

Table 7.2 Hotel Companies' Global Reach (*Continued*)

| Choice Hotels International (6,300 hotels in nearly 40 countries) | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Comfort Inn | Comfort Suites |
| Quality | Sleep Inn |
| Clarion | CAMBRIA Hotels & Suites |
| MainStay Suites | Suburban |
| EconoLodge | Rodeway Inn |
| Ascend Hotel Collection | |

appear in the former Eastern European Bloc countries and Cuba were B&Bs. However, it should be noted that in the United States, and probably other countries, very small B&B homes are generally operated for supplemental income, tax benefits, and as a means of defraying utility costs rather than as an investment or sole source of income.² No matter what the setting or operator, research has shown the successful B&B operators are those providing guests with the same positive experience again and again.

Today, B&Bs come in a wide variety of sizes and service offerings. You can now find Bed & Breakfast Homes (1–3 rooms), Bed & Breakfast Inns (4–20 rooms), and Bed & Breakfast Hotels (over 20 rooms and sometimes a small restaurant). The average B&B in the United States has 6 rooms.³ If you travel to southern Europe or perhaps Quebec, rather than finding B&Bs, you might find pensions, which offer similar accommodations. As B&Bs have grown in numbers, government-sponsored as well as independent reservation and **referral organizations** have evolved to assist owners in marketing their services to travelers seeking the “comforts of home.” B&B owners have found the Internet to be an especially effective marketing tool for **booking** reservations.

Even though B&Bs may look different, personal attention and breakfast in the morning are common themes that tie all B&Bs together. One reason some travelers prefer B&Bs to hotel accommodations in a large city is that a \$200 room in a B&B is may be a better buy than a \$200 hotel room. A B&B operator rarely adds on parking, Internet connection, or other charges, and many offer afternoon snacks and wine in addition to a hearty breakfast. With the ready availability of the Internet, it is easy, and more personal, to book a stay at a B&B virtually anywhere in the world. Managing and operating a B&B to provide guests with stays that are rewarding and memorable is a multifaceted challenge requiring many skills. Finance, management, marketing, technology, cooking, decorating, cleaning, safety, customer service, staffing—the list is practically endless.⁴

Living Like a Local

Offering visitors a place to stay in one’s home, whether it’s on an air mattress in the living room, a spare bedroom, or the entire property; private accommodations, has grown tremendously in the past few years. Airbnb, as the pioneer intermediary for this type of lodging, has revolutionized the already competitive lodging landscape. Now Airbnb and various other intermediaries in this lodging space, such as Homeaway, VRBO, and Flipkey, carry huge volumes of room inventory, especially in destinations where hotel room rates are high. To compete with private accommodations, hotel’s chains have also begun to use these intermediaries to distribute their own room inventory.

Why would travelers want to stay in someone else’s home? According to research, the primary reason is to “feel like a local” and get a taste of the community life during their visits. These rental units are usually spread out in the community, unlike hotels which usually are located in clusters near business districts or tourist attractions. Although in some cities, private accommodations could cost more than hotel rooms, for the most part; staying in private accommodations could save money. In fact, most private rental units are