



REGISTRATION AND HOUSING

Attrition Propositions

With the hotel community taking a firmer stance on attrition and organizers focused on limiting their liability (or eliminating it entirely), negotiating fair contracts that promise suitable capacity with limited downside is becoming more of a challenge. Join Heidi Voorhees, Senior Vice President of Housing for Experient, for this lively discussion about how to land on housing contracts that are suitable to all parties.

- It is getting harder to book hotel contracts without attrition.
- Some hotels are mandating attrition or not taking the business. They see it as sharing the risk. If they don't sell a room, they can never make up that revenue. It is an asset that expires.
- More and more, concessions are starting to be based on performance. At 70% pick-up you get abc, at 80% you get xyz. Determine what concessions you REALLY need and make sure those are built into the minimum attrition level.
- Another way to lower attrition is to increase/guarantee f&b.
- If attrition is being allowed, there will likely not be a low-rate clause agreed to with little to no concession offered.
- Rate yielding may be a way to get contracts without attrition. It allows the hotel to make up revenue in case some rooms are not picked-up.
- Reporting is key. You need to be able to document your events history and business value to the city/hotel. Experient is creating a template to help with this.
- 85% pick-up is the standard attrition, according to the hoteliers in the group.

- Make sure you are asking for attrition for your exhibitor blocks if you have attrition. Pass the risk on so you are not caught with all of it.
- It is becoming more rate that hotels are allowing groups to replace business in lieu of attrition fees. Again, the asset is already gone and this tactic only works if the hotel can't fill a future gap in inventory.

Blocking and Tackling

The basics of marketing housing blocks can help drive participation, but often organizers need to learn and utilize new approaches that reach participants with the right messages at the right times to maximize capacity. Heidi Voorhees, SVP Housing at Experient, leads this discussion regarding the basic and advanced marketing strategies and tactics that can help fill the block.

In order to get meeting space/rooms at a hotel, make sure to track and add the bar revenue to your RFPs to make the business more desirable.

Incentives to get people into the block:

- Educate group/attendees/exhibitors on the value to stay in the block for the group to be able to get a good location, rate, etc.
- If the President's Suite isn't being used, use that as an opportunity to provide a RACK (random act of convention kindness) to an attendee. The social value/buzz goes a long way.
- See if the hotel(s) will provide a comp room as a scholarship for a student and promote that hotel property. The more people who book in the block, the more scholarships offered.
- Ask the hotel if they can provide entry into their clubs, participate in hotel events happening at the property, a drawing for a comp room, 20-50% off meals/clubs/drinks, etc.
- Ask the CVB to offer discounts and gift certificates
- Create a stay-to-play model where attendees/exhibitors have to stay in the block to register/get discount/etc.
- Provide a copy of the keynote speaker's book for those who stayed in the block
- Provide tickets, limo transfers, special experiences, tickets to shows, etc. for those who book in the block.

Instead of doing a random drawing/raffle for incentives, ask attendees/exhibitors to participate in a video contest of why they stay in the block. Review and vote by a credible audience (Board, etc.).

Provide a note in their room such as "thanks for staying in the XXX event housing block". By doing so you help...

Outmaneuvering Pirates

Captain Jack Sparrow has nothing on modern day room pirates who use every trick in the book to pilfer our treasures by luring away unsuspecting passengers. Join Joyce DePass, Director of Meetings for the American Society of Landscape Architects, and Heidi Voorhees, Senior Vice President of Housing for Experient, to discuss innovative techniques for combatting the villains who are increasingly determined to steal our booty.

- Most recently the pirates are getting worse and just pushing their legal limits
- Wholesales vs. priceline.com - some hotels can turn "off" the wholesale prices, but not priceline.com
- Poachers - stealing from our blocks to go into their blocks
- Pirates - most likely "illegal"
- 95% of show organizers don't have "best practices" in place

Suggestions:

- Don't post the exhibitor listing until absolutely necessary or until the housing company reaches out to your exhibitors directly
- Outbound calls
- Association to inform exhibitors that they will be getting a call from Experient
- Have all exhibitors report back to the association if they get a pirate or poacher email. Enter those exhibitors into a raffle to win \$\$\$.
- Priority points to exhibitors for staying in the block
- Educate all folks with the "official" logo of vendors
- Vendors also have the association show logo
- List the pirate company names on the website - it has come to our attention that these companies are claiming to be the housing vendor.....please do not book your Housing with them
- Torches Interference - a coalition that is helping to fight pirates

Additional Notes from Heidi Voorhees:

- If you have a city-wide event, to help prevent poachers, ask your hotel to block out all travel groups during your event. This can/should be done one year in advance.
 - -Poachers get their rooms through the hotel wholesale chain. They are usually sold several levels down the chain so it is hard to track and determine who sold the rooms to them. The hotels typically require the wholesale channel to sell the rooms as part of a package.
- Discuss hotel's policy for checking for pirates. Each hotel has thresholds on room blocks (5-10+ rooms) and various methods for alerting staff on what to look for and how to handle. Many also blackout dates for certain wholesalers outside of air crew over major event dates.
- Include details on pirates/poachers in the exhibitor prospectus.
- ALSA asks attendees/exhibitors to report pirate/poacher activity to show management. In return, those who report this type of activity are entered into a raffle for gift cards.
- Another idea is to offer attendees a discount on registration if they book in the block.
- The industry/Experient should create a video to tell the story of the poachers.

Reinventing Onsite Registration

As one of our best opportunities to make a great first impression with event guests, onsite registration experiences are often a mash-up of carnival ride queues, fast food service, and efficiency rivaled only by the DMV. Join James Kelley, Director of Onsite Services for Experient, to discuss how the onsite registration experience can be transformed into a great first impression that makes guests feel welcomed, informed, and well-served.

James has been with Experient for over 15 years. The focus of today what in a perfect world would registration look like. As a client. Why did you choose to attend this session? What could we do as your event team to make your event reg perfect...no one comes to the event to stand in a reg area. They are there for sessions, events, and networking. Time/resources and money would not be a deciding factor of what to do...

Ideas/issues from clients included:

- Diminish the perception of being bearded in the registration area. Because most attendees fly in just in the nick of time but this is an issue that makes lines long.
- rdr party (rapid deployment registration). Was set up at the shuttle bus off of the cart and had them remote registered coming off the shuttle lines off of Bluetooth. Experient staff wore aprons it was a great experience for the attendees that they could do business there immediately
- another client is using the option of remote registration off the carts in the book store to push additional business in the bookstore
- In a perfect world they would be wired but you can do wireless.
- They can be as remote in hotels because it's where the customers are.
- On site piece diminishes value it peaks at first and is imposed as an information desk.
- Advanced credential, remote access, fix lines by getting data accurate in advance.
- onsite reg was set up like a Mac store. But it was confusing to the attendee so went to scan and go.
- one on one service because onsite reg forms no longer exist
- what can you turn your onsite reg area into once registration is 80% complete

Remote access at hotels or in the airport while attendees are waiting for their bags. You can better understand staffing needs based on room blocks and/or airlift

- Internet cafe
- Sponsorship for reg areas
- Cme area
- Mini theaters/tech area
- Book signing area
- Mobile app area/wifi lounge
- Product theater
- Featured poster area
- Close down with the exception of two counters.
- Info desks

Mailing badges discussion

- Line issue on site
- Badge in hand is a 30 second process with confirmation
- Take away preview screen
- Scan and go for those comfortable with registering on own
- Second confirmation 2-3 days prior to arriving on site. Short and sweet with a map of area. Include with housing that has the direct confirmation number from the property.

So...what's the WHY for remote registration?

- Market the opportunity to promote specific hotels based on remote registration
- Have higher room rates at those specific hotels
- Make business rules for express check in. Limit to attendees only
- Repurpose signage for the remote areas scrolling or electronic marquee
- Use pictures that attends would recognize instead of words on signage

Investigating moving to color printing onsite on a polyolith stock -

- People are married to badge holders
- However the stripe would be printed in color
- Would you use expensive stock for tickets. Polyolith is less expensive than paper stocks and holders
- Would ribbons be an issue? Shouldn't be because it can adhere to the poly material



Thriving in a Sellers' Market

As space tightens and hotels rein in both the concessions they'll give and the risks they'll take, organizers' must adapt and get more creative with sourcing and contracting. Join Felicia Brent and Pam Nutting, Vice President of Strategic Sourcing and Director of Contract Management for Experient, to discuss how to survive and thrive in a sellers' market.

- Be flexible and willing to work with the Hotel in order to achieve a better deal. This includes, looking at your dates, the pattern, and set-up & tear-down time and being open to making revisions.
- Be more sensitive to the space you are asking a Hotel hold- nice to have vs. need. Can you be flexible and give some of the space back to the Hotel-? Do you need 24 hour hold on every room you are asking for? Do you need 4 set-up and tear down days? Any thing you can do to give the Hotel back more space will not only reduce your costs, it will perhaps help you to fight into a date you really want.
- Understand the correlation between the rate and the concessions you are asking for. The more concessions you ask for the higher the rate may be. Really look at your concessions and ask for the things you really need and will utilize. This may help bring your rate down in addition to making your group more attractive to the Hotel as you are not asking them to comp everything.
- Consider a multi-year deal with a specific chain. Perhaps going ahead and securing 2 years meetings in different cities with the same chain may get you what you really want in both cities.
- Understand the value of your group and have the data to support (outlet spend, pick up history, etc.). Be willing to share this with the Hotel so they understand the complete value your groups brings to the Hotel. This may help you secure the dates you want over another group who can not substantiate the value they bring in terms of spend.
- Be more flexible in your contracting terms, asking for no attrition, and or no cancelation may not enable you to secure the specific dates and hotel you want, but if you have strong pick up history, and would be willing to accept an attrition clause, a Hotel would be more willing to consider your business.