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A rendering of the open-concept lobby that will be featured in the Hyatt Centric South Beach in Miami.

Hyatt adds upper-upscale Centric brand to portfolio

By Dennis Nessler
Editor at Large

CHICAGO—Despite launching five brands since 2006, Hyatt Hotels Corporation has identified yet another segment of the market that it believes is underserved and ripe with opportunity. As a result, the company has launched Hyatt Centric, a full-service, lifestyle brand designed for business and leisure travelers.

The new brand is being positioned as an upper-upscale product—between Hyatt's luxury Andaz brand and the Hyatt Regency flag—and as a complement to Hyatt Place, which is the company's limited-service, lifestyle offering. According to Kristine Rose, VP, brands, Hyatt, "We think this brand rounds out our portfolio nicely so that we have created distinct separation between each one of our brands."

Hyatt president and CEO Mark Hopkins commented on the brand as it was officially unveiled to the industry at last month's ALIS conference in Los Angeles. "A very important group of travelers was looking for an experience that, we feel, we can fulfill in a very deliberate and powerful way. This

new brand will allow us to compete in a powerful way in the lifestyle segment, and it will allow us to actually redefine that segment as we grow the brand," he said.

The company is expecting to open some 15 Hyatt Centric locations this summer in major markets such as New York, Paris and Atlanta, in addition to Chicago and Miami, where properties are already in development and expected to open this spring. Rose noted that, while there will be a portion of corporate-owned and managed hotels, the brand will be "mostly franchised." She added that the "brand will not have a prototype, because each one is unique."

The Hyatt Centric name is based on the brand's mission of putting its guest at the center of the action in the best destinations, according to the company. While many of today's brands have been created with Millennial travelers in mind, Rose was quick to point out that Hyatt Centric is "specifically not targeting the Millennial generation."

The brand is looking to attract what it refers to as the "modern explorer." Rose—who described the brand's competitive set as hotels like Kimpton,

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Marriott inks deal to acquire Delta Hotels and Resorts

By Stefani C. O'Connor
Executive News Editor

BETHESDA, MD—The pace for international expansion for mega-chain Marriott International already has been set for 2015 with last month's inking of an agreement to acquire Canada's Delta Hotels and Resorts, keeping the franchisor on point with its growth plans.

The deal includes the brand, management and franchise business being sold by Delta Hotels, LP, a subsidiary of British Columbia Investment Management Corp. (bcIMC), which owns 13 of the hotels with one under development via affiliates.

Pending regulatory approvals, if the transaction closes as expected in second quarter, Marriott would pick up 38 hotels representing some 10,000 rooms in 30 cities spread across the Great White North for approximately \$1.55 billion (C\$1.68 billion).

According to Rick Hoffman, Marriott's EVP/integers, acquisitions and business development, the deal is "an attractive opportunity" to build strength in Canada, where Marriott

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Rick Hoffman
Marriott International

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■ **This year's ALIS conference** offered optimism and opportunity—Hotel Business was there to cover the event. [page 12](#)

■ **Lodging demand in London** has accelerated at a rapid pace due to an increase in tourism and a fast-growing economy. [page 18](#)

■ **Marcus Restaurant Group** has developed the Straight to Your Plate program, which pairs the group's hotels with local purveyors. [page 24](#)

"2015 is probably the best year of this economic cycle... There's no sign of a recession for the next year or two."

—John Silva
Wells Fargo

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