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Marriott's Starwood Database Hacked, 500 Million Guests may be Affected

Marriott International said on Friday that hackers illegally accessed its Starwood Hotels brand's reservation database since 2014, potentially exposing personal information on about 500 million guests. The company said for 327 million guests, personal information compromised could include passport details, phone numbers and email addresses. For some others, it could include credit card information. The company said it learned about the breach after an internal security tool sent an alert on Sept. 8. On further investigation, the hotel chain learned data had been hacked long before. Marriott said it would send emails to affected guests, starting Friday. Marriott said it was too early to estimate the financial impact of the breach and that it would not affect its long-term financial health. It also said it was working with its insurance carriers to assess the coverage. Hotel groups have of late become a target of hackers, seeking to steal information such as credit card data. Last year, both InterContinental Hotels Group Plc and Hyatt Hotels Corp were victims of cyber attacks. Hyatt said it had discovered unauthorized access to payment card information at certain of its locations, affecting 41 properties in 11 countries.