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# THE SHARING ECONOMY: IF YOU CAN'T BEAT IT, JOIN IT



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I was curious to know which hotel group was going to be the first one to embrace the sharing economy, mostly incarnated in our industry by Airbnb, rather than taking any other more defensive approach.

Up to now there has been a lot of debate about the merits of Airbnb, how much it will take away from the traditional hotel industry pie and, more important, if it complies with the different tax and safety regulations of each market. Nobody so far had addressed, however, if there was any hotel group capable of capitalizing on Airbnb and generating new business out of it.

Now at least one hotel group has come up with what could be an interesting way of co-existing with the sharing economy, [Room Mate Hotels](#). This Spanish hotel chain with properties in the United States, Spain, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands and Turkey has just [launched Be Mate](#).

The concept is simple. After noticing the increasing amount of properties listed on Airbnb around each of its own hotels (in some instances, several hundred apartments within a 500-meter-radius from the hotel), Room Mate has decided to try to collaborate with the landlords and clients of these properties by generating additional value for their activity.

For those landlords that comply with local regulations and meet the Room Mate quality standards, the Spanish hotel chain will be offering its own booking channel for their apartments through the hotel chain's new distribution platform. In addition, Airbnb landlords will be offered cleaning services in their apartments, key collection and drop-off services and all sorts of additional optional services and activities organized by each hotel such as meeting rooms, local tourism visits, F&B services, transportation services, etc.

Room Mate is even going to sell room inventory through this channel in markets where it is not already present with one of its own hotels.

It remains to be seen if this concept is successful, but one cannot deny this is truly a clever and constructive step towards capitalizing on the sharing economy in our industry. Let's see who is next.

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