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MARRIOTT SHORT-TERM RENTALS FOR DIGITAL NOMADS - A CAMPAIGN AIMED AT ADVERTISING MARRIOTT HOMES TO NOMADS AND REMOTE WORKERS

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MARRIOTT SHORT-TERM RENTALS FOR DIGITAL NOMADS - A CAMPAIGN AIMED
AT ADVERTISING MARRIOTT HOMES TO NOMADS AND REMOTE WORKERS

By

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A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
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Executive Summary

Marriott International is one of the most renowned travel companies in the world. They consider themselves a travel program with hotel brands and experiences. In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, Marriott suffered a great loss of revenue similar to other companies in the hospitality industry. Fortunately, the pandemic also brought along some changes to the American way of life and opportunities for people to travel and work remotely. The number of people who reported being digital nomads nearly doubled in the United States from 2018 to 2021, one year after the pandemic (Patterson, 2022). This new demographic of people is looking for housing in different parts of the world for a few weeks or months at a time. This phenomenon gave Marriott an opportunity to offer a solution to a clientele they have never served before. Marriott can utilize this campaign to implement a system to advertise short-term rental homes to the digital nomad community in hundreds of countries around the world. This campaign report conducted primary research about people's attitudes and knowledge of the Marriott brand and their willingness to stay in short-term rentals offered by Marriott Bonvoy. This report analyzed the data and developed subsequent objectives with corresponding strategies in order to guide Marriott International to conquer the new target market. This plan identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that Marriott should take into consideration while following this guide. The recommendations were meticulous including clear tactics to support the strategies and reach the original objectives. Additionally, this campaign plan also lists the limitations of its use and what factors may have affected the outcome of the primary research. Despite that, this report is successful in providing marketing professionals at Marriott with an elaborate plan to increase brand awareness and revenue from the community of digital nomads around the world.

Introduction

Marriott International is a multinational company founded in Washington, D.C. by J. Willard Marriott and his wife Alice Marriott in 1927. The company currently owns and operates hotels and residential homes all over the world. In 2018, Marriott started a pilot program in Europe that would later be known as “Homes & Villas by Marriott.” This new venture proved to be beneficial for the company; as its revenues grew, it expanded the Homes & Villas brand into more destinations including the Caribbean, the United States, and Latin America. This plan outlines a campaign strategy for the Marriott Homes & Villas brand to be marketed to digital nomads. Digital nomads are individuals who travel to different parts of the world while working remotely using technology and the internet. While being a digital nomad was not quite common in 2018, that changed suddenly when Covid-19 forced the world’s population into quarantine and many people started working from home. Three years after the height of the pandemic, 35 million people are working as digital nomads around the world, 14 million more than there were in 2020 (Tagliaferri, 2022). Consequently, there is a new demographic of people traveling periodically and looking for short-term accommodation in different parts of the world. Marriott International has a unique opportunity to market the Homes & Villas section of its business to this audience of digital nomads and remote workers, further expanding availability to additional locations.

Problem statement

The pandemic had a huge impact on Marriott's gross profit. Marriott’s annual gross profit for 2020 was \$1.459B, a 54.65% decline from 2019 (Macrotrends, n.d.). There has been a surge in travel in recent years after the pandemic and Marriott can capitalize on it (Restrepo, 2022).

The term “revenge travel” refers to people wanting to make up for lost time and travel more frequently as they were not able to do during the lockdown (Restrepo, 2022). The increase in leisure travel also includes digital nomads moving from one place to another and looking for month-long accommodations. In a world where remote work is more common than ever, the Homes & Villas venture of Marriott is the perfect solution for remote workers and digital nomads looking for short-term rentals. According to a digital nomad study by Weelance, 32% of digital nomads travel to five to ten countries per year, and the average stay is 1-3 or 3-6 months in each destination. In terms of income, 64% of digital nomads earn an annual salary between \$50,000 to \$250,000 a year (Tagliaferri, 2022). Digital nomads are global citizens who, for the most part, can afford the cost of housing in the places they visit. They are worldwide consumers with modern challenges looking for contemporary solutions. Marriott International is in a unique position to provide those solutions to the growing community of digital nomads. This plan provides a framework for Marriott to advertise their curated homes to a new demographic of customers. This campaign will target an audience of 25-55-year-old males and females who travel while working remotely in different places of the world. This campaign developed a strategic communication plan aiming at informing and changing consumer attitudes about Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy.

Situation analysis

Organizational Analysis

Marriott started as an A&W root beer stand in 1927 (Marriott International, n.d.). Over the next 29 years, they expanded into Hot Shoppes, Inc., selling hot food items and opening franchises until going public in 1953 (Marriott International, n.d.). Marriott later entered the

hotel industry in 1957 when it opened the world's first motor hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Over the next few decades, Marriott opened many more locations in the United States and abroad, making it an international company (Marriott International, n.d.).

Marriott's vision statement is to be the world's favorite travel company. Their core values are putting people first, pursuing excellence, embracing change, acting with integrity, and serving the world (Marriott International, n.d.). The company believes in taking care of its employees in such a way that they will care for their customers as a result. This was the founder's philosophy and has earned Marriott awards as a "Great Place to Work." Marriott embraces innovation, strives to play its role in corporate social responsibility, and values conducting its business with integrity.

The service that Marriott provides can be traced back to the guiding principles that J. Willard Marriott used to build the first root beer stand and the Hot Shoppes restaurant chain. The company grew from just one hotel in 1957 to 2,000 hotels in the year 2000 (Marriott International, n.d.). Today, Marriott has a portfolio of 8,000+ properties in 139 countries and territories to serve their clientele. Over the years, Marriott has acquired independent hotel brands and created new ones to bring the number of total brands in their portfolio to 30 brands. According to Macro Trends, the company's gross profit for one year until September 30, 2022, was \$4.181B, an 82.82% increase year-over-year (Macrotrends, n.d.).

Market Analysis

The hotel industry came to a standstill during the pandemic due to travel restrictions and a fear of the contagious virus, Covid-19. Two years later, the hospitality industry is on its way to pre-pandemic levels of profit (Riaz, 2022). In the hotel business specifically, the revenue per

available room is increasing despite labor shortages (Riaz, 2022). However, despite the pandemic, research shows that the market size of the hotels and motels industry has increased by approximately 7.7% every year between 2018 and 2023 (IBISWorld, n.d).

The hotel industry had to make some adjustments to meet the rising number of returning customers. Some trends have emerged to make the hotel experience safer and more convenient than before the pandemic. Of these trends, the most widely adopted are contactless payments, chatbots, virtual reality tours, mobile check-in service, sustainability, robots delivering room service, and safety and hygiene practices (Revfine, 2019). With these new changes, customers and employees alike are forced to adapt to a new reality that revolutionizes the way Marriott and other hotel chains do business.

The global hotel market is estimated to have 17.5 million guest rooms in approximately 187,000 hotels worldwide (Hotel Tech Report, n.d.). Marriott International is the biggest hotel brand in the world when it comes to its room portfolio, while Wyndham Hotel Group has the most properties, Marriott has about 1.4 million guest rooms, nearly half a million more than Hilton Worldwide, the second runner-up (Hotel Tech Report, n.d.).

The hotel and tourism industry made a revenue of \$198.6 billion in the first year of the pandemic, which inevitably was a 46% drop from 2019 given the halt on travel during that year (Hotel Tech Report, n.d.). Usually, from year to year, the hotel market accounts for 10% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP), and yet in 2020, that same industry only accounted for 5.5% of the global GDP. The US hotel market does not bode well in comparison with the European hotel market. For many years in a row, European hotels have done significantly better in terms of room occupancy and RevPAR performance (Hotel Tech Report, n.d.).

Consumer Analysis

Marriott International customers are categorized into different groups. Each brand of the company advertises and targets a certain buyer persona that is unique to that brand itself. The following table shows Marriott International's target market for each brand.

Table 1

Target Market of Marriott International's various brands (Xaif, 2023).

Brand	Target Group
Marriott Courtyards	Over-the-road travelers
Ritz-Carlton Hotels	Luxury travelers
Marriott Conference Centers	Corporates that conduct meetings
Residence Inn and TownePlace Suites	Targeted at people needing month-long accommodations
Marriott Vacation Clubs	Travelers seeking to shop for timeshares

Note. From "Detailed marketing strategy of Marriott International" - A Case Study. IIDE.

Retrieved April 4, 2023, (<https://iide.co/case-studies/marketing-strategy-marriott-international/>)

The target market that Marriott International has not yet directly addressed is 25–55-year-old digital nomads and remote workers. Since the pandemic, the number of digital nomads has drastically increased from 4.8 million in 2018 to more than 11 million in 2021

(Patterson, 2022). According to Nomadlist, 51% of digital nomads live in hotels, which presents an incredible opportunity for Marriott to advertise to that audience (Patterson, 2022).

The following graphic shows data about the average digital nomad living in 2023, which can inform Marriott Homes & Villas about the buyer persona for marketing purposes.

Table 2

Summary of Digital Nomad Statistics

Digital nomads worldwide	35 million
Digital nomads in the USA	11 million
Average age of a digital nomad	32 years old
Digital nomad average salary	\$119,423
Digital nomad relationships	61% are married, 39% are unmarried
Digital nomad biggest challenge	Finding WiFi
Digital nomad work hours	< 40 hours/week

Note. From “Everything you need to know about digital nomads: 41 amazing statistics.” The Broke Backpacker. (<https://www.thebrokebackpacker.com/digital-nomad-statistics/#sources>).

This table indicates the buyer profile for the average digital nomad consumer that Marriott International will be advertising to. By knowing their challenges, work hours, age, and salary, Marriott can better serve the consumer’s interests.

Competitor Analysis

Marriott International's biggest competitors are Hyatt, Hilton, and the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. These corporations share a significant portion of the hotel market and compete for similar groups of consumers. By understanding the competitor's strengths and weaknesses, Marriott can gain some advantages that can help them earn a significant share of the profits.

Hyatt

Hyatt is an international hospitality company whose portfolio includes over 1,200 hotels and all-inclusive resorts in 72 countries and six continents. Hyatt's total revenue for the full year of 2022 exceeded its pre-pandemic numbers from 2019. They saw a 6.5% growth and expanded their offering with an additional 114,000 rooms (Hotel Online, 2022). According to IBIS World, Hyatt is one of the top five hotel brands in the world and is worth \$154 billion (IBIS World, 2020).

Hyatt launched their "Work from Hyatt" package in August 2020 and expanded it from 25 hotels to 90 hotels in September of the same year. Hyatt's work-from-anywhere package offered digital nomads incentives to book a Hyatt hotel for their stays. With room prices as low as \$139 per night, Hyatt is offering long-term guest amenities such as discounted laundry service, private rooms for business meetings, and suites for large families and workspaces (Thau, 2020).

Hyatt's marketing strategy consists of the 4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion (MBA Skool Team, 2022). Hyatt's product strategy is offering luxury hospitality services, as a

leading premium hotel chain. The company prides itself in offering spacious rooms, event spaces, gardens, high-end amenities, bars, and restaurants in many of its locations. Hyatt's pricing strategy is to offer a premium price for their rooms as they market to upper-class citizens and high-profile business individuals. Hyatt's place and distribution strategy is to have a worldwide presence. As previously stated, Hyatt has hotels on six continents and 72 countries. Lastly, Hyatt's promotion and advertising strategy relies on customer relationship management and customer satisfaction to increase brand value by word of mouth (MBA Skool Team, 2022). Hyatt also offers discounts and loyalty programs to incentivize their clients to book their hotel brands.

Hyatt is a fierce competitor of Marriott International, as they have already taken steps to advertise to and profit from the target market of digital nomads.

Hilton

Hilton is a global corporation founded in 1919 with 19 brands of hotels in 123 countries and territories around the world. Their portfolio contains 7,061 properties worldwide, servicing middle and senior-aged customers on business and leisure travel. Hilton's total revenue was 5.78 billion USD in 2021 (Macrotrends, n.d).

In October 2021, one of Hilton's hotel brands, Tru, posted on Instagram: "Calling all digital nomads: we've got comfortable spaces and free WiFi. At Tru, you can work, study, online shop, and even move your desk around." This post was one of the early indicators that Hilton was starting to cater specifically to the digital nomad community. Hilton's Global Trends report shows that there has been a 30% increase in stays over 7 days between 2019 and 2022 (Hilton,

2022). This report suggests that Hilton Hotels may have already benefited from the rise of remote workers and digital nomads after the pandemic.

After an analysis of Hilton's social media pages, it is noticeable that they synchronize the content posted on their pages. Also, Hilton uses social listening to provide great customer service, especially on platforms such as Twitter. On an average day, Hilton receives 1,500 Twitter mentions (Bredava, 2023). A lot of the tweets are about special promotions, questions, news, and guests tagging Hilton in their photos. Despite some negative comments, a high percentage of their mentions, 32.1% to be exact, is positive, while 20.2% is negative. Of the mentions, 47.7% of the daily tweets are neutral (Bredava, 2023). Hilton uses their platform to answer customer tweets whether good or bad and uses social listening to improve their customer service online. This strategy has been successful in winning customers over, according to Awario.

Hilton is a powerful and effective competitor of Marriott International. Their marketing strategy only has helped them stand out from other hotel brands. Their reach into providing remote working accommodations is a threat to Marriott's Homes and Villas.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts

Founded in 1961, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts is a luxury hotel brand that differentiates itself through the exquisite service they provide and its extremely high customer loyalty. According to Fortune, the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts had a revenue of 4.4 billion dollars in its most recent year, 2022. This hotel chain has over 120 properties in 47 countries and territories (Four Seasons, 2021).

Four Seasons' mission statement is to offer its customers experiences of exceptional quality. They want to be recognized for managing the finest resorts, clubs, and residences in the world (Four Seasons, n.d). The hotel's service culture is based on impeccable customer service, ethical standards, and treating others as one wants to be treated. They claim that their success is due to an understanding of and belief in what they do along with sound financial planning. Their meticulousness has earned them the ranking as one of the world's leading ultra-luxury hotel brands according to the Luxury Travel Expert (LTE, 2023).

Four Season Hotels and Resorts spent under \$100 million on advertising in print and digital in 2022 (MediaRadar, n.d). Their marketing strategy is extensive. In 2009, Four Seasons launched a digital marketing plan to appeal to niche segments of their audience (Shah, 2016). Their strategy included rebuilding their website and updating the features and design on their Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. Four Seasons also created curated content for their YouTube page, portraying the luxurious possibilities at some of their properties. The brand marketing strategy also incorporated content marketing with blogs and microsites to educate and provide insights for customers. One of their projects included a "Have Family, Will Travel" blog that they use to post stories of previous customers who traveled with their children. Following the implementation of their strategy, Four Seasons saw a 20% increase in their digital revenue (Shah, 2016).

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts is a one-of-a-kind competitor of Marriott due to the luxurious services they offer. The company adapts to changes in the market to maximize its reach and better serve its clientele.

While Hyatt, Hilton, and Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts have their advantages, Marriott has advantages of its own. Marriott is the only company of the four to have an established brand for renting Homes and Villas with the same points and advantages as booking hotel rooms. Marriott International has an opportunity to get ahead by leveraging the target market of digital nomads to gain lifelong customers for its Home & Villas brand. Marriott can learn from these competitors by analyzing their digital nomad programs, and by understanding their marketing strategy on print media, and social media. Through detailed planning, Marriott Homes & Villas can become the next leading digital nomad accommodation provider.

Marriott SWOT Analysis

Strengths (Internal)	Weaknesses (Internal)
<p>→ Synchronized Social Media Accounts: The messaging that Marriott posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter is consistent across platforms.</p> <p>→ Long history: Marriott was founded in 1927 in Washington, D.C. making it 96 years since its inception.</p> <p>→ Quality Service: Marriott is widely known for its amazing customer service and recognition of their members' loyalty status.</p> <p>→ Worldwide Reach and Popularity: Marriott is an International company</p>	<p>→ Homes & Villas locations scarcity: Marriott Homes & Villas has a small portfolio of only 2,000 homes in the United States, Europe, the Caribbean, and Latin America.</p> <p>→ Third-party profit sharing: Marriott does not own, clean, or maintain the properties they list on the website. Marriott shares the profit of the homes they book with the owners/managers.</p> <p>→ Lack of popularity: The Marriott Homes and Villas Brand is not well known.</p>

<p>with 30 brands and 8,000+ locations in 139 countries and territories. Marriott is a household name that caters to individuals with different socioeconomic statuses.</p>	<p>→ Youtube Account: The Marriott Youtube account is not consistently updated and lacks a variety of content</p> <p>→ Facebook Strategy: The Facebook strategy lacks clarity and is inconsistent.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities (External)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats (External)</p>
<p>→ Pinterest: Using the platform to feature unique stays at Marriott properties around the world.</p> <p>→ New audience post-pandemic: The opportunity to gain new customers from the increase of digital nomads.</p> <p>→ Using Micro-Influencers: Reaching an audience of digital nomads by partnering with micro-influencers on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.</p> <p>→ Booming travel industry: As of December 2022, the tourism sector has recovered to about 65% of its pre-pandemic levels (UNWTO, 2022).</p> <p>→ Short-term housing rentals: Marriott has the opportunity to offer housing rentals to a new demographic.</p>	<p>→ Hotel Residences and Apartments by Hilton: Hilton has its version of the Marriott Homes & Villas and can offer the same opportunity to digital nomads.</p> <p>→ Four Seasons service and amenities: They offer a luxury experience that Marriott does not provide in most of its brand hotels.</p> <p>→ Hyatt House hotels - Living accommodations: Hyatt has offerings just as enticing as the ones by the Homes & Villas brand of Marriott.</p> <p>→ Loss of momentum: If Marriott waits too long to take action, it will lose the opportunity to take advantage of providing a solution to digital nomads.</p> <p>→ Competitors on Pinterest: Hilton and Hyatt are providing value on Pinterest</p>

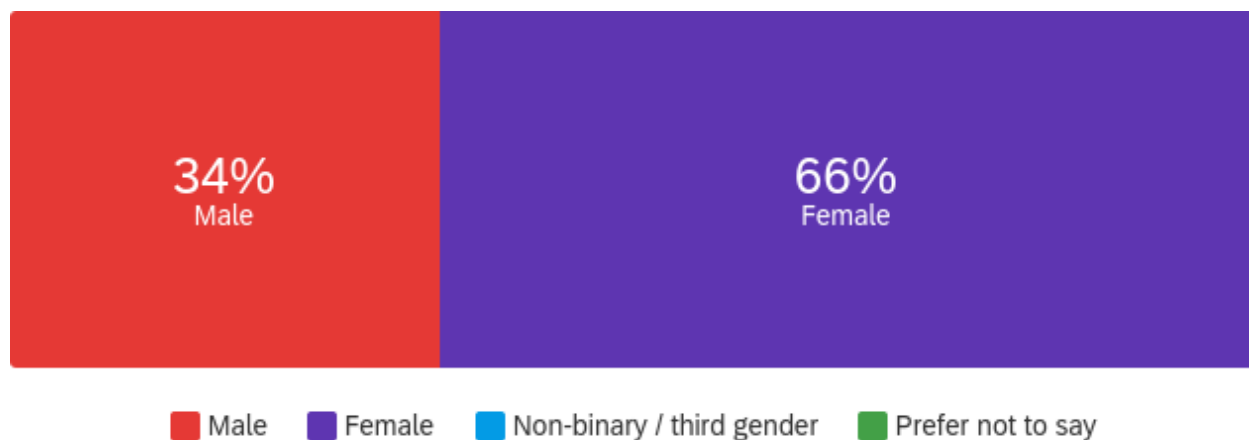
<p>→ Leading in Digital Nomads housing: Marriott Homes & Villas can become the #1 place to stay for short-term rentals.</p> <p>→ Rapid expansion: Marriott has the opportunity to expand the Homes & Villas brand exponentially with the right strategy.</p>	<p>by posting advice, travel guides, and recommendations related to their hotels in many locations around the world. Meanwhile, Marriott is not using the platform to its advantage.</p>
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Primary Research and Findings

A survey was conducted over the course of two weeks to gather data regarding the views, habits, and perspectives of Marriott consumers on the campus of Florida International University in South Miami. The anonymous survey consisted of 13 questions of varying degrees of detail regarding the respondent's interactions with and opinions of the Marriott brand. The survey was hosted on Qualtrics, a web-based software, and distributed online through email, text messages, and word of mouth. The respondents were selected at random through snowball sampling. The study received a total of 33 responses from the survey.

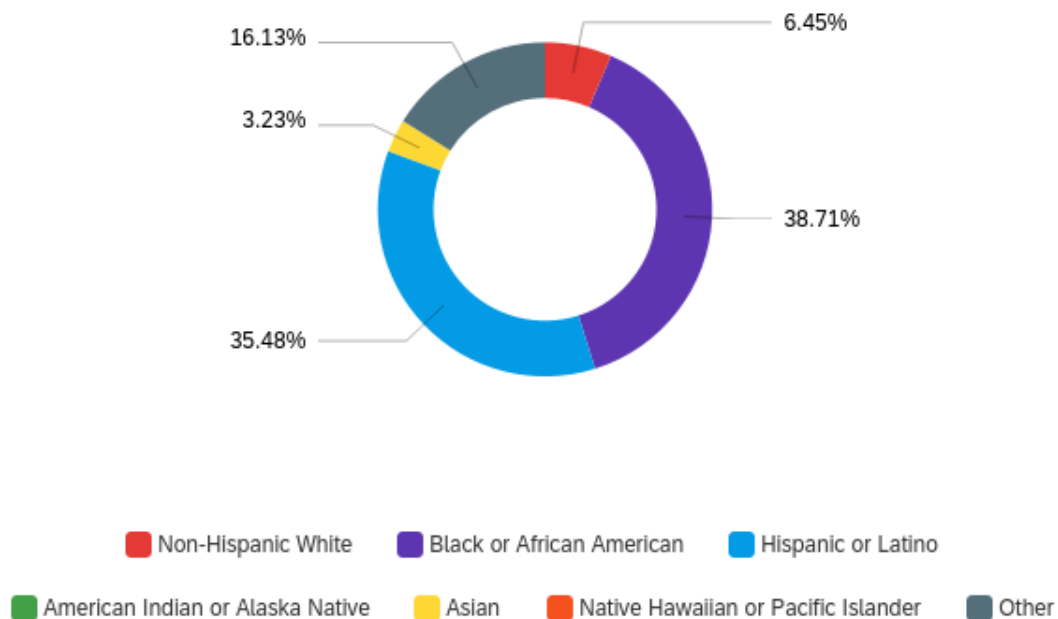
The first three questions were identifying questions that sought to understand the respondent's demographic although no names nor sensitive information was disclosed. The first question asked about the participant's gender and the results showed that 11 respondents were males and 21 were females. More than half of the participants were women which makes up 65.63% of the data received versus 34.38% of the data from men.

Figure 1



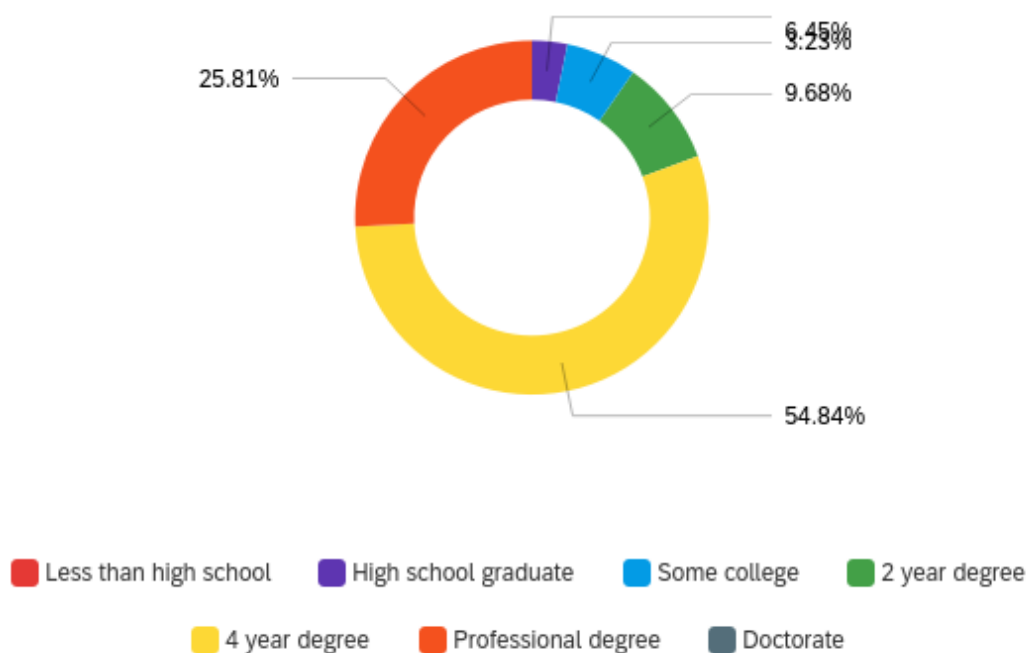
The second question asked about the race/ethnicity of respondents. The data showed there were two Non-Hispanic Whites (6.45%), 12 blacks or African Americans (38.71%), 11 Hispanics or Latinos (35.48%), one Asian (3.23%), and five people who identified as “Other” and made up 16.13% of the respondents.

Figure 2



The third question sought to understand each respondent's educational level. One person was a high school graduate and made up 3.23%, two people had some college education and accounted for 6.45%, and three people were 9.68% of the participants and had earned a 2-year college degree or an associate. 17 of the respondents made up 58.84 percent of people and had a bachelor's or 4-year degree. Lastly, eight of the people who filled out the survey had a professional degree such as a master's or doctorate, and were 25.81% of the participants.

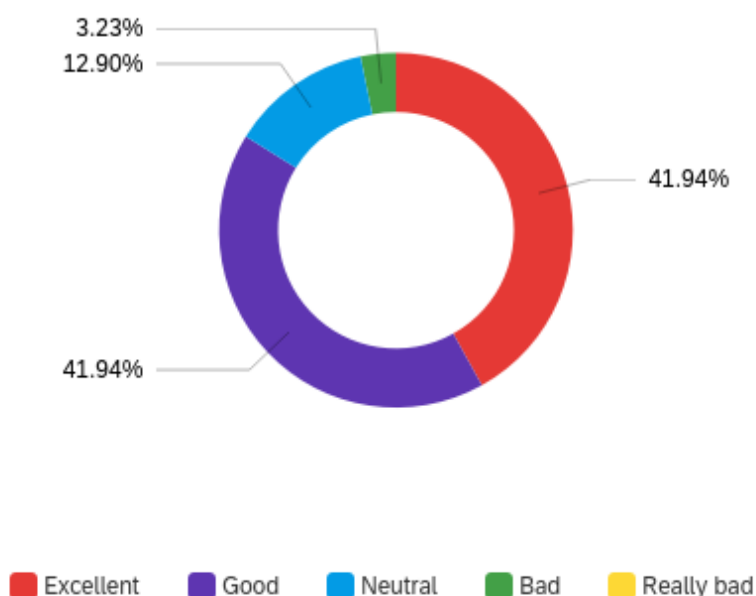
Figure 3



The fourth question asked if they ever heard of or encountered the brand "Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy" and 25.81% of respondents (eight) said yes and an overwhelming 74.19% (23) said no. The fifth question asked if they ever stayed at a Marriott property before and 29 respondents or 93.55% said yes and two or 6.45% of them said no. The sixth question

asked respondents to rate the overall experience at their last stay and nearly 84% of them rated their experience as good and excellent. One person rated their experience as bad, 4 people rated their experience as neutral, 13 rated it as good and another 13 rated it as excellent. The seventh question delved into long-term stays. The question asked: “Given the opportunity, would you stay in a Marriott property for an extended period of time (30+ days)?” The responses were an overwhelming yes. Of all the responses, 26 people, or 83.77% said yes, they would stay in a Marriott property for a month or more, while four people, or 16.13% said no, they would not.

Figure 4



On the eighth question, we asked people to comment on what comes to mind when they think of the Marriott brand. The answers varied, however, the overarching themes were luxury, relaxation, cleanliness, excellent customer service, convenience, safety, worldwide, pet friendly,

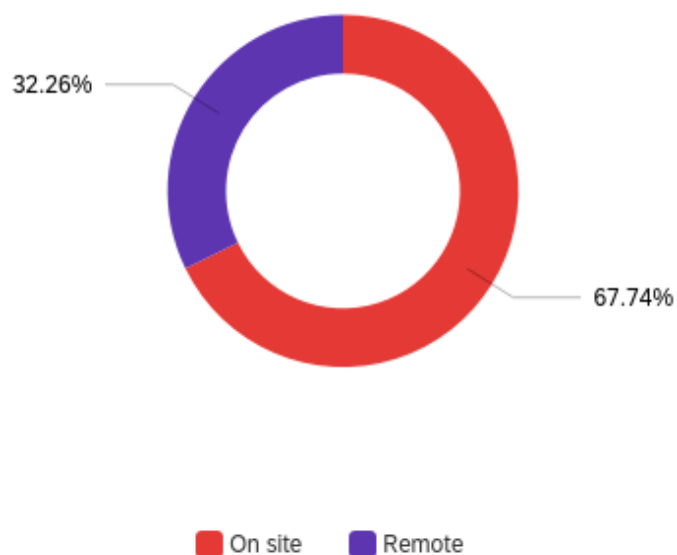
quality, customer loyalty, modern, affordable, established, family time, class, reliability, and inclusiveness.

Figure 5



This word collection provided great insight into what the respondents thought of the Marriott brand. The ninth question asked if respondents worked on-site or remotely/from home and the responses showed that 21 respondents or 64.67% worked on-site, while 10 people or 32.26% worked fully remotely.

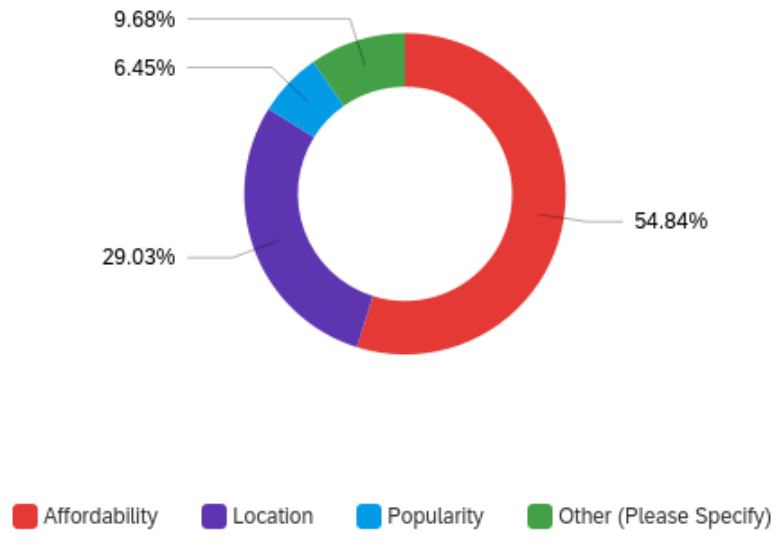
Figure 6



On the tenth question, we asked people if they would book a home rental at Marriott Homes & Villas and 90.28% (28 people) said yes, while 9.68% (three people) said no. The question asked them to elaborate further by asking why and the answers ranged from affordability to great customer service, amenities, and stellar reputation. The people who answered no said they would not because of the interior design of the hotel, and the smell of the property, and others complained of the high price of the rooms.

The twelfth question asked the participants what makes them pick one hotel brand over another and 58.84%, or 17 people said the affordability, 29.03%, or nine people said the location, 6.45%, or two people said the popularity, 9.68%, or three people stated other reasons such as the decor, the reviews, the cleanliness, the aesthetics, and the quality.

Figure 7



The final question asked people to give their additional thoughts on the Marriott Homes & Villas brand and the comments were positive praising the brand for its family values, history, customer service, and comfort.

Figure 8



The survey had internal validity. It provided our research with data on the public's views about the Marriott Bonvoy brand and the extent of their knowledge of the Marriott Homes & Villas brand. This data was partially used to create relevant objectives and strategies to enhance the Marriott brand.

Recommendations

Integrated Marketing Communication Objectives

This strategic communication plan proposes three specific, measurable, and relevant objectives to guide Marriott's acquisition of the digital nomad target market and support the growth and expansion of Marriott Homes and Villas by Marriott Bonvoy. The objectives are as follows:

- Increase the brand awareness of Marriott and Marriott Homes & Villas on social media and in the real world by 35% by the end of the fiscal year.
- By January 2024, raise the number of month-long and extended stays at Marriott and Marriott Homes & Villas by 20% more than its current average.
- Through a digital nomad advertising campaign, increase the number of digital nomads booking short-term rentals through Marriott by 20% within the next six months.

Integrated Marketing Communication Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #1: Influencer and Content Marketing

The first strategy to increase brand awareness would be influencer and content marketing. Marriott can utilize micro-influencers in the digital nomad industry to promote their homes and

hotels on social media and encourage others to book them. Marriott can also partner up with bloggers, and Youtubers to create informative articles and videos offering advice on short-term rentals in foreign countries. The content created can suggest Marriott properties as a great option to consider and thus increase brand visibility.

Tactic 1: The first tactic is to host influencer events to help nomad influencers familiarize themselves with the Marriott brand.

Tactic 2: The second tactic is to use Buffer to schedule posts on different social media platforms.

Tactic 3: The third tactic is to publish monthly content on YouTube to educate the public on the remote work and travel lifestyle.

Tactic 4: The fourth tactic is to create a digital nomad content calendar to coordinate posts on the subject of digital nomad living.

Strategy #2: Advertising and Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The second strategy to increase brand awareness would be advertising and search engine optimization. Marriott can run an advertising campaign on all their social media platforms to popularize the Marriott Homes & Villas brand. Additionally, Marriott can optimize their website for search engines like Google to suggest Marriott Homes & Villas when people search for digital nomad accommodations and short-term rentals. This can both increase the visibility of the brand and bookings on the website.

Tactic 1: The first tactic is to use the hashtag #HomeAwayFromHome on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to bring visibility to the brand.

Tactic 2: The second tactic would be to hire an SEO specialist to evaluate the current optimization of the Marriott website and to develop a plan to improve the site’s visibility on search engines such as Google.

Figure 9

Advertising graphic for the Marriott Digital Nomad campaign “Home Away from Home.”



Note. This graphic was designed by the author, Guethshina Altena, for the Marriott Campaign.

Strategy #3: Long Stay Special Rates and Flexible Booking Options

The strategy to raise the number of month-long and extended stays would be offering special rates and flexible booking options. Similar to Airbnb, Marriott can offer some discounts for stays that are 30 days or longer. The special rates would be proportional to the length of the stay and act as an incentive to encourage digital nomads, and other travelers to book Marriott's home rentals for long periods of time. Furthermore, Marriott can encourage digital nomads to stay at their properties for extended periods by offering a stress and worry-free booking experience. By allowing guests to cancel anytime without a penalty, Marriott can see an increase in the number of bookings from long-term travelers.

Tactic 1: The first tactic is to use the Marriott Bonvoy app to launch long-stay discounts and special rates for guest booking 10 consecutive days or more. The discounted rates would be advertised on social media indicating greater discounts, the longer a guest stays.

Tactic 2: The second tactic is to communicate through email and online advertisements the free cancellation policy for bookings up to 3 days before check-in for a stay 30 days or longer. This option would give guests the freedom to book ahead of time without worrying about a restrictive cancellation policy.

Strategy #4: Amenities and Events

The fourth strategy is offering amenities and events specifically catered to long-term guests and/or digital nomads. Marriott can entice long-term guests by extending their amenities and offering events that are catered to them. Special events would include a series of workout classes, cooking workshops, picnics, city tours, and more.

Tactic 1: The first tactic is to create and publish a video advertising the events and amenities available for long-term guests.

Tactic 2: The second tactic is to create a social media campaign across multiple platforms to advertise the perks of living short-term in Marriott Homes & Villas in iconic travel destinations such as Paris, Rome, and Bali.

Strategy #5: Targeted Advertising, Email Marketing, and Event Marketing

The fifth strategy to increase the number of digital nomads booking home rentals is through targeted advertising, email marketing, and event marketing. Marriott can increase their reach to digital nomads by creating targeted advertisements that are shown to customers who fit the criterion of being digital nomads. The targeted advertising can be on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Youtube which has the goal of drawing in customers who are periodically traveling and working remotely. Through their interactions with digital nomads communities, events, and services, Marriott's marketing team can build an email list of remote workers and send them personalized emails that cater specifically to their accommodation needs. Lastly, Marriott can increase their visibility by sponsoring and hosting events in digital nomads hubs such as Lisbon, Bali, Medellin, Chiang Mai, and Buenos Aires. Through events, Marriott can become well known in digital nomads communities and offer special promotions at their events to encourage home rental bookings.

Tactic 1: The first tactic is for Marriott to sponsor a networking event in Lisbon that offers informational workshops by industry leaders and that will be attended by a wide range of professionals and digital nomads.

Tactic 2: The second tactic is for Marriott to create a remote-work-friendly filter on the website and the app to facilitate digital nomads searching for homes with a quiet environment, comfortable workspace, and high-speed internet.

Tactic 3: The third tactic is for Marriott to use a referral program for digital nomads and remote workers. The people who refer their friends and family would earn a reward to be used at Marriott Homes & Villas for their next stay.

Strategy #6: Partnering up with nomads communities and Remote Work Assistance

The sixth strategy to increase the number of digital nomads booking home rentals is partnering up with nomad communities and providing remote work assistance. Marriott can target a demographic of digital nomads by partnering with other companies that service digital nomads such as co-working spaces and online communities. Marriott can offer discounts to the members of these nomad organizations as an incentive for them to book short-term home rentals. This opportunity will increase the visibility of Marriott Homes & Villas in the face of the appropriate target market. Additionally, Marriott can gain more digital nomad customers by offering work support tailored to digital nomads. These advantages can include but are not limited to high-speed internet, comfortable workstations, business services, and an information package about the location written specifically to guide new short-term residents.

Tactic 1: The first tactic is for Marriott to showcase on social media and their website the work-friendly amenities and upgrades added to homes for remote worker guests.

Tactic 2: The second tactic is for Marriott to offer periodic giveaway opportunities to their digital nomad community partners to bring traction to their website and their email subscriptions.

Each strategy and subsequent tactics were developed precisely to aid in the achievement of a specific objective. The aforementioned strategies and tactics will help Marriott executives reach the three objectives outlined in this communication plan.

Limitations

This campaign research provided a lot of insights into how Marriott can increase revenue from renting homes short-term to digital nomads and remote workers. However, the research had some limitations that should be taken into consideration. This research may not have been as in-depth as the researcher would have wanted. The research was conducted over two weeks and thus time was of the essence. The research lacked financial resources that could have helped in collecting a larger quantity of data from a more diverse group of individuals. Lastly, the research did not include direct opinions and perspectives from active digital nomads in different parts of the world. That limitation was the lack of means to reach an audience that lives thousands of miles away.

The limitations tell us how generalizable the result of this study is. A small study on a college campus tells us simply what the opinions and attitudes toward the brand that specific population has. This study is not applicable in other settings such as a workplace or different country.

The limitation of a two-week time window gave the researcher very little opportunity to reach more respondents which could have affected the result of the study. With more time, the study would have been more thorough, reach more participants and provide a wider perspective on the subject.

The lack of financial resources limited the reach of the survey to the audience abroad who could have provided helpful insights on the matter. Digital nomads are known for always being on the road and to reach them specifically for a survey or a focus group, a financial incentive would have been incredibly important to have them commit a few hours of their time. Lastly, the study relied on a small population made up mostly of college students, however, it would have been important to reach a population of digital nomads and remote workers who live abroad in locations that have Marriott properties and Marriott Homes & Villas.

Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness of this campaign, Marriott should use Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for each objective that was set forward in this plan. To evaluate an increase in brand awareness, Marriott marketers should conduct focus groups, and survey the public to identify whether or not more people recognize the brand after running the trial campaign. Another KPI that would indicate an increase in the Marriott Homes & Villas brand awareness is the number of shares, likes, and followers on the brand's social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and Twitter. Website traffic is also an important indicator of the increase of Marriott Homes & Villa's brand awareness.

To evaluate an increase in long-term stays at Marriott Homes & Villas, the KPIs that should be looked at are the average length of stays, the occupancy rates of the homes, the revenue per available room, and lastly the repeat guest rate. The average length of stay can be used to compare the number to the previous year to determine if there was an increase in month-long stays. The occupancy rate is also a great indicator of whether or not guests are booking for extended periods. The revenue per available room could indicate that guests are

occupying the homes and villas for longer periods and thus generating more revenue for Marriott. Lastly, the repeat guest rate demonstrates which guest has chosen to stay at a Marriott Homes or property again after an initial stay. That KPI is indicative of repeated business and is correlated to a positive view of the business.

When it comes to evaluating the increase in digital nomads booking Marriott homes, the conversion rate and Net Promoter Score (NPS) would indicate whether the advertising to the digital nomad community has been successful. The conversion rate would measure which website visitors go from simply browsing to completing a booking on the Marriott Homes and Villas website. That KPI would indicate the success of the campaign in changing the audience's behavior. The Net Promoter Score would measure how satisfied and how loyal digital nomads are to the Marriott Homes & Villas brand. Those key performance indicators would give marketers the insight they need to update the campaign as necessary.

Conclusion

All and all, the Marriott Homes & Villas campaign will be successful if well executed. With the proper budget and time, Marriott will be able to reach all three objectives by using the detailed strategies outlined in this plan. Despite the limitations of the research, the results found are relevant and can help make an impact on Marriott's marketing strategy for the new target audience of digital nomads and remote workers. Once completed, this marketing campaign should be evaluated based on each objective with their respective Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Although this campaign is a complete plan to gain a new target market, revisions and updates may be necessary to adjust the strategies as the public's response informs of the development of the campaign. This plan was meant to provide insight into the opportunity to

expand the reach of Marriott Homes & Villas into more locations while gaining new consumers all over the world. While it may have missed certain aspects of the Marriott Homes & Villas brand, this campaign served its purpose in proposing detailed objectives and strategies to grow the population of people who book Marriott properties for long-term stays all over the world.

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Appendix: Survey Responses

Q2 - What is your gender?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your gender?	1.00	2.00	1.66	0.47	0.23	32

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Male	34.38%	11
2	Female	65.63%	21
3	Non-binary / third gender	0.00%	0
4	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	32

Q3 - Please indicate your race/ethnicity.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Please indicate your race/ethnicity.	1.00	7.00	3.19	1.82	3.32	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Non-Hispanic White	6.45%	2
2	Black or African American	38.71%	12
3	Hispanic or Latino	35.48%	11
4	American Indian or Alaska Native	0.00%	0
5	Asian	3.23%	1
6	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
7	Other	16.13%	5
	Total	100%	31

Q3 - Please indicate your educational level.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Please indicate your educational level.	2.00	6.00	4.94	0.95	0.90	31

#	Answer	%	Count
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1	Less than high school	0.00%	0
2	High school graduate	3.23%	1
3	Some college	6.45%	2
4	2 year degree	9.68%	3
5	4 year degree	54.84%	17
6	Professional degree	25.81%	8
15	Doctorate	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	31

Q4 - Have you heard of or encountered the brand "Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy"?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you heard of or encountered the brand "Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy?"	1.00	2.00	1.74	0.44	0.19	31

#	Answer	%	Count
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1	Yes	25.81%	8
2	No	74.19%	23
	Total	100%	31

Q5 - Have you stayed at a Marriott property before?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you stayed at a Marriott property before?	1.00	2.00	1.06	0.25	0.06	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	93.55%	29
2	No	6.45%	2
	Total	100%	31

Q6 - What was your overall experience at your last stay?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
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1	What was your overall experience at your last stay?	1.00	4.00	1.77	0.79	0.63	31
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#	Answer	%	Count
1	Excellent	41.94%	13
2	Good	41.94%	13
3	Neutral	12.90%	4
4	Bad	3.23%	1
5	Really bad	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	31

Q7 - Given the opportunity, would you stay in a Marriott property for an extended period of time (30+ days)?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
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1	Given the opportunity, would you stay in a Marriott property for an extended period of time (30+ days)? - Selected Choice	1.00	2.00	1.16	0.37	0.14	31
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#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	83.87%	26
2	No	16.13%	5
4	Other (Explain)	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	31

Q7 - When you think of the Marriott brand, what comes to mind?

Hotel

Luxury

Neat, clean, space. good customer service

Good

Relaxation

Convenience, Luxury, Safety

Clean

Pet friendly

A hotel brand that has locations all over the world

Quality

Cleanliness and solid customer service

Good quality, abundance of hotels.

One of the very best places to relax oneself in a short period of time

Upgrade, no carpet in the rooms, modern bed, rooms and decor. Need improvement with scent of the buildings.

hotels

Big hotel brand

Modern

Quality, reasonably priced mid luxury

JW Marriott

Affordable

Affordable luxury

Luxury

Relaxation, family time

Luxury stay available worldwide

Establish hotel brand

Class

Well-known/clean/reliable

I don't really have an opinion on the brand. I think about hotels.

Clean, inclusive, accommodative, excellent service

Great Hospitality

Tight bed sheets

Q8 - Do you work on site or remote/from home?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you work on site or remote/from home?	1.00	2.00	1.32	0.47	0.22	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	On site	67.74%	21
2	Remote	32.26%	10
	Total	100%	31

Q9 - Given the opportunity, would you book a home rental at Marriott Homes & Villas?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Given the opportunity, would you book a home rental at Marriott Homes & Villas?	1.00	2.00	1.10	0.30	0.09	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	90.32%	28
2	No	9.68%	3
	Total	100%	31

Q10 - Why or why not?

Don't mind

If I'm looking for an up-scale, quality stay then I would consider Marriott

I'm sure I would have a positive experience.

Nice

Because Marriott has great customer service it's clean and nice

Because I like it

Good value

Given opportunity

Yes because I plan to work remotely at some point in my life and it would be great to have all the amenities if the hotel.

For the experience

Yes if I was working remote and looking to tour different cities for months at a time to figure out a place to live, I would.

I trust the Marriott brand and reputation.

I like the environment

Needs improvement , needs to look more modern, smell of the facilities are very undesirable .

seems cool

If the price is right

Clean and modern

Willing to try it

If it was reasonably priced

Sounds a good idea

I prefer a hotel with amenities when traveling

Convenient

I enjoy their service

Established reliable

Relaxation

Idk the brand

I think it would be a comfortable stay.

It is clean and trustable

I had a great Experience with Marriot

Cause it's free room service so they clean for you

Q11 - When traveling, what makes you pick one hotel brand over another?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	When traveling, what makes you pick one hotel brand over another? - Selected Choice	1.00	6.00	1.97	1.53	2.35	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Affordability	54.84%	17
2	Location	29.03%	9
4	Popularity	6.45%	2
6	Other (Please Specify)	9.68%	3
	Total	100%	31

Q12 - Other (Please Specify)

Quality & Affordability

Decor, beauty, reviews, clean.

Aesthetics

Q13 - Please add any additional thoughts on the Marriott Homes & Villas Brand.

Marriott is a family brand that has a large loyalty program.

Haven't tried it yet, but definitely love all products and services that MARRIOTT offers.

The hotels and houses needs a big update. I feel like it all depends on the locations but deep down they all need to be remodel, remove the carpets, bring fresh air, and fresh scents, clean and clean and clean. The odor of mold, cigarettes, sweat, and old furniture in the hallway and rooms doesn't sit well with everyone.

It could find ways to become more distinctive from other hotel franchises

I think they would be comfy

Greatnesssss

Student Biography

Guethshina was born and raised in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She is passionate about graphic design, creative writing, public speaking, and strategic communications. She has worked at Florida International University for eight consecutive years. In Spring 2023, she will earn her Master's degree in Global Strategic Communications.

Guethshina is a highly organized and meticulous individual who aims to make a difference through her job. At the start of her college years, she worked at the Panther Press Newspaper and Magazine as a staff writer and was later promoted to News Assistant Director. In her time at the newspaper, she wrote and published over 100 news articles and oversaw a team of contributing and staff writers. Guethshina then took her skills to TracFone Wireless Corporate Headquarters where she created the company's monthly newsletter, as a corporate communications intern for two semesters.

Guethshina also works on causes close to her heart. As a fervent advocate for mental health, Guethshina worked at the FIU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) as a Peer Educator. She educated students on topics such as consent, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, stress and time management. Today, Guethshina volunteers at Kristi House in Miami helping the organization provide treatment, advocacy, and coordination of services for child trauma.

Guethshina currently works as a Program Coordinator at the Global Sales Program at the FIU College of Business. She uses her creative skills to promote the program and plan sales tournaments and networking events for students, sponsors, and faculty. After graduation,

Guethshina hopes to work in an agency where she can make a difference for her clients and provide strategic communication recommendations and creative design services.