

# E-business developments: how it is happening

[Business](#), [E-Commerce](#)



E-business is building momentum in the Caribbean. Several regional programs have been initiated, with certain countries taking the lead. A few of these enterprises are detailed below: The Caribbean Ecommerce Initiative a regional organization of the Forum of Caribbean States (CARIFORUM), funded by CARIFORUM and the European Union. Established in 1998 the goal is to develop an online marketplace for the Caribbean. Cable & Wireless announced in Internet World in New York plans to invest almost US\$50m over the next 5 years to provide a range of eBusiness solutions based in the Caribbean Region.

Antigua, home to 68, 000 people, has more than 100 licensed online casino operators, which generate millions of dollars every year for the Antiguan government. The online betting industry employs 3, 000 people in Antigua. The Bahamas E-business Government Initiative is a multifaceted approach which aims to deregulate the telecommunications industry, install new infrastructure and develop legislation to position The Bahamas at the leading edge of the E-business gauntlet. " We see ourselves as a catalyst stimulating a collective effort by the private sector.

Such a collective effort is essential if The Bahamas is to have an opportunity to participate in the benefits to be found in transitioning our society to participate fully in a digital economy" says BFSB's CEO & Executive Director Wendy C. Warren. New World Network, the principal owner of the Americas Region Caribbean Optical-ring System (ARCOS), a leading submarine broadband cable network, announced that it has lit the first seven segments of ARCOS linking the United States, the Bahamas, Turks & Caicos, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

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Later projects include most of the Caribbean Islets. " Activating this first phase of ARCOS will provide these countries with a fast, reliable and efficient way of unleashing new opportunities for IT businesses," said David Warnes, President and CEO Government Action: What is big brother doing?

Information about regional government efforts to facilitate E-business is practically nonexistent. With the exception of The Bahamas The little information available is basic, surface policy statements, barren of any method or analysis

Web queries on government sites have found planned E-business development schemes in every major Caribbean country with a web presence. The respective administrations are behind the curve, but are making token strides towards acceptance. In order to define strategy and construct a successful E-business model, businesses must have a framework of legislation from which to work. A fundamental component of the effort of the implementation is the establishment of a lobby to exert pressure on the incumbent governments to allocate resources.

In the United Kingdom a consortium for is asking the government to sponsor high-speed links that support home workers. Other examples are the special interest groups call for extensions to current benefits, such as the R&D tax credit introduced last year to encourage spending on innovative technology projects in the United States among engineering, pharmaceutical, electronics and other organizations. The major hurdle of governance is the assessment of taxation. Without proper revenue collection guidelines, governments are

reluctant to endorse E-business and the businesses themselves are unsure about profit potential.

According to Adrian Mello, Senior technology reporter for ZDnet, "Uncertainty for both consumers and merchants might slow e-commerce's progress. The government can play a key role in helping e-commerce out of the doldrums by providing clear regulations on taxation and privacy. " Business must be the driving force behind the governmental overhaul required to facilitate E-Business in the Caribbean, as the natural pace of regional legislative change is simply too slow in the modern atmosphere.