



## **WebBeds pens milestone MoU to boost international visitor arrivals to Sichuan**

- *Major agreement signed with Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd.*
- *WebBeds to distribute entire portfolio of hotels to its B2B partners globally*
- *Overall aim to enhance leisure travel to Sichuan from new international source markets*

### **Singapore, 07 August 2019**

WebBeds, the world's second largest B2B accommodation provider, recently embarked on a successful visit to southwest China's Sichuan province, where it sealed significant agreements with local travel and hospitality partners to promote the region across its global network of B2B travel partners.

During the visit, WebBeds' executives penned a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd – a state-owned enterprise and a leading player in the region's hospitality sector, with a portfolio that includes many of Sichuan's most popular hotels. Its flagship property, Sichuan JinJiang Hotel in downtown Chengdu, has hosted many Chinese leaders and celebrities over the years and is a landmark in the city.

Under the MoU, WebBeds will distribute Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd's entire collection of hotels to its B2B clients worldwide. This will put the hotel group in direct contact with many prominent regional travel agencies, enhancing its ability to engage with international guests – a key strategic objective for the company, and for Sichuan province.

"We are thrilled to enter into this important MoU with Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd. WebBeds currently sees a disparity between inbound and outbound tourist numbers in China, and Sichuan province is no exception. This important new partnership will not only provide our travel trade clients with an exceptional collection of hotels in Sichuan; it will also help the region attract more guests from new, as-yet-untapped markets," said Mr. Daryl Lee, CEO APAC, WebBeds.

"Looking forward, we want to invest in marketing China as an attractive destination to travellers around the world. We firmly believe that by raising awareness of the many leisure offerings Sichuan has to offer, we can help to address the inbound-outbound imbalance. WebBeds wants to work with our stakeholders across China to play a pivotal role in the growth of China's inbound tourism sector, in Sichuan and beyond. We encourage hotels in China to join us on this exciting journey," he added.

"This MoU is a genuine win-win for all parties. At present, Sichuan mostly receives domestic and corporate travellers, so this agreement represents a step forward in our efforts to welcome more international leisure guests. Sichuan province has a wealth of world-class attractions for visitors, including natural and cultural wonders. I look forward to working with WebBeds to showcase everything our spectacular region has to offer," stated Mr. Yan Xue Wei, Chairman, Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd.

Following this initial MoU with Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd, WebBeds is now in discussions with Sichuan Tourism Board to promote the destination, initially to its B2B clients across Asia Pacific.

Overall in China there remains a large disparity between inbound and outbound tourist flows; the country welcomed approximately 61 million<sup>2</sup> inbound visitors in 2017, compared to the 131 million<sup>3</sup> Chinese citizens who travelled outbound. There are signs of a shift however; Euromonitor predicts that China will become the world's most visited tourism destination by 2030<sup>4</sup>, welcoming a projected 127 million visitors per year. By this

time, destinations like Sichuan will be in a prime position to welcome an influx of inbound international travellers.

Sichuan and its provincial capital, Chengdu, are famous around the world. The province is home to approximately 80 percent of the world's giant pandas, many of which can be seen at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. Chengdu is also a centre of Chinese opera and an official UNESCO City of Gastronomy, famous for its spicy cuisine and elegant teas. Further outside the city, guests can experience the 71-metre-high Leshan Giant Buddha, the world's largest stone Buddha statue, and Mount Emei, one of China's Four Sacred Buddhist Mountains.

These stunning attractions are driving a surge in tourism to Sichuan; according to full-year figures, the province's tourism revenue reached a record CNY1.01 trillion (US\$150.0 billion) in 2018<sup>1</sup>, up 13.4 percent year-on-year. Like most Chinese destinations however, the majority of visitors to Sichuan province are domestic travellers, and the Sichuan Tourism Board is keen to draw more international leisure visitors.

As the main gateway to Western China and the country's fourth busiest airport, Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport is now served by more than 60 passenger airlines and has flights to over 50 international destinations, including New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris and Sydney.

## Ends

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.traveldailynews.asia/sichuan-to-become-a-must-see-tourism-destination>

<sup>2</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-transport-and-logistics/our-insights/huanying-to-the-new-chinese-traveler>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/11/china-will-be-the-world-s-top-tourist-destination-by-2030/>

## About WebBeds:

Formed in 2013, WebBeds is the world's second largest and fastest growing B2B accommodation supplier to the travel industry, operating its business through a portfolio of brands comprising JacTravel, Sunhotels, Totalstay, Lots of Hotels, Destinations of the World, (DOTW) and FIT Rooms. WebBeds provides a global distribution network of travel trade partners with the choice of 250,000 hotels, comprising over 28,500+ direct contracts, 60+ third party providers and 25 major hotel chains in over 10,000 destinations worldwide.

Customers can access this huge choice of inventory, (ranging from affordable guest-houses to luxury hotels and including international chain hotels, city-centre and resort properties) via market-leading, trade-only websites or simple and seamless platform to platform API connectivity. Clients can also book transfer services in 950 destinations along with thousands of guided excursions and tickets for attractions. WebBeds also provides tailor-made travel arrangements for groups of all sizes covering corporate and leisure, special interest, education and MICE via its dedicated and award-winning DMC division.

The company has a staff of over 1,800 travel professionals and 50 offices worldwide.

WebBeds is a subsidiary of Webjet Limited (ASX: WEB) – an ASX 200 listed company operating a digital travel business with over AUD\$3.5 billion in total annual turnover, as at December 2018.

## About Sichuan Tourism Investment JinJiang Hotel Co., Ltd:

Sichuan Tourism Investment Jinjiang Hotel (STIJH) is one of the key business segments of Sichuan Provincial Tourism Flagship Enterprise, upholding the mission of "Bringing Health and Happiness for a Beautiful Life". Creating a platform of whole value chain in hotel service which includes Hotel Investment & Financing, Programming & Design, Construction & Management, Industrial Extension in up & downstream, the company manages 114 hotels including Sichuan Jinjiang Hotel, which ranks 23rd among the "Top 60 Hotels of China group", and first in the western region of China. With the philosophy of "Innovation, Pragmatism, Win-win and Gratitude", the company is committed to providing meticulous services for investors, customers, employees and partners with international vision, professional spirit and perfect experience.

**Photos:**

(Pictured Left) Ms. Jin Li, General Manager of Sichuan Tourism Investment Jinjiang Hotel Co., Ltd.

(Pictured Right) Mr. Daryl Lee, CEO Asia Pacific, WebBeds

***Taken at Sichuan JinJiang Hotel***

