

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

When it comes to your hotel's pricing approach

LEARN MORE →



IDEAS™
A SAS COMPANY

HOTELS

PASSION FOR HOSPITALITY

NEWS

Pairing mode: Be careful whom you invite to share

By [Barbara Bohn](#) on 7/18/2016

Hotel partnerships are evolving as the “sharing economy” gains momentum, and hotels are leveraging it to—they hope—burnish their brand relevance and serve guests in one stroke.

“A lot of these relationships are born out of the desire to be more relevant to the millennial audience,” says Chris Davidson, executive vice president, global strategy at MMGY Global, a travel and hospitality marketing firm. But “every brand has to consider whether that experience is consistent to their brand promise to their guest.”



Take Uber, which is popping up as a partner even as U.S. cities grapple with how to regulate the upstart ride service. Choice Hotels

Parisian taxi drivers in January protested the increased competition they face from car services such as Uber.

International’s loyalty members can earn Uber rides at check-in. Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide members rack up points when they use the service.

“We evaluate potential partnerships through the lens of our members—how we can create unique travel experiences and strengthen loyalty,” says Starwood, which didn’t quantify how many loyalty members use the program.

But Davidson warns: Customers—particularly millennials—won’t bite unless the partnerships truly add value. Hilton Worldwide’s HHonors members can order an Uber from Hilton’s app. That could be perceived as valuable, Davidson says, but some customers might simply open the Uber app directly.

Ten of Twenty Four Seven Hotels’ sites under management have deleted shuttle services and begun offering guests complimentary airport rides through Uber for Business. Many customers use the service themselves, says Leesa Gibbons, vice president of operations at Twenty Four Seven.

While she doesn’t have financial metrics, Gibbons believes it has saved money. And if there’s a glitch? “If Uber wasn’t available, we’ll ask the guest to jump in a taxi and we’ll pay for it.” Down the road, if a better option is found, there’s no contract to terminate. “We do our best to satisfy the guest,” she says. “That’s the business that we’re in.”

 **Post a comment**

Name

Subject

Comment

SUBMIT CANCEL

Comments are limited to 2000 characters.

Note: Promotional messages or sales solicitations are not appropriate. Messages containing racist, sexist or vulgar language will be removed and can be cause for membership cancellation. For more information see [Terms of Use](#).

 **Comments**