

**BARBADOS TOURISM MARKETING INC.  
PRESS RELEASE**

**Appointment of Chief Executive Officer**

After an intensive global search, the Board of Directors of the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. is pleased to confirm the appointment of Mr. Jens Thraenhart, as Chief Executive Officer of the island's destination marketing agency, effective November 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. Mr. Thraenhart, a tourism veteran of 26 years, emerged as the top candidate from an initial pool of 178 candidates of qualified professionals from around the world. The list included 20 applications from Barbados and 27 from the wider Caribbean region. The search and selection process was undertaken by Profiles Caribbean Inc. and a sub-committee of the Board and industry professionals. The agency also conducted proactive outreach to regional and international industry partners of the BTMI.

This announcement will usher in a new era for the organization, one that will see the BTMI transition to a more commercial marketing enterprise which is reshaping its operations to better compete in the new pandemic era of global tourism. Thraenhart, is a German Canadian tourism practitioner, versed in global tourism strategy and execution, and leadership experience from North America to Asia, having worked for the Canadian Tourism Commission (now Destination Canada) and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts (now part of Accor), and most recently as Executive Director of the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office, appointed by the six member governments in Southeast Asia for four consecutive 2-year terms. During his almost eight years in office, he created various award-winning campaigns and initiatives, and created the private-sector tourism board Destination Mekong to foster public-private partnership collaboration. He is conversational in three languages, including English, French, and German as well as basic Spanish, Thai, and Mandarin. A results-driven entrepreneur, Thraenhart brings a depth of experience executing innovative technology solutions in tourism marketing. An expert in China Outbound Tourism, Thraenhart co-founded award-winning travel technology agency Dragon Trail, authored the China Travel Trends books in 2010 and 2012, and chaired the China Chapter of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), while living in Beijing for five years.

He is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair of the Affiliate Members Board of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and has served on industry boards including the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association (HSMIA), and the International Federation of IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT), bringing key stakeholder relationships in key target markets for Barbados tourism. Thraenhart has been recognized as one of the Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Travel and Hospitality three times, was recognized by Travel Agent Magazine as one of the Top Rising Stars in Travel, and was added to the Hall of Global Tourism Heroes in 2021. An MBA graduate of Cornell University, he is currently completing his doctorate thesis with a focus on 'strengthening tourism integration resilience via stakeholder collaboration' at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Chairman of the BTMI, Mrs. Roseanne Myers confirmed the appointment. “The team at the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc has done a great job of reopening markets, using their knowledge and experience and established trade relationships. We believe that coupled with Jens’ international tourism experience, proven track record in strategy execution and entrepreneurial perspectives, the BTMI will emerge from this period of the pandemic, a much stronger, high-performing destination marketing company that brings increased benefit to our industry and the wider economy. We undertook the challenge to find the best candidate for the CEO position to help shape the way forward, and we are exceptionally pleased to have done so, after a thorough and transparent process. We welcome Jens to the Barbados team.”