THE HISTORY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
Columbus landed on and named Trinidad in 1498. A century later, Spaniards settled the island, which remained under Spanish rule until the British captured it in 1797. During the colonial period, French, Dutch, and British forces fought over possession of Tobago, and the island changed hands 22 times—more often than any other West Indies island. Britain took final possession of Tobago in 1803. The two islands of Trinidad and Tobago were incorporated into a single colony in 1888. Trinidad and Tobago achieved full independence in 1962 and joined the British Commonwealth—becoming a republic in 1976. Trinidad and Tobago is the fifth-largest exporter of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in the world and the single largest supplier of LNG to the U.S., providing two-thirds of all LNG imported into the U.S.

THE CHALLENGE: NO ELECTRONIC INDEXING OF PROPERTY ASSESSMENT RECORDS
One of the issues that the government of Trinidad and Tobago has encountered while attempting to modernize their processes was that none of the property records in each of the country’s 13 Corporations (the equivalent of states) were electronically indexed. Each of the 13 Corporations followed their own guidelines for creating and storing these property description cards and a majority of the documents had been maintained on physical paper cards. There were no existing standards for formatting or content with some cards containing as many as 320 fields of data that needed to be captured. And in many cases, the information on the cards was incomplete or obscured such as listing geographical landmarks as addresses, as well as interchangeably using descriptors—concrete, brick, tile, block—to describe the same physical aspect of different properties (i.e. roofs). The government turned to Thomson Reuters and provided five months to complete the project from the time the go-ahead to proceed was received.

THE SOLUTION: ON-SITE SCANNING AND HOME OFFICE INDEXING
According to Kevin Williams, Thomson Reuters manager for this project, the first order of business was to determine standard terminology to be used as descriptors. “Initially, we had on-site meetings with the entire staff assigned by the government to this project to establish agreed-to indexing definitions and rules,” said Williams. “We pulled a large sampling of cards from each one of the 13 Corporations and together, went through each one and established agreement on standard identification for each of the fields listed on the cards.”

Next, Thomson Reuters set up a scanning operation in Port of Spain, the capital city of Trinidad and Tobago. The scanning team manned by a staff of seven records conversion specialists verified,

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“Because Thomson Reuters utilizes the most current indexing technology today, we were able to easily comply with the requirements of having to provide up to 320 index fields per document.”

**THE BENEFITS: COMPLETE AND ACCURATE INDEXING OF ASSESSMENT RECORDS**

Thomson Reuters’ thorough and detailed process resulted in providing 200,000 electronically indexed records to the government of Trinidad and Tobago. “Even with all the incomplete, inaccurate and redundant information contained on the records we received, we were able to deliver the finished project in the allotted five month window,” said Williams. “In addition, and even more astonishing, we were able to do so with an enviable 99% level of accuracy as certified by the customer.”

KEVIN WILLIAMS
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