

Building a Culture of Preparedness – When Seconds Count

Theme: *“Without Resilience, One Big Wave
Can Change Everything”*

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Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association

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● 2026 DISASTER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP SERIES
A Collaboration Between Tropical Shipping and Local and Regional Partners

Private Sector Readiness and Response





Private Sector Readiness and Response Support and Insights from the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association



What We'll Cover....

- **Tourism: A Resiliency Barometer for Recovery...**
 - Tourism's Importance
 - Recovery Issues
 - Recovery Timelines
- **Readiness and Response Roles of the Private Sector**
 - Locally
 - Regionally
- **Pathways to Resilience**
- **Available Resources**



Private Sector Readiness and Response
Support and Insights from the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association



The Virgin Islands and Caribbean Were ‘Shook-Up’ By an Unprecedented Barrage of Major Hurricanes Between 1989 and 1999. We Remember but Would Like to Forget...

- Hugo
- Marilyn
- Luis
- Hortense
- Lenny
- Floyd
- And many more....



Their Intensity and Our Response and Lack of Readiness Became Wake-Up Calls for Readiness and Response



Private Sector Readiness and Response

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US VIRGIN ISLANDS KEY DATA

 Total Travel & Tourism GDP Contribution			 Total Travel & Tourism Jobs Contribution		
2019	54.2% (of Total Economy) USD 2.6 BN		2019	28.4 (000s) =70.0% (Share of Total Jobs)	
2024	59.7% USD 3.1 BN	Annual Change: 4.5% (15.6% vs 2019) Economy Change = 2.5%	2024	34.4 (000s) =83.3%	Annual Change: 4.5% (21.4% vs 2019)
2025 (F)	59.7% USD 3.1 BN	Annual Change: 2.7% (18.7% vs 2019)	2025 (F)	35.9 (000s) =85.4%	Annual Change: 4.3% (26.6% vs 2019)
2035 (F)	62.8% USD 3.7 BN	CAGR (2025 - 2035): 1.7% Economy CAGR (2025 - 2035): 1.2%	2035 (F)	44.8 (000s) =97.8%	New Jobs (2025 - 2035): 8.9 (000s)



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The Pervasive Impact of Tourism....It Touches Everyone.....





WTTC CONDUCTED SPECIAL CARIBBEAN TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY IN 2022

Key Findings...

- Region's Tourism Recovery Continues to Outpace Most of the World
- Recovery Pace Tied to Country and Company Readiness and Response
- Potential for Greater Economic Contribution by 2032
 - 4.1% Annual Caribbean GDP Growth vs. 2.2% - 1.34 million new jobs (710,000 more with higher growth forecast)

What If Factors....

Potential for GDP and employment protection and growth tied to meeting local and regional challenges

- Address air connectivity and high cost of air travel
- Greater investments in digital solutions, infrastructure and human capital
- Better crisis preparedness and response
- Focus on environmental protection
- Cost and Value Competitiveness
- Collaboration and coordination region-wide by governments and industry

Crisis Recovery Issues Cited by 601 Small to Medium Size Tourism Businesses in 2021 CHTA/OAS Study

1. Lack of Critical Business Tools to Support Continuity:

- Low Levels of Business Continuity Plan
- Limited Use of Crisis Management Plans
- Liability Insurance Not Fully in Place (*"Expensive necessity that requires innovation and personal approaches to get around it"*)

2. Marketing/PR Limitations:

- Limited Marketing/Communication Ability to Inform Market of Reopened Status

3. Low Business Digitization:

- Weak levels of digitization and technology adoption
- Low ability levels to take payments digitally

4. Certification of Compliance

- Limited Guidelines for Reopening with lack of technical support
- Limited or no technical support and advice on accessing local or regional compliance certification or recognition stamp (e.g. CARPHA, TTTC)

STEs with the Following Business Tools Fully in Place

Sub-Sector Category	Business Continuity Plan	Crisis Mgt Strategy	Liability Insurance
Accommodation	33%	33%	32%
Food & Beverage	19%	17%	17%
Transportation	21%	10%	20%
Recreation/Entertainment	33%	32%	31%
Tourism Services	38%	38%	38%

STEs With the Following Capabilities

Type of STE	Operation Digitized	Can Take Payments Digitally
Accommodation	35%	35%
Food and Beverage	32%	32%
Transportation	19%	19%
Recreation/Entertainment	33%	31%
Tourism Services	46%	45%



Private Sector Readiness and Response

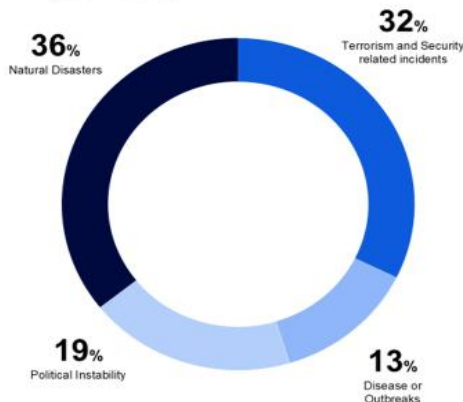
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Recovery Time Is Directly Tied to Readiness

Bouncing Back from Crisis – Tourism Industry Improves Capacity....

90 Crises

(2001-2018)



Key Findings



- Crises are more frequent but diminishingly disruptive
- Recovery duration has decreased significantly from 26 months in 2001 to 10 months in 2018

Average Recovery Times



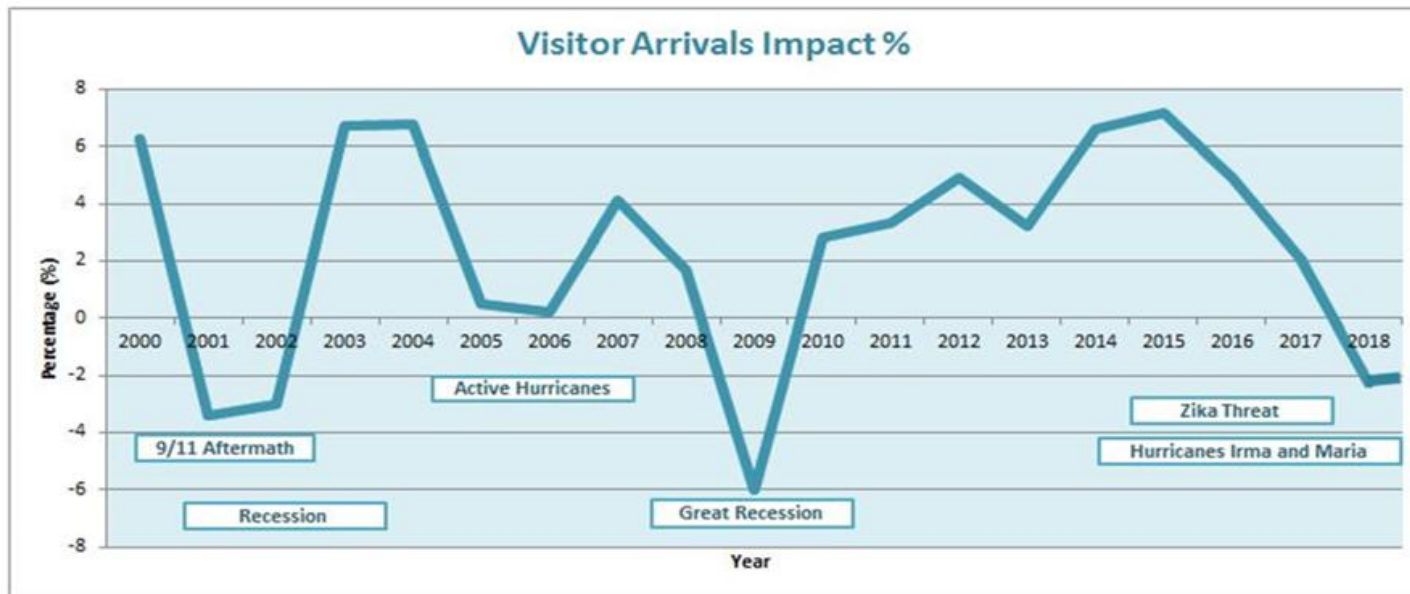
Minimum Recovery Times





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Caribbean Tourism Industry's Recovery Timeline from Crisis



Note: The Caribbean Tourism Industry Recovered from the Recent Pandemic Faster Than Any Other Region in the World



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The Caribbean Contagion Effect....We're All in this Together....

Hurricane Beryl's Impact on Air Travel Demand

Significant short-term drop in
Caribbean bookings



Tickets issued for international arrivals to the Caribbean,
with any future travel dates; year-on-year variation

Most impacted Caribbean Destinations	Tickets between 16 -29 June	Tickets between 30 June - 23 July
Jamaica	+5%	-24%
Cuba	-18%	-17%
Grenada	+26%	-14%
Bahamas	+5%	-7%
Cayman Islands	+11%	-7%
Curaçao	-9%	-6%
Guadeloupe	+8%	-5%
Barbados	+6%	-4%
Martinique	+8%	-1%
Dominican Republic	+7%	+3%
Caribbean	+9%	-2%

Source: ForwardKeys Actual Air Tickets

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Reframing Resilience

Traditional Focus – Readiness Plan Addressed:

- Protecting Physical infrastructure
- Employee Readiness
- Protecting Guests/Customers
- Ensuring Adequate Insurance
- Communication Systems in Place
- Data Protection
- Evacuation & disaster response

New Reality – Enhancing Readiness

- Digital and AI infrastructure is now just as critical as physical infrastructure
- Rapid Response and Communications Critical
- Damage Control Essential
- Redundancies Key – Energy, Communications
- Monitoring and Managing Mis-Information
- Collaboration Takes on Added Importance

Modern Resilience = Physical + Digital + Human

AI is part of this, but resilience requires a full digital ecosystem



Readiness and Response Roles – A Shared Responsibility



Government: *Infrastructure, Policy, Regulation, Coordination, Health and Safety, Communication, Information Sharing, Recovery Support*

Private Sector: *Business Continuity, Guest/Customer Relations, Coordination, Communication, Information Sharing, Recovery Support*

Local and Regional Organizations/Institutions: *Resources, Training. Advocacy, Information Gathering and Sharing, Recovery Support*



Before a Crisis: Preparedness

Annually....

- ✓ Plan Early – Business Continuity Plan
- ✓ Draw on Planning Resources
- ✓ Designate Leaders/Point Persons
- ✓ Ensure Redundancies are in Place – electricity, water, communications
- ✓ Update and Protect Database – primary, secondary contacts – staff, key suppliers and services, key govt contacts, customer database
- ✓ Conduct Vulnerability Assessment including maintenance and retrofitting requirements
- ✓ Secure and Update Emergency supplies
- ✓ Vital Records Protection
- ✓ Security Measures in Place
- ✓ Information Source Updated
- ✓ Conduct Staff Training
- ✓ Review and Update Insurance Coverage

Our Rapidly Changing Environment..... **Embrace Digital Tools and AI to Better Enable Readiness and Response:**

- ✓ Demand forecasting & exposure analysis
- ✓ Guest/Customer databases management
- ✓ Cloud backups of critical data
- ✓ Sourcing for supplies, equipment, etc.
- ✓ Assessing losses
- ✓ Reviewing insurance policy against losses
- ✓ Supporting communications with employees, guests/customers, suppliers, public, etc.
- ✓ Conducting scenario planning & risk modeling
- ✓ ???



During a Crisis: Response

Digital Capabilities:

- Mass messaging (SMS, WhatsApp, email)
- Cloud PMS & remote access systems
- Real-time guest tracking
- Coordination across properties
- AI chatbots handling guest/customer queries



Connectivity Resilience

Satellite internet (e.g., Starlink) as backup when:

- Fiber networks fail
- Cell towers are down
- Local telecoms disrupted

Digital connectivity = operational lifeline during a disaster



After a Crisis: Recovery



Digital + AI Enable:

Dynamic Pricing

Demand stimulation

Targeted Marketing

Campaign optimization

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Driven

Client reactivation

Reputation Mgmt

Online presence

Market Visibility

Global reach

 Digital maturity = faster revenue recovery



Airline Disruption & Travel Flow Resilience



Post-Disaster Reality:

- Flight cancellations & rerouting
- Stranded passengers
- Uneven arrival patterns
- Operational pressure on hotels



Digital + AI Solutions:

- Real-time flight tracking integration
- Automated arrival notifications
- Communication with delayed travelers
- Re-optimized transfers & logistics
- Staffing adjustments based on arrivals
- Pricing/inventory tied to airlift capacity

"When airlift is disrupted, digital intelligence becomes our control tower."



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Digital = Business Continuity Infrastructure

Reframe digital systems as essential business continuity infrastructure:



**Cloud-Based
PMS**



Digital Backups



**Remote
Reservations**



**Cashless
Systems**



Online Payments



**Central Decision-
Making**

Essential for operational continuity during and after crises



AI: Accelerator of Resilience

From CHTA's AI Transformation Guide (V2)

Caribbean Use Cases:

- AI guest platforms (e.g., Jade Mountain)
- Multilingual AI chatbots
- AI-driven revenue management
- Predictive maintenance
- AI marketing optimization

Already in place across the region

Core Principle:

Digital = Foundation



AI = Accelerator



Energy Resilience & Grid Independence



Key Vulnerability: Energy Supply

AI + digital energy systems enable:

- Intelligent energy management
- Optimized consumption
- Smart load prioritization during outages
- Solar + battery storage integration
- AI-based grid/generator/battery switching



Benefits:

- ✓ Reduced reliance on national grid
- ✓ Lower cost volatility
- ✓ Operational continuity during outages
- ✓ Sustainability improvements

"Energy resilience is now a competitive advantage"

Energy resilience enables hotels to operate independently during disruptions



Workforce Resilience



Caribbean Labor Realities:

- High staff turnover
- Seasonal workforce
- Post-disaster staff disruption

Challenges that require resilient systems

Digital + AI Support:

- Faster onboarding & training
- Digital learning platforms
- Staff decision-support tools
- Multilingual service tools

AI strengthens the workforce, not replaces it

Empowering your team with digital tools creates a more resilient organization



Community & Employee Resilience

After disasters, employees and communities are directly affected:

- Housing damage
- Transport disruption
- Financial strain

Digital Tools Support:

- Staff communication & welfare check-ins
- Digital staff registries
- Emergency scheduling & redeployment
- Mobile payroll & financial support
- Coordination of relief assistance

AI Can Support:

- Workforce availability forecasting
- Optimal staff redeployment
- Data-driven HR decisions

"Resilience is not just about systems — it is about people."



Strengthening Local Economic Linkages



Digital platforms enable stronger linkages to local economy:



Digital Payments
to local vendors



Online Marketplaces
for local suppliers



AI Recommendations
for local experiences

Recommendations for:

- Local tours
- Restaurants
- Artisans
- Cultural experiences
- Alternative Accommodations if needed



Tourism recovery benefits entire community



Responsible & Inclusive Digital Transformation

Data Privacy & Cybersecurity

Protect guest and business data

Responsible AI Use

Bias mitigation & transparency

SME Inclusion

Access for small businesses

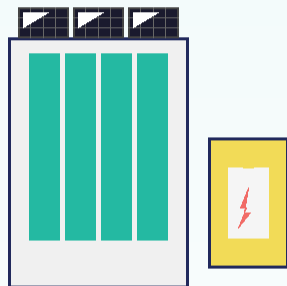
Equitable Access

Digital tools for all



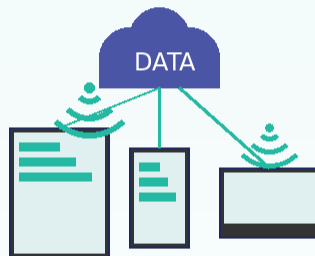
Resilience must be inclusive and accessible to all

Caribbean Tourism: Leading the Future



RESILIENT

Energy Independence
Physical + Digital



DIGITAL

Cloud Infrastructure
Connected Systems



PEOPLE

Community Resilience
Workforce Strength

Building Together • Adapting Faster • Leading Globally

CHTA Member Resource: Crisis Communications Guide



Some of the guide components include:

- Crisis management checklist
- Social media policy
- Guidelines to communicate with media
- Communication templates
- Cancellation guidelines
- Points of contact





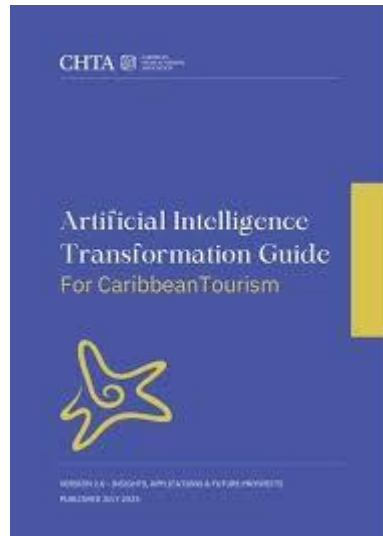
Crisis Communications Toolkit

Developed in 2022 from lessons learned from the pandemic, the Toolkit Includes:

- **Regional Tools of the Tourism and Health Program (THP)**, which offers information on the nine CARPHA-developed regional THP tools
- **Promotional Tools and Resources** to engage travelers, and health and tourism partners
- **Media Relations materials**, including press release, media advisory and media pitch examples
- **Social Media Guide** to support consumer and personal handles
- Resources such as correspondence **templates** that can be used to establish and sustain the Tourism and Health Program in each country



New Support Resources for the Caribbean Tourism Industry CHTA AI Guides...



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CHTA Resources (Select to link to resources)

- [Hurricane Preparedness Manual](#)
- [Hurricane Cancellation Guidelines](#)
- [Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association \(CHTA\) – Crisis Communications Guide](#)
- [Business Continuity Planning](#)
- [Insurance Readiness Guide](#)
- [Insurance Claim /Loss Help – Member Benefit Program with Allied Member Smith Orloff & Associates](#)



Thank You!



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