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ITAGroup Part of U.S. Virgin Islands “Voluntourism” Project

Des Moines (July 9, 2009) – West Des Moines-based **ITAGroup**, a leader in performance improvement, recently partnered with other companies from the industry to lend support for a club benefiting at-risk children in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The effort was an opportunity to give back to a popular destination for many clients of the participating companies, while also demonstrating the value of voluntourism.

Voluntourism is a growing trend where companies give back to the community in conjunction with an incentive reward trip. Island Meetings & Incentives, the premier destination management company in the Virgin Islands, has worked with organizations like **ITAGroup** for several years on voluntourism initiatives and joined forces with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism to spearhead this particular event.

Kerry Visser, a supervisor at **ITAGroup**, was part of the group of incentive planners and meeting trade journalists who joined volunteers from the Department of Tourism, the Savan Boys Club, the United Way, Island Meetings & Incentives and Marriott’s Frenchman’s Reef Beach Resort for a full day of painting, cleaning and sharing with several of the boys and girls directly benefiting from the effort.



Photo Courtesy of U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism

“This was another example of competitors within an industry coming together for the purpose of giving back and saying *thank you*,” commented Visser on the experience. “It was a very hot day, but nobody seemed to care because we saw how excited the children were to know strangers had come all that way to help enhance something they take great pride in.”

Those participating hope to take their experiences and promote them to companies looking for more than a trip. And while it is a key strategy for the islands, where corporate groups make up roughly 20 percent of tourism, destinations around the world are following suit in an attempt to recover from recent financial downturns.

In addition to the volunteer project, the group toured hotels, restaurants and attractions, and met local travel partners.

About ITAGroup

ITAGroup is a full-service performance improvement company focused on providing sales/dealer incentive programs, employee recognition and rewards, business-to-business loyalty initiatives, product launches, and business meeting and conference coordination. The company, whose clients include FORTUNE 100, 500 and 1000 companies, is employee owned and headquartered in West Des Moines, Iowa, with sales offices across the country. To learn more, visit www.itagroup.com