



# Trade & Investment Convention 2008

April 30<sup>th</sup> - May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 • Centre of Excellence • Macoya • Trinidad

# Final Report



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# Trade & Investment Convention 2008 Report

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ninth annual Trade and Investment Convention (TIC), held from April 30-May 3, 2008 at the Centre of Excellence, Macoya, Trinidad, was a resounding success, setting new records for the number of exhibitors and buyers, and generating more positive feedback from attendees and higher levels of reporting from the news media than ever before.

TIC 2008 was hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association, and sponsored by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT), and RBTT Bank Limited. This year saw additional partnerships with Fedex Express (The Best of TIC Booth Awards) and regional television network, Caribvision, and e TecK and the Ministry of Public Administration ("Business Centre & Investment Portal").

Some 260 exhibitors showcased goods and services on the multi-sectoral tradeshow floor (2007: 237). Approximately 61% of TIC 2008 exhibitors were local, and 39% were overseas exhibitors from 21 countries.

TIC 2008's special drive to increase the number of foreign buyers attending the convention met with significant success: The number of overseas buyers and distributors increased by 177%, to 256 (up from 144 in 2007), and buyers arrived from 35 countries, more than every before.

TIC's post-Convention Exhibitor Survey indicates a high level of satisfaction with the Convention management, infrastructure and marketing, and particularly, with the quality of buyer attendance. While exhibitors are reluctant to disclose TIC-related sales for reasons of competitive confidentiality, two companies confirmed TIC sales of US\$300,000 each, while another closed a TT\$250,000 sale on the floor. The majority of survey respondents said 100% of the sales leads generated at TIC were new prospects. 80% of the respondents indicate that they intend to exhibit in 2009.

*Please refer to the Full Report for details and statistical Analysis*

# TRADE & INVESTMENT CONVENTION 2008

## *Final Report*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The ninth annual Trade and Investment Convention (TIC) was held from April 30-May 3, 2008 at the Centre of Excellence, Macoya, Trinidad.

TIC 2008 ranks as our most successful Convention to date. In addition to setting new records for the number of exhibitors and buyers participating, TIC 2008 generated more positive feedback from attendees and higher levels of reporting from the news media than ever before.

The TIC Business Education Programme was well attended, and played an important role in attracting decision-makers to the event.

As we approach our tenth anniversary, TIC has cemented its place as the Caribbean's most important Business-to-business (B2b) event, bringing together manufacturers, service providers, buyers and distributors, financial institutions, investors, and regulatory agencies in a successful initiative to expand intra- and extra-regional trade.

## 2. SPONSORS

TIC is the flagship inward trade mission of the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association, the TTMA, and has traditionally been sponsored by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), and RBTT Bank Limited. In 2008, we were joined by a new sponsor, Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT).

Sponsor presence is fully integrated into all TIC advertising and promotions. Their logos and links are featured on TIC's website: [www.tic-tt.com](http://www.tic-tt.com), and on all TIC advertising, support materials and signage (sponsors in turn feature a TIC link on their home pages).

The Formal Opening Ceremony and Tour of the TIC Tradeshow, which is attended by 300-plus national and regional decision-makers and opinion leaders, offers sponsors a powerful forum: they speak at the event (on a related theme of their choosing), attend the ribbon-cutting, and tour the floor with the Prime Minister, dignitaries and the news media.

**Sponsor Activities:** All lead sponsors sit on the TIC Organising Committee and participate fully in regular meetings that determine the course of the event. New sponsor TSTT notes: "This gave us a voice and the chance to make meaningful input into the staging of the event".

Sponsors have traditionally been very active participants in making the TIC a success. For example, sponsors issue news releases and place advertisements before, during and after TIC to highlight their activities at the Convention.

But in 2008, sponsors took their participation to a new level, embarking on a range of new value-added initiatives for TIC 2008. In addition to their financial support, the presence of MTI, TSTT and RBTT Bank Limited created significant synergies at the Convention. Their respective business offerings came together at the TIC nexus in a unique manner that facilitated the strengthening of participants' business activities.

**The Ministry of Trade and Industry's** use of a full range of internal and external communications channels to encourage attendance at TIC 2008 was extremely effective. The Ministry facilitated increased awareness of the event through liaison with Government Information Services (GIS), which repeatedly aired a special TIC 2008 documentary on all free-to-air television stations. This generated high levels of interest and increased attendance. The Ministry also played a key role in TIC's expanded effort to increase the number of overseas buyers attending the Convention, providing contact information for potential foreign buyers, particularly with regard to the Seven Sectors targeted for development by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.



**RBTT Bank Limited** enhanced its presence on the TIC floor. The RBTT booth was staffed by a high-level team, which offered business participants (visitors and exhibitors alike) export, trade and financing advice. RBTT Bank also introduced a new communications initiative through its credit card booklet inviting its customers to attend TIC. This was mailed out to all credit card customers ahead of the Convention and stimulated greater attendance, particularly on our business-to-consumer (b2c) day. RBTT Bank also aired an advertisement for the Trade and Investment Convention at specially selected branches on its internal advertising screens.

**Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago** also sent special TIC invitations to key corporate customers, and to raise awareness and publicly demonstrate its participation and commitment, displayed TIC signs at public offices and aired a TIC mini-documentary on in-house advertising screens. On the tradeshow floor TSTT made an immense contribution, developing and delivering sophisticated and world-class WIFI for the COE, which delighted participants. The company's booth was a lesson in maximising tradeshow opportunities: From an autograph session with cricket star Brian Lara (on a lower traffic day to increase attendance), to in-booth fashion shows, TSTT's booth was a hotbed of activity and set a new standard for all participants. TSTT also made an invaluable contribution to the entertainment line-up at the TIC Trinidad and Tobago.

### 3. MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

TIC's 2008 extensive marketing campaign made use of a variety of targeted communications channels. Our full-colour, bound, brochure and four-page flyer were distributed to key targets both in hard copy and via the Internet in PDF format. The TIC Secretariat initiated a regular schedule of e-bulletins to exhibitors, buyers and opinion leaders advising of new developments, special promotions and upcoming events.

**Press:** At the core of the marketing campaign was a phased Press Campaign of full page advertisements restricted largely to the in the Business Press, which:

- [1] Encouraged Exhibitor Participation
- [2] Encouraged Buyer Participation
- [3] Profiled Exhibitors

In addition, TIC introduced a weekly strip ad on the business page of the Trinidad Guardian main paper. A separate press campaign was undertaken to encourage participation in TIC Business Education Keynote Sessions.

The campaign proved successful not only in raising awareness and stimulating participation, but in pre-qualifying attendees.

**Television & In Flight Programming:** TIC's 3-minute documentary/advertorial remains one of our most successful marketing tools. It was aired for two-cycles (6 months) as part of Caribbean Airlines' in-flight programme on all of the airline routes and generated significant awareness of the Convention. This year, for the first time, through our partnership the Ministry of Trade & Industry, the documentary was also aired on all local television stations in time-slots reserved for Government programming.

A 30 second television advertisement was also created and aired as part of our package with CNC Channel 3 (on cable and free-to-air) during news and business programmes. Special contra packages were negotiated with Gayelle Television and CNMG and both the documentary and 30-second ad aired on these stations.

**Regional Television:** In 2008, TIC forged a new partnership with the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC). CMC is the only television network to serve the entire Caribbean region, and its CaribVision news programme airs in every CARICOM territory. CMC carried a package worth US\$75,000 in advertising for TIC, which included daily airing of the 30 second TIC ad for the 6 months preceding the conventions, and two airings of the documentary.

**Radio:** TIC's radio advertising was restricted to the two stations – 97 FM and 103 FM – identified as having the highest listenership amongst the business community. The campaign ran in two phases [1] Exhibitor Sales and [2] Buyer Awareness. Each phase was executed via 5 different 30-second advertisements, one for each day of the week.

**Media Relations:** TIC has an excellent relationship with the local business press. Media-related initiatives for 2008 included a formal launch to the news media at the Marriot Conference Centre, a regular schedule of press releases, which enjoyed a 98% publication rate.

Our Formal Opening and Tour of the Convention was attended by every major press, radio and television institutions in Trinidad and Tobago and carried live on CNMG television/radio.

The TIC team provided visiting reporters with guided tours of the Convention, and rendered assistance as required to the two local stations which had taken booths at TIC - Gayelle (TV) and CNMG (Radio/TV). CNMG carried hourly reports from the TIC tradeshow floor on Radio 91.9 FM and nightly updates, Gayelle streamed the Convention live on its website and aired nightly reports on specific exhibitors. The year also saw the introduction of a new Regional Media Centre in partnership with CaribVision (CMC).

Visiting and on-site media generated scores of features, both on the Convention and on specific exhibitors, which featured in the press, and on television and radio throughout the week of, and the week following the Convention.

#### 4. EXHIBITORS

TIC has maintained a pattern of continuous expansion of booth sales over the past four years.

**Table 1: TIC Booth Sales**

Year	Number of Exhibitors	Booths Sold
2005	118	102
2006	247	205
2007	215	237
2008	159	260

TIC 2008 also saw the introduction of three booth structure options: small, medium and large booths, on a tradeshow floor comprised of 288 booths.

**Table 2: Booths by Category**

Total Booths	288
Small (6ft x 6ft)	24
Medium (10ft x 10ft)	254
Large (6ft x 18ft)	10

**Table 3: Booth Sales by Category**

Total Booths Booked	# of booths booked	% of booths booked
Total Booths Booked	260	90%
Small Booth	24	100%
Medium Booth	226	89%
Large Booth	10	100%

All 288 TIC booths were occupied: 260 booths by paid exhibitors, 4 booths allocated for private one-on-one meeting rooms, and, 24 booths dedicated to the new “TIC Business Centre & Investment Portal” sponsored jointly by e TecK, the Ministry of Public Administration and the TTMA.

### Exhibitor Analysis

Of the 260 Exhibitor booths at TIC 2008, 81% were sold to local exhibitors and 19% to foreign exhibitors (i.e. of 159 exhibitor registrations, 125 were local companies and 34 foreign). Some booths were occupied by more than one company – a frequent occurrence where foreign trade associations and embassies facilitated country exhibits. The total number of exhibiting companies at TIC 2008 was 209.

51% of exhibitors had previously participated at TIC (our most frequent return participant has exhibited nine times). The remaining 49% were all first time exhibitors.

In the past TIC has aimed to maintain a 60:40 ratio of local to foreign exhibitors. In the past two years our attendance has been consistent at 67% local, 33% foreign. This year 128 companies (61%) of our exhibitors were local, and 81 companies (39%) were foreign.

**Table 4: Local vs. Foreign Exhibitors at TIC 2008**

<b>Total Exhibiting Companies</b>	<b># of booths booked</b>	<b>% of booths booked</b>
Total # Exhibitors	<b>209</b>	
Local Exhibitors	<b>128</b>	<b>61%</b>
Foreign Exhibitors	<b>81</b>	<b>39%</b>

### Local Exhibitors

Trinidad & Tobago had a significant presence at TIC once again, with 128 local exhibitors in 210 booths representing 61% of the exhibiting companies.

**New Participants:** It is noteworthy that six of the “Seven Sectors Earmarked for Development” by the GOTT, which the Ministry of Trade and Industry is assisting in business development, expansion and job creation were represented at TIC for the first time:

- Trinidad & Tobago Film Company
- Trinidad & Tobago Entertainment Company
- Yachting Steering Committee
- Merchant Marine Industry Development Committee
- Printing & Packaging Industry Council
- Food and Beverage Industry Development Committee

Several new exhibitors indicated that they exhibited at TIC to foster awareness of their products and their companies and for corporate positioning purposes, e.g.: Pricemart, Paramount Transport & Trading Company, Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd, Creation Advertising & Contracting Services, Netix Supplies & Services, IBG Phonics, Ecliffe Elie, Venture Capital Incentive Programme and MSM Art Studio.

**Return Participants:** 58% of TIC 2008 local exhibitors had participated in previous Conventions. Several return exhibitors outdid themselves in terms of the size and standard of their exhibits they showcased. For example, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, exhibiting with Petrotrin and the National Gas Company, created a 25 booth Energy Pavilion; Neal & Massy Automotive Limited increased its presence from 10 booths in 2007 to an entire block of 16 booths this year.

Many veteran exhibitors who have supported TIC for more than five years were back once again, including VenCaribbean Limited (which has exhibited at TIC since the Convention's inception), Sundelight Limited, Genethics Pharmaceuticals and The House of Paper Products.

**Table 5: Return vs. New Local Exhibitors at TIC 2008**

<b>Local Past &amp; New Exhibitors</b>	<b># of booths booked</b>	<b>% of booths booked</b>	<b># of exhibitors booked</b>	<b>% of exhibitors booked</b>
Local Exhibitors	<b>210</b>		<b>128</b>	
Past Exhibitors	159	76%	74	58%
New Exhibitors	51	24%	51	40%

### **Foreign Exhibitors**

TIC 2008 proved to be a truly international convention, welcoming participants from 21 countries with 81 foreign participants exhibiting in 50 booths. Longstanding participants, including Austria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Curaçao, and the Netherlands, returned; Barbados, Jamaica, Grenada, Canada, Guadeloupe, Thailand and the USA exhibited for the second year running; and for the first time, we opened our doors to El Salvador, the UK, St. Kitts & Nevis, South Africa, Nigeria, China, Hong Kong and Korea.

**Table 6: Return vs. New Foreign Exhibitors at TIC 2008**

<b>Foreign Past &amp; New Exhibitors</b>	<b># of booths booked</b>	<b>% of booths booked</b>	<b># of exhibitors booked</b>	<b>% of exhibitors booked</b>
Foreign Exhibitors	<b>50</b>		<b>81</b>	
Past Exhibitors	6	12%	12	15%
New Exhibitors	22	44%	22	27%

The table below gives a clear breakdown of the countries that participated, the number of booths they occupied and the number of companies from each country.

**Table 7: Foreign Participation By Country**

<b>COUNTRY BREAKDOWN</b>	<b>No. of Companies</b>	<b>% of Companies</b>	<b>No. Booths</b>	<b>% of Booths</b>
Austria	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Barbados	4	1.9%	4	1.5%
Brazil	12	5.7%	6	2.3%
Canada	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
China	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Costa Rica	10	4.8%	10	3.8%
Curaçao	16	7.7%	2	0.8%
El Salvador	10	4.8%	2	0.8%
Grenada	5	2.4%	2	0.8%
Guadeloupe	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Hong Kong	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Jamaica	2	1.0%	2	0.8%
Kingdom of the Netherlands	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Nigeria	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Panama	2	1.0%	2	0.8%
Republic of Korea	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
South Africa	2	1.0%	1	0.4%
St. Kitts & Nevis	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Thailand	1	0.5%	1	0.4%
Trinidad & Tobago	128	61.2%	210	80.8%
United Kingdom	2	1.0%	3	1.2%
United States of America	6	2.9%	6	2.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Trade Relationships:** TIC continues to build new (and strengthen existing) relationships with local, regional and international Trade Associations, Chambers of Commerce & Industry and Diplomatic Missions, many of which were represented at this year's Convention:

Trade Promotion Associations

- Austrian Trade Commission
- PROCOMER – Foreign Trade Corporation of Costa Rica
- Exporta – Conadei (El Salvador)

Chambers of Commerce & Industry

- Curaçao Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Diplomatic Missions

- Embassy of Brazil
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Embassy of Korea
- South African High Commission
- Thailand
- US Embassy

Foreign Government Corporations

- Barbados Coalition of Services Industry
- Grenada Industrial Development Corporation
- Grenada Ministry of Economic Development & Planning
- Grenada Board of Tourism
- Ministerio de Comercio e Industrias de Panama

**Sector Breakdown:** Over the past 2 years, TIC has standardised the Business Activities and Business Sectors represented by exhibitors in order to effectively categorise and measure the types of companies showcase products & services at TIC. Tables 8 and 9 present 12 standard activities and 25 sectors.

**Table 8: Exhibitor Breakdown by Activity**

<b>BUSINESS ACTIVITY</b>			
<b>13</b>	Agent	<b>29</b>	Retailer
<b>45</b>	Distributor	<b>78</b>	Service Provider
<b>32</b>	Exporter	<b>18</b>	Trade Organisation / Association
<b>23</b>	Importer	<b>10</b>	Trading Company
<b>5</b>	Investment / Joint Venture	<b>22</b>	Wholesaler
<b>64</b>	Manufacturer	<b>21</b>	Other - Diplomatic Corp

**Table 9: Exhibitor Breakdown by Sector**

<b>BUSINESS SECTOR</b>			
<b>10</b>	Agriculture	<b>12</b>	Machinery & Equipment
<b>7</b>	Automobile	<b>6</b>	Marine / Yachting
<b>12</b>	Chemical & Chemical Products	<b>9</b>	Medical / Pharmaceuticals
<b>12</b>	Computer / Electronic	<b>11</b>	Music, Film & Entertainment
<b>26</b>	Construction & Accessory Products	<b>16</b>	Paper, Printing & Packaging
<b>9</b>	Electrical Products	<b>7</b>	Plastic & Rubber Products
<b>12</b>	Energy & Energy Related Products	<b>11</b>	Textile & Apparel
<b>14</b>	Financial & Insurance Services	<b>13</b>	Transportation (sea, land, air, courier)
<b>37</b>	Food & Beverage	<b>5</b>	Other - Country Promotion
<b>15</b>	Furniture & Appliances	<b>1</b>	Other - Real Estate
<b>12</b>	Health & Safety	<b>2</b>	Other - Services
<b>16</b>	Household	<b>32</b>	Other
<b>24</b>	IT & Communications		

### Exhibitor Survey Feedback

Immediately following TIC 2008, the Secretariat conducted an “Exhibitor Evaluation” via telephone and e-mail.

Of 159 registered exhibitors, 90 participated in the survey, thus, our analysis is based on a 56% sample size of registered exhibitors.

It should be noted that not all questions were answered by respondents, affecting sub totals for respective questions.

**Category Ratings:** Ratings were on a scale from 1-5 (1=highest; 5=lowest).

**TABLE 10: Survey Results - Convention Floor & Facilities**

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Poor</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Floor Traffic</b>	18%	<b>42%</b>	32%	6%	2%
<b>Quality of Attendees</b>	19%	<b>38%</b>	33%	10%	0%
<b>TIC Management</b>	<b>51%</b>	34%	8%	4%	2%
<b>TIC Staff</b>	<b>57%</b>	28%	10%	3%	2%
<b>Booths</b>	17%	<b>36%</b>	33%	9%	6%
<b>Bathrooms</b>	14%	27%	<b>38%</b>	19%	2%
<b>Parking</b>	9%	19%	<b>37%</b>	19%	17%
<b>Food</b>	13%	23%	<b>30%</b>	27%	7%
<b>Security</b>	21%	<b>32%</b>	28%	17%	2%

## Analysis of Responses

### [1] Reasons for Exhibiting

The question: “Why did you exhibit at TIC 2008?”

- Most respondents said their goal was to create Product and Company Awareness
- Another frequent motivation was the desire to promote and expose products and services.
- Several exhibitors said TIC’s Caribbean reach was a major incentive to participation.
- Other Common reasons were: networking, to gain potential customers, and to increase sales.
- “TIC is the only worthwhile B2B and B2C show in the Caribbean”.

### [2] Intention to Return

- 80% of Survey respondents indicated that they will exhibit in 2009, TIC’s 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- 4% do not intend to return
- 16% are unsure

### [3] Preferred Booth Size

85 exhibitors responded to our question as to preferred booth size

**Table 11: Preferred Booth Sizes**

Booth Option	No. of Respondents	%
Small (6x6)	5	6%
Medium (10x10)	51	60%
Large (6x18)	12	14%
Pavilion	5	6%
Customised Size	12	14%

#### **[4] Preferred Convention Dates**

- 75 of 86 responses confirmed that April/May is the most appropriate time of the year for TIC.
- Some suggested that TIC should take place in the July/August school vacation period, to reduce time spent in traffic congestion and increase time available outside of work hours

#### **[5] Preferred Number of Days & B2b/B2c Allocation**

TIC aimed to quantify the number of days exhibitors prefer for Business-to-business interaction (B2b) and for Business-to-consumer interaction (B2c).

- The majority of respondents agree that TIC should remain a 4-day Convention and prefer the current allocation of days (3 B2b and 1 B2c)
- 78% said 3 days for B2B was ideal, with 15% preferred a reduction to 2 days.
- 58% of respondents believed that one day is adequate for B2c interaction
- 26% of the respondents think that TIC should allocate two days to B2c
- 14% say that TIC should dispense with consumer days, limiting TIC to B2 only
- Most respondents (60%) like the Wednesday – Saturday format for TIC
- The majority say that if TIC is extended it should be Wednesday - Sunday
- 20% of respondents advocated for a Monday–Friday format

#### **[6] Preferred Time of Days**

- 45 of the 87 respondents (52%) say that TIC should ideally take place between the hours of 10.00 am – 7.00 pm
- 33% said 9.00 am – 6.00 pm was also a suitable time
- 7% suggest that the Convention floor should be open from 10.00 am – 6.00 pm, and 5% preferred 8.00 am – 4.00 pm

#### **[7] Advertising and Promotion**

- TIC's extensive advertising and promotion campaign finds favour with exhibitors, many respondents complimented the "adequate" advertising strategies.
- Some exhibitors would like to see more TV, radio and press ads focused on the exhibiting companies in particular.
- One respondent suggested live streaming of TIC on the Convention's website for those unable to attend.

- Another respondent suggested that TIC introduce more interactive/digital signage about exhibitors on the floor during the convention.

#### **[8] Quantification of Exhibitor Success**

It should be noted that for various reasons, including security concerns and competitive confidentiality, exhibitors are generally reluctant to disclose the value of sales stemming from TIC.

- Some Respondents indicated that it was difficult to determine the number and value of prospective sales resulting from TIC so soon after the event (19 respondents said it was too early to tell)
- Two companies were, however, particularly forthcoming. Arcor Group, the local division of an Argentinean company, and Exporta from El Salvador, both newcomers to TIC, each indicated that the Convention produced sales worth (at minimum) US\$300,000.
- T&T company, Creation Advertising and Contracting Services closed a TT\$250,000 sale within the first two days of TIC and is still meeting with numerous companies to finalise other such contracts.
- 25 of 63 respondents said 100% of the sales leads generated at TIC were new prospects
- 9 indicated that 50% of their leads were new; 15 said it was too soon to tell
- No company indicated how successful TIC was in terms of a percentage of their monthly sales, most indicating that it was “too soon to tell”

#### **[9] Exhibitor Manual**

TIC continuously improves its Exhibitor Manual, in an effort to elaborate all rules and regulations governing the Convention.

- 52% and 45% said the manual was “very useful” and “useful”, respectively. 4% say the manual is “not useful”

#### **[9] Exhibitor Meetings**

TIC hosts Exhibitor Meetings for local and foreign participants preceding the Convention to explain the rules of the floor, upcoming events and to answer exhibitors’ questions

- 78% of the respondents attended either the first or second meeting and said the meeting and staff were very helpful; several mentioned staff who “went beyond the call of duty” to ensure all of their questions and concerns were addressed.

### **[10] Website**

TIC aims to ensure that our website is user-friendly and easily accessible.

- A total of 93% of all respondents said the site met its target and indicated that the back-end login was also very useful.

### **[11] Promotional Tools for Exhibitors**

As part of its promotional package, TIC profiles exhibitors in its advertisements, sends e-bulletins to its database on exhibitors' behalf (on request), features exhibitors on its website, and provides Buyer Invites (standardised and customisable) for exhibitors use.

- 74% of respondents stated that they make use of these materials
- Most use the website, buyer invites and newspapers as forms of advertising.

### **[12] TIC Highlights for Exhibitors**

- The majority of respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the networking opportunities offered by TIC
- Participants were particularly pleased to have the chance to meet with “quality companies”, especially foreign companies
- Respondents said the TIC “atmosphere” and the traffic flow of qualified “professional attendees” created “an excellent forum” to showcase their products
- Respondents frequently noted: “the helpfulness of the staff” “giveaways”, “the news coverage”, and “the good food”.
- The second most frequent comment addressed “the comment was the quality and overall organization of the show”
- “This is the most organized show we have ever taken part in”.

### **[13] Booth Facilities**

- 80% of respondents said the TIC infrastructure (furnishings, electricals and badges) were more than adequate.
- 20% said the facilities were “not adequate” citing specific problems; The most frequent difficulty was with electricals, and respondents noted:
  - “delays in rectifying problems”
  - “untidy wiring”
  - junction boxes placed above some booths that were “messy” and “took away from booth décor”

#### **[14] Booth Dismantling**

For the past 3 years, TIC has dedicated one day for booth dismantling. Our survey asked exhibitors whether they would prefer to completely dismantle their booths on the evening of the last day of TIC: 56% agreed that this was preferable. However 44% did not, and suggested that partial dismantling be allowed on the Saturday evening.

#### **[15] Suggested Improvements**

Our survey respondents submitted a variety of requests for improvements, encompassing:

- Security
- More food options; all day service; healthy choices
- Improved cooling (Air Conditioning / Fans)
- Relocation of the Exhibitor seminar room from the Mezzanine which is “too noisy”
- More and Better Parking
- More Regional & International Buyers
- Multilingual website and promotional material
- Cheaper Booths
- Increased time for set up and breakdown

#### **[16] Comments**

- Its time to take TIC to another country
- TIC should take place at another venue that is more accessible for buyers and exhibitors (traffic to the east is counterproductive)
- One day should be allocated for schools only
- More booth variety
- TIC should take place “every other year”
- TIC should be a permanent event
- The entire TIC event should be filmed to make a documentary "Building the Nation"

## 5. BEST OF TIC 2008 BOOTH AWARDS

TIC 2008 saw the judging of the second Annual Best of TIC Booth Awards, sponsored for the first time by Fedex Express. Judging criteria included: Appearance & Attractiveness, Originality & Creativity, Effective Layout, and Product & Innovation Presentation. The judging panel included representatives of the local Business media and a representative from the regional news television channel, CaribVision.

The introduction of the awards inspired fierce competitiveness amongst exhibitors, who went above and beyond to distinguish themselves and to outdo each other. The varying booth décor and high standard of design made judging an extremely hard task.

A new innovation for 2008 was the introduction of the People's Choice Award, also sponsored by Fedex Express, with door prizes provided by Caribbean Airlines and Rostrevor Apartment Hotel, Barbados.

### **Fedex Express Best of TIC 2008 Booth Award Winners**

#### Small Booth Category

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      G. A Farrell & Associates Limited, Booth 198

1<sup>st</sup> Place      CaribbeanJobs.com, Booth 225

#### Medium Booth Category

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      Graphic Impact Limited, Booth 97

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      Instyle Patio, Booth 179

1<sup>st</sup> Place      Water One, Booth 52

#### Large Booth Category:

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      Lifetime Roofing, Booths 66 & 67

1<sup>st</sup> Place      Arcor Group, Booths 251 & 285

#### Pavilion Category:

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      Tobago House of Assembly, Booths 119-122

1<sup>st</sup> Place      Agricultural Development Bank, Booths 162–166

### **Fedex Express People's Choice TIC 2008 Award Winner**

Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago

## 6. BUYERS & DISTRIBUTORS

The TIC 2008 Registration Desk recorded attendance of 5,797 persons.

**Table 12: TIC Attendees by Type**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Number</b>
Foreign Buyers	256
Local Buyers	2,158
Paying Attendees	1,300
Incomplete and Missing Data	60
Service Providers staff	75
Exhibitor Staff	2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,849</b>

### Foreign Buyer Drive

TIC embarked on an enhanced Foreign Buyer Drive in 2008, geared towards

[1] Increasing the number of overseas buyers and distributors attending the Convention

[2] Improving the quality of Buyers attending, by ensuring that attendees were decision makers involved in relevant markets, sectors and industries

This initiative was a marked success:

- The number of overseas buyers and distributors seeking new products at TIC increased by 177%, to 256 up from 144 in 2007.
- Buyers visited Trinidad and Tobago for TIC from 35 countries, more than every before

**Table 13: Buyers by Country**

	Country	No.	%
1	Anguilla	1	0.39%
2	Antigua and Barbuda	7	2.73%
3	Bahamas	1	0.39%
4	Barbados	20	7.81%
5	Belize	1	0.39%
6	Bermuda	3	1.17%
7	Brazil	1	0.39%
8	Canada	11	4.29%
9	Cayman Islands	2	0.78%
10	China	4	1.56%
11	Columbia	2	0.78%
12	Costa Rica	2	0.78%
13	Dominica	10	3.90%
14	Dominican Republic	3	1.17%
15	Grenada	20	7.81%
16	Guyana	34	13.28%
17	Haiti	2	0.78%
18	India	2	0.78%
19	Jamaica	15	5.85%
20	Malaysia	1	0.39%
21	Martinique	3	1.17%
22	Montserrat	1	0.39%
23	Netherlands Antilles	7	2.73/%
24	Nigeria	1	0.39%
25	Panama	2	0.78%
26	Puerto Rico	2	0.78%
27	Saint Kitts & Nevis	7	2.73/%
28	Saint Lucia	7	2.73/%
29	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	27	10.55%
30	Turks & Caicos	3	1.17%
31	United Kingdom	5	1.95%
32	U.S.A.	30	11.72%
33	Venezuela	4	1.56%
34	Virgin Islands (British)	1	0.39%
35	Virgin Islands (US)	1	0.39%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>1</b>

## **Matchmaking**

126 exhibiting companies took advantage of TIC's matchmaking service in 2008.

Matchmaking took place through two channels – an automated system facilitated on-line at [www.tic-tt.com](http://www.tic-tt.com), and a direct to buyer method initiated by exhibitors with the assistance of TIC (the Secretariat also sent special Buyer invitations via e-mail and in hard copy to Buyers from companies on request).

**On-Line:** TIC's On-line Matchmaking Meeting Service allowed participants to pre-arrange meetings with Exhibitors, Buyers, Wholesalers, Distributors, and other potential business partners. Companies were asked to complete on-line forms and the automated service then matched those companies with the appropriate interested parties at the Convention.

The on-line service allowed all users of the TIC website to view participating companies' trade offers and/or demands. Advanced search tools on the website allowed site users to look for companies within specific business sectors. Access to the service and appointment schedules was available to registered and confirmed exhibitors and buyers only.

Management and scheduling of meetings was automated and handled online, and meetings were scheduled and facilitated on the three B2B days of the Convention, at 45 minute intervals, in one of six meeting rooms on the Mezzanine Floor

**Off-Line:** Exhibitors who did not use the on-line service were also facilitated. Every exhibitor was asked to complete a questionnaire indicating the types of Buyers they wished to have invited to TIC 2008 and to provide the names of existing clients or prospects they wished to have invited to TIC. Our Buyer team then carried out targeted research and made direct contact with appropriate Buyers, informing them of relevant companies exhibiting from their sectors.

## 7. TIC 2008 BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The TIC 2008 Business Education programme featured an extensive and high quality line-up of seminars, workshops, panel discussions and presentations.

### Keynote Sessions

1. ***T&T Sector - Best Bet Investment Opportunities:*** Presenter: Mr. Ian Ivey, NEXT Corporation, New Zealand; Hosted by the TTMA and sponsored by NEXT corporation, BPTT LLC, and NIHERST, this seminar focused on developing opportunities in global markets from a long term perspective in five sectors, Food & Beverage, Niche Manufacturing, Biotechnology, Creative, Tourism.
2. ***How Caribbean Businesses Succeed:*** Presenter: Mr. Ian Ivey, NEXT Corporation, New Zealand; Hosted by the TTMA and sponsored by Next Corporation and NIHERST, this session led participants through the Illustration, Analysis and Discussion of model case studies of successful local businesses and their leaders.
3. ***Idea Power: How to Unleash Creativity and Innovation in your Organisation*** Presenter: Harvey Millar, Ph. D, Professor, School of Business, St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; Hosted by the TTMA and sponsored by the Business Development Company Limited, this session demonstrated creativity tools and illustrated the link between organisational success and the ability to create and innovate products and services to remain ahead of customers and competition.
4. ***Process Mapping & Analysis for Improving Manufacturing Performance:*** Presenter: Harvey Millar, Ph. D, Professor, School of Business, St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; Hosted by the TTMA, this one-day workshop focused on improving manufacturing performance through process mapping and analysis.

### **Exhibitor Presentations & Seminars**

- EPA & OCT's: New Opportunities for Cooperation, Curaçao Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Department for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands Antilles, Directorate of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands Antilles
- Trinidad & Tobago's Printing & Packaging Industry – A Springboard for Non-oil Export Growth, Printing & Packaging Industry Council (PPI), Business Development Company Limited (BDC), Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Grenada – The Ideal Investment Location, Grenada Industrial Development Corporation
- Corporate Wellness “New Approaches to Managing Health Care and Health Care Costs” Baptist Health South Florida
- Fundamentals of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Occupational Safety & Health Agency
- Occupational Hygiene, Occupational Safety & Health Agency
- OSHA and its Strategy to Improve Safety & Health Compliance and Culture, Occupational Safety & Health Agency
- Permit to Work (Occupational Safety & Health), Occupational Safety & Health Agency
- Cement, Concrete and Best Practices, Trinidad Cement Limited
- Interactive Video Demonstration of Bellwether PMX Procurement Software, R. George Stephenson & Associates Limited
- Introducing ArcusStone, Construction Restoration Maintenance Services Ltd.
- Diversity Visa – Green Card Lottery, Embassy of the United States of America
- Education USA, Embassy of the United States of America
- Connect the Caribbean, CANTO

## **7. OTHER PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Airline Partners**

Three leading air carriers partnered with the TIC 2008 to offer special discounts for overseas TIC participants.

- COPA Airlines offered a 30% discount on airfares from the Dominican Republic, and a 15% discount on all other flights operated by COPA Airlines valid on COPA Airlines and/or Aero Republica for destinations connecting through Panama; valid travel dates: April 25th, 2008 - May 8th, 2008.
- Caribbean Airlines offered a 5% discount on applicable fare levels to Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago from the USA, Canada, Caribbean, St. Maarten, and Venezuela.
- American Airlines offered a 5% discount on all valid airfares from the USA, Caribbean, Europe, Asia and Latin America to Port of Spain between April 27 and May 6, 2008.

### **Event Sponsors**

- Ministry of Trade & Industry, full sponsor Buyers Cocktail Function
- Tourism Development Company, co-sponsor, Closing Cocktail Function
- The West Indian Tobacco Company (WITCO), co-sponsor, Closing Cocktail Function
- Angostura Limited, co-sponsor, Closing Cocktail Function
- Blue Waters, co-sponsor, Closing Cocktail Function
- Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago, co-sponsor, Closing Cocktail Function

### **Business Education Sponsors**

- Business Development Company Limited: Seminar, Idea Power: How to Unleash Creativity and Innovation in your Organization
- BPTT LLC: Co-sponsor, Seminar: T&T Sector – Best Bet Investment Opportunities
- NEXT Corporation: Co-sponsor:
  - Seminar, T&T Sector – Best Bet Investment Opportunities
  - Seminar, How Caribbean Businesses Succeed

- NIHERST: Co-sponsor:
  - Seminar, T&T Sector – Best Bet Investment Opportunities
  - Seminar, How Caribbean Businesses Succeed
- Trinidad & Tobago Manufacturers' Association: Sponsor:
  - Seminar, T&T Sector – Best Bet Investment Opportunities
  - Seminar, How Caribbean Businesses Succeed
  - Seminar, Idea Power: How to Unleash Creativity and Innovation in your Organization
  - Process Mapping & Analysis for Improving Manufacturing Performance

#### **Booth Awards**

- FedEx Express: Sponsor Booth Awards
- Caribbean Airlines: Sponsor People's Choice Awards Door Prize

#### **On the Floor**

- Ministry of Public Administration: Business Centre
- e Teck: Investment Portal

**OFFICIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS:**

- The Telecommunication Services of Trinidad and Tobago - Wireless Internet Service
- Emagine Information Solutions Limited – Computer Hardware for Business Centre & Registration areas
- MDC UM – Furniture for Registration and Business Centre
- Instyle Patios Ltd. – Furniture for Food Pavilion and Food Court
- Carisafe Medical Services Ltd. (CMSL) – Medical Emergency Services
- Creation Advertising & Contracting Services Limited – Business Centre AV equipment
- Click Media – Digital Signage
- VEMCO TT – Business Centre Refreshments
- Blue Waters – Registration and Business Centre Refreshments