

**Client:** Great Northern Hotel Yellow News  
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**Reach:** 12000  
**Size:** 327cm2  
**Value:** 1847.55

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## Starwood pays tribute to London

By April Hutchinson

Starwood Hotels & Resorts has signed the first European property to its Tribute Portfolio brand.

The Great Northern Hotel at London's King's Cross will now be marketed under Tribute, which is Starwood's 10th brand, launched in April with the tagline of "Stay Independent".

It fills a gap in Starwood's portfolio for the kind of independent hotels it believes travellers are increasingly seeking, while allowing owners of "upper upscale" hotels to maintain their spirit but benefit from Starwood's distribution.

"The Great Northern was one of the great railway hotels of the world, made even greater by current owner Jeremy Robson, who has done an outstanding 'back to brick' renovation," said Michael Wale, Starwood Hotels & Resorts president, Europe, Africa & Middle East.

Robson said: "Starwood really understands the upscale hotel world and the customer set we're attracting at the hotel, so Tribute Portfolio is a

perfect match and we don't have to compromise."

He said that his 91-room hotel had been "constantly busy" since opening two years ago, but the deal would mean a rise in profitability.

Starwood has five other hotels in London and Wale said the city had experienced a "tremendous July".

"London continues to thrive – and is just one of those exciting, in-demand cities," he said. "Yes, there's intense competition but hotels here really do offer a great return."

He said the growth potential for Tribute generally was unlimited: "In Europe, as much as 65% of the hotels are unbranded, independent operations. There is a great opportunity for us."

Tribute launched with the Royal Palm South Beach Miami and will add four new US openings this year and next. Starwood expects to have 100 hotels signed up by the brand by 2020.

The Great Northern joined the Starwood network on September 1 with agents able to book and earn points via SPG Pro.