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Hilton Worldwide now free to launch boutique brand

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Hilton Worldwide could be on the verge of re-entering the boutique hotel sector, three years after it abandoned its development of the Denizen brand, according to a hotel observer.

Presenting the results of the International Boutique and Lifestyle Hotel Study 2013 to the Boutique Hotel Summit, Andrew Sangster, editor of Hotel Analyst, said that he expected that Hilton will announce its plans for a new brand sometime this year.

"The company has the appetite to do so and has a monster franchise machine which will enable it to happen," he told the delegates at yesterday's conference held at London's Montcalm hotel.

Sangster referred to the fact that Hilton is now free to consider launching a boutique brand again as it has been two and a half years since the company was banned for 24 months from entering the lifestyle market after settling out of court with Starwood Hotels and Resorts over a corporate espionage suit.

In 2009 Starwood claimed that Hilton had stolen documents to help it develop Denizen after two of its former employees, who had helped launch its successful W brand, moved to Hilton.

However, a spokesperson for Hilton Worldwide later denied that the company is planning to launch a boutique brand.

"We are focused on our ten existing brands representing more than 3,900 hotels around the globe, six of which are present in Europe, and we have not announced any plans of developing a lifestyle brand or launching one at any future time."

[Denizen brand marks Hilton move into boutique hotels >>](#)

[Starwood accuses Hilton of theft of trade secrets >>](#)

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