

Glossary of Terms

This glossary contains commonly used terms and phrases that every sports event industry professional must know to be successful!

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.

Bid Fee – The amount of money some event owners require from the winning bidder. This fee may be retained by the event owner as part of their compensation for selecting the destination. It might also be credited against a guarantee that the host has agreed to provide at the conclusion of the event. It is a common practice to require that each bidding organization submit either all of the fee or a portion of it with each bid. This money is returned to all unsuccessful bidders. Some bid organizations do not, as a formal policy, pay bid fees. They focus on other events or the development of their own.

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.

Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) – A resource for sports event planners bringing events to their community. Provides services, including, but not limited to, hotel & restaurant information, calendar of events, visitor guides, housing, attraction & shopping information.

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 Development – Occurs at the state, regional, or municipal level, or in public-private partnership organizations that may be partially funded by local, regional, state, or federal tax money. These organizations seek out new economic-generating opportunities while working to retain their existing business wealth.

Economic Impact – Net change in an economy caused by activity involving the acquisition, operation, development, and use of sport facilities and services.

Event Housing Management Software – Technology to handle the housing needs of event participants. Modern experience for players, families, and fans.

Event Management – Process by which an event is planned, prepared and produced. Encompasses the assessment, definition, acquisition, allocation, direction, control and analysis of time, finances, people, products, services, and other resources to achieve objectives.

Event Manager – Responsible for overseeing and arranging every aspect of an event, including researching, planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating an event's design, activities, and production.

Event Owner – Youth sports, multi-sport, national governing bodies (NGBs), grassroots programs, and any other organization that owns events that are bid out and/or awarded.

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.

Facility Guide – Document or online listing of sports facilities in the local area that can be utilized for hosting sporting events. Should include details of facilities including seating capacity, floor dimensions, lighting available, air/heating system, etc.

Grassroot Event – Low-cost sports competition created by host organization in order to attract visitors into their community.

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.

"Heads in Beds" – Occupying hotel rooms with guests.

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.

Host Organization – Sports commission, convention and visitors bureau (CVB), park and recreation department, venue, and any other organization who host sporting events.



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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.

Local Organizing Committee (LOC) – Group of individuals in the community who form an ad-hoc committee to manage the procurement and running of sports events.

National Governing Body (NGB) – Any sport organization responsible for the rules and regulations of one or several sport activities. Usually membership-based and comprised of athletes, coaches, officials, and a national staff dedicated to the promotion and growth of the sport through city, state, region, or national level participation.

National Sales Organization (NSO) – NSOs manage and support sales activities for a hotel company or brand. They serve as a hub, coordinating sales efforts across multiple properties nationwide or globally. NSOs expedite responses to RFPs and help travel planners find the best accommodations in their network.

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

Peak Night – Refers to the night during an event when the most rooms are occupied by those in attendance.

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

Request for Proposal (RFP) – A document that outlines the requirements to host a sporting event. Should include requirements for the following: hotel rooms, bid fee, facility/fields, estimated number of participants, complimentary services, etc.

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 – total number of sleeping rooms that are utilized and attributed to one event.

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 – number of rooms blocked or occupied multiplied by the number of nights each room is reserved or occupied.

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 – Organization created to support the development and hosting of amateur sporting events in their community. May be born out of a chamber of commerce, convention and visitors bureau (CVB), or be a department within a bureau.

Sports Events & Tourism Association (Sports ETA) – The leading not-for-profit association of sports event travel industry professionals that provides professional development, industry research, and networking opportunities; also the producers of the Sports ETA Symposium, Chief Executive Summit, Women's Summit, Facilities Summit, and 4S Summit.

Sports Event Travel Industry – Niche of the tourism industry that uses the hosting of sporting events to attract visitors to communities in order to drive economic impact.

“Stay to Play” – Rule used by some events which requires participants to utilize certain hotels in order to be eligible to participate in competition.

Supplier – Hotels, sports publications, insurance companies, consulting and research firms, housing services, and any other company that supplies products and services to the sports event industry.

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.

United States Olympic Committee (USOC) – Not-for-profit organization recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the sole entity in the United States whose mission involves training, entering and underwriting the full expenses for the U.S. teams in the Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, and Parapan American Games. The USOC oversees the process by which U.S. cities seek to be selected as a Candidate City to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games (winter or summer), or the Pan American Games. In addition, the USOC approves the U.S. trial sites for the Olympic, Paralympic and Pan American Games team selections.

