CDA is a Caribbean initiative that aims to create a secure, transparent, and interoperable framework for data infrastructure, promoting innovation, collaboration, and digital sovereignty. Datasur from Suriname and Blue NAP Americas from Curaçao are the association's founding members. The association has the support of different Governmental ministers, entities, and private organizations in the region. CDA aims to design and build a regional infrastructure to provide an alternative cloud solution for the area. This will be achieved by creating a federated ecosystem of cloud and edge services, a collaborative network where each member contributes to and benefits from the shared resources and capabilities, all in close collaboration with regional Governments and other stakeholders. Here's an overview:

Key Objectives for the Region

1. **Data Sovereignty:** The CDA is committed to ensuring that control over data remains with governments, private entities, and individuals, aligning with the values and regulations of participating governments and organizations in the region. This emphasis on digital sovereignty empowers stakeholders and instills a sense of control over their data.
2. **Interoperability:** develop, adopt, and implement standards for seamless integration and data exchange between regional data centers, cloud providers and systems.
3. **Transparency:** Foster trust through clear standards, certifications, and governance models.
4. **Innovation:** Encourage collaboration and co-creation between companies, industries, and participating countries to develop advanced data services and applications supporting a strong regional digital economy with global potential.
5. **Scalability:** Facilitate service offerings that address local, regional, and international needs.

CDA and its members believe the wheel does not need to be reinvented and we are open to adopt global best practices.

Core Components of the CDA proposed cluster of interconnected data centers.

1. **Federated Services:** A decentralized network of member data centers offering cloud, edge, and data services while maintaining interoperability.
2. **Trusted Framework:** The CDA proposed cluster of interconnected data center infrastructure will be built on principle of common standards and certifications, ensuring security, privacy, and compliance. This framework is designed to inspire trust and confidence in the data services provided by the CDA members, fostering a secure and transparent data environment.
3. **Data Spaces:** Sector-specific environments (e.g., health, tourism, finance, customs, immigration, law enforcement) where organizations can share data securely and collaboratively.
4. **Self-Description:** CDA members connected to the cluster of interconnected data centers and their services must disclose detailed descriptions to ensure compatibility, transparency, and compliance.

5. **Compliance and Certification:** The CDA will establish mechanisms to certify participating data centers, ensuring they meet the high standards set by the CDA governance framework.

This commitment to compliance and certification is a testament to the CDA's dedication to quality and its mission to provide a secure and transparent data infrastructure.

Governance

1. Mutually agreed-upon global best practices govern CDA infrastructure.
2. It includes stakeholders from various sectors, such as governments, private enterprises, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations.

Potential Benefits

1. **Digital Sovereignty for the Caribbean:** Reduces dependence on non-Caribbean cloud providers, offering a competitive alternative and improving control over own regional collected/shared data.
2. **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** This enables innovative applications by creating a common data-sharing framework for industries such as healthcare, tourism, finance, electronic communications, and others.
3. **Cost Efficiency:** Organizations can avoid vendor lock-in by promoting interoperability and adopting more cost-effective solutions.

Relevance for the Caribbean

CDA's principles of federation, data sovereignty, and interoperability can inspire initiatives for building regional data ecosystems, such as the **federated government cloud** or the **CARICOM Single ICT Space**. In close collaboration with global partners, CDA wants to create the foundation of the **CARICOM** proposed **Single ICT Space**, which could encourage local data sovereignty while ensuring global compatibility and security for the region.

CDA aims to enhance the Caribbean's digital independence by creating a trusted data ecosystem that supports innovation, competitiveness, and the responsible use of data. By doing so, it ensures that regional governments, businesses, and individuals retain control over their digital assets.

Interested in hearing more? Participate in our annual conference to be held in Curacao on April 16 and 17, 2025.