

SPORTS EVENT HOUSING



Sports ETA

SPORTS EVENTS & TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Score Bigger Wins: 29 Sure-Fire Tips to Optimize Team Housing & Grow Your Events

Part 1 of 4

Sponsored By



*A special series of white papers
for rights holders and organizers.*

1 | Executive Summary

You want your events to be outstanding with more players and fans – thrilling experiences for everyone there.

But instead, you're sitting at your desk, staring at your computer, and wondering: Why is the housing piece so complicated?

You know good hotel rates, location, and room block management are essential for event success. But with more teams traveling to compete in more games... managing housing can be challenging.

Getting team accommodations wrong could be costly and embarrassing. If housing misses the mark with attendees, that can seriously damage your event. To develop a program that helps you succeed, you need to dig deeper and uncover best practices you haven't considered before.

So, how can you build the best housing program for your events?

That's where this special report can help. It offers 29 tried-and-true methods from sports tourism experts. Get insider tips that even the most experienced event rights holders and operators miss. Then, decide which ones to add to your own roster.

This report is your playbook for:

- **Negotiating the best hotel deals**
- **Securing grants and cash sponsorships**
- **Bypassing hurdles like lost room night revenue**
- **Driving more revenue with less work**
- **And more**

After reading the report, you'll have the top plays of event housing pros. And you'll be well on the way to developing a program that makes housing run smoothly and contributes to successful events that make players and attendees thrilled to return.



2 | Challenges and Opportunities in a Fast-Changing Landscape

Managing events has been called “the hardest job in the world.” One of the challenges is handling housing for players, families, and fans.

Rising room rates, heavy workloads, and insufficient staffing are a few of the stressors that rights holders and operators face. As a result, they’re turning to faster, easier, more effective ways to handle housing.

“Hotels are critical for event success,” says John David, President and CEO of the Sports Events & Tourism Association (Sports ETA). “To create effective, customer-centric events, you need a great housing program.”

David shares three market trends that make housing more important than ever:

1. **The rising role of data**
2. **Higher costs**
3. **Booming market**

Let’s look at how you can make the most of these trends to deliver the best experiences for your players, attendees, and staff.



Photo by Timo Volz

“Hotels are critical for event success. To create effective, customer-centric events, you need a great housing program.”



John David
President & CEO Sports ETA

Before joining Sports ETA, David served on the Sports ETA Board of Directors for 11 years, representing the Rights Holder category. In 2022, David became the Secretary of the Board, making him the first Rights Holder elected to the Executive Committee.

Previously, David was the Chief Strategy Officer of USA BMX, the world’s largest sanctioning body for the Olympic sport of bicycle motocross racing (BMX). During his 23-year tenure there, David helped the association double its membership and more than triple its revenue. He also produced two Olympic Trials, co-coordinated the unification of the sport in the U.S., and spearheaded the campaign to create of the new USA BMX headquarters, arena, museum, and Hall of Fame in Tulsa, Okla.

#1: Rising Role of Data

Destinations today want a proven return on investment (ROI) from the events they host.

“The days of Convention and Visitor Bureaus and sports commissions providing financial support based on attendance are gone,” David states. “They now require quantifiable proof of economic impact.

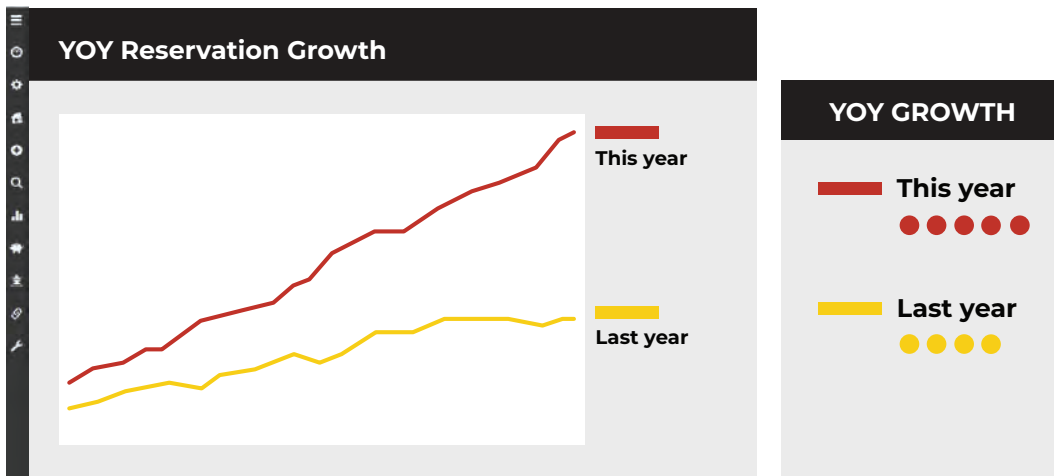
To this end, hotel room nights play a key role.

They show you’re a serious player who can create economic impact. And so, you’re more likely to garner destination support, such as facilities, grants, and cash sponsorships.

Housing data also drives growth. Many sports, like pickleball, have grown so fast that few venues can house their larger tournaments due to limitations in court availability. Imagine you could help a destination plan a complex with the courts you need. And you could prove your events would draw big crowds.

“That’s growth of revenue and growth of sport. But to go to the bargaining table, you need a housing program with reliable data that demonstrates value.”

— John David



#2: Higher Costs

Event costs have skyrocketed in the past few years.

It’s no surprise higher costs are event professionals’ top challenge, according to Northstar Meetings Group’s [January 2024 Pulse Survey](#).

[Skift Research Global Travel Outlook 2024](#) projects hotel room rates will continue to climb. In this economy, rights holders are pushing hard to drive more revenue.

“A well-executed housing program is an excellent source of revenue,” David asserts. “What’s more, commissions and rebates help offset event expenses and boost profits. Revenue from room nights can be game-changing for organizations.”

#3: Booming Market

Now that events are back in full force, sports tourism is booming, with no end in sight to projected growth. Sports destinations are hosting thousands of players and fans per weekend.

“Hotel brands are stepping up and supporting sports travel at a level we've never seen before,” David explains. “This is an exciting time for the future of housing. Many destinations now have sports-certified properties that understand the nuances of sports events.”

Pro Tip:

Don't let your teams and families wander the Internet searching for accommodations. Instead, guide them to host hotels in your program that enhance the experience for teams and families.

Try these best practices.

Given the costs and possibilities, rights holders and operators must look beyond the standard methods they've used before. You need to consider the revenue opportunities, efficiencies, and enhanced customer experiences that come with a stellar housing program.

This special report can help. It provides 29 time-tested methods to consider and possibly add to your lineup.

Developing a set of best practices can take a little time. But an outstanding housing program will elevate the experience for your players and attendees. Plus, it will free you up to focus on the other things that go into producing all-star events.



Photo by Liam McKay

3

Create a Winning Plan

Like players and coaches, you need a great game plan. Follow these tips below to gain support, prove value, and delight players and fans.

1. Make Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) and sports commissions your first touchpoint.

For many sporting families, the weekend is about more than the game. CVBs and sports commissions share a wealth of knowledge and perks to turn trips into mini vacations.

To this end, savvy rights holders and operators partner with destinations to enrich the experience and make athletes and families eager to come back.

CVBs and sports commissions are also your conduits to hotels. They can steer you to good dates for hotel availability and room rates. They serve as brand ambassadors, too.

Tell your event story.

“Sporting events often require different concessions than corporate meetings and conferences,” says Janis Breedlove, Vice President of Events and Experiences at Sports ETA. “For example, laundry service or storage space for equipment.

“They also have shorter cutoff dates for late qualifying teams and athletes, as well as housing challenges related to elimination tournaments when teams leave early,” Breedlove continues. “CVBs and sports commissions can explain to their hotels why these concessions are vital and how your event will drive economic impact.”



SUCCESS STORY

Eugene and Coast Sports Commission in Oregon hosted high-end track-and-field events. To gain support, the Commission held a luncheon for area hotels. As executive director then, Breedlove explained to hotel leadership what they were trying to build in the long term.

“This strategy led to Eugene hosting the World Athletic Championships, and that was amazing for the destination and hotels,” she says.





2. Get room pick-up reports.

As mentioned, destinations today want a measurable and predictable return on investment (ROI).

The trouble is, operators are often too busy to gather this information amidst the hustle and bustle of running events. And so, they miss the opportunity to show their impact.

“Get pick-up reports after every event,” advises Erin Simcox, Director of Event Services and Housing for Visit Knoxville, Tennessee. “Hotels submit room pick-up through your housing technology, making ROI easy to show.”

What if you don’t use housing software?

“Work with the CVB and sports commission from the start. They have relationships with area hotels and can get pick-up reports if you ask them.”

— Erin Simcox

3. Bring your A Game.

Make the process easy for families.

“People have plenty of options today,” states Laura Dermody, President of Pellucid Travel, a full-service sports housing agency. “A great housing service should make booking a hotel room a quick and easy process, so attendees do not have to do all the legwork to spend their own money and attend an event.”

“Set yourself apart with white-glove service. A seamless housing process is key to putting your tournament ahead of the competition.”

— Laura Dermody

4. Give attendees what they want.

“Knowledge is power,” Simcox notes. “Conduct a brief survey to learn what teams value most in a hotel.”

She recommends operators add a few questions to the tournament registration form to determine preferences, such as:

- Proximity to the sports venue
- Lowest room rate
- Specific brands or amenities
- Proximity to local attractions

What if players have already registered?

Conduct a post-event survey to find out where they stayed and what they liked (and didn't like) about their hotel. This information will come in handy for the teams' future events.



Image by rawpixel.com



4

Book Smart

Depending on how you handle reservations and room blocks, you and your teams will be frustrated, satisfied, or wowed. Set yourself up for easier wins with these proven strategies below.

5. Maximize your bargaining power.

Negotiate with hotels while you still have several destinations on the table.

“As soon as you announce you’re holding your championship in a specific city, you lose your bargaining power,” Breedlove cautions. “Room rates will likely be higher, and concessions more difficult to obtain.”

6. Start early.

“Lock in your room block as early as possible, especially in destinations that attract major events,” recommends Carson Vanlandingham, VP of Operations / Lodging Coordinator at Five Tool Baseball, a company specializing in showcases, tournaments, and leagues for high school and collegiate ball players.

Vanlandingham recalls a situation when he tried to book accommodations well in advance and still found no availability. The reason? Major League Soccer had a four-year deal to bring hundreds of teams to the area on the same weekend.

His advice: “Set up your events and room blocks as early as possible. Because there’s always a bigger fish that might come in and take those rooms out of inventory.”

7. Check hotel availability.

Many people assume hotels will always have rooms available. That is no longer the case now that events and travel are back.

“Vet your dates with hotels and your housing company before reserving fields and courts and opening registration to ensure hotel inventory is available in the destination,” Dermody advises. “Securing blocks of rooms early will help groups save money with lower rates. That will encourage them to return to your event next year.”

8. Build realistic forecasts.

“You never want to hold rooms and not fill them,” Vanlandingham cautions.

For example, you might have 50 teams coming for a tournament and think you’ll need a giant room block. But only 15 end up staying overnight. The rest are local.



Vanlandingham’s Three Steps for Effective Forecasting

1. Start with a small room block.
2. Track housing performance through your software.
3. If housing is on pace, add rooms incrementally as needed to avoid overbooking.

5

Make It Fun

There's more to sports travel than what happens on the rinks and fields. The best housing programs tap into players' passion for sports and add to the fun.

9. Embrace the local culture.

"Every city has hotels with unique amenities," Simcox points out. "As part of a CVB, I help tournament directors choose the best options for events in my city."



Local Flavor

Hyatt Place Knoxville Downtown was once the Farragut Hotel, the birthplace of the Southeastern Conference in 1932.

"Players can take in a hotel exhibit on the SEC and see its history right before them," she says. "It's such a cool perk that they're playing in the Conference and staying in the hotel where it came to be."

10. Transform meeting space.

Parents and kids want to have fun together in the evening.

"Book a meeting room for them at their hotel," Dermody recommends. "A new sales manager may not consider meeting space for youth sports. But this is an amenity traveling teams have come to expect."

No need for exuberant young athletes to race up and down hallways. Give teams their space to continue the good times when games on the fields and courts end.

You'll make players, parents, and hotel managers happy.

11. Incentivize attendees to book in the group block.

Let teams know they'll stay together at the same hotel by offering team sub-blocks.

Successful event owners also offer incentives and perks to book within room blocks. For example: tournament registration discounts, team parties at the hotel, and welcome gifts.

Why not surprise teams at check-in with fun gift bags for active families? Encourage them to explore the destination with free passes to local attractions and discounts at area shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues.

"Get creative," Simcox advises. "These extras don't need to cost a lot. But they engage players and families and improve housing performance."

6

Team Up With Hotels

To excel in housing as in sports, you need to work together. The following plays keep hotel communications running smoothly and elevate the experience for players and families.

12. Communicate early and often.

Sports-event housing can be complicated. One of the challenges is managing many different room sub-blocks, especially for national championships. You have blocks for athletes, teams, officials, media sponsors, and band members.

Of course, families want to attend, too. “You don’t want rates outside the room block to get so high that parents can’t attend a national championship where their child is participating,” Breedlove notes.

She advises rights holders and operators to identify potential challenges as soon as possible and address them openly with hotel partners.

“Sales directors can fix many things and have more flexibility if they know about potential issues early.”

— Janis Breedlove



Speed and Flexibility

Modern platforms let you adjust room blocks and prices on the fly to fit customer preferences and changing market needs.

For example, do you have a request for more guest rooms or suites? Talk to your hotel partner. If inventory is available, you also have tools to add accommodations and room types to the system even after the event is live.

13. Play the long game.

It's no secret hotels have experienced high turnover since the pandemic. Brands are improving the situation through hiring and training.

Still, you may work with new hoteliers who have never handled a tournament. Take the lead and let them know what to expect.

For instance, you may see an unconfirmed reservation in your system. Vanlandingham recommends contacting your hotel partner right away. You may find the sales manager you negotiated the contract with no longer works there.

“Take a few minutes to bring a new employee up to speed even if your event is a few months away,” he advises. “Hotels will help you, especially when they have advance notice. A phone call can save everyone time and aggravation in the long run.”

14. Keep your friends at hotels.

Using event technology and third-party housing companies can make it easy to stand back and remove yourself from the process.

That's not the best way to go.

“Maintain your relationships with hoteliers, especially for events that return to the same markets,” David emphasizes. “Keep your relationships with national brand managers, too. You still need those connections – even if your third-party or in-house specialist is doing great work.”

**“At the end of the day,
sports tourism is a
relationship business.”**

— John David



Photo by Antenna

7

Drive More Reservations With Less Work

Organizers are managing more fields and courts and allowing more teams to play. As participation soars, you need technology to manage housing. Here's how the latest solutions help you win.

15. Streamline event management.

Producing events gets frustrating when you're juggling five or six different apps that don't play well together. Critical details can get missed in the process.

"Managing stay-to-play teams can chew up a lot of time," Vanlandingham explains. "You need to keep flipping back and forth between apps to check rooming lists and housing performance to ensure teams meet requirements."

The good news: The latest all-in-one sports-event management software reduces the number of apps you use.

"An integrated platform keeps you organized," Vanlandingham states. "I have everything I need to manage group housing in one spot."



Pro Tip:

Simplify registration, housing, scheduling, roster management, and communications with software that combines all the essential tools in one easy app.



16. Boost revenue and improve service.

"Connect your registration and housing technology," Dermody advises. "This is a best practice even long-time tournament directors overlook."

She says you're missing opportunities to generate more revenue and provide better service if you don't link reservations with registration lists.

"By connecting housing with registration, we saw an increase in bookings of more than 30 percent."

— Laura Dermody

17. Optimize performance.

When using event technology, David reminds rights holders to take the final step.

“A great housing program also involves looking at the data to understand how many people are staying in the room block,” he points out. “You can’t overlook the vital step of analyzing data to maximize housing performance.”

18. Keep it simple.

What about technology’s steep learning curve?

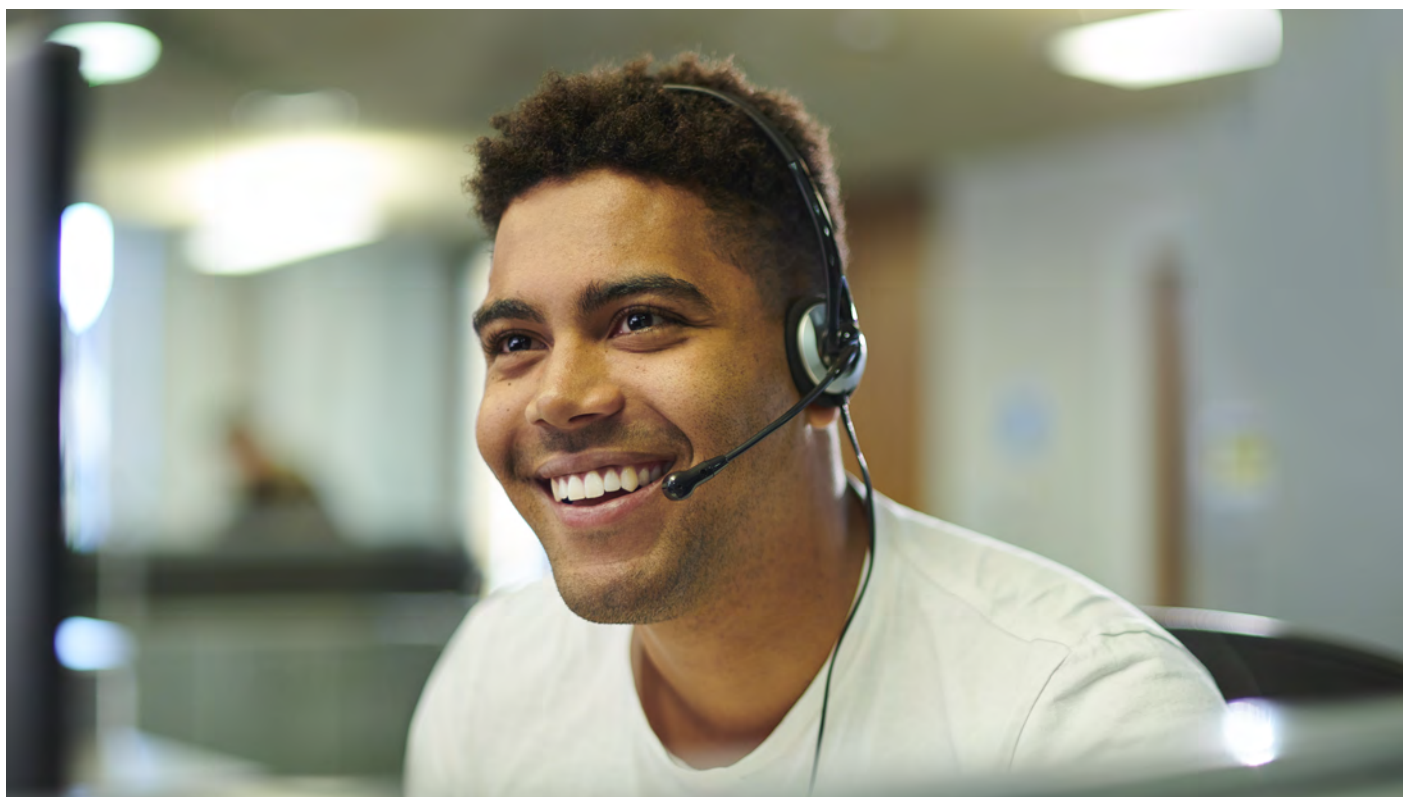
Avoid solutions that create so many hoops to go through that your customers aren’t happy.

Instead, Vanlandingham advises, “Choose software that’s easy to master. You also want a provider that offers excellent onboarding and customer support.”

He shares the following hallmarks of wow-level service good tech partners provide: (see right)

Wow-level Service:

- Answers your questions right away
- Bases advice on many years of experience with hotels and housing technology
- Shares a few suggestions that improve your process
- Saves you time
- Makes your job easier.



8

Leap Over The Hurdles

Even the best matchups have their ups and downs. So, build a backup plan if something doesn't go as expected. These tips below will help you overcome obstacles without breaking a sweat.

19. Ditch high cancellation fees.

"Anything can happen with sports – bad weather, illnesses, injuries," Dermody explains. "Teams and individuals who get penalized for something out of their control are less likely to attend your event in the future, so help them the best you can with lenient cancellation fees."

She offers the following negotiation tips to sidestep high penalties:

- **Pay close attention to the cancellation clause in hotel contracts.**
- **Avoid group cancellation policies.** Hotels stand to lose more money on group cancellations, so the policy for groups is usually stricter.
- **Negotiate for an individual cancellation policy instead.**

20. Don't close the door on family and friends.

What if you fill your room block? And with inventory tight at your hotel, you're faced with the prospect of turning away family members and friends.

No need to tell fans they're out of luck.

Offer non-contracted inventory instead.



How Non-Contracted Inventory Helps You Win

Some housing management software lets you pull guest rooms from platforms like Expedia, Hotels.com, and the GDS. When your contracted room blocks are full or past their cutoff date, you can populate your system with available rooms from other hotels. And you can do it quickly, with the tap of a button.

Your customers will appreciate the convenience of booking these accommodations through your platform up to the day of the event, while supplies last. Plus, you can report on the additional room nights and earn commissions from them.

21. Make history with first-time events.

When you provide hotels with event history, you give them confidence your group will meet its room block commitment.

No history? No problem.

For first-time events, conduct a trial run before officially blocking rooms.

“With enough lead time, we do a direct open room block,” Simcox explains. “That means the hotel isn’t taking rooms out of inventory. It’s simply offering the group a discounted rate while supplies last. This approach lets you get special savings and gauge interest without overbooking.”

Be open with hotels. Explain it’s a first-time event, and you’d like to get some history.

22. Avoid lost room night revenue.

“All sorts of things can arise with a tournament at the last minute,” Dermody explains.

“Maybe you booked accommodations well in advance,” she continues. “When the schedule comes out two weeks before the tournament, parents learn they’re staying too far from the venue and want to switch hotels.”

Dermody offers three tips to get better rates for your customers and avoid lost room night revenue:

1. **Help teams and parents who need to make a last-minute change.**
2. **Tap into the relationships your housing partner or in-house specialist has with hotels.**
3. **If using multiple venues, try to pick facilities teams can count on being at for most of the event from the start.** That way, they will avoid this issue when the schedule comes out.

“Your mini pick-up report will come in handy if interest is strong and you want to create an official room block for future events.”

— Erin Simcox



23. Increase concessions and reduce risk.

Managing housing becomes a lot of work as your program expands and you run bigger events in new markets. Many organizations turn to third-party housing companies to ease the load.

“The main reasons for partnering with a housing company are risk mitigation and cost efficiencies,” Breedlove says. “Comp rooms, discounts on audio-visual services, and free parking add up fast. Better rates and more concessions drive higher attendance.”

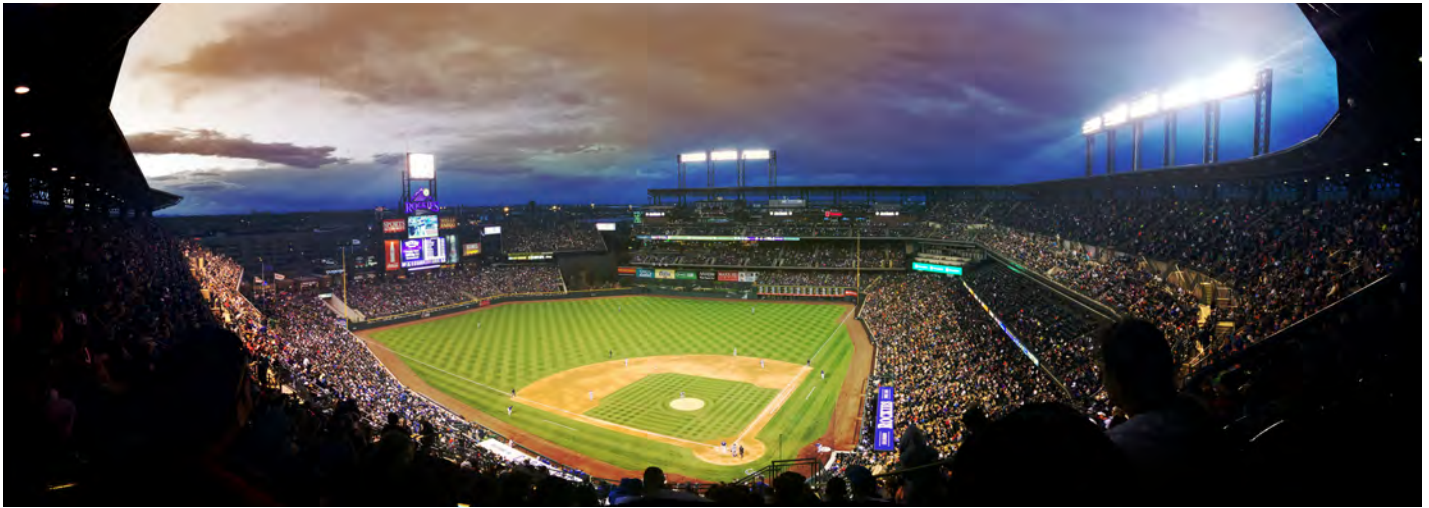


Photo by Shawn Reza



Qualities of a Great Housing Partner

- Extensive experience in hospitality
- Expertise in hotel contracting
- Knowledge of new contract clauses that require special attention
- Longstanding relationships with hotels in sports markets
- Bargaining power to secure lower rates and generous concessions
- Powerful technology to support their efforts on your behalf
- A commitment to service



Photo by Kraken Images

9

Score The Best Deals

The following tips will help you get the hotels and rates you need to win over players and families.

24. Negotiate early.

“Finding hotel availability is a challenge in many markets with the return of travel and events,” Breedlove explains. “Cancellations during the pandemic further reduce inventory. Many planners rescheduled their events to occur this year.”

To avoid this problem, let long-term negotiations work in your favor. Start discussions with hotels well in advance. You’ll increase your chances of getting the hotels you want at attractive room rates and terms.

25. Be flexible.

Let hotels know you have some flexibility in your dates when possible.

Why? Because hotels constantly work to complete their “occupancy puzzle.” Many offer special rates and concessions in return for flexibility.

A minor change to your dates might fit your event perfectly into the hotel’s “puzzle.” It often pays to let hotels know you’re willing to explore alternate dates if they make it worthwhile.



26. Go the distance on concessions.

As mentioned, hotel negotiations have become tougher these past few years. For example, some hotels no longer want to provide free breakfast. But this perk means a lot to families.

“Know what your attendees want and negotiate hard for the concessions that matter.”

— Carson Vanlandingham

27. Present the whole picture.

An event might need a lower room rate. But it will offset the rate by bringing in a lot of food and beverage sales.

“If you have open conversations with hotels at the outset, you can usually get to a place where everyone is happy,” Simcox says.

28. Stay open.

Tell hotels what rate your group is comfortable with and what concessions they need.

“Sales directors know they’re competing with other hotels and destinations,” Simcox states. “At the end of the day, they want to submit a competitive bid.”

29. Adjust on the fly to get the best rate.

Good housing programs require hotels to provide the lowest available rates during their stay. But room rates change based on different factors including demand forecasts.

“If a family finds a better rate at the same hotel for the same dates, notify your housing specialist immediately,” advises Vanlandingham.

“A good travel planner will make every effort to renegotiate the contract and get you the best possible deal.”

— Carson Vanlandingham



Photo by Brooke Lark

10

Conclusion

Managing sports-event housing can be complicated. You have so many things to keep track of for each event to run smoothly.

Like players and coaches, you need a great game plan. This special report shares 29 best housing practices to help you:

1. **Drive the best hotel deals** – even in a seller’s market
2. **Maximize support from destinations**, including grants and cash sponsorships
3. **Avoid red flags** like high cancellation penalties
4. **Generate more revenue with less work** with the right housing tech tools
5. **Enrich the experience** so players and families can’t wait to come back

By considering these tried-and-true methods from our team of sports tourism and housing experts, you’ll gain inspiration to develop the most valuable plays for your organization.



Our Experts



John David

President & CEO, Sports ETA



Janis Breedlove

VP Events & Experiences,
Sports ETA



Erin Simcox

Director of Event Services and
Housing, Visit Knoxville Sports
Commission



Laura Dermody

President, Pellucid Travel



**Carson
Vanlandingham**

VP of Operations / Lodging
Coordinator, Five Tool Baseball

About Sports ETA



As the only non-profit 501(c)3 trade association for the sports and events tourism industry in the United States, Sports ETA is the most essential resource for sports commissions, sports destinations, sports event owners, and industry partners. We believe sports tourism and the events that our members own and host have the power to transform society for the better. Our passion is to help sports events and tourism professionals achieve previously unimaginable levels of performance. We do this by nurturing a community of smart, creative, and interesting people: our members. Visit sportseta.org.

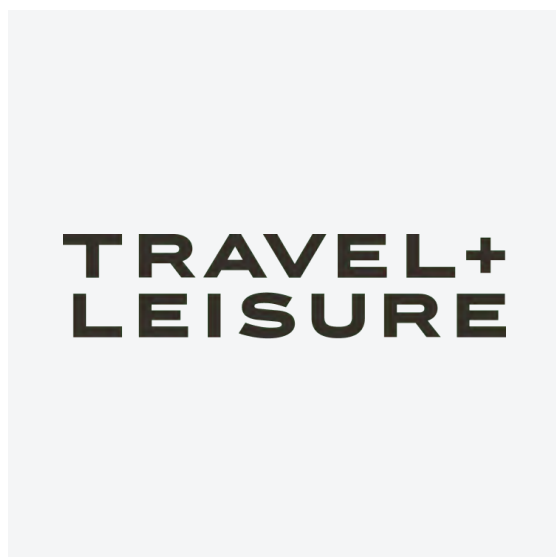
About GPS + Playbook 365

GPS + Playbook365 is an all-in-one sports-event management software that puts all the essential tools in one place. No more hopping back and forth between apps. GPS + Playbook365 simplifies event management from start to finish. The solution combines tools for team registration, multi-venue scheduling, scoring and bracketing, waiver management, email and text communications, marketing, group housing, analytics, and reporting. Organizers save time and delight customers with a simple one-stop shop. Visit gpsplaybook.com.

GPS + Playbook365 is part of **Travel + Leisure Co.** (NYSE:TNL), the world's leading membership and leisure travel company.



Photo by Paulo Almeida



About Travel + Leisure

As the world's leading membership and leisure travel company, Travel + Leisure Co. (NYSE:TNL) transformed the way families vacation with the introduction of the most dynamic points-based vacation ownership program at **Club Wyndham**, and the first vacation exchange network, **RCI**. The company delivers more than six million vacations each year at 245+ timeshare resorts worldwide, through tailored travel and membership products, and via **Travel + Leisure GO** - the signature subscription travel club inspired by the pages of Travel + Leisure magazine. With hospitality and responsible tourism at the heart of all we do, our 18,000+ dedicated associates bring out the best in people and places around the globe. We put the world on vacation. Learn more at travelandleisureco.com.



Glossary



Housing Terms

Amenity: Items and services hotels offer guests to enhance their stay, including in-room extras (toiletries, robes) and on-property premiums (dining, pool, fitness center, spa, playground). Use of some on-property amenities has a fee.

Attrition: A clause included in a hotel contract to ensure a group fulfills its contractual obligation for rooms by the cutoff date.

Attrition fee: A penalty incurred for unsold rooms in your room block after the cutoff date.

Best available rate: A pricing model hotels use to provide the lowest possible rate on a given date. Hotels analyze market conditions, such as occupancy and demand, to define the rate. This pricing strategy is based on ever-changing factors, so the best available rates fluctuate.

Cancellation clause: A provision in a hotel contract detailing the terms and conditions under which a company can cancel or terminate the agreement or reservation.

Cancellation penalty: A fee for failure to comply with the terms of the cancellation clause. Rules are different for individuals and groups. Hotels stand to lose more money on group cancellations, so group penalties are typically stricter.

Commission: Payment made for bringing business to a hotel, typically a percentage of the room rate.

Comp rooms: Complimentary guest room(s) based on the number of rooms a group purchases. For example, receive one free night for every 50 rooms occupied.

Concessions: Special deals from a hotel, usually in the form of discounts or complimentary services. Concessions typically include free parking, complimentary guest rooms, suite upgrades, food & beverage discounts, storage space for sports gear, special meals for athletes, and more.

Cutoff date: The date when a hotel releases unused accommodations in a room block to the public for general sale.

Destination Marketing Organization (DMO): A non-profit organization that promotes tourism and events in the destination.

Economic impact: Net change in an economy caused by activity involving the acquisition, operation, development, and use of sports facilities and services. Economic impact includes money spent in the destination on expenses like hotel accommodations, dining, shopping, entertainment, and transportation.

Event housing management software: Technology to handle the housing needs of event participants. Modern solutions connect event housing and registration to capture more reservations, boost efficiency, and enhance the experience for players, families, and fans.

Event risk management: The process of identifying, evaluating, and limiting an event's exposure to risk. Effective event risk management helps organizations safeguard participants and avoid financial loss, reputational damage, and legal disputes.

Group booking: Reservation for a block of rooms for a specific group, typically starting at 10 rooms per night or more.

Group rate: The rate for accommodations in a room block for an event. Group rates are typically lower than individual rates because of the volume.

History: Record of an organization's previous events to help hotels manage expectations. History typically includes information on rooms contracted, actual pickup, meeting space, and food and beverage sales.

Housing bureau: Organizations, often part of a convention bureau, that manage the housing process for events in the destination.

Inventory: Guest rooms available for a hotel to sell.

No-show: A term used for a reservation made but not consumed. The participant does not check in, cancel, or change the reservation.

Rebate: A set dollar amount an organizer negotiates into the room rate that hotels pay to help cover the costs of an event.

Responsible rebates: An essential best practice. High room rates due to excessive rebates can prompt attendees to book outside the official group block.

Return on investment: A performance measure referring to the ratio between the net profit made and the cost of investment to produce an event.

Room availability: The number of guest rooms not booked at a hotel during a given time frame for different room types, such as standard, deluxe, or suite.

Room block: A designated number of hotel rooms set aside and often discounted for participants in tournaments, showcases, and other events.

Room block release date: The date when the hotel stops holding rooms exclusively for your group and makes them available to the public.

Room nights: The total number of guest rooms a planner commits to occupy in exchange for the contracted rate. Room nights equal the number of rooms times the number of nights reserved. A guest booking one room for three nights generates three room nights.

Room pickup: The number of sleeping rooms occupied from the total reserved.

Room rate: A fee charged for sleeping rooms. Types of rates include corporate, individual, group, and inclusive.

Rooming list: Roster of people needing accommodations. The list typically includes the room type and arrival and departure dates. Some properties also require passport numbers.

Sales coordinator/manager/representative: Hotel staff person responsible for selling guest rooms and function space.

Sports commission: An organization, usually under a county DMO or tourism office, that is responsible for driving visitation to the destination by hosting sporting events.

Stay to play: A policy requiring participants to use one of a preferred group of hotels to be eligible to participate in a sporting event. Guest rooms must be a part of the event's contracted inventory with the hotel.

Third-party housing company: An organization that works with organizers to find guest rooms and negotiate hotel contracts. Housing companies have long-established relationships with hotels. They negotiate competitive rates and concessions, reduce financial and contractual risk, and manage housing logistics efficiently.