



Case Study

**How MEP Publisher  
Partnered with us and  
took control of their  
3 Complex Websites**



# CASE STUDY WITH MEP PUBLISHERS

## ABOUT CAROLINE TAYLOR

Caroline is a staff writer and web editor for Caribbean Beat, editor (print and web) for Discover Trinidad & Tobago, and serves on the Board of MEP Publishers.

## ABOUT MEP PUBLISHERS

MEP was founded in 1990 (and incorporated in 1991) by veteran journalist Jeremy Taylor and Joanne Mendes, and now is one of the Caribbean's longest- running and most respected publishing houses.



### CONTACT INFO

Media & Editorial Projects Ltd  
(MEP Publishers) 6 Prospect  
Avenue Maraval, Port of Spain  
Trinidad & Tobago

**(868) 622-3821 / 5813 / 6138**  
**[meppublishers.com](http://meppublishers.com)**

## MEP PUBLISHERS PARTNERED WITH US AND TOOK BACK CONTROL OF THEIR SITES

As websites grow and become more complex over time, so too do the problems surrounding them. That is what MEP Publishers discovered when they attempted to redevelop two of their websites in 2017. A slow server, a compromised theme, and a deadline missed by nearly six months led MEP to get help.

We entered the picture, stabilized and secured their websites, and proved to be an agile and reliable partner for this project and much more. Let's take a look at the specifics.

# CASE STUDY WITH MEP PUBLISHERS

## WHY DID YOU PARTNER WITH US?

MEP Publishers got into the website space very early (particularly among local/regional sites), starting with a custom CMS nearly 20 years ago. We committed to doing what no other Trinidad & Tobago or Caribbean publisher had — putting every article of every issue of our magazines online (including digitizing an archive going back to the early 90s), and presenting them on attractive, user-friendly websites.

Over the years we migrated to Drupal and then to WordPress, but the complexity of the sites (especially Caribbean-Beat.com and DiscoverTnT.com), and the multiple iterations of the sites' coding over the years, resulted in significant overruns and lingering bugs.



*If only we had a dollar for each time a developer said to us, “We’ve never seen anything like this...”*

In early 2017, we started a redevelopment process that was meant to take no more than eight weeks per site. But eight months later, the first site was still unfinished, and the live site had been compromised. The second site had a potentially malicious script running (it turned out to be TimThumb, used by the site's theme), which was regularly taking down our cloud server. This went on for weeks, and the company we were working with was too slow to respond. With our print publications all heading to the press right at this point, it was an unbelievably stressful time.

But there's always opportunity in crisis. We were convinced there had to be a better way to get things in hand, and determined to make sure none of it ever happened again. So late one night, I started doing research, and reached out to a short list of well-regarded companies, laying out our challenges and our goals in significant detail to see which ones could and would respond as quickly and thoroughly as possible. One of those companies was us, and the rest (cue the cliché) is history.

# CASE STUDY WITH MEP PUBLISHERS

## WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH US BEEN LIKE?

It has really met and exceeded our hopes and expectations. They stabilized and secured our two live sites quickly. Then they were an integral part of us successfully completing — at long last — redevelopments of both. They also continue to work with us on tweaks and improvements.

I was so impressed with their speedy and efficient work on those MEP projects that I brought another non-profit site to them ([marionetteschorale.com](http://marionetteschorale.com), which had been stuck on an old theme at WordPress 3.x for far too long), and are just now getting [meppublishers.com](http://meppublishers.com) on a care plan too.



*Their sign-off on emails is “we’ve got your back,” and that’s exactly how it feels.*

Whether I need to urgently fix a bug, find a solution to a problem, or strategize for ways to constantly move the sites forward, the support and technical expertise that they provide continue to bring tremendous peace of mind.

# CASE STUDY WITH MEP PUBLISHERS

## HOW HAS PARTNERING WITH US HELPED YOU?

First of all, all our sites are now healthier, faster, and more secure than they ever have been. It hasn't just been the high-quality website maintenance and development work, but the way they really operate like a Chief Technology Officer for us, and an agile technical partner.

Very often you find organizations like ours — SMBs and non-profits — resisting website maintenance. They think they can't afford it (and sometimes it really is very expensive), or think they're small enough to avoid being a target of a hack, or can manage things internally. Our experience with them has completely changed our thinking on all that. Their packages are affordable and offer great value.

Beyond the work they do directly on our sites, they serve as a sounding board for questions and ideas about how to improve them.



*Their feedback and advice allow us to spend less time trying to troubleshoot things, and instead focus on the growth of our sites and our organizational goals. We're able to make critical decisions and improvements much faster.*

Perhaps most importantly, we feel confident that we're no longer vulnerable to finding ourselves in the position we were last year, and that whatever critical changes and threats emerge for website owners, we have a reliable partner who can help us tackle them, 24/7.

## CASE STUDY WITH MEP PUBLISHERS

### WHAT GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR 2018 THAT YOUR PARTNERSHIP WITH US WILL HELP YOU ACHIEVE?

They've already helped us achieve two: finishing the redevelopment of our magazine websites; and moving to hosting environments that better support all our sites' needs. Now we're able to move from being reactive with our websites to being proactive.



*Our last big project was moving all the sites over to HTTPS. It's something I put off because of how large and complex some of our sites were, but we finally felt equipped to move forward because they were on it*

Of course, we also want to continue to grow the sites' traffic and revenue and we hope that ongoing improvements (including the hosting and HTTPS moves) will continue to fuel that.

With all the technical things safely in their hands, we can turn our attention to developing our websites' content and continue to build their archives. Our chief goal is to add value for our readers and clients in more ways than we've ever had the scope to before now.



*We have greatly valued working with them, and hope we can look forward to a long and fruitful partnership. And...I was even sent a company t-shirt!*

# CASE STUDY WITH MEP PUBLISHERS

## SUCCESS

Your website is one of the most important business assets that you own. Yet, it takes a lot of time and resources to keep it not just afloat but running optimally at all times. MEP Publishers understood that an overextended project and a compromised website were unacceptable, while also recognizing they couldn't do it on their own.

If you're struggling to stabilize performance and keep your asset secure, consider making an investment in your website's future with us.



