

## Renaissance aims for young, hip business travelers in hotel brand refresh

By Ramsey Qubein October 21, 2015 11:15 am



*AWOL Nation band performing at the Renaissance Long Beach Photo credit, Renaissance Hotels*

Like so many other major hotel chains these days, Renaissance Hotels and Resorts is upending its conservative, buttoned-up nature to double down on the next gen business traveler, the kind that likes to work hard and play hard, even when traveling for business. As part of its new effort called Business Unusual, Renaissance is investing in everything from musical acts to boutique design in an attempt to attract the coveted millennials.

To target the younger demographic, Renaissance is shaking things up with custom content available at its hotels and online. The brand premiered three music videos by musical talent like The Lone Bellow and A-Trak. The Navigator (the snazzy name the hotel gives its concierge team) TV series airs on the AXS cable TV channel and was filmed at various Renaissance properties.

Marriott, the parent company of Renaissance, has already been [investing in live music to attract millennials](#), and the hotel chain is continuing to get creative. Renaissance's new Play to Stay program gives aspiring artists and musicians the chance to stay at a hotel for free in exchange for recording an impromptu song or hold a jam session for guests at the hotel. Videos are available for people to vote on their favorites, and the winner receiving a gift card worth \$10,000 to Renaissance Hotels.



*Renaissance Chicago following its Wanderlust renovation Photo credit, Renaissance Hotels*

This is all part of a larger effort, dubbed Wanderlust, to highlight the playful, contemporary design that gives its hotels more of a boutique vibe. Guests will find rotating works of local art, books about the area, and design pieces in the lobby. Two hotels are in the works to fully showcase the new design concept, Renaissance Montreal Downtown and Renaissance New York Midtown, but soon all Renaissance hotels will be in on the fun.



*Lobby bathroom of Renaissance Chicago Photo credit, Renaissance Hotels*

Hotels will launch nightly “bar rituals” on the house to encourage guests to try local craft beers or curated cocktails. And who doesn’t like free drinks? Renaissance says it wants to take the focus off the 9-to-5 and create a new space for the 5-to-9 scene.

A new partnership with Bizarre Foods star Andrew Zimmern is reshaping the menus at many hotels to offer more, um, unusual fare. While the sheep’s head and calf’s brain that he has sampled on his show won’t be on the menu, things like frozen passion fruit mousse and veal tongue sliders will.



*Renaissance Hotel Chicago Photo credit, Renaissance Hotels*

The new “business unusual” strategy comes at a time when many hotel brands are laser focused on earning the loyalty of younger travelers who want a hotel tailored around their tastes and style.

Vice President of Marketing for Renaissance, Dan Vinh says, “We want to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurial business travelers – who crave the unexpected and provide them with experiences worth sharing. Their experience at a Renaissance Hotel may give them a new creative idea, help them do their jobs better or give them a fun story they can take home or to their next meeting.”

**Business Travel, Hotels**

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