

The Importance of Electronic Trade To Dominican Businesses

by

[Avonelle Christian James](#); (Jun. 28/02)

For the last several years, electronic trade has been a driving force in advanced economies. Businesses in North America and Europe have seen billions of dollars in revenue generated from the use of the internet to promote and sell their products. This new technology has drastically changed the way in which the world economy is operating. It will continue to change the world for years to come.

Dominican businesses with an interest in joining this revolution, cannot avoid adopting this new vision - a vision that could help propel this country into the thrust of this new economy. An economy where globalization will be the driving force towards economic success. An economy where diversification is critical -- where a strong educational force is the key to deriving an economic structure which does not solely depend on one or even two industries for success - namely tourism and agriculture.

So what must businesses do to prepare for this new age? As a computer scientist, I can offer one of the many solutions which I believe we must embrace in order to succeed. The internet. The internet has opened a new world for businesses. A world where every industrial sector in Dominica can take advantage of the many benefits so far enjoyed by only the most developed countries of the world. So what can the internet offer Dominica? How can Dominica take advantage of this brand new order to its benefit? In this series of papers, we will explore together the many benefits that electronic trading has to offer.

The first and most glaring benefit of this new age, is the opportunity for businesses to market and boost their exports to a global market. For so many years, Dominica has confronted a striking imbalance between the amount of goods imported versus those exported to the rest of the world. Even with the many trade initiatives put into place, Dominica has not been able to create the equilibrium needed to help stimulate economic growth in the country. Dominican businesses can help to reduce the gapingly wide trade imbalance; one which does not only apply to goods being brought into the country. Electronic trade opens the doors to market products globally for companies with limited resources. The marketing nonetheless, must be a collaborative effort between businesses, governments and the avenues used to serve them. Joint electronic marketing in turn, will lead to global exposure, resulting in increased sales.

Electronic trade will also help us to develop a new breed of workers in the new millennium. Workers educated to succeed in medicine, science and engineering, entrepreneurship, education, financial services, and much, much more. Our next

generation of workers, with prudent planning, will not need to migrate to another country to harness their skills. The new business environment in Dominica will provide jobs, training and incentives for them to remain. With the revolutionary technological shift sweeping the new world, we cannot afford to be left behind. It is important that Dominican businesses retain this new breed of workers in order to increase the productivity levels needed to compete in a global marketplace.

The Dominican Diaspora - those Dominicans living abroad -- is proof that there is a tremendous talent pool on the island which is exported out of the country year after year. It all ties in to the need for businesses to embrace technology in order to attract the best talent. Businesses must adopt effective strategies to stimulate greater usage of IT, including e-commerce. Technology, transcends so many, many facets of our lives, that we simply cannot ignore it. Electronic trade, one of the newer aspects of technology, must become an integral part a successful business strategy. It will allow Dominican businesses to walk boldly in the new millennium, and conquer this brave new world.

Dominican businesses should move feverishly into the 21st century with a bold new vision, and with a renewed vigor to transform the economic infrastructure which was handed to us by our forefathers hundreds of years ago. One which dictated that the only way to survive in Dominica is by the traditional means which were handed down to us from one generation to the next. No longer can we depend on a single avenue for continued success. Diversification of our marketing strategy is critical in creating a sound plan - especially the integration of electronic marketing.

About the author: *With over 15 years' experience in designing and developing telecommunications and web applications, Avonelle Christian James is the founder of caribbeansupplies.com - an electronic marketing and distribution company. During the first ten years of her career, Ms. James was employed as a scientist at world-renowned Bell Laboratories, where she worked on a variety of telecommunications products. There she served as a software architect in the research and development of leading edge telecommunications products. In 1996, Ms. James left her position at Bell Laboratories, to form Advanced Software Concepts, Inc., a web and telecommunications consulting firm, based in Reading, Massachusetts. Ms. James earned a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from the University of Massachusetts. After one year of industry experience, Ms. James returned to Northeastern University, where she earned a Master's Degree in Computer Science.*



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