



# KNIGHTS NEWS

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## **A MESSAGE FROM RAJIV BHATIA**

Dear Knights Inn® Family,

It is with great pride that I reflect back on 2008. Obviously, it was a challenging year for all of us. Everyone, in one way or another, has been touched by the condition of our nation's economic situation. We were not immune to what went on in the world last year, but we still grew at a brisk pace and we still improved our quality.

One of our primary goals in 2008 was to reach the 300 property milestone. The brand surpassed that mark with the opening of our property in Pharr, TX. That is quite an accomplishment. As of 2004, we had only 205 properties in the system. That is an increase of 45% percent over that time span.

Knights Inn is now larger than at any time in our history. That's an important achievement for us because system growth is an indicator of health. Clearly, this shows that our brand is extremely well fit and strong.

This is something we accomplished together! And we did it in spite of the economic challenging times. It would not have been possible without the dedication to quality and service by all our property owners. That is something we can all take pride in, and it is something that we should keep in mind as we collectively face, what will likely be, another economically challenging year in 2009.

Based on what we accomplished together in 2008, I have no doubt that we will navigate our way through these choppy economic waters and meet these challenges head on. Remember, in tough times, strong brands become great brands.

I am excited about what lies ahead. We have proven that we have the ability to deliver on our promise to keep the customer satisfied. Let's stay focused on that as we continue to grow and reach new heights. Our dedication to quality and service makes our future bright.

Warmest Regards,

Rajiv Bhatia  
Brand Senior Vice President





## TRADING DOWN IS UP!

We are all aware of the uncertain economic climate facing America today. Consumers, faced with tightening budgets and the rising cost of travel, are being extremely cautious.

In times like this, it is important to stay mindful that this is actually good news for the economy brand hotel. We are always fairly well insulated from economic woes that engulf our country. Typically, when things get tight, consumers start "trading down."

For Knights Inn, that is our opportunity!

Travel does not usually stop because of an economic downturn. Instead, corporate and business travelers look to "trade down" on their accommodations. That, obviously, translates into a higher demand for lower cost hotels.

Travelers are now discovering that they can still enjoy comfort after a "trade down" from an upscale brand. It is the hotel that can deliver the essentials - easy check-in, a clean room, a comfortable bed, a pleasant shower, a simple breakfast, free Internet access and big screen televisions – that will succeed in luring customers.

The economy segment is not a bad place to be these days. Every segment, except for luxury, winds up getting someone else's guests. Knights Inn has the added good fortune of being able to capitalize on a strong, well-regarded company name – Wyndham Hotel Group. There is no question that consumers want to trade down within the same family of brands. That is because they still get their Wyndham RewardsSM points and also can count on superior accommodations.

Promoting a hotel experience and offering top quality service becomes even more essential when guests are looking for the least expensive, yet comfortable option. Now is the time to spruce things up!

We must position ourselves to gain customers by constantly demonstrating superior quality and enormously friendly service. Let's keep providing guests with a clean, comfortable, friendly and relaxing atmosphere.

Our goal is to make the guest say, 'Wow, it's not that different than hotels that cost way more.' The services are there at a substantial savings."

## MAKING A CONNECTION CREATES LOYALTY

Everyone who walks into your lobby has just been on an adventure. Whether it is with a briefcase in hand or kids in tow, they are likely tired and anxious to start their stay. In all likelihood, they all have extremely high expectations.

We live in a stressful world. It moves fast. For most of us, it probably sometimes seems like we have no control. Many times, the most reliable elements in travel are the brands we choose for lodging.

In order to be the brand of choice with a guest, we have to strive to make a connection with everyone we serve. That begins with effective communication.

Guests generally remember how they were greeted, acknowledged and thanked. Warm welcomes, a lot of personal attention, and a simple conversation typically foster an emotional connection.

Once a comfortable line of communication is created, you will likely get a clear understanding of what a guest expects. That makes it a lot easier to help the guest and ultimately creates a memorable experience.

Remember, top quality hospitality is all about making guests feel as if they are not just any other guest.

# HOTELS MAKING KNIGHTS INN "A VERY GOOD PLACE TO BE"

Achieving excellence in the hospitality industry is not an easy task. It's a multi-faceted job that requires passion, professionalism, knowledge and lots of hard work. The properties listed below have consistently succeeded in that regard and are top ranking properties in QA and Medallia.

SITE ID	CITY	STATE	SITE ID	CITY	STATE
18050	Bakersfield	CA	6216	Wabash	IN
7708	Martinsburg	WV	14950	Bristol	VA
7473	Seymour	IN	3214	Hurricane Mills	TN
3261	Highland	CA	5753	Birmingham	AL
14427	Cedar City	UT	12169	Parkersburg	WV
18056	Fort Madison	IA	2765	Richmond	KY
7470	Pittston	PA	9865	Horseheads	NY
9385	Grove City	OH	5863	Beaumont	TX
7363	Columbus	IN	15209	Richmond	IN
7486	Liverpool	NY	7441	Kissimmee	FL
13798	Nashville	TN	19165	Orlando	FL
7985	Santa Cruz	CA	2526	San Francisco	CA
12687	Rensselaer	IN	2523	Huntsville	AL
2518	Berea	KY	8147	Danvers	MA
7296	Savannah	GA	22523	Pecos	TX
23015	Ontario	CA	7333	Austell	GA
11434	Rosemead	CA	7361	Cayce	SC
9390	Mount Gilead	OH	4506	Jacksonville	FL
7381	Elkton	MD	4506	Jacksonville	FL
15531	Pendleton	OR	23633	Eagle Pass	TX
10277	Springfield	OH	10820	Collinsville	VA
2997	Lebanon	TN	18590	Arlington	TX
7705	Galax	VA	7370	Miamisburg	OH
7344	Charleston	WV	6403	Dothan	AL
7717	Bartonsville	PA	7324	Albany	GA
9285	Cadiz	KY	6871	Dillon	SC
15381	Absecon	NJ	14647	Sandusky	OH
8832	Peru	IN	9727	Saint Augustine	FL
7352	Palm Harbor	FL	10315	Gainesville	FL
19545	Los Banos	CA	14446	Somerset	KY
13233	Anderson	SC	7360	Cleveland	TN
22984	South Amboy	NJ	11614	Emporia	VA
10561	Verona	VA	10635	Charles Town	WV
18806	Williams	AZ	15457	Lenox	MA
8961	Kalamazoo	MI	20314	Brownwood	TX
22917	Tonawanda	NY	17979	Virginia Beach	VA

## MEDALLIA TOP 10 (JANUARY 2008 TO JANUARY 2009)

Hotel	Site Id	Sample Size	+GX Satisf. Score
Martinsburg	7708	121	8.55
Trenton	3520	71	8.33
Clearwater/Palm Harbor	7352	130	7.99
Monroe - N. Dixie Hwy	7721	94	7.68
Pittsburgh/Bridgeville	7461	128	7.64
Santa Cruz	7985	45	7.64
Kitchner	13984	72	7.54
Parkersburg	12169	72	7.5
Rensselaer	12687	51	7.41
Laurel-Ft. Meade Rd.	7413	71	7.4



## BUILD QUALITY BY MAINTAINING AWARENESS

Always look for clues. Seek out hints. Become aware of what's going on at your property and in the community. This includes several components:

- **Guests:** Constantly ask open ended questions so you can then become aware of your customer's needs. Figure out who needs directions or who needs assistance. If a guest appears to be waiting for somebody in the lobby, offer him or her a newspaper or magazine. While passing guests, greet them in a friendly manner. Ask them if there is anything you could do for them.
- **Amenities and Services:** Become well acquainted with the property's offerings. Constantly monitor for general cleanliness – dirt on the floor, stains on the ceiling or walls and garbage in the parking lot. Always check to see if light bulbs are working properly. Make sure all guest rooms are equipped with basic items – towels, pillows and television remote controls.
- **Surrounding Area.** Know all the basic businesses within walking distance: pharmacies, grocery/convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants and ATM. Be familiar with all the local attractions and know how to get there. Know what events are going on in town: concerts, festivals, parades and sporting events. Know the basic geography, history and cultural make-up of the area.
- **Colleagues:** Possess an understanding of all your co-worker's needs and make yourself available to help them out.
- **Security:** Be mindful of security issues and report anything you find to be suspicious.

# THE PERSONAL TOUCH

Here is a sampling of some hand written notes that were either left behind in some of our rooms or mailed to us afterwards:



Dear General Manager, Knights Inn,  
Cadiz, Kentucky

We were traveling with several families and we had a lot of requests. Your team had everything under control. They handled all of our needs with the utmost courtesy and professionalism. We felt that we were in good hands the entire time.

- Christine Behnke, Marion, Indiana



Dear General Manager, Knights Inn,  
Arlington, Texas

I booked my stay directly because I had some very specific needs. I wanted adjoining rooms and I needed explicit amenities in one room and not the other. My requests were complicated and I, quite honestly, would not have been surprised if there were a few mix ups. To my delight, everything was perfect. The staff got it right! This was my first time staying at this hotel. I won't hesitate to come back. Everyone was helpful and the entire place was clean.

- Bill Brightly, Altus, Oklahoma



Dear General Manager, Knights Inn,  
Kirksville, Missouri

I've stayed at several different hotels in the area and yours is, by far, the best. It's the only place I stay now. I am always overwhelmed by the tremendous show of hospitality by everyone here. They are all so friendly and helpful. The rooms are also lovely, clean and nice. I'll be back!

- Robyn Earl, Boone, Iowa



Dear General Manager, Knights Inn,  
San Antonio, Texas

I have been in the hospitality industry for 30 years. I have rarely seen the kind of professional behavior that I witnessed at your hotel. Your employees were kind and caring. The room was extremely clean and the lobby looked neat and organized. I will gladly recommend Knights Inn to friends, family and employees.

- Art Culligan, Mountainair, New Mexico



Dear General Manager, Knights Inn,  
Maumee, Ohio

I could not get over the snowstorm that hit when we were at your hotel. I thought we would be snowed in for days. That was not the case, thanks to your extremely thorough and hard working staff. They cleared the snow from all the walkways and from around the car. We didn't have to dig our way out. We just got into our car and pulled away. It was a very pleasant experience.

- Donald Ortman, Olean, New York



Dear General Manager, Knights Inn,  
Corpus Cristi, Texas

Thank you for making our stay so pleasant. We got into town early for a wedding, well before most of our friends. We had never been here before and did not know the area at all. Thankfully, the people at your hotel were more than willing to recommend restaurants and places to visit. It was obvious that they took great pride in their locale. Their suggestions went a long way in making our stay eventful.

- Catherine Swackhammer,  
Russellville, Arkansas





**Pharr, TX**



**Cheyenne, WY**



**Globe, AZ**



**San Francisco, CA**



**Lake Tahoe, CA**

## WELCOME NEW PROPERTIES!

Our property in Pharr, Texas has the distinction of being our 300th property. Owner Kamaldeep Gil is absolutely thrilled about joining the Knights Inn family. I spoke to him shortly after the deal became official. He raved about our "commitment to growing this brand with quality properties." He predicted that our brand's affordability, versatility and passion for quality will continue to make Knights Inn "a logical choice for potential owners and developers."

He is right! The brand has come so far so fast while remaining true to our commitment to service and quality. That would not have been possible without the energy and enthusiasm of the entire Knights Inn franchise community. It is obvious to me that we are all on the same page in our commitment to steadfastly grow the brand even further in the years to come. As we continue to expand, I look forward to watching the Knights Inn name crop up all over the United States and in Canada.

In 2008, we added a record 65 new properties (31 % growth). Here is a list of our additions since mid-September. Please join me in welcoming them to the Knights Inn family:

OPENING DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER OF ROOMS
September 15	Victoriaville, CA	52
September 19	Fayetteville, NC	70
September 26	Stockton, CA	52
September 26	Lake Tahoe, CA	31
September 30	Cheyenne, WY	66
September 30	Charleston, SC	88
September 30	St. Louis/Ferguson, MO	50
September 30	Leavenworth KS	85
November 6	Thomson, GA	39
November 10	Roanoke, VA	48
November 19	Globe, AZ	40
December 1	San Francisco, CA	68
December 3	Regina, CAN	43
December 3	Abilene, TX	75
December 11	Oklahoma City, OK	70
December 18	Brenham, TX	52
December 30	Rowland, NC	90
December 30	Waco, TX	40
December 31	San Antonio, TX	31
December 31	Pharr, TX	68
December 31	Plainview, TX	34
January 12	High Point, NC	83

## CATCHING ON IN CANADA

Knights Inn continued its rapid expansion in Canada with five properties in the past eight months. In its relatively recent history, brand properties in Canada were located in Ontario and British Columbia. We have now expanded into New Brunswick and Saskatchewan. There are now 16 properties in Canada.

New additions include:

Fredericton, New Brunswick

Orillia, Ontario

Owen Sound, Ontario

Oshawa, Ontario

Regina, Saskatchewan



Orillia, Ontario

## FRANCHISE SERVICES UPDATE

We recently enhanced the team with an Operations Support Desk (OSD). The operations support desk representative is now your primary point of contact for your franchise support services questions and issues - (800) 932-3300. Our goal in establishing this added level of support is to enhance your customer service experience and provide you with a coordinated high level of service. This team of experienced hospitality professionals has been trained to address your needs related to Quality Assurance standards, MyPortal, brand initiatives and marketing resources, among other areas.

As you all know, Mark Biederman rejoined the brand as our Franchise Service Manager. Mark has been with WHG for eight years and with Knights Inn from 2005-to-2007.

In an effort to enhance our support even further, Valerie Iannacone was added as our Senior Manager, Franchise Operations. Valerie has been with WHG for seven years. Most of that time was spent with Days Inn. She also spent two years with Super 8.

It's a pleasure to have Mark back with the brand and to have Valerie added to our team. Both are seasoned hospitality industry professionals and are quality additions. With their in depth industry knowledge and background, both are helping the brand maintain and even build upon the quality we offer our guests.

## TIPS FOR MAKING A CONNECTION

**General Behavior:** Initiate a verbal exchange with everyone you pass in the hotel – internal and external customers. Keep in mind a list of light topics to avoid silence – the weather, traffic or holidays.

**External Customers:** Always greet guests with a simple hello, smile or nod. Inquire about their stay and ask if there is anything you can do for them. Take responsibility for every problem or unfulfilled need brought to your attention. Assure guests that you are doing everything possible to make things right.

**Internal Customers:** Treat all team members like family. Take an interest in their lives. Ensure that their birthdays are acknowledged. Celebrate special days or occasions (holidays, anniversaries, milestones) in the staff room.

**Web Surfers:** Blogs have become one of the most effective ways to connect with Internet users. A blog is a regularly updated Web page where writers post articles for personal or business use. A blog is a way to keep your guests up to date on the latest happenings at your hotel. It is in this informal setting that 'conversational marketing' occurs, and relationships are built with the public.

Primary point of contact for your franchise support services questions and issues:

**(800) 932-3300**



## THE KNIGHTS NEWS NEEDS YOUR INPUT!

We would like to make this newsletter a venue to publicize and share property-level best practices and success stories. We would also like to publish personal notes from satisfied guests. Please pass along any information you might have. News clips from your local newspaper and photos are also welcome! If your photos are taken with a digital camera, please make sure your camera is set on the highest resolution. Photos may also be sent via regular mail.

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## WE'LL SEE YOU AT THE SUMMIT

I hope that each of you share in my excitement over how the Knights Inn® brand has successfully and dramatically grown over the past two years. As we continue to expand, we look for ways to enhance our operational effectiveness.

This spring we will be holding five regional Summit meetings. During these sessions, we will provide the opportunity to exchange best practices, implement common processes, learn through our everyday experiences and celebrate our collective successes. They will also provide us with a forum for brand updates, education and training and give you an opportunity to network with each other, as well as corporate personnel. The information we share with you will be beneficial to the ongoing successful operation of your property's future revenue potential.

Please plan to attend your respective regional session in order to hear what lies ahead for the brand. Your participation is crucial to our shared success.

Date	Location
March 19	Columbus, OH
March 26	Atlanta, GA
April 2	Dallas, TX
April 9	Las Vegas, NV
April 16	Parsippany, NJ

*\*Note: Canadian properties should attend their own regional meetings.*

## SHETH LAUDED . . . AGAIN

The Knights Inn® Springfield, Ohio was once again singled out for service excellence by the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Each year, the organization, without notice, anonymously inspects local businesses.



Chris Schutte, the group's Director of Destination Marketing, had high praise for property owner Champak Sheth. "He consistently delivers outstanding service to his guests. His entire team of professionals exemplifies an outstanding spirit of hospitality. The property continuously exceeds our stringent cleanliness standards.

"It's an honor to be recognized in such a way," Sheth said. "My entire team deserves credit. We routinely strive for excellence by maintaining high levels of operational superiority and guest satisfaction. Our customer-centric approach enables us to provide top-quality accommodations to the guests we serve. Each of our employees is focused on maintaining and even building upon our reputation for service excellence. We will continue to demonstrate these high standards of performance."