



Think BIG

There are more than 1,200 hotel brands worldwide and most are owned by a few companies¹. Let's look at 'who's who' in the hotel industry 😊.

The Big Picture^{2,3,4}

Over the years, mega hotel chains have emerged worldwide. These companies snapped up smaller brands and independent hotels and created many new brands along the way, allowing them to cater to a wide range of travelers in a highly competitive market (note that most big hotel chains only own a fraction of hotels in their portfolio, they have management or franchise agreements with others). Below is a list some of the biggest hotel brands in the world today.

- The company with the most hotels worldwide is *Jin Jiang International*, a Chinese tourism and hospitality company with 11,959 locations as of 2021.

¹ <https://www.cloudbeds.com/hotel-business/brands/>

² <https://www.decorativeceilingtiles.net/the-biggest-hotel-chains-in-the-world-by-number-of-locations>

³ <https://news.airbnb.com/airbnb-q2-2023-financial-results/#:~:text=In%20Q2%202023%2C%20active%20listings,7%20million%20total%20active%20listings.>

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airbnb>

It is followed by Wyndham Hotels & Resorts (9,280), Marriott International (8,484), H World Group Limited (8,176), Huazhu Hotels Group (7,830), Choice Hotels International (7,500), Hilton Worldwide (7,165), InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG, 6,164), BTG Hotels Group (5,916) and Accor Group (5,300). However, the chain with the most hotel rooms is *Marriott International*, with more than 1.5 million rooms around the globe.

- The hotel chain with the highest number of locations in the US is *Wyndham Hotels & Resorts*, with 6,083 locations across the country. Hotels under this brand can be found in every state. Texas has the most Wyndham locations.
- As for Airbnb, the biggest competitor of hotels, in 2023, it had over 7 million active listings, about five times the number of *Marriott* hotel rooms!

Some of the largest hotel chains in the world had relatively modest debuts. Let's go back in time to see how it all started for a few well-known brands.

Debuts^{5,6,7}

- John Willard *Marriott* started off with a root beer stand in 1927, and after 30 years had acquired enough money to buy his first hotel, Twin Bridges Marriott in Virginia, USA. The motel had 365 rooms, each with two double beds and a black and white television set. Marriott later added a swimming pool that could be converted into an ice rink in winter. When Grosvenor House (owned by Marriot) in London opened its doors to the public in 1929, it aimed to set a new standard for hotels with "better food, wines, services and private accommodation". It was the first hotel in London to have private bathrooms with running water in every room. The Great Room, where the Beatles played in the 1960s', was originally intended as an ice rink but instead became one of the biggest ballrooms in London.
- In 1919, Conrad *Hilton* entered the hotel business, buying the 40-room Mobley Hotel in Cisco, Texas when he was actually on his way to buy a bank. It was a key move that led him to build his own Hilton branded hotel, the Dallas Hilton, which opened in 1925.

⁵ <https://www.cloudbeds.com/hotel-business/brands/>

⁶ <https://www.loveexploring.com/gallerylist/74500/what-the-worlds-biggest-hotel-chains-used-to-look-like>

⁷ <https://www.zippia.com/wyndham-hotels-resorts-careers-1317724/history/>

More than just a hotel, Hilton created a central court where guests could visit a barber, go shopping and send a telegram. Richard Nixon was present at the opening of Hilton Beverly Hills in 1955. Hilton was also one of the first chains to offer TVs in every guest room, amenity kits with sewing materials and booklets with useful phone numbers.

- The *Wyndham* hotel brand is much younger. It was created in 1981 in Dallas, Texas, by Trammell Crow, the president of Trammell Crow Company. The company's origins can be traced to the founding of Hospitality Franchise Systems (HFS) in 1990, created as a vehicle to acquire hotel franchises. By 1995, it had acquired the Days Inn, Howard Johnson, Ramada, and Super 8 brands. HFS then expanded into other businesses, and, in 1997, merged with CUC International to form Cendant Corporation. As the chain grew, it was acquired in 1998 by Patriot American Hospitality, later named Wyndham International. In 2005, the company went private after being acquired by Blackstone Group (BX), a private equity firm, then Cendant bought the Wyndham hotel brand from the Blackstone Group. In 2006, as part of a plan to break Cendant up into four separate companies, its hotel and timeshare businesses were spun off as Wyndham Worldwide.

All major hotel chains have one point in common: a huge number of properties and rooms to maintain. To do so, they need sufficient and competent staff. However, staff shortage is the number ONE issue in the hotel industry nowadays. Fortunately, a mobile tipping solution like Tip&Go can help alleviate this problem by increasing the wages of hotel employees by up to 30%, therefore encouraging them to stay in the industry 😊.

Francis Léonard CEO



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