



Press Release

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## **Six Hotel Loyalty Programs Now Offer No-Annual-Fee Credit Cards**

*Co-branded card offers from major hotel chains offer points that can be exchanged for free room nights and even airline miles.*

September 8, 2004, Shorewood, WI. Unlike the airline industry, the majority of hotel co-branded credit cards do not assess an annual fee. This is part of the strategy to attract cardholders from the same pool of travelers that are candidates for the mileage-earning cards offered by the airlines. These findings are based upon a review by the IdeaWorks Company of the no-annual-fee credit cards associated with the frequent guest programs of the 16 largest U.S. based hotel companies.

**“Hotel Loyalty Programs and No-Annual-Fee Credit Cards”** was released today as a 5-page industry analysis. The loyalty programs in the survey are: Baymont Guest Ovations, Best Western Gold Crown Club, Choice Privileges, Hilton HHonors Worldwide, Hyatt Gold Passport, InterContinental Hotels Priority Club Rewards, LaQuinta Returns, Marriott Rewards, Microtel MicroPass, Omni Hotels Select Guest, Prime Hotel Rewards, Radisson Gold Rewards, Red Lion/WestCoast GuestAwards, Red Roof RediCard, Starwood Preferred Guest and TripRewards.

Three of the credit cards offer the best overall value of those included in the survey. The Best Western MasterCard requires the lowest charge volume to earn 1,000 airline miles, with 5 major carriers participating. The Choice Privileges Platinum Visa has 9 participating airlines; the most of any of the frequent guest programs in the survey. The Hilton HHonors Platinum Card from American Express may offer the best overall compromise of low point-to-reward ratios and a choice of 3 participating airlines. Hilton requires the lowest charge volume for a hotel award; \$2,500 in charges earns a free night at any hotel in the “Opportunity” award category.

The complete 5 page Industry Analysis is available online at the IdeaWorks Company web site: <http://www.ideaworkscompany.com/news/>

**About IdeaWorks:** IdeaWorks was founded in 1996 as a consulting organization building brands through innovation in product, partnership and marketing and, building profits through financial improvement and restructuring. Its international client list includes the hotel, airline, marine, railroad, consumer products and health care sectors. IdeaWorks specializes in brand development, customer service improvement, customer research, competitive analysis, creating partner marketing strategies, cost reduction programs and business restructuring. IdeaWorks brings value as a consultant by researching the expectations of the customer, learning from the wisdom of the client organization and applying innovative ideas to create solutions for clients and consumers.