

Choice Identifies Four Finalists in Agency Review

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Choice Hotels International, worldwide franchisor of Comfort, Quality, Clarion, Sleep, Econo Lodge, Rodeway Inn and MainStay Suites brand hotels, has narrowed to four the number of agencies under consideration to assume its consumer advertising account, estimated at \$35-40 million.

Chosen as finalists from 12 agencies that responded to Choice's request for proposals are Arnold Worldwide, Avrett Free Ginsberg, Bozell Kamstra and Deutsch. All are New York-based with the exception of Arnold Worldwide, which is located in Washington.

The four finalists will present to Choice executives in late January. According to Wayne W. Wielgus, Choice's senior vice president of marketing, a final selection will be made immediately following.

Gray Kirk van Sant, Choice's incumbent agency, has declined participation in the agency review process.

"Choice Hotels and Gray Kirk van Sant enjoyed a 19-year relationship," said Wielgus. "We appreciate their contribution to the success of our brands and wish them the best in all future endeavors."

According to Wielgus, the primary criterion for agency selection is the ability to build strong consumer images and grow business for Choice and its brands, both domestically and internationally. "The agency we ultimately select will have franchising and multiple-brand experience and the ability to build breakthrough creative around our brand strategies," he said.

Bajkowski & Partners, a New York-based firm, is handling the review for Choice.

Choice Hotels International is one of the world's largest lodging franchisors, with more than 5,000 hotels open or under development in 41 countries. For more information on Choice or its seven brands, visit <http://www.choicehotels.com/>.

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