

Money

October 21, 2015

This Hotel Company Is Best at Rewarding Loyal Customers

By Brad Tuttle

This article is based upon a report issued by IdeaWorksCompany.

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If you're a loyal Marriott customer, pat yourself on the back. According to a new study from the consulting firm IdeaWorks, Marriott's rewards program gives loyalty members the most generous payback for future room stays of any hotel company. The average return for money spent on Marriott is 9.4%, meaning that for every \$100 spent with Marriott, a loyalty member can expect \$9.40 worth of value toward a future stay.

The reward programs for Hilton and IHG followed Marriott in terms of generosity, with returns of 8.9% and 8.6%, respectively. Rounding out the top four is Starwood, with an average return of 6.1%. In other words, Marriott's payback is 54% better than what loyalty members get from Starwood, the study found.

The findings are the result of 1,440 queries conducted around the globe, in which the number of points required for a hotel stay was compared to the room rate in dollars—and the value of points was also translated into dollars based on how much spending was required to accrue them. It's a complicated endeavor, and the individual hotel guest might have different results, especially if he or she is a traveler who takes advantage of particularly lucrative promotions that offer extra points. If you're skeptical, take into account that previous studies also named Marriott as having the best rewards program in the hotel business.

As for the upsides of belonging to a rewards program other than Marriott, well, IHG has bragging rights for having the most hotel rooms as well as the most loyalty members in the world, and experts point to the Starwood-branded credit card as a standout because points compiled in the account are worth more than those from cards tied to other hotel companies. Hilton, meanwhile, has been named by some as having the best hotel rewards program for business and luxury travelers.