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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MARKET STRATEGY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN FOR BELIZE, CENTRAL AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

Pannell Kerr Forster was engaged by the United States Agency for International Development to conduct market research and prepare publicity materials for a Belize tourism promotion project. In collaboration with International Planning and Center, Inc. (IPAC), Pannell Kerr Forster was to provide the Government of Belize with publicity materials which will identify and promote the country's most promising tourist sites, attractions, and facilities. The publicity materials, together with institutional recommendations and a strategic marketing and public relations plan, were designed to stimulate awareness of Belize as a desirable tourist destination and to provide a solid basis for the production of additional promotional materials meeting specific needs identified during or after the project.

The publicity materials include the following deliverables:

- A 28-page composite brochure.
- A four-page adventure trail, wildlife, culture, and flora brochure.
- A six-page marine adventure, cayes, marine life, sailing, diving, snorkeling, and fishing brochure.
- A composite map.
- An inland adventure map.
- A marine and cayes map.
- A comprehensive, 2,000-slide photographic library.

BELIZE - THE TOURISM PRODUCT

A country's tourism product is a composite of many interrelated elements, all of which must be organized into a coherent framework and presented to the consuming public as a bundle of goods and services that projects a particular and desirable image. The interrelated elements consist of natural and human resources; man-made infrastructure and superstructure facilities; transportation; and a series of supporting facilities, services, and amenities geared toward improving the in-country experience of the international visitor.

At this time, Belize's tourism product is in its embryonic stage, which is the principal determinant of the marketing strategy that should be adopted by the country to promote tourism. The current development patterns of tourism in and to Belize, which encompass the next two to five years, do not allow the country to be marketed as a mass tourism destination and we do not believe that the country should be marketed as such over the foreseeable future. In bringing about the awareness that Belize **is** a tourist destination, however, the country must be promoted for what it is and has to offer - an adventure vacation experience with an incredible variety of activities, but lacking in the comfort and services normally associated with certain better-developed Caribbean and Central American tourist destinations.

In Table 1 on page 3, we have summarized the factors that we consider to limit the potential of Belize's tourism industry. Based on this, in Table 2 on page 4, we have presented recommendations for the improvement or expansion of the country's existing tourist facilities.

Table 1
Belize
Tourism - Limiting Factors

- Lack of awareness of Belize as a tourist destination.
- Rainy season (and to a lesser extent the hurricane season) - June through October.
- Antiquated international airport; limited air carriers; late flights.
- Lack of adequate ground transportation.
- Price-value relationship of accommodations below that of internationally accepted standards.
- Hospitality services below generally accepted international standards, but type of service now offered is part of present attraction of Belize.
- Inaccessibility and lack of visitor information and basic services at most tourist attractions, particularly Maya ruins and nature reserves.
- Insufficient government legislation and ongoing protection of natural resources.
- San Pedro is fully developed so future development must be directed elsewhere.
- Belize City - personal safety issues,
  - lack of entertainment and restaurants,
  - appearance of city is not attractive to recreational tourists, and
  - many tourists are advised to avoid the city.
- Lack of information on Belize available to general public.
- Lack of coordination of tourism promotion effort.
- Communication difficulties which make booking vacations to Belize time-consuming and expensive.
- Scarcity of capital for infrastructural and facilities development.

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster.

Table 2
Belize
Recommendations for Improvement/Expansion of Existing Facilities

Facility	Recommendation
Philip S.W. Goldson International Airport	Generally tidy; provide comfortable seating areas; install a public telephone; install a tourist information booth; organize a proper taxi stand; provide training for immigration and customs officials; prepare standard procedures for departure.
Transportation	Encourage the purchase of new equipment by giving import concessions; initiate a transfer facility between the airport and hotels in Belize City; upgrade domestic airports - fencing, lengthening of runway, construction of a control tower for Belize City Municipal Airport; open a West Coast U.S. gateway; require licensing of guides; increase the number of training programs for guides/ground service operators; improve road and direction signage, particularly to major tourist attractions.
Accommodations	Institute a hotel classification system; encourage upgrading of the hotel product but without an increase in rates; increase the number of training programs for all levels of hotel staff.
Attractions	Institute a stabilization and beautification program for the Maya ruins including construction of tourist facilities; encourage scheduled tours to ruins and other inland attractions; implement conservation legislation for marine and land reserves; create more marine reserves like Hol Chan; provide permanent anchorages at dive sites; institute a training program for Belizeans to become dive masters; institute a catch and release program for recreational fishing; encourage culturally-oriented entertainment; in Belize City, ensure efficient garbage collection and waterfront debris removal; implement a master plan for San Pedro or Ambergris Caye.

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster.

THE BELIZE TOURIST MARKET

The Historical Perspective of Tourism in Belize

Tourism in Belize has been developed largely by the private sector, mainly by small, owner-operated, or family businesses. On a national level, tourism is viewed as having a significant part to play in the economic development of Belize and recently was raised to the number two priority in the economy. However, the role of the Government of Belize in the development of tourism has been restricted by a lack of available capital. This lack of capital has adversely affected the development of the country's infrastructure and the ability, at a national level, to develop those parts of the tourism product that cannot be developed solely by the private sector. With this background, the lack of coordination of the country's tourism promotion effort (discussed later) is not surprising.

The Current Tourist Markets

Statistics on tourist arrivals by country of origin gathered by the Belize Tourist Bureau include all foreign arrivals into Belize. Unfortunately, statistics are unavailable on the country of origin of recreational tourists. Discussions with hoteliers confirmed, as would be expected, that most recreational tourists originate from the U.S.A. Most hoteliers were of the opinion that 80 to 90 percent were from the U.S.A., the remainder coming from Canada, Europe (the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy), and Central America. Based on this research, we prepared an estimate of the origin of recreational tourists and present this information in Table 3 on page 6.

Table 3
Belize
Estimated Recreational Tourist Arrivals by Country of Origin

U.S.A.	80%	Europe	5%
Canada	10	Other	5

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster.

Texas and Louisiana are the main source markets for recreational travelers from the U.S.A. This traveler-pattern occurs because three of the largest tour wholesalers serving Belize are located in either Houston or New Orleans, and many Belizean hotels have U.S. representatives in the Houston area. Other market sources are California, New York, New Jersey, Colorado, and Florida.

From our research, we have prepared an estimate of the mix of recreational visitors to Belize in 1987 and present this information in Table 4 on page 7. We have also prepared an estimate of the type of trips undertaken by recreational tourists to Belize and have presented this information in Table 4. We caution that these estimates are only rough guides and do not represent comprehensive visitor statistics.

Table 4
Belize
Tourist Mix Estimate

1987 Arrivals:	**Recreational Tourists**	**32,500 - 37,500**
	Commercial Travelers	17,500 - 22,500
	Total Tourist Arrivals	55,000
	Overland Arrivals not using Tourist Facilities	44,300
	Total Arrivals	99,300
1987 Recreational Tourists:		
	Diving	39%
	Fishing	21
	Nature/Archaeology	28
	Sailing	6
	General	6
		100%

Source: Belize Tourist Bureau; Pannell Kerr Forster.

Market Share

Tourist arrivals to Belize are a small percentage (roughly one percent) of total tourist arrivals to Caribbean destinations. This gives a misleading picture of Belize's share of its potential tourist market, however, because Belize does not compete with all other destinations in the Caribbean. Rather, because of the type and variety of attractions that the country offers, Belize competes primarily for special interest groups with only certain Caribbean and Central and South American destinations. Generally, each of these destinations offers some, but not all, facets of the attractions offered by Belize.

Although statistical information on travel by special interest groups does not exist, we can attempt to estimate Belize's share of this market by looking at tourist arrivals to the destinations with which Belize potentially competes. Table 5 on page 8 presents details of tourist

arrivals for 1984 and 1985. (The latest year for which data is available for all destinations is 1985.) When viewed in this way (in each year), Belize's market share is 2.6 percent of total tourist arrivals to those destinations, excluding arrivals to Baja California, Cozumel, and Cancun.

Table 5
Market Share Relative to Selected Competitive Destinations
(Tourist Arrivals in thousands)

	1984		1985	
	Number of Arrivals	**% of Total**	**Number of Arrivals**	**% of Total**
Belize	**88.4**	**2.6%**	**93.4**	**2.6%**
Bahamas	1,278.5	38.3	1,368.3	38.2
Baja California-Mexico	N/A	-	N/A	-
Bonaire	19.8	0.6	24.0	0.7
British V.I.	121.5	3.6	129.9	3.6
Cancun-Mexico	N/A	-	N/A	-
Cayman Islands	148.5	4.4	145.1	4.0
Costa Rica	274.0	8.3	262.0	7.3
Cozumel-Mexico	N/A	-	N/A	-
Dominica	22.2	0.7	21.5	0.6
Equador	219.0	6.5	238.0	6.6
Guatemala	192.0	5.7	252.0	7.0
Honduras	126.0	3.8	126.0	3.5
Peru	279.0	8.3	300.0	8.4
Trinidad & Tobago	191.5	5.7	187.1	5.2
Turks & Caicos	17.3	0.5	29.2	0.8
U.S. V.I.	369.5	11.0	411.5	11.5
	3,347.2	100.0%	3,588.0	100.0%

Note: Includes both commercial and recreational tourist visitors.

Source: Caribbean Tourism Statistical Report, 1987 - Caribbean Tourism Research and Development Center, Barbados; World Tourism Organization, 1986 - Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, Madrid; Pannell Kerr Forster.

Competitive Destinations

Destinations considered competitive with Belize are those places with characteristics similar to Belize, that offer the same kinds of attractions, and that are within comparable distances of the source tourist markets. Given Belize's diverse attractions, we have discussed separately the destinations that compete primarily for water sports enthusiasts and those that compete for inland adventure travelers.

Competitive Water Sports Destinations

We are of the opinion that Belize is very competitive from a locational and product-offering viewpoint with the following destinations: the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos, Bonaire, Mexico (Cancun and Cozumel), Honduras (the Bay Islands), and Costa Rica. The primary reason why Belize is not as successful in terms of number of visitors as most of its primary competition is the lack of awareness about the country itself among the target markets. Accordingly, by targeting the composite and rack brochures towards the wholesale and retail travel agents serving Belize's competition, we believe that the market those travel agents now serve will be attracted to Belize once made aware of it. We believe that Belize would be most successful trying to attract those recreational tourists now visiting Cancun, the Cayman Islands, and the British Virgin Islands.

Competitive Inland Adventure Destinations

Belize's competes primarily with Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Dominica. To the extent that vacationers from the U.S. are looking for an experience comparable with Costa Rica or Guatemala, Belize should, with proper

promotion, represent a preferable destination. It is closer to the U.S. than either Costa Rica or Guatemala, safer than Guatemala, and its primary language is English. Belize offers the same inland adventure attractions and opportunities as Costa Rica but offers more to the inland adventurer through its Maya ruins, extensive cave system, and unique cultural features. We believe, therefore, that some portion of the inland tourists to Costa Rica and Guatemala could be attracted to Belize for their vacations. Further research, however, would be required to identify the size of this market. Although small in numbers, travelers from the U.S. to Dominica represent a market which could be attracted to Belize through adequate promotion. With easier air access and a closer proximity to the U.S. than Dominica, Belize could draw many of that island's visitors.

MARKETING CONCLUSIONS

The major findings and conclusions gathered during the course of the assignment and which form the basis of our recommended strategy are summarized in Table 6 on page 11.

Table 6
Belize
Findings and Conclusions

- Visitors are generally satisfied with their vacation experience when they are fully aware of what Belize is/offers:

  - friendly, English-speaking people,
  - a unique, little-known destination,
  - an incredible variety of activities for the adventure tourist,
  - unspoiled land,
  - excellent diving,
  - wildlife and remoteness, and
  - easy access, only two hours via air from three U.S. Gateway cities.

- Belize experiences a high repeat-visitor factor.

- Belize's current tourism product appeals primarily to special interest groups who have similar demographic characteristics:

  - highly educated,
  - high level of discretionary income,
  - aged between mid-20s to mid-40s, and
  - primarily from U.S.A.

  Belize is becoming better known among these groups despite the lack of information on all that Belize has to offer.

- Except for special interest groups, most people, even wholesalers and travel agents who sell the Caribbean, are unaware of Belize as a tourist destination.

- Belize will not be a mass tourism market over the next two to five years. It is not contemporary but rustic, simple, and lacking in sophistication yet not in charm.

- Current development patterns indicate that the tourism product will not change over the next two to five years.

- Development of additional, tourist-related infrastructures and facilities is taking place in and around Belize City and on Ambergris Caye, north of San Pedro. Therefore, any marketing strategy should be targeted towards these areas.

- Lack of capital for infrastructure or facilities development.

- No competitive destination has as great a variety of attractions; Belize competes on various dimensions.

- Belize is more accessible than many of its competitors.

- Belize does not effectively promote itself in the U.S. market.

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster.

THE MARKETING STRATEGY

Pannell Kerr Forster developed a marketing strategy for promoting Belize and supervised the production of publicity materials which complement this strategy. The marketing strategy reflects the attractions Belize now offers the tourist, as well as the market appeal it possesses for current travelers to Belize and similar travelers to other comparable destinations. The strategy focuses on the way in which Belize should be presented to the traveling public through printed publicity materials including a 28-page general brochure, two smaller, "rack" brochures on water sports and inland adventure; three tourist maps; and a photo library of the country's attractions.

The strategy is also expressed in the Public Relations Plan which provides a guide to the implementation of the marketing strategy and distribution of the printed promotional materials. Specifically, the Public Relations Plan will create an awareness of Belize in the media, the tourism industry, and the special interest groups. The plan defines the role the Government of Belize should take in tourism promotion vis-a-vis the media, including promotional activities within the international tourism industry and public information activities within and outside of Belize.

The marketing strategy which Pannell Kerr Forster has developed is presented in Table 7 on page 13. The publicity materials are designed to fulfill the objectives stated in this strategy.

Table 7
Belize
The Marketing Strategy

- To create an awareness among special interest groups; travel agents, tour operators, and wholesalers (especially those who now sell Cancun, the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Dominica); and, ultimately, the target markets that Belize:

  1) is a tourist destination with diverse attractions,

  2) appeals to different groups who have very similar demographic characteristics; generally aged between mid-20s to mid-40s, highly educated, and with a high level of discretionary income.

  The target markets will be the special interest groups, whose activities are:

Diving	Ecotourism - Naturalists, conservationists
Fishing	Archaeology
Sailing	

- To promote a balance between the diverse activities available, which can be categorized as follows:

  - water-based (water sports)
  - inland-based (adventure)

  The target markets are located in the following countries:

  1. U.S.A. and Canada
  2. Europe - U.K., Germany, Italy, France
  3. Central America - Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica

  The vast majority of potential recreational tourists will come from the U.S.A.; in particular from Texas, Louisiana, Florida, California, New York, New Jersey, and Colorado.

- To build upon the current markets because major changes can not be made to the tourism product over the next two to five years.

- To promote the tourism product as it exists today.

- To promote/portray Belize as a destination that is located in the Caribbean, but with Central American influences and unique attractions.

- To focus on areas in Belize that have the available and expanding infrastructure to handle increased tourism; namely, Belize City, Ambergris Caye, and Cayo District.

- To evoke an image of a natural, unspoiled, undiscovered tourist destination that offers a unique adventure vacation experience.

Source: Pannell Kerr Forster.

MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY

The effectiveness of the recommended marketing strategy should be monitored principally by means of an outgoing visitor survey conducted at various times of the year. Other methods of assessing the strategy's effectiveness include using the immigration card that all visitors to Belize must complete, monitoring the relative levels of hotel performances to obtain information on where visitors are staying in Belize, and monitoring the origins of North American requests for information on Belize.

PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

Tourism Communications - The Present Situation

For potential tourists, the principal source of tourism information about Belize is through friends rather than through any official promotional efforts. The present dissemination of tourist information is disjointed and the communications network, which includes both the public and private sectors, is not operating effectively.

The public sector includes all governmental entities that are involved with tourism. The direct lines of authority lead from the Minister and Permanent Secretary to the Tourist Bureau. Other lines of authority include the Parliament and Prime Minister, the Foreign Affairs Minister (to liase with the Embassies, Honorary Consuls, and U.N. Mission, which have assumed the role of U.S. tourist bureaus); the Ministers of Economic Development, Natural Resources, and Home Affairs; and the Civil Aviation, Immigration, Forestry, Fisheries, and Archaeology departments. The

Belize National Tourism Council (BNTC), the link between the public and private sectors, presently acts as an advisory body.

Within the private sector, the Belize Tourism Industry Association (BTIA) is a major force representing some 250 tourism interests. Others within the private sector include the airlines; the media; wholesalers, tour operators, and travel agents; special interest groups outside Belize (the Audubon Society, diving groups); cruise lines; the Belize Export and Investment Promotion Unit (BEIPU); the Belize Audubon Society; the Belize Zoo; the Michigan Partners of the Americas; the Belize Institute of Management; and the Belize general public.

The Tourist Bureau in Belize lacks a communications and tourism promotion function and does not coordinate tourism information dissemination procedure or policy with the Embassy in the U.S. which has assumed this role. There is no U.S. Tourist bureau, no professional advertising and/or public relations firm under contract, and no toll free telephone number for Belize tourism information. Information being distributed consists of photocopies of government information; Belize, the Grand Tour, an advertisement-filled guidebook not suitable for destination-image enhancement; a full-color brochure supplied by a tour operator; and a newsletter supplied by a second tour operator.

Public relations and long-term tourism promotion functions have been assumed by Belize Promotions, a major tour operator. Tour operators and airlines lead in the promotional efforts and are becoming more targeted

in developing strategies, but without any official direction from the Belizean government.

The private sector participates in several trade shows with the Belize Tourism Ministry, and in many others on their own, to reach special interest groups. Budgets range from well under $25,000 to $70,000. The private sector has not engaged in cooperative marketing and the public sector has not successfully encouraged such marketing.

In general, procedures to assure the flow of information through the tourism communications network and to foster cooperative efforts among all tourism interests are lacking. The private sector has not engaged in cooperative marketing, resulting in the failure to maximize the impact of past publicity and promotional efforts on the target audiences to create awareness of Belize as a tourist destination. In view of the limited funds available in both the public and private sectors, cooperative approaches will be especially important.

Brochure and Map Distribution Plan

The production of brochures, the primary deliverable of this assignment, and their distribution is the first step in the Government of Belize asserting more control over the country's efforts to promote its tourism product. However, as discussed later, this must be coupled with the additional effort of reorganizing the communications network, both public and private, in order to ensure that the message being sent is consistent with government policy, and is effectively disseminated to maximize the impact of the country's tourism promotions. We recommend that the

distribution of the brochures and maps should take place immediately so as to ensure the maximum impact on the target audiences indicated in the marketing strategy.

The proposed distribution plan, an integral part of the overall public relations plan, will provide the most effective way to capitalize on the limited quantity of brochures and maps through dissemination at trade shows, to airlines, and to major wholesalers now offering Belize as a destination. The 28-page brochure is intended as a reference tool and sales piece for attracting new tour operators and special interest groups. The water sports and inland adventure (rack) brochures are for general consumer use.

English Language Brochures

For the English language rack brochures, the most effective means of distribution is at the trade shows where wholesalers, tour operators, travel agents, airlines, other travel interests, and often consumers convene in one location. Current and potential wholesalers, tour operators, and travel agents should receive one copy of the 28-page brochure and two copies each of the other brochures and maps for reference. A small quantity should be reserved for the media, for official use by the Belizean Government and its appropriate agencies, and for future tourism promotion.

The major airlines serving Belize should receive significant quantities of each publication to distribute at the trade shows that they attend regularly, in response to requests for information to their international

travel desks, and as sales materials for their sales forces who call upon wholesalers, tour operators, and travel agents regularly. The airlines reach all the target audiences Belize tourism needs to reach, effectively and cost-efficiently.

A large percentage of the brochures also should be retained for the current distribution system, composed of the Tourist Bureau, the U.S. Embassy, and the Honorary Consuls. Finally, the wholesalers who now sell Belize should receive a large percentage of the brochures to fulfill requests for information in response to their extensive advertising and direct mail campaigns, targeted both to special interest groups and travel agents.

Although limited quantities of the brochures and maps have been authorized, it is important to note that, based on a survey of current wholesalers, tour operators, cruise lines, airlines, and governmental agencies that now distribute tourism materials, more than 200,000 of the rack brochures and 50,000 of the 28-page brochure will be required to impact the market most effectively. Additional funding for reprinting should be sought; one airline and a major tour operator have expressed an interest in reproducing the materials for their use.

Given the limited quantities available, we recommend that the distribution be handled as a new product introduction with a heavy initial effort and follow-ups at regular intervals, followed by a sustaining level of effort. The results from the initial effort are

expected to trigger interest in the private sector and possibly among aid-providing institutions and organizations.

Italian, German, and Spanish Brochures

Because the quantities available are so limited, we recommend that distribution of the foreign language brochures be restricted to travel shows and selected travel representatives in each of the countries.

Public Relations Plan

For the next two to five years, Belize tourism will continue to be a special interest market focused on small tour operators, as the in-country tourism and transportation infrastructures gradually develop and ground operations are implemented to accommodate larger numbers of visitors and organized tours. Essentially, the tourism product should be promoted as it exists today.

Pannell Kerr Forster has designed the PR plan to provide a comprehensive, professional approach to communications with the media, travel trade industry, wholesalers, tour operators, and travel agents who can provide the increased volume of tourists consistent with the developing capacity of Belize's infrastructure and its ongoing efforts towards environmental preservation.

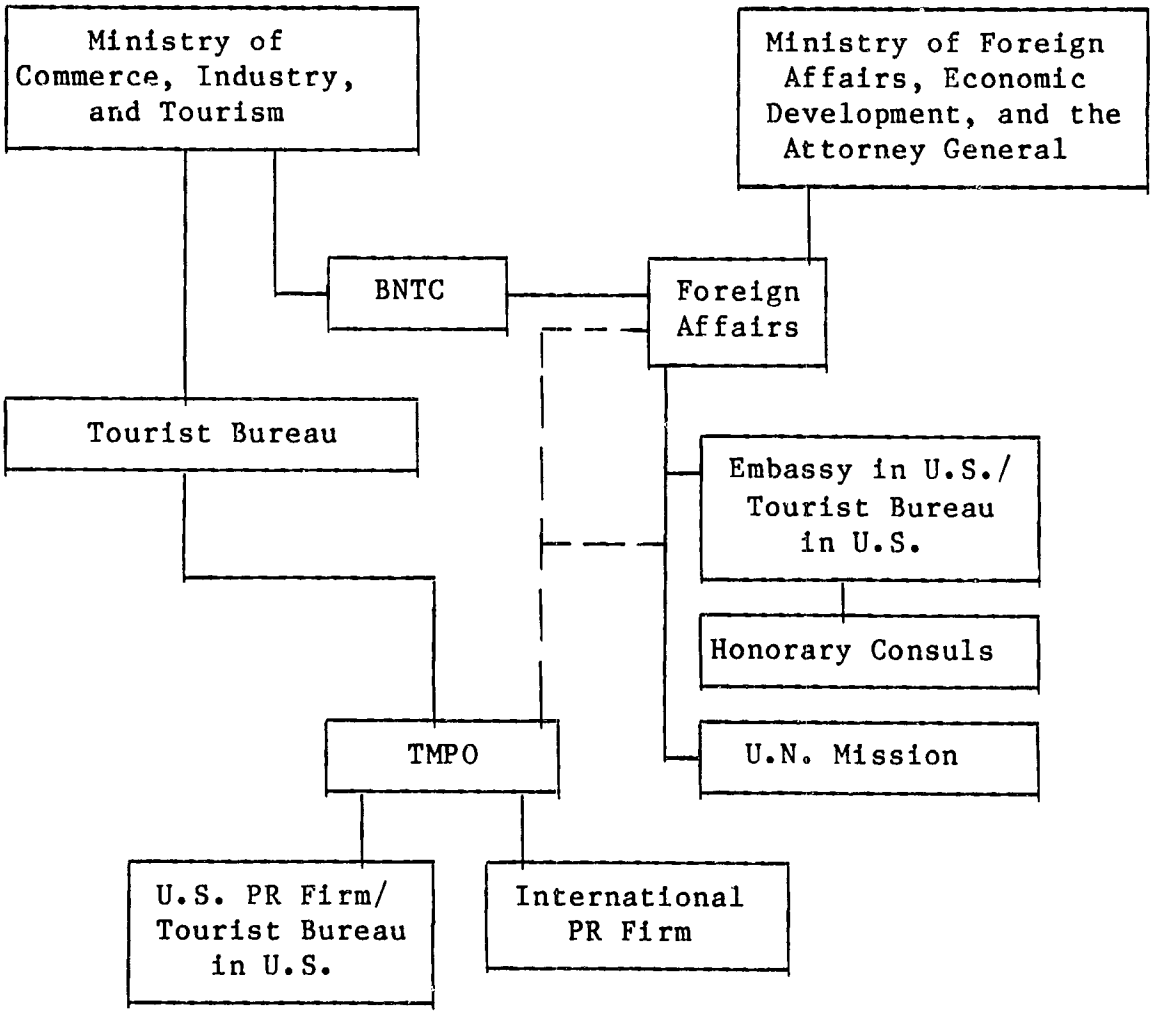
The Ministry of Tourism should assume responsibility for public relations and tourism promotion leadership. The Ministry should use as its positioning statement for Belize - Belize... The Adventure Coast,

Undiscovered. Unspoiled. - to serve as the overall theme of tourism development activity. Table 8 on page 21 presents our recommended organizational structure of the Ministry of Tourism.

The Tourism Bureau should establish a Tourism Marketing and Promotion Office (TMPO), the director of which would become the official spokesperson for tourism, under the Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism. The TMPO would be responsible for setting up a communications system to disseminate tourism information inside and outside Belize and developing tourism awareness programs including media relations, trade shows, promotions, special events, and coordination of public and private sector efforts. Its director would develop marketing and media strategy as the official spokesperson for tourism, prepare materials, monitor media coverage, cultivate media and special interest relations, create packages and promote cooperative marketing in the private sector, begin a tourism awareness campaign to inform Belizeans of the value of tourism, and develop a crisis communications strategy.

The present communications network as outlined earlier would continue to be utilized. While the BNTC would remain the link between the public and private sectors, we recommend that a seat on the BNTC be designated for a liaison officer of the BTIA, to facilitate communications between the two organizations. The Chief Civil Aviation Officer should also be

Table 8
Organizational Structure for the Ministry of Tourism



Source: Pannell Kerr Forster.

added to the BNTC in view of the importance of the airport in tourism development.

A U.S. Tourist Bureau should be established, with a toll free telephone number, which the TMPO would oversee. It would respond to inquiries for information, coordinate with the U.S. Embassy and U.N. Mission on information dissemination, and work closely with tour operators and airlines in North America to distribute tourism promotional materials. The U.S. Tourist Bureau could be set up either by adding staff at the Embassy in Washington or, if funds permit, through a U.S. public relations firm. Such a firm should be retained, under the TMPO's direction, to serve as official spokesperson for Belize tourism in North America and to handle media relations, provide trade show support, execute special events and promotions and cultivate travel trade relations. The use of this option has been credited with the great success of Guatemala's promotional efforts in terms of publicity generated, tourism awareness created, and increased visitation. At present, Guatemala is the only one of Belize's principal competitors that retains a U.S. public relations firm.

The Public Relations functions should be executed in a four-phased program over a two- to five-year period as outlined in Table 9. In Phase I, the first six months, the media would be the primary focus. Starting in Phase I but continuing in each of the other phases, the U.S. Tourist Bureau or the PR firm, if engaged, would prepare a media kit along with developing media lists, news release distribution facilities, and a monitoring service. Familiarization (FAM) trips for

Table 9
Public Relations Functions by Phases

Function	Phase I (6 mos.)	Phase 2 (12 mos.)	Phase 3 (24 mos.)	Phase 4 (12 mos.)
Spokesperson for tourism	---------->	---------->	---------->	---------->
Media Kit	---------->	---------->	---------->	---------->
Media List	---------->	---------->	---------->	---------->
FAM Trips for:				
Travel Writers	-------->	---------->	---------->	---------->
Travel Agents	---------->			
Guidebooks Updates	-------->	---------->	---------->	---------->
Placement with:				
Travel trades		---------->	---------->	---------->
Special interest/ consumer stories and placement		---------->	---------->	---------->
Trade Show Support		---------->	---------->	---------->
Destination Video		------->		
Special Events		------->	---------->	---------->
Belize Calling			------->	---------->
Briefing for:				
Trades			---------->	---------->
Belizeans			---------->	---------->
Travel Trade Seminars in U.S.				--------->
Tour Operators Seminars in Belize				------->
Belizean Tourism Awareness	---------->	---------->	---------->	---------->

selected media would be initiated. Officials positions on controversial issues such as environmental protection and development should be prepared and communicated to the media to avert negative publicity that could devastate the tourism awareness effort. Travel guidebooks would also be updated annually.

In Phase II, a year-long period, media relations would begin on a regular basis with the issuance of monthly releases to the travel trades and the scheduling of features for special interest groups prepared by experts in the respective fields. A destination video would be produced to replace the currently outdated ones. Publicity would be developed from trade show participation; particularly the DEMA, Eastern Airlines' Las Americas, Henry Davis, and J & D Expo fairs in the U.S. and WTM, ITX, ITB, and Tiangus international fairs in Europe. Promotions, which would involve developing packages with airlines, wholesalers, and travel agents, would be critical, as would special events planned for such possibilities as a fishing, sailing, or a November Garifuna festival. The feasibility of such events would depend upon the availability of adequate hotel accommodations and ground, guide, and other support services.

In Phase III, a two-year period, additional promotions would be undertaken including "Belize Calling," a sales blitz promotional media tour of six key U.S. markets by both government and travel industry representatives. The tour should coincide with scheduled promotions. A speaker's bureau within Belize should be formed to enhance local

awareness as well as to be available for tours outside the country. A monthly briefing sheet for airlines and existing and potential tour operators should be initiated.

In Phase IV, a one-year period, seminars for travel trade media in the U.S. would be held every six months. A formal tourism awareness campaign should be implemented to generate enthusiasm and interest in tourism among Belizeans and to maintain and foster the friendliness that has characterized Belize's tourism product. This program could begin as early as Phase I, depending on the availability of funding.

The government's public relations and advertising strategy should be available to all tourism interests, who should be encouraged to participate cooperatively where possible to maximize the impact of the dollars to be spent. The TMPO should support tourism training programs on an ongoing basis and should promote cooperation among all governmental departments concerned with the tourism product.

Consideration should also be given to preparing additional materials including a hotel directory brochure; an activities directory; posters; a reef navigation map; communications packages including labels, envelopes and note paper for disseminating information; sales pieces for reaching potential tour operators; travel videos; and posters and brochures for special events.