



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on January 26, 2011

Marriott Says It Will Pull Porn From Hotel Rooms

Pro-family groups are cheering the decision of Marriot International, one of the nation's leading hotel chains, to remove access to pornographic content from its in-room televisions, beginning with new hotel constructions in 2013. Marriott joins Omni Hotels, which pulled "adult content" from room entertainment menus in 1999, as the only large hospitality chains to pull the plug on guest access to pornography.



Phil Burress of the Ohio-based Citizens for Community Values (CCV) called the move a "good start," following the group's 2009 campaign that exposed a company called LodgeNet as the nation's largest provider of in-room pornography to hotels. Reportedly one of LodgeNet's biggest clients was Marriott. Burress said that his group also met with representatives from Marriott to "strongly object to their pornography sales."

Following the announcement that the hotel chain would drop porn, Burress told Focus on the Family's CitizenLink, "There's no question that Marriott was feeling the heat, and may have lost tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue from people who refuse to do business with them."

While Marriott told [USA Today](#) that the move away from in-room porn "coincides with a pending shift to new, in-room entertainment technology," it also comes, wrote *USA Today* reporter Barbara De Lollis, "after years of discussing whether the availability of adult entertainment in guest rooms ... is appropriate and whether secure safeguards exist to keep it away from children."

In-room pornography has traditionally been a "profitable but little-discussed revenue stream for hotels," DeLollis noted, with most of the large hotel chains offering it to guests. But industry reports indicate that there may be a steady move away from the option, and it has more to do with overall economics and than from any pressure applied by concerned citizens.

According to industry analysts, LodgeNet has been losing revenue over the past few years as a tough economy has prompted travelers to cut back on extra spending, and as consumers have begun carrying their entertainment with them on iPods, smart phones, and lap tops.

A January 21st *USA Today* survey of travelers staying in hotels found that 81 percent do not watch pay-per-view movies in their rooms, with 66 percent opting for free TV, and around 14 percent watching DVDs or accessing content from their laptops or smart phones.

In a press statement Marriott offered lip-service to the need for keeping pornography away from children, insisting that it has always been company practice "to keep adult content out of the reach of



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children and unavailable to any adult who chooses not to view it. We have strong controls in place that allow guests to block these materials.”

But with rapidly changing technology, including the rise of Internet-based movies and video-on-demand content, It is possible that Marriott and other hotels will be jettisoning one porn delivery system for more easily disguised form.

“We are working with in-room entertainment providers and technology vendors to transition to the next generation of in-room entertainment,” explained the Marriott press statement. “This new platform of Internet-based video-on-demand will facilitate our exit from the traditional hotel video systems that included adult content in the menu selection, and will also provide guests greater choice and control over what they watch across our system.”

In reality, that “control” would likely mean the freedom for hotel guests to access or block a wide variety of entertainment available to them, including pornography, and to do it more anonymously than has been possible in the past.

The bottom line, warns technology experts, is that without constant pressure from concerned individuals, families, and groups to keep hotels accountable, the potential revenue available from clickable online pornography in guest rooms is just too tempting for profit-minded hotel executives to resist.

Photo: Marriott International headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland



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