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Answered September 28, 2026 · 6 source FDDs cited

Which franchisors initiate the most litigation against their franchisees?

Headline finding, stated precisely: The corpus field that answers this is `litigation_franchisor_initiated_count` — the number of Item 3 actions in which the **franchisor was the initiating party**. It does not record who the *defendant* was. So the ranking below identifies franchisors that sue *a lot*, and document text confirms that much of that volume is directed at franchisees — but the count itself is not a pure "franchisor sues franchisee" tally. Read the caveats after the table before quoting these numbers.

Ranking (newest FDD per brand, franchisor-initiated count > 0)

#	Brand	FDD year	Franchisor-initiated actions	Outlets
1	Econo Lodge	2026	160	599
2	Comfort Inn	2026	150	1,643
3	Ascend Collection	2026	130	184
4	WoodSpring Suites	2026	115	284
5	Quality	2026	115	1,566
6	Cambria Hotels	2026	104	76
7	Clarion	2026	100	172
8	Suburban Studios	2026	100	114
9	Quality Inn	2025	98	1,621
10	Sleep Inn	2025	92	410
11	MainStay Suites	2025	88	139
12	Ascend Hotel Collection	2025	77	182

13	Suburban Extended Stay Hotel	2020	71	60
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[All rows: Item 3 of the cited brand-year FDD.] Outside lodging, the next-highest brand is [ERA Real Estate \(2015\)](#) with 20 franchisor-initiated actions against 549 outlets [[ERA Real Estate, 2015](#), Item 3].

Basis: filter_rank over the corpus, newest FDD per brand, ordered by litigation_franchisor_initiated_count descending, restricted to counts above zero — 845 brands meet that filter [corpus: n=845].

What the underlying documents actually say

Supporting the interpretation: Choice Hotels' Item 3 groups a large block of these matters under an explicit heading — "**ACTIONS INITIATED BY CHOICE TO RECOVER ROYALTIES, LIQUIDATED DAMAGES AND OTHER DEBTS OWED TO CHOICE HOTELS**" — and lists individual franchisees (e.g., Patricia Johnson, Mahmoud Karimi) as "Defendant or Respondent" [[Econo Lodge, 2025](#), Item 3]. So a substantial share of the volume above is genuinely the franchisor suing franchisees, overwhelmingly to collect unpaid fees and liquidated damages.

Qualifying the interpretation:

- The same Item 3 sections also contain suits running the *other* direction: "Trocki Hotels, LP... filed an action **against** Choice Hotels International" over wrongful termination [[Comfort Inn, 2016/2023](#), Item 3; [Econo Lodge, 2018/2023](#), Item 3], and "DIP Hospitality, LLC prevailed on its wrongful termination claim" against Choice, which paid damages and fees [[Econo Lodge, 2026 \[buy\]](#), Item 3].
- Some matters involve **non-franchisee** parties entirely — e.g., a consumer class action over deceptive fee practices under Ontario's Consumer Protection Act, with Choice as defendant [[Comfort Inn, 2026 \[buy\]](#), Item 3; [Econo Lodge, 2026](#), Item 3].
- Franchisor-initiated actions may target *former* franchisees, guarantors, vendors or other counterparties; the structured field does not distinguish among them.

Two further reasons not to over-read the table

1. **These are sibling brands, not independent franchisors.** The top twelve entries are Choice Hotels International brands. Each brand files its own FDD and discloses litigation covering the parent system, so one corporate litigant is producing twelve rows. Treated at the franchisor level,

this is essentially a single data point, not a dozen.

2. **Some rows are the same brand in different years.** Quality (2026) and Quality Inn (2025), Ascend Collection (2026) and Ascend Hotel Collection (2025), and Suburban Studios (2026) and Suburban Extended Stay Hotel (2020) look like renamed continuations rather than distinct systems, which further inflates the apparent breadth of the list.

Bottom line

Choice Hotels' lodging brands disclose far more franchisor-initiated litigation — both absolutely and relative to outlet count (e.g., 104 actions against 76 Cambria Hotels outlets [[Cambria Hotels, 2026](#) [\[buy\]](#), Item 3]) — than any other franchisor in the corpus, and the document text confirms these are largely collection suits against franchisees. Outside that one corporate family, disclosed franchisor-initiated litigation drops off sharply, to 20 actions at ERA Real Estate [[ERA Real Estate, 2015](#), Item 3]. The defensible claim is "franchisors that most often appear as the initiating party in Item 3," with the Choice Hotels concentration and the mixed defendant types stated alongside it.

SOURCES

1. [ERA Real Estate — 2015 Franchise Disclosure Document](#)
 2. [Econo Lodge — 2025 Franchise Disclosure Document](#)
 3. [Comfort Inn — 2016 Franchise Disclosure Document](#)
 4. [Econo Lodge — 2026 Franchise Disclosure Document](#) · [buy the full FDD](#)
 5. [Comfort Inn — 2026 Franchise Disclosure Document](#) · [buy the full FDD](#)
 6. [Cambria Hotels — 2026 Franchise Disclosure Document](#) · [buy the full FDD](#)
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