



There has been a lot of recent press from certain hotel chains relating to why they may not be meeting their guidance projections, as well as hinting at the possibility of expanding beyond the now current 48-hour cancellation to a 7-day or flexible cancellation policy. One hotel chain is offering more options, flexibility, and is catering to the business traveler.

Choice Hotels may not be the brand a travel manager thinks of first when it comes to corporate travel, but if you think you know Choice – it may be time to think again. At this year's GBTA conference, Choice Hotels launched their "**We Mean Business**" program, and it caught our eye enough to bring some of the changes to your attention.

Choice Hotels has been listening to travel managers, arrangers, and business travelers, and has identified the following three primary drivers in buying behavior:

- Travel Arranger: Brands they can confidently recommend, located in nearly every top business market
- Travel Manager: Real value to help minimize clients' total cost of travel, plus business essentials like Wi-Fi and breakfast
- Business Traveler: Perks to help keep travelers feel happy, productive, and rewarded when they stay within the requirements of their travel policy

As for the changes – here are a few of the highlights

**Expanding upscale brands:** Over the past few years, Choice has expanded the upscale brands to include over 200 Cambria® Hotels and Ascend Hotel Collection® properties across the U.S.

- Cambria Hotels now has over 30 properties across key business markets including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Dallas, and 60 additional hotels in development. Properties are designed for the modern business traveler, offering extras to feel indulged without breaking the travel budget.
- The Ascend Hotel Collection brings upscale, boutique hotels, offering a unique experience for the guest who doesn't want a cookie-cutter hotel but does want to be inspired by the local community.

**Upper Midscale and Midscale brands:** Choice has also upped its game for its Upper Midscale and Midscale brands for businesses that are already well known among guests.

- The Move to Modern initiative and investment of over \$300 million to revitalize their flagship Comfort® brands, has delivered the highest guest satisfaction scores to date.
- The Sleep Inn® brands have delivered over 90% complete renovations and is the most established brand offering a reliable experience at a midscale price point.

#### **Traveler Loyalty and Rewards:**

Traveler loyalty and rewards programs are important to those road warriors. Choice acknowledges the time away from home for business and has enhanced their Choice Privileges® rewards program to offer extra perks during the week with benefits that can be redeemed right away.

Apparently Choice Hotels does "mean business," and it is always refreshing to see the actions following the input.