



For Immediate Release

Source: Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association

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Jerry Inzerillo (second from left) with CHTA's Chief Marketing Officer Matt Cooper, First Vice President Stuart Bowe, Chief Operations Officer Vanessa Ledesma, and Chief Executive Officer Frank Comito.

TRAVEL LEADER CALLS FOR URGENT INVESTMENT IN CARIBBEAN HUMAN RESOURCES

PUERTO RICO (October 1, 2016) - Gerard "Jerry" Inzerillo, CEO of Forbes Travel Guide, known for his innovations and relationships in the tourism, hospitality, and entertainment communities, called for an urgent investment in the next generation of Caribbean travel and tourism leaders to elevate service standards within the region.

"We have the soul to do it - this region has soul and that is a bankable commodity, more than the beautiful turquoise waters," Inzerillo told a packed audience at the opening of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association's (CHTA) Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF) in Puerto Rico last night.

"Importing (talent) is not an excuse," he contended, underscoring the importance of training local workers. "It is (our) obligation to develop our own people...and talent," said the chief executive who started his career as a busboy.

Inzerillo, who celebrates 50 years in the industry next year, asserted tourism, now 10 percent of global GDP, is "the single, great ambassador of humanity in the world because it celebrates all the stuff that's in our soul."

"It is not growing incrementally, it is exploding...we are in the right place at the right time. What is going to happen in travel in the next five years is breathtaking," he remarked, highlighting trends such as multi-generational family travel, women traveling in groups and millennial travel.

However, he lamented it has never been more difficult to run a tourism entity, citing low margins, increased competition, the development of human resources, and a diversity of other challenges.



A section of the audience at the opening of CHIEF.

Inzerillo, who was instrumental in the success of some of the world's most famous hospitality brands such as Atlantis, One&Only Resorts and Ian Schrager Hotels, and held leadership roles with Four Seasons and Hilton Hotels & Resorts, underscored the importance of guest satisfaction. He encouraged attendees to wow them with gracious and anticipatory hospitality service: "Sophisticated travelers will reward you for that, (others) will feel it."

Inzerillo was president of Kerzner Entertainment Group, where he raised the visibility of the company and the profile of its properties in the Bahamas, Dubai, the Indian Ocean, Mexico, Morocco, Africa, Mauritius and Maldives. Inzerillo oversaw the production and launch of several legendary properties, including the opening of the billion-dollar Phase III of Atlantis in the Bahamas in May 2007 and the \$1.5 billion Atlantis-Dubai on Palm Island in 2008, which received worldwide media coverage and was featured on the cover of Newsweek. He also served as chief operating officer of Sun City, the unique South African resort complex built by Sol Kerzner.

About CHIEF

CHIEF incorporates a variety of educational tracks led by experts from many travel, tourism and hospitality industry segments, and features round table panels with one-on-one discussions on Environmental Sustainability, Operations, Sales and Marketing, and Technology. CHIEF is staged by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) in conjunction with host sponsors El Conquistador, A Waldorf Astoria Resort, Interval International and JetBlue Getaways; strategic partners MasterCard and Tambourine; platinum sponsors Cable and Wireless and Travelzoo; and gold sponsors Airbnb, Bonnier Corporation, CaribbeanJobs.com, Choice Hotels International, Clear Channel Airports Division, Delta Air Lines, Johnson Controls, JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery, KMPG, Landmark Vineyards, Lutron Electronics, OBM International, Oracle Hospitality, Rainmaker, SiteMinder, Sobel Westex, Sojern, STR, TravAlliance Media, TravelClick, Tropical Shipping, TSA Solutions, and Univar Environmental Sciences. For additional information about CHIEF, visit www.chtachief.com or call +1 305 443-3040.

About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean's leading association representing tourism interests for national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 50 years, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working together with 1,000 hotel and allied members and 32 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean's future and helping members to grow their business. Whether navigating new worlds like social media, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, data and intelligence or looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on issues that matter most.

For further information, visit www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.

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