

GEOGRAPHY

Research on one economic enterprise ('Sheraton on the Park'). In your research make sure to mention all the inclusions (number of rooms, suites, convention rooms), its link to the global economy and the environmental impact.



The Sheraton on the Park hotel is linked with the economic activity of tourism by being an accommodation provider that relies on people coming into Sydney and booking this hotel. This hotel is the flagship (main branch in Australia) owned by the Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. – a US-based transnational corporation with extensive interests in the hotel and gaming industry. Overlooking the Hyde Park, the neoclassical building is no more than 3 minutes away from Sydney's CBD (Central Business District) and the Darling Harbour. The luxurious 'Sheraton on the Park' is a 5-star hotel found at 161 Elizabeth St, a tree-lined oasis in the heart of Sydney.

Sheraton on the Park's commercial success has been closely linked to its geographical diversity and its ability to monitor and respond to shifts in consumer demand. The choice of Starwood to locate the Sheraton from Wentworth Avenue to the newer, better developed and easier accessible area was a strategy to link the hotel with the entertainment of Sydney (i.e. Darling Harbour) as well as the shopping and boutique areas where the hotel is 3-4 minutes away from David Jones and the city centre with quick access to tourist spots such as Queen Victoria. The photograph shown the title page and the hotel being located opposite the Hyde Park reveals the aesthetic quality enhancing the environmental aspect of the hotel. Also greenery and shrubbery in the hotel strengthens the aspect.

The hotel consists of 557 spacious guest rooms, including 48 suites. It is the classic colour palettes of creams and earthy tones, plush fabrics, fine furniture that creates a welcoming and comfortable environment. The guest rooms consist of the basic needs (eg: television, refrigerator, hair dryer) but also writing desk, separate shower with full size bath and high speed internet access. The 24 hour room service is of a high standard. The types of suites available are the Executive, Deluxe, and the Royal suites which are examples of outstanding accommodation as these rooms are very spacious consisting of a separate living room. Additionally the guest rooms and the suites also contain a convenient dining room, guest powder room, a Bose stereo entertainment system, plasma screen television as well as the hotel's trademark marble bathroom. All these rooms are equipped with on-demand in-room movies, walk-in wardrobes, room safe, mini-bar and individually controlled air-conditioning.



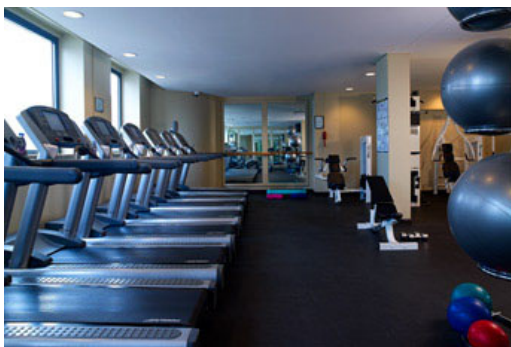
Guest Rooms



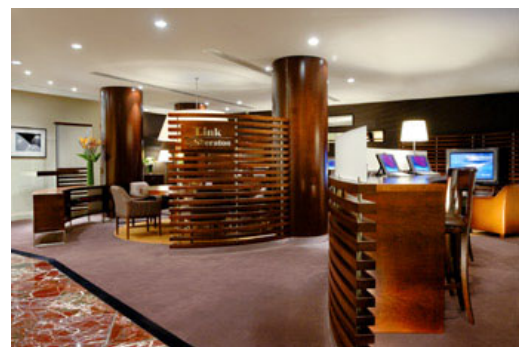
Royal Suite

As one of the largest conference hotels in the city, Sheraton on the Park provides versatile meeting space with a capacity of 900 guests. The inclusion of 18 conference rooms provides an inviting ambiance that inspires conversation and new ideas. On the main convention level, soaring windows provide a showcase view of Hyde Park. The highlight of the meeting facilities is the availability of abundant space with natural light. However the pillar less Grand Ballroom with its intelligent technology featuring an LED lighting system and the outdoor terraces makes this place a masterpiece. These rooms incorporate spacious meeting, banquet and ballroom facilities to meet the needs of all types of groups, from small board meetings to national and international conventions.

Located on the 22nd floor, Sheraton fitness is a gym offering sweeping views of the city. The gym has undergone full refurbishment which now boasts new flooring, state of the art equipment, luxurious locker rooms, and heated indoor swimming pool, sauna and steam rooms. The hotel is also renowned for its five-star delivery of therapeutic and beauty treatments, which aims at maintaining good health, inner balance and well being. Additionally, the Link@Sheraton is an appealing place in the lobby for clients to work and relax. It is a 'social enabler' according to Hoyt Harper, Senior Vice President of Sheraton. Business facilities include a 24 hour business centre offering services such as secretarial support and the right to use computers. With other access to advanced technologies (eg: Windows 7), as wells as featuring a communal lounge area, board games and international newspapers and magazines, this site is about more than addressing the needs of the business traveller.



Sheraton fitness



Link@Sheraton

These are attractions which influence people from the country and worldwide to come and stay at this hotel when visiting Sydney, a city known for its dining options.

There have been minor changes undergone to improve the efficiency of the hotel. For example, there were 559 guest rooms and 49 suites, now there are 557 guest rooms and 48 suites. These changes have led to more space for other services which can include recreation, employee facilities, etc.

The hotel's '5 star status' can be revealed through the fact that it employs 530 people in 21 departments where 72% of the employees are full time. The relatively high staff/guest room ratio of almost 1:1 further reflects the hotel's status where the nature and range of services provided are labour intensive. The hotel's occupancy rate is staggeringly high exceeding 90%. However during seasonal variations, (in winter), the hotel business is quiet. At these times, the hotel offers special packages to attract additional customers in an effort to maintain the occupancy rate. These can include weekend packages or 'Christmas in July' which attract people from all over the world to celebrate the winter Christmas. Also loyalty programs from the Starwood are offered. These are points that can be obtained from any of the six brands of Starwood. Through these innovative ideas, customer's interest begins to grow, eventually staying at hotels like the Sheraton on the Park, maintaining the occupancy rate.

In relation to links, Sheraton's link to government is complied with all local government regulations (eg: fire and safety), health regulations (eg: kitchen areas) and emergency procedures. Also as an employer Sheraton must follow the labour laws of the state in which it operates (eg: hours and conditions of work, leave, and payments of benefits and entitlements). Sheraton benefits at a national level from macroeconomic policies encouraging increased economic activity and policies that promote the tourism industry. These include investments by government in infrastructure projects, such as the expansion of Sydney Airport, which also benefit the industry. As the marketing, advertising and sales office are centralised, it results in a one global network. There is a strong link between airlines, hire car firms, cruise ships and the Sheraton on the Park as they all suffer from the idea 'if it isn't occupied, it perishes'.

For accommodation providers like Sheraton the improvement of technology has increased the hotels revenue to a greater extent. Automated reservations systems are essential for the efficiency and commercial viability. Global reservation systems are used by Sheraton to help defray the development cost and maximise usage. Plugging into this system allows Sheraton global access, where the hotel accommodation is effectively put for sale on a multitude of markets. Because before this, marketing had to be done by issuing brochures and through a direct approach to travel agents and tour operators. Using the internet, guests are able to inspect and book a room by using a computer terminal in the comfort of their own home or office. Internet-based sales have increased from \$US75 million in 1998 to \$300 million in 2005. Therefore, technology has played a major role regarding the way Sheraton operates.

Hence, the importance of Sheraton on the Park is revealed through its location which is in the centre of Sydney's bustling retail precinct. This hotel is a great example of a 5-star hotel that attempts to balance the consistent delivery of superior guest experience with maximising its share of the market and thereby providing acceptable returns/profits to the hotel owners. With continuous successful reputations, Sheraton on the Park will always play an important role in the global chain.