



HEADQUARTERS

BETHESDA, MD

With 30 brands and more than 6,500 properties in 127 countries, Marriott International is a leading corporation in the hospitality industry.

This January, Marriott International opened its doors to DECA. We spent the day touring the headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, learning about trends and innovation in the hospitality industry, experiencing Marriott’s Innovation Labs and Test Kitchen, and engaging with Marriott executives.

HISTORY OF OPPORTUNITY

Anyone who walks into Marriott International’s headquarters can quickly see that the company values its history and they’ve worked to incorporate that history into the workplace. A timeline on the wall shows the company’s trajectory, starting with the A&W root beer franchise where it all began.

In 1927, J. Willard Marriott and his new wife, Alice, drove their Model T from Utah to Washington, D.C. Proving his opportunistic nature and entrepreneurial spirit right away, J.

Willard knew exactly what business would thrive in the hot and humid D.C. air. They opened The Hot Shoppe, a nine-seat root beer stand, where patrons could get an icy mug of root beer for a nickel. As the seasons changed, the franchise grew quickly, adding hot food to the menu and opening new locations across the East Coast. It ultimately became the first fast food business, offering milkshakes and burgers to customers in their cars.

Ten years later, they got their first taste of the travel industry when J. Willard noticed that many travelers would come to their restaurant for takeaway items, like coffee and muffins, before catching flights. Hot Shoppes began delivering boxed lunches to passengers at Hoover Airport, making it the first in-flight airline catering company.

Marriott made its historic shift to the hotel industry in 1957 when Bill Marriott opened the world’s first motor hotel in Arlington, VA. Over the next 25 years, Marriott became a diverse global enterprise, and Bill Marriott became a visionary CEO whose leadership transformed the hospitality industry.



1927

Newlyweds J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott, along with business partner Hugh Colton, open the first A&W root beer franchise in Washington, D.C., named “Hop Shoppes.”



1969

Marriott opens its first international hotel in Acapulco, Mexico.



1937

“In-flight” airline catering debuts when Hot Shoppes begins delivery of boxed lunches to passengers at Hoover Airport, south of Washington, D.C.



1972

Marriott partners with Sun Line, becoming the first lodging company to enter the cruise business.



MARRIOTT'S CORE VALUES

When asked about leadership, Ms. Harrison's response was a simple question, "what do you think?" She went on to say that this is a lesson she learned from her father, former CEO and current Executive Chairman of the Board of Marriott, J.W. Marriott, Jr. Her dad would tell her these were the four most important words in leadership. Good leaders give people the opportunity to express their opinions. "We value our people at Marriott. We want to give them a voice and let them know they matter."



PUT PEOPLE FIRST



PURSUE EXCELLENCE



ACT WITH INTEGRITY



EMBRACE CHANGE



SERVE OUR WORLD

CONTINUING THE TRADITION

Marriott's history does not live in the past. The foundation that was built in still lives on today. Debbie Marriott Harrison, Global Officer, Marriott Culture and Business Councils, is the granddaughter of Marriott International's founders. She is passionate about the company's culture, sharing that they aim to live out the same mission today – to open doors of opportunity. Her grandfather used to say that "if you take care of your employees, they'll take care of your customers." Marriott's core values are evidence of the original priorities living on today.



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1983

Marriott debuts lodging for business travelers with the first Courtyard hotel.



1987

Marriott acquires Residence Inn and pioneers the extended-stay lodging business.



1984

The first JW Marriott, named in honor of founder J. Willard Marriott, opens in downtown Washington, D.C.



1988

Marriott opens its 500th hotel in Warsaw, Poland, the first western-managed hotel in Eastern Europe.

NOW TRENDING

MARRIOTT'S MARKETING COMMAND CENTER

On the ground floor of Marriott's headquarters, there are pieces that welcome you like any other office building – a reception desk, modern couches, hallways and stairs leading to offices and conferences spaces. Any visitor is sure to be drawn to the space set off to the right. Glass walls, flashing screens and a selfie stand – this is M Live, the social media hub of Marriott.

This glass-enclosed social nerve center houses a dozen Marriott employees and even more screens displaying real-time action around the globe. Take one glance around and you'll see scrolling Twitter feeds and Instagram photos, graphs and charts of data, digital maps with yellow dots.

While overwhelming to an outsider, Katie Gantt, Digital Content Producer for Marriott International, gave us the inside scoop.

KEEPING UP WITH THE PROPERTIES

With the use of a technology called geo-fencing, they can see every public posting on a social-media platform done from within their properties. For example, if someone posts a wedding or engagement photo from one of their properties, the M Live team will reach out and contact the front desk to let them know. The hotel will often then reach out to the customers and give them a room upgrade, a special dinner – something to show that Marriott values them. If a guest posts about a concern or an issue with their stay, the staff sees it and reaches out directly.

KEEPING UP WITH THE TRENDS

Much like within other departments of Marriott, the M Live team is looking for opportunities. They constantly keep up with



what's trending so that they can better engage with guests around the globe.

At the peak of the Pokémon craze, one man posted about being the first person to catch all the Pokémon in the U.S. Marriott reached out to sponsor his international quest with free hotels in Paris, Hong Kong and Sydney.

KEEPING IT REAL

Gantt noted that one of the goals of M Live is to have Marriott's brand be part of the real, personal conversation. Social media is nonstop. They work round the clock to sift through guests posts from Marriott properties around the world. They see it as an opportunity to truly engage with their guests, even if they



1997

Marriott acquires Renaissance Hotel Group, doubling Marriott's presence overseas.



2004

The first Bulgari Hotels & Resorts property opens in Milan, Italy.



1999

Marriott acquires ExecuStay corporate housing company.



2009

Marriott launches Autograph Collection, a new brand of upscale and luxury independent hotels.

DECA SPOTLIGHT

are thousands of miles away in their Bethesda, MD office.

With a constant flow of information and minute-by-minute data tracking, Marriott is able to identify trends and create new content based on those trends across the Marriott brands, securing a spot as a leader in the digital space. Plus, M Live operates in service of Marriott's core values. The goal is simple – to enhance the experience of their customers.



DECA ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: RAY BENNETT

Ray Bennett has been Chief Global Officer of Global Operations at Marriott International, Inc. since June 2015. Mr. Bennett is responsible for the design, development and deployment of products and services for all lodging brands across Marriott's 6,700 hotels globally at Marriott International, Inc.

After working for a major hotel brand for 18 years, travel is a big part of Bennett's life. Looking back, though, that hasn't always been the case. In fact, it wasn't until he qualified for ICDC that he got to experience the world he now knows so well. "My first time really traveling was to ICDC in Houston," Bennett says. "It was my first time out of Detroit, my first time on a plane. DECA really opened my eyes to the opportunities that were out there." Bennett took home DECA Glass for accounting and he began his career in that same field. He entered the hospitality industry through food and beverage.

Bennett was running a Pepsi manufacturing plant in the late '90s when a friend recruited him to run the eastern half of Marriott International's food distribution company, which supplied and transported food for Marriott hotels and other clients. When Marriott began selling off the remnants of its food distribution business in 2003, Bennett was tasked with something new: learning the hotel industry inside and out.

“The more experiences you have, the greater chance you have of finding things you are passionate about.”



2012

Arne Sorensen becomes President and CEO of Marriott International.



2015

Marriott International acquires Delta Hotels and Resorts®; Becomes the Largest Full-Service Hotelier in Canada.



2013

Marriott debuts MOXY HOTELS – The company's first entry into the economy tier, three-star hospitality segment in Europe.

2016

Marriott International acquires Starwood Hotels & Resorts, creating the world's largest hotel company with 5,700+ properties offering more than 1.1 million rooms across 30 brands in over 110 countries.