

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Trump-branded hotels are dropping name in light of US President's constant controversies

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The Trump hotel in Panama is working to abandon the Trump name and disassociate from the Trump Organization. Image credit: Trump Organization

By DANNY PARISI

Hotels both in the United States and internationally managed by the Trump Organization have ended their relationship with the president's family's business, signifying that the brand has become toxic for the hotels' desired customers.

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After the iconic hotel in SoHo in New York's Manhattan borough dropped the Trump Organization last week, another hotel in Panama has begun the process of stripping the Trump name from the hotel's association, after paying around \$32 million for the association. While President Trump continues to accrue near-daily controversies, the many brands that bear his name are beginning to feel the danger of continuing to associate with the man.

Trump associations

The Trump family name has always been associated with high-end real estate and hospitality, but that association is becoming increasingly difficult to bear for some of the hotels with Trump emblazoned on the marquee.

Since his inauguration, and even before, President Trump has proved a divisive and inflammatory figure, seemingly unable to go more than a few days without embroiling himself in one controversy after another, swiftly earning him one of the lowest approval ratings in presidential history.



Trump SoHo. Image credit: Trump Organization

This has proven a difficult matter for the many hotels that bear the Trump name. The Trump Hotel in SoHo has just announced that it will no longer work with the Trump Organization or have Trump in its name. A hotel in Panama is in the process of doing the same.

For these hotels, the association with Mr. Trump has proved detrimental to business.

CBS reported that Ithaca Capital Partners, the company that owns the Trump-branded hotel in Panama, voted to remove the Trump name and disassociate with the Trump Organization due to the strain it put on business, especially in a Latin American country where Mr. Trump has proved even less popular than in the U.S. ([see story](#)).

Despite this, the Trump Organization has denied that any association with its brand has caused harm to the hotel's business. Still, the reasoning cited by the hotel owners says otherwise.

Courting controversy

The distancing from Trump by hotels that bear the name has been happening for a while.

Earlier this year, JFC Capital and Trump Hotels reached an agreement in which the former is paying \$6 million to remove the U.S. President's name from a property in Toronto. As protests against the president are increasing at Trump Hotels' properties around the world, its hospitality brand could continue to suffer ([see story](#)).



Trump Panama. Image credit: Trump Organization

President Trump's Mar-A-Lago has seen a number of high-profile nonprofit organizations cancel events at the West Palm Beach, FL country club.

Following President Trump's divisive comments on the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, VA earlier this year, charities such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army have reconsidered holding their event at the Trump-owned property.

The Trump hospitality brand has been seemingly unaffected by the polarizing administration, but as a significant portion of the country continues to find fault in President Trump's politics, this may change ([see story](#)).

As President Trump continues to court controversy, the brands associated with his name will have to face the tough question of disengaging from the Trump Organization or risking losing the many customers who find themselves too embarrassed or angry to associate with anything that bears the name Trump.

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