Wartenberg ([awartenberg@usvitourism.vi](mailto:awartenberg@usvitourism.vi)) for additional details.

-Make it a point to attend the bi-monthly **"Meet the Members"** Reception. Invite non-members to attend to network and learn about the benefits of membership.

**-Membership Card**—It's one of our newest programs and it's growing every week. Members are offering considerable discounts on savings on a variety of services, room rates, etc. The card can serve as a great reward for your employees. To view the existing offers visit our web site at [www.usvihta.com](http://www.usvihta.com). Contact Nicole Friday to add an offer to the program.

-The HTA joined the Department of Tourism at the recent **ITB trade show** in Berlin, Germany. Over a 175,000 visitors attended the show. Common questions were "where are you located, how do I get to you, what can I do there, and are you American? A more detailed recap will be forthcoming.

## HTA Staff Profile—Canika George John



If you want to know anything about the Hotel & Tourism Association, Canika George John is your "go to" person. Now in her 9th year at the association, Canika began her career as an intern. But her raw talent led her to positions as an administrative assistant,

executive assistant, marketing manager, office manager, and her current one as Manager of Events, STT/STJ Committees and general operations. When the association is in the midst of a major conference or event, she counts on her supportive husband Jermaine to take the lead on parenting their three young children. In her spare time (and with kids in tow), she is the chairperson of the VI Carnival Queen and Prince & Princess Competitions. Canika is currently completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. She lives by the motto: **Success is never final.** Canika is proof that with a supportive village, you can successfully juggle a career and family life.

## Tax Tips from the Bureau

With the tax filing deadline right around the corner, the Bureau of Internal Revenue is sharing some important preparing tips for filers.

1. Remember to sign your return
2. Make sure all addresses match
3. Include a daytime phone number
4. Checks should be made payable to the Bureau of Internal Revenue and include the tax year and tax ID number
5. If unable to file by April 15, complete Form 4868, Application for Automatic Extension to File Income Tax Return. It is best to make some kind of payment to reduce interest and penalties that will accrue.
6. If unable to pay taxes owed, contact the Bureau to set up a payment plan
7. Taxpayers who are eligible for, but did not receive, the Economic Stimulus Check in 2008 are entitled to claim the Recovery Rebate on their return.

## SAVE THE DATE

April 15	"Meet the Members" Reception—Skyride to Paradise Point
June 15-19	16th Annual Destination Symposium St. Thomas & St. Croix
June 15-July 24	Summer Employment Program
September	Travel Agent Month
Sept. 29-Oct. 2	Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association Small Hotels Retreat—St. Thomas, Frenchman's Reef Marriott, <a href="http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com">www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com</a>
November 21	Tommy Star Awards & Gala

