Choice Hotels Launches Upscale Ascend Collection Program

Collection Offers Unique, Historic and Boutique Hotels with Strong Local Brand Equity
Opportunity to Leverage Choice's Powerful Distribution Network

Worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International today announced the launch of its Collection program in North America and the Caribbean, which offers upscale independent hotels the opportunity to affiliate with Choice and leverage the company's robust global distribution network. The new program was introduced to owners at the company's 54th Annual Convention, held in May in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Hotels that affiliate with the Ascend Collection program benefit from a wealth of marketing services tailored specifically to drive property-level occupancies and revenues. The target Ascend Collection hotels are upscale independent, unique, boutique or historic properties with strong local brand equity that want to keep their own names and identities while tapping into a broader distribution channel. Hotels that join the Ascend Collection program tap into a robust reservations and distribution system, one which delivered nearly $2 billion last year in room revenues for its 5,600-plus hotels worldwide.

"We're very pleased with the direction that Choice Hotels has taken with the Ascend Collection program," said Pat Olejniczak, director of sales, Clarion Collection Kress Inn of De Pere, Wisconsin. "We believe that the new affiliation will better identify the upscale and unique properties that our hotel represents. The new affiliation will allow us to continue to market to a high clientele that is looking for a unique stay at an upscale property. The new Ascend Collection affiliation will more clearly define the upscale image that the member properties represent and as a result we're anticipating a much higher average daily rate for our hotel."

Choice is developing a number of wide-ranging consumer marketing programs designed to raise awareness of the Ascend Collection program while targeting the growing number of consumers that seek unique, one-of-a-kind hotels. The company is also embarking on a dedicated Ascend Collection-specific outreach initiative to a number of its established third-party intermediary accounts, which include travel agents and corporate, leisure, government, and motor club travelers.

"The Ascend Collection concept is designed for the growing number of travelers that are looking for upscale hotels that provide authentic, local experiences and great guest service," said Stacy Ragland, vice president, operations, Ascend Collection, Choice Hotels. "We've been very successful with the Clarion Collection program, delivering nearly 40 percent of the system's domestic room revenues in 2007*. By sharpening our focus with more targeted, support for these upscale properties, we anticipate strengthening owners' return on investment and reservation contribution."

Ascend Collection members participate in the Choice Privileges rewards program, which has over 6.5 million members and delivered over 20 percent of Choice franchisee's domestic room revenue last year. Clarion Collection and Ascend Collection hotels receive a number of dedicated support services from the Choice organization, including brand management, opening services, performance management, revenue management and quality assurance.

The transition to the Ascend Collection program is anticipated to occur by October 31, 2008.

About Choice Hotels

Choice Hotels International franchises more than 5,600 hotels, representing more than 455,000 rooms, in the United States and 38 countries and territories. As of March 31, 2008, 986 hotels are under development in the United States, representing 79,276 rooms, and an additional 96 hotels, representing 8,321 rooms, are under development in more than 20 countries and territories. The company's Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Sleep Inn, Clarion, Cambria Suites, MainStay Suites, Suburban Extended Stay Hotel, Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands serve guests worldwide.

Additional corporate information may be found on the Choice Hotels Web site, which may be accessed at http://www.choicehotels.com/.

* Source - May 1, 2008 Ascend Collection Franchise Disclosure Document

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