

1

00:00:33,000 --> 00:00:35,000

Hello folks.

2

00:00:35,000 --> 00:00:38,216

It's Heather ReId here with episode number three of event contracts exposed.

3

00:00:38,516 --> 00:00:40,666

I am so excited to be here with you today.

4

00:00:40,666 --> 00:00:43,716

My pronouns are she her and I am a

5

00:00:43,733 --> 00:00:49,000

60 year old white female sitting in my home office with wall to wall bookcases behind me.

6

00:00:49,016 --> 00:00:52,850

I'm wearing a navy blue blouse, have ash colored

7

00:00:52,850 --> 00:00:55,116

hair and I'm wearing red glasses.

8

00:00:55,133 --> 00:00:59,200

So today we're here to discuss the truth about hidden fees.

9

00:00:59,516 --> 00:01:02,566

and I actually thought I probably should rename

10

00:01:02,566 --> 00:01:06,033

it to my truth about hidden fees because

11

00:01:06,049 --> 00:01:08,750

the is kind of definitive sounding.

12

00:01:08,750 --> 00:01:11,799

So we're going to dive into what

13

00:01:11,816 --> 00:01:14,983

I know to be true about hidden fees, share some horror

14

00:01:15,000 --> 00:01:17,700

stories from listeners that we got ahead of time

15

00:01:18,233 --> 00:01:22,299

and discuss the steps that planners can take to avoid unexpected costs.

16

00:01:22,316 --> 00:01:27,166

So I want to remind folks that I am not legal counsel.

17

00:01:27,166 --> 00:01:31,183

I am a 30-year experienced meeting professional,

18

00:01:31,200 --> 00:01:35,033

and the discussions here today do not in any way constitute

19

00:01:35,033 --> 00:01:38,083

or provide or suggest legal advice.

20

00:01:38,750 --> 00:01:41,866

And two, I know that you're going to have some questions

21

00:01:41,866 --> 00:01:45,933

now or during the replay, so please don't hesitate

22

00:01:45,950 --> 00:01:49,183

to put those in the comments whenever and wherever

23

00:01:49,200 --> 00:01:52,666

you are viewing this, and we'll do our best to address them live

24

00:01:52,666 --> 00:01:55,233

or in future episodes or get back to you.

25

00:01:56,000 --> 00:01:59,099  
So as my colleague, Anthea Rowe

26  
00:01:59,099 --> 00:02:02,750  
joins me on screen, I'd like to ask folks

27  
00:02:02,750 --> 00:02:07,183  
to comment, where did you hear about today's episode?

28  
00:02:07,200 --> 00:02:11,150  
We would love to know where folks

29  
00:02:11,150 --> 00:02:13,666  
heard about this because we are trying our

30  
00:02:14,250 --> 00:02:18,000  
darnest to get the news out about this um LinkedIn episode.

31  
00:02:18,300 --> 00:02:21,599  
So, uh, Anthea, where are you?

32  
00:02:21,599 --> 00:02:23,599  
Great.

33  
00:02:23,599 --> 00:02:24,550  
Thanks, Heather.

34  
00:02:24,550 --> 00:02:25,216  
Hello, everyone.

35  
00:02:25,216 --> 00:02:26,416  
Welcome.

36  
00:02:26,416 --> 00:02:30,166  
Thanks for starting to see your um your comments come in about where  
you're heard from us.

37  
00:02:30,166 --> 00:02:33,283

I am a 45 year old white woman with

38

00:02:33,300 --> 00:02:35,449

long blondish uh hair.

39

00:02:35,449 --> 00:02:38,500

I like ash the way you said that head. um sitting in a home

40

00:02:38,516 --> 00:02:42,050

office with similarly books behind me, a bookshelf

41

00:02:42,050 --> 00:02:44,383

and in a navy wall wearing a navy dress.

42

00:02:44,699 --> 00:02:46,699

My pronouns are she her.

43

00:02:47,750 --> 00:02:50,933

So you're here today to help ask me

44

00:02:50,933 --> 00:02:54,466

some questions so I can stay on track and you're going to monitor comments

45

00:02:54,466 --> 00:02:56,866

and things like that so uh let's get

46

00:02:57,650 --> 00:02:59,650

right into the deep stuff.

47

00:02:59,650 --> 00:03:02,400

I will do my best and I'll

48

00:03:02,400 --> 00:03:05,699

do my best to um monitor people's um thoughts and comments

49

00:03:05,699 --> 00:03:09,349

if we can't get them to them all like Heather said we'll answer to

them um later.

50

00:03:09,349 --> 00:03:11,483

So Heather off the top, um

51

00:03:12,300 --> 00:03:15,766

why do many event planners feel suppliers

52

00:03:15,766 --> 00:03:17,983

lack transparency about their fees?

53

00:03:20,033 --> 00:03:23,233

The short answer because it's our lived reality and

54

00:03:24,000 --> 00:03:27,716

by that I mean that most planners have experienced

55

00:03:27,716 --> 00:03:32,449

some sort of post-event invoice shock.

56

00:03:32,449 --> 00:03:35,500

They've opened up that invoice to find an

57

00:03:35,516 --> 00:03:40,483

unexpected charge, unexpected fee, surcharge.

58

00:03:40,800 --> 00:03:43,916

And if a planner hasn't experienced

59

00:03:43,916 --> 00:03:47,449

it themselves, I know that they know of someone who has.

60

00:03:47,449 --> 00:03:50,750

The other thing I know to

61

00:03:50,750 --> 00:03:54,099

be true is that our industry publications are saturated

62

00:03:54,116 --> 00:03:56,866  
with examples. um Our uh

63

00:03:57,466 --> 00:04:00,516  
slack channels with industry professionals in it,

64

00:04:00,533 --> 00:04:04,300  
um Facebook group groups, et cetera. The

65

00:04:04,316 --> 00:04:09,833  
lack of transparency actually is one of the top concerns for event  
planners.

66

00:04:10,550 --> 00:04:13,900  
Actually, Anthea, just yesterday,

67

00:04:13,916 --> 00:04:18,283  
we're starting to see some government involvement in consumer and

68

00:04:18,300 --> 00:04:21,899  
what I would say in our case as planners, our our attendees,

69

00:04:21,899 --> 00:04:26,816  
um we're starting to see some uh attendee facing situations to be  
addressed.

70

00:04:26,816 --> 00:04:31,066  
Yesterday, the US Federal Trade Commission banned

71

00:04:31,066 --> 00:04:34,666  
the burying of junk fees on short-term

72

00:04:34,666 --> 00:04:36,766  
lodging and tickets to live events.

73

00:04:37,250 --> 00:04:40,500  
So when you read the article, it says the fees aren't

74

00:04:40,500 --> 00:04:43,800

going to disappear, but they must now be disclosed

75

00:04:43,800 --> 00:04:47,399

up front and the total cost must be displayed more prominently.

76

00:04:47,399 --> 00:04:50,449

So I'm glad to see that we're getting movement

77

00:04:50,449 --> 00:04:54,283

in the US and what happens in the US always comes

78

00:04:54,300 --> 00:04:57,899

to Canada at some point, which is where I'm at or U at, you and I are at.

79

00:04:58,850 --> 00:05:01,850

So I'm glad that there's movement there, but I also

80

00:05:01,850 --> 00:05:05,983

think that there's just as many surprises or

81

00:05:06,000 --> 00:05:09,833

hidden charges that are not attendee facing,

82

00:05:09,833 --> 00:05:12,583

but in fact, they are client facing.

83

00:05:12,600 --> 00:05:15,716

So in other words, the planner is seeing

84

00:05:15,716 --> 00:05:19,616

the additional fees, the additional penalties or surcharges.

85

00:05:19,916 --> 00:05:23,816

It's not the ones that are going to the attendee for their guest room.

86

00:05:23,816 --> 00:05:26,816  
They're ones that are coming to the planner or to

87  
00:05:26,816 --> 00:05:29,933  
the client for the event itself.

88  
00:05:29,933 --> 00:05:31,933  
So

89  
00:05:31,933 --> 00:05:33,250  
Okay.

90  
00:05:33,250 --> 00:05:33,800  
Yeah.

91  
00:05:33,800 --> 00:05:35,383  
And so so that was the federal Trade Commission in the US.

92  
00:05:35,399 --> 00:05:38,033  
And yeah, like you said, Canada will follow presumably.

93  
00:05:38,033 --> 00:05:41,033  
And then also from the consumer side to hopefully

94  
00:05:41,033 --> 00:05:44,983  
the the client side. um You that planner has been hosts.

95  
00:05:45,000 --> 00:05:48,116  
And for those people listening to the replay, uh

96  
00:05:48,116 --> 00:05:51,050  
we're recording this on December 18th, 2024.

97  
00:05:51,050 --> 00:05:54,733  
So then that banning by the FTC was December 17th.

98  
00:05:55,750 --> 00:05:57,750  
Good point.



99

00:05:57,750 --> 00:05:58,500

Got it.

100

00:05:58,500 --> 00:05:59,116

Okay.

101

00:05:59,116 --> 00:06:00,816

And yeah, it was was it Julius Salaris in his

102

00:06:00,833 --> 00:06:05,199

popular newsletter who said, um, lack of transparency around fees was one of

103

00:06:06,750 --> 00:06:10,250

Okay, so like, is it a conspiracy?

104

00:06:10,250 --> 00:06:13,416

Are our hidden fees are then using suppliers?

105

00:06:13,433 --> 00:06:16,483

Like, is it their way of trying to trick us out of

106

00:06:16,500 --> 00:06:19,066

or trick planters out of their precious budgets?

107

00:06:19,066 --> 00:06:21,066

Like, you know, tell me a bit about it.

108

00:06:21,750 --> 00:06:25,916

So hidden fees to me implies intentional concealment.

109

00:06:25,916 --> 00:06:29,383

It's maybe even suggest dishonesty,

110

00:06:29,399 --> 00:06:32,216

um which to me is a deceptive practice.

111

00:06:32,216 --> 00:06:35,383

And I've never been on the supplier partner

112

00:06:35,399 --> 00:06:37,550

side of this industry.

113

00:06:38,000 --> 00:06:43,199

So I don't know what the rationale is, but I absolutely don't believe it is to trick us.

114

00:06:43,199 --> 00:06:48,300

I don't believe and I don't want to believe that it is to be deceptive in their practices.

115

00:06:48,300 --> 00:06:51,466

However, the term hidden fees does carry a

116

00:06:51,466 --> 00:06:54,883

negative connotation, and for us as planners, it doesn't

117

00:06:54,899 --> 00:07:00,166

lend itself to building trust or to being able to make informed decisions.

118

00:07:00,466 --> 00:07:03,633

So, as I said, I personally and

119

00:07:03,649 --> 00:07:09,516

some would say probably naïvely, don't believe that supplier partners are out there to try and trick and deceive us.

120

00:07:09,533 --> 00:07:13,899

I actually believe that it is our responsibility

121

00:07:13,916 --> 00:07:17,816

as planners to suss out every possible

122

00:07:17,816 --> 00:07:20,566

financial impact to our events

123

00:07:21,250 --> 00:07:23,250

and our reb budgets.

124

00:07:23,250 --> 00:07:25,133

And it's one of our core responsibilities.

125

00:07:25,133 --> 00:07:29,266

We need to acknowledge that these things exist and we

126

00:07:29,266 --> 00:07:32,500

need to work extremely hard to reveal them each

127

00:07:32,516 --> 00:07:37,366

and every time we encounter both a contract negotiation

128

00:07:38,033 --> 00:07:40,366

and a post-event invoice.

129

00:07:40,366 --> 00:07:44,483

So we can't just stop our feet and say that suppliers are being mean.

130

00:07:46,366 --> 00:07:48,366

as much as we love you.

131

00:07:48,366 --> 00:07:50,566

So you, we're getting some comments from Katie says,

132

00:07:50,566 --> 00:07:53,733

recently received a hotel bill that included a service charge on

133

00:07:53,750 --> 00:07:57,166

room rentals, um totaling an additional \$800

134

00:07:57,166 --> 00:07:59,316

over the initial.

135

00:08:00,000 --> 00:08:02,216

Sounds pretty common, right?

136

00:08:02,216 --> 00:08:04,216

You've received a final hotel bill.

137

00:08:04,216 --> 00:08:07,899

This is Emily with a service charge added encore AV costs.

138

00:08:07,916 --> 00:08:11,149

Yeah. um so it sounds like it's

139

00:08:11,149 --> 00:08:14,800

like the everyone here today listening to has experienced it.

140

00:08:14,816 --> 00:08:17,816

So, I mean let's we've talked about

141

00:08:17,816 --> 00:08:19,966

them in kind of abstract.

142

00:08:19,966 --> 00:08:24,933

Like what are some actual examples of hidden fees um the many planners encounter?

143

00:08:25,500 --> 00:08:28,733

So, as I said, like to me, there are some attendi facing

144

00:08:28,733 --> 00:08:31,433

ones and there are also client ones.

145

00:08:31,433 --> 00:08:34,783

So if you're thinking about your attendees, it might be their sleeping room.

146

00:08:34,799 --> 00:08:37,966

It could be everything from Wi-Fi to

147

00:08:37,966 --> 00:08:41,316

phone calls from in the room to in room safes

148

00:08:41,333 --> 00:08:45,399

service or sorry room service charges, early departure fees.

149

00:08:45,416 --> 00:08:48,466

One of our listeners are registered to

150

00:08:48,466 --> 00:08:53,316

attend was saying even early check-in fees are now being assigned.

151

00:08:53,633 --> 00:08:55,633

It could be mini bar restocking.

152

00:08:55,633 --> 00:08:58,666

If you take something out, it counts it as being sold, even if you put

153

00:08:58,666 --> 00:09:01,716

it back in. newspaper delivery, luggage starts.

154

00:09:01,733 --> 00:09:06,166

There's all sorts of attendee facing ones that we need to be very aware of.

155

00:09:06,166 --> 00:09:09,516

But when we're looking at event contracts, we also need to think about the

156

00:09:09,533 --> 00:09:13,250

client and meeting spaces, just like,

157

00:09:13,250 --> 00:09:17,016

was it Katie said that there was a service charge on room rentals.

158

00:09:17,033 --> 00:09:19,033

Absolutely, very, very common

159

00:09:19,316 --> 00:09:22,616

that there are now administrative slash service fees

160

00:09:22,616 --> 00:09:26,450

on meeting room rentals, um one example

161

00:09:26,450 --> 00:09:29,799

that was given to us um on LinkedIn was an

162

00:09:29,816 --> 00:09:34,066

HVAC surcharge for after hours events.

163

00:09:34,066 --> 00:09:37,833

Well, oh my God, you're renting a room.

164

00:09:37,850 --> 00:09:39,850

They know the time of day.

165

00:09:39,850 --> 00:09:44,016

Why is there an HVAC charge on top of meeting space rental?

166

00:09:44,033 --> 00:09:47,266

An example given was the use of wall sockets.

167

00:09:47,266 --> 00:09:50,616

One planner witnessed the hotel representative

168

00:09:50,633 --> 00:09:54,166

going around and counting how many wall sockets were being used and given a charge,

169

00:09:54,166 --> 00:09:57,233

a daily charge for additional power.

170

00:09:57,649 --> 00:10:00,700

Costs to access lighting panels or

171

00:10:00,716 --> 00:10:04,433  
lighting remotes, uh costs for water stations.

172  
00:10:04,433 --> 00:10:07,433  
I know there was an example given that outdoor

173  
00:10:07,433 --> 00:10:11,566  
event space is rented and of course, we're shown

174  
00:10:11,566 --> 00:10:15,333  
with, you know, umbrella, patio umbrellas and heaters.

175  
00:10:15,350 --> 00:10:18,350  
And then, no, it's the bare surface and now you need to rent

176  
00:10:18,350 --> 00:10:21,649  
the umbrellas and you need to rent the um heaters.

177  
00:10:21,649 --> 00:10:23,649  
So

178  
00:10:23,649 --> 00:10:25,799  
there's all sorts of sources for

179  
00:10:25,799 --> 00:10:31,549  
meeting space um fees in addition to the core price of rental.

180  
00:10:31,549 --> 00:10:34,549  
And then if we talk about food and beverage, which is another

181  
00:10:34,549 --> 00:10:39,100  
big component of the event world, you

182  
00:10:40,000 --> 00:10:43,133  
I've heard that condiments for coffee and tea can

183  
00:10:43,133 --> 00:10:46,366  
be at um a surcharge that our

184

00:10:46,366 --> 00:10:49,899

coffee and tea service does not include um honey or

185

00:10:49,916 --> 00:10:53,683

does not include, you know, whatever. sugar, I don't drink either.

186

00:10:53,700 --> 00:10:56,700

So, you know, it could it could be that water

187

00:10:56,700 --> 00:11:00,000

stations on a banquet table now have a charge.

188

00:11:00,299 --> 00:11:02,299

There's so many.

189

00:11:02,299 --> 00:11:04,666

And I don't want to take time on what are the charges.

190

00:11:04,666 --> 00:11:07,666

I think we don't have to look too far and I I

191

00:11:07,666 --> 00:11:10,783

think we can learn from one another about all the different examples.

192

00:11:10,799 --> 00:11:14,450

What I really want to spend the meat and time here today is

193

00:11:14,450 --> 00:11:19,416

on what can we do to address these kinds of hidden charges?

194

00:11:19,433 --> 00:11:21,433

So

195

00:11:21,433 --> 00:11:23,266

I think there's there's no so there's

196



00:11:23,266 --> 00:11:28,366  
no lack of what is being labeled as hidden fees.

197  
00:11:28,366 --> 00:11:30,366  
Right.

198  
00:11:30,366 --> 00:11:32,233  
And it, I mean, it sounds like it could

199  
00:11:33,000 --> 00:11:35,000  
be reinvented.

200  
00:11:35,000 --> 00:11:36,433  
Right?

201  
00:11:36,433 --> 00:11:38,216  
So if you goated asking, like, okay, well, the outdoor space doesn't

202  
00:11:38,216 --> 00:11:41,383  
include the patio tables and umbrellas, then maybe there would be

203  
00:11:41,399 --> 00:11:46,549  
additional things later like, oh, you didn't say that you wanted the  
speakers to be playing music out there, even though they're already  
wired in.

204  
00:11:46,549 --> 00:11:48,549  
Like, it sounds like

205  
00:11:48,549 --> 00:11:50,516  
yeah, it could always just go on and on.

206  
00:11:50,516 --> 00:11:54,283  
So it seems like what planners need is more of an approach.

207  
00:11:54,299 --> 00:11:57,649  
And I just want to acknowledge some of the things people have added in  
the comments.

208

00:11:57,649 --> 00:12:00,883

It sounds like they've been hit up for fees on

209

00:12:00,899 --> 00:12:03,350

things like.

210

00:12:03,350 --> 00:12:05,350

Yeah.

211

00:12:05,350 --> 00:12:08,266

Branding like cling for in a room that you've already rented.

212

00:12:08,566 --> 00:12:11,683

um because it's biled to hear you say,

213

00:12:11,700 --> 00:12:15,416

um, like counting the electrical outlets that are being used or HVAC?

214

00:12:15,416 --> 00:12:19,066

It's like you were going to heat the room or I don't air condition it.

215

00:12:20,866 --> 00:12:22,866

that is wild.

216

00:12:22,866 --> 00:12:24,950

Okay, so then to your point, it's not about

217

00:12:24,950 --> 00:12:30,483

catalog every cataloguing every single potential like hidden fee and we'll talk about how you feel about that name. um

218

00:12:32,250 --> 00:12:34,250

in more detail.

219

00:12:34,250 --> 00:12:36,100

But what, um, you

220

00:12:36,116 --> 00:12:39,116  
know, we've established that hidden fees are prominent in the industry.

221  
00:12:39,116 --> 00:12:41,866  
How do you think planners should be dealing with them?

222  
00:12:42,950 --> 00:12:46,116  
So, first and foremost,

223  
00:12:46,133 --> 00:12:50,266  
I I just want to say I am a planner and I've only ever been a planner.

224  
00:12:50,266 --> 00:12:53,433  
I've never been on the supplier partner side

225  
00:12:53,450 --> 00:12:55,600  
and it's not that I don't have an appreciation.

226  
00:12:55,616 --> 00:12:58,483  
It's just that I am able to put on some blinders.

227  
00:12:58,916 --> 00:13:02,383  
and I want to show that these are my own seasons

228  
00:13:02,399 --> 00:13:05,750  
thoughts and opinions, um and maybe after 30 years, we

229  
00:13:05,750 --> 00:13:09,983  
can, you know, if I can help inform someone's practice great.

230  
00:13:10,666 --> 00:13:14,016  
So the first thing I would love to see planners

231  
00:13:14,033 --> 00:13:17,333  
do in dealing with hidden fees is to abolish

232  
00:13:17,816 --> 00:13:23,450

or ban the term hidden fees from our industry's vernacular.

233

00:13:23,450 --> 00:13:27,950

We need to be negotiating in language that builds trust.

234

00:13:27,950 --> 00:13:31,483

First of all, we need to be negotiating using

235

00:13:31,500 --> 00:13:33,649

business terminology.

236

00:13:34,066 --> 00:13:37,533

We need to allow ourselves to be making

237

00:13:37,549 --> 00:13:42,583

informed decisions and really going after what does an informed decision include?

238

00:13:42,600 --> 00:13:44,600

That includes pricing.

239

00:13:44,600 --> 00:13:47,566

And it helps us reduce unnecessary and

240

00:13:47,566 --> 00:13:51,983

uncomfortable disputes later in the event continuum.

241

00:13:53,266 --> 00:13:56,566

It's fair enough to say, well, okay, get rid of the word hidden fees.

242

00:13:56,566 --> 00:13:59,799

Because that fosters just exactly what you asked me about,

243

00:13:59,816 --> 00:14:03,166

you know, a lack of transparency or a conspiracy.

244

00:14:03,166 --> 00:14:05,566

No, let's use

245

00:14:06,750 --> 00:14:10,500  
defined fees when we're talking proactively

246

00:14:10,500 --> 00:14:14,100  
at our um RFP stage, at

247

00:14:14,100 --> 00:14:17,933  
our site selection stage, uh in our contracts.

248

00:14:17,933 --> 00:14:21,350  
And then we also want to be using

249

00:14:21,350 --> 00:14:24,766  
terminology like undisclosed fees.

250

00:14:25,250 --> 00:14:28,366  
So this is, I want to kind of take that apart for

251

00:14:28,366 --> 00:14:31,833  
you. So defined fees, so

252

00:14:31,850 --> 00:14:35,866  
DEFINED, just in in case I'm

253

00:14:35,866 --> 00:14:38,266  
not clear, defined fees to me

254

00:14:39,250 --> 00:14:42,533  
include supplementary fees, spurcharges,

255

00:14:42,533 --> 00:14:46,783  
penalties, their fees

256

00:14:46,799 --> 00:14:50,633  
that are created are charges that are created to augment

257

00:14:50,633 --> 00:14:55,000  
the supplier partner's revenue to supplement.

258  
00:14:55,016 --> 00:14:59,750  
We know that we've all been to Helen back with COVID as were they.

259  
00:14:59,750 --> 00:15:03,399  
They're trying to find creative ways to acquire revenue.

260  
00:15:03,716 --> 00:15:06,883  
And so to find fees, though,

261  
00:15:06,899 --> 00:15:12,116  
acknowledges that these fees exist, um and they're not, quote, hidden.

262  
00:15:12,116 --> 00:15:16,733  
So to me, I like the term defined fees and I'll get into that more.

263  
00:15:16,733 --> 00:15:19,666  
And then undisclosed fees

264  
00:15:20,266 --> 00:15:23,916  
actually means not an announce or kept private.

265  
00:15:23,933 --> 00:15:27,233  
And so when we are contracting

266  
00:15:27,233 --> 00:15:31,783  
four events, we want to say we've

267  
00:15:31,799 --> 00:15:36,716  
done our homework in our very, very best to uncover fees, et cetera.

268  
00:15:36,716 --> 00:15:40,250  
Then we also want to address the fact that we

269  
00:15:41,000 --> 00:15:44,700  
may not have been told about all of the defined fees,

270

00:15:44,700 --> 00:15:47,333  
and so they become undisclosed fees.

271

00:15:47,333 --> 00:15:50,633  
And there is actually legal language

272

00:15:50,633 --> 00:15:53,033  
that can go along with no

273

00:15:53,816 --> 00:15:55,816  
undisclosed fees.

274

00:15:55,816 --> 00:15:57,733  
So we'll get to that.

275

00:15:57,733 --> 00:16:00,033  
So so just so you understand the terminology that um so

276

00:16:00,049 --> 00:16:03,216  
when we're at the RFP stage of sourcing venues

277

00:16:03,233 --> 00:16:07,299  
and suppliers, we as planners should be seeking to uncover as many

278

00:16:08,216 --> 00:16:12,116  
defined fees that exist as possible.

279

00:16:12,116 --> 00:16:15,950  
So we covered sleeping room rates

280

00:16:15,950 --> 00:16:20,200  
include, and you should have your own laundry list

281

00:16:20,216 --> 00:16:23,750  
of everything that you've heard that a sleeping room rate

282

00:16:23,750 --> 00:16:27,283  
might also be charged,

283  
00:16:27,600 --> 00:16:29,700  
in addition to the sleeping room rate.

284  
00:16:29,700 --> 00:16:32,750  
Our food and beverage functions, we want to

285  
00:16:32,750 --> 00:16:37,066  
identify all of those examples that we are learning in are being  
disclosed

286  
00:16:37,066 --> 00:16:40,366  
here today, for example, all of those are

287  
00:16:40,366 --> 00:16:44,266  
defined expenses that may or may not exist in a property or with

288  
00:16:44,266 --> 00:16:48,166  
supplier, but when we know of them, we are proactively asking

289  
00:16:48,166 --> 00:16:50,683  
them to identify, do they have them or don't they have them?

290  
00:16:51,000 --> 00:16:54,000  
Meeting space rental, the lighting controls,

291  
00:16:54,000 --> 00:16:57,533  
the HVAC, the number of units of staging, the

292  
00:16:57,533 --> 00:16:59,933  
water stations, the use of the wall sockets.

293  
00:16:59,933 --> 00:17:03,100  
We should have our own list of what we know

294  
00:17:03,116 --> 00:17:07,133



in the exists in the industry exists as defined fees,

295

00:17:07,133 --> 00:17:10,733

or charges, penalties, et cetera, however you want to call them.

296

00:17:11,250 --> 00:17:14,333

So, and there may also be miscellaneous fees, so

297

00:17:14,333 --> 00:17:16,849

things that don't fall into one of those three categories.

298

00:17:16,849 --> 00:17:19,966

And so we're really putting out

299

00:17:19,966 --> 00:17:23,983

there that we are aware that these fees exist and

300

00:17:24,000 --> 00:17:27,766

we are responsible for uncovering them, discussing

301

00:17:27,766 --> 00:17:30,733

them, negotiating them, and contracting them.

302

00:17:31,066 --> 00:17:34,233

So then when we get to the RFP stage, um,

303

00:17:35,516 --> 00:17:39,883

we should, in my opinion, be using always a defined

304

00:17:39,900 --> 00:17:44,750

fees checklist that accompanies our main RFP document.

305

00:17:45,349 --> 00:17:48,583

and I know this seems like a lot of work, but it's also a

306

00:17:48,599 --> 00:17:53,700

lot of work and a lot of uncomfortableness to discover these things after the fact.

307

00:17:54,000 --> 00:17:57,533

So clients should indicate clearly that RFP

308

00:17:57,533 --> 00:18:02,450

responses from supplier partners are not considered complete

309

00:18:02,933 --> 00:18:06,483

if the defined fees document has not been completed.

310

00:18:07,000 --> 00:18:10,549

That to me would be a bold step forward,

311

00:18:10,549 --> 00:18:14,233

is saying that, you know, your piece of business may not,

312

00:18:14,500 --> 00:18:18,900

you know, you may not win the piece of business if there isn't the transparency that is deserved.

313

00:18:19,316 --> 00:18:22,916

When you're shortlisting your potential supplier

314

00:18:22,916 --> 00:18:26,566

partners or so these might be site visits, they might be exploratory

315

00:18:26,566 --> 00:18:30,516

conversations, that defined fees document that you've

316

00:18:30,533 --> 00:18:35,333

created should be reviewed and updated in collaboration with the supplier partner.

317

00:18:35,750 --> 00:18:38,750

And then you can negotiate to the best of your ability

318

00:18:38,750 --> 00:18:43,000

and I'm going to say in proportion to the value of

319

00:18:43,016 --> 00:18:47,266

the piece of business that you are representing, it's

320

00:18:47,266 --> 00:18:52,000

not something that we should expect everything if we're, you know, a small piece of business.

321

00:18:52,016 --> 00:18:55,250

There may be some that are completely irrelevant,

322

00:18:55,250 --> 00:18:57,650

but really for honing in on what might be applicable.

323

00:18:58,000 --> 00:19:01,066

And then where my zone of

324

00:19:01,066 --> 00:19:04,783

of experience in contracts

325

00:19:04,799 --> 00:19:08,816

is really, uh there's several things.

326

00:19:08,816 --> 00:19:10,816

One,

327

00:19:12,250 --> 00:19:15,500

every single word of a contract needs to be read

328

00:19:16,250 --> 00:19:20,450

and reread and reread in silence

329

00:19:20,450 --> 00:19:24,650

out loud, whichever way you that you read things, because

330

00:19:25,500 --> 00:19:28,549

there' the contracts are worded

331

00:19:28,549 --> 00:19:30,883  
with very ambiguous wording.

332

00:19:30,900 --> 00:19:34,000  
There it might be there may be a charge at

333

00:19:34,750 --> 00:19:38,750  
additional charge. um it may be ambiguous

334

00:19:38,750 --> 00:19:42,816  
wording that kind of skirts around the fact that there might be  
something else besides.

335

00:19:43,250 --> 00:19:46,549  
Common sense might also tell you that, okay, they

336

00:19:46,549 --> 00:19:49,299  
haven't laid out anything regarding sleeping rooms.

337

00:19:49,316 --> 00:19:52,666  
All right, common sense and and good practice.

338

00:19:52,666 --> 00:19:55,783  
I know that there are fees that are going to come along with those.

339

00:19:55,799 --> 00:19:58,849  
So at the contract stage, we should

340

00:19:58,849 --> 00:20:02,200  
be using that document, but we should also be

341

00:20:02,216 --> 00:20:05,216  
really looking for any opportunity in the wording

342

00:20:05,700 --> 00:20:08,933  
that suggests that there would be additional charges.

343

00:20:08,933 --> 00:20:11,799  
So that's one point I'd really like to make.

344  
00:20:11,816 --> 00:20:14,983  
Second, in our

345  
00:20:15,000 --> 00:20:19,016  
certification program, I teach what is the difference between, um

346  
00:20:19,666 --> 00:20:23,983  
an attachment and amendment, an exhibit to a contract.

347  
00:20:24,000 --> 00:20:28,066  
And I want to focus on an exhibit to a contract.

348  
00:20:28,066 --> 00:20:32,383  
And this is a document that is attached to the um contract

349  
00:20:33,116 --> 00:20:37,066  
that's viewed as sample documents.

350  
00:20:37,066 --> 00:20:40,116  
So there are documents that the parties intend to

351  
00:20:40,133 --> 00:20:43,000  
execute or deliver at some point in the future.

352  
00:20:43,016 --> 00:20:46,133  
And it could be that as planners,

353  
00:20:46,133 --> 00:20:48,400  
we require that the

354  
00:20:49,016 --> 00:20:52,066  
defined fees document is

355  
00:20:52,066 --> 00:20:55,733  
attached as an exhibit to the contract.

356

00:20:55,849 --> 00:20:58,900

Or if we I know there

357

00:20:58,916 --> 00:21:02,083

are some properties that will disclose their pricing list.

358

00:21:02,099 --> 00:21:04,366

I've been fortunate to work with some of them.

359

00:21:04,366 --> 00:21:07,599

That pricing list, even if it's 2024

360

00:21:07,616 --> 00:21:11,266

price list, is still attached to the contract as a

361

00:21:11,266 --> 00:21:15,333

benchmark as a point of reference for future year business.

362

00:21:15,650 --> 00:21:19,250

So that's another way of documenting and

363

00:21:19,250 --> 00:21:22,900

including is to ask and require for an exhibit

364

00:21:22,916 --> 00:21:26,150

to be attached to the main document.

365

00:21:26,150 --> 00:21:29,799

And a point of note there, it's

366

00:21:29,816 --> 00:21:33,049

an attachment is that if your exhibit is included, make

367

00:21:33,049 --> 00:21:36,516

sure you reference it in the body of the contract that exhibit A

368

00:21:37,066 --> 00:21:39,166  
um has been included.

369  
00:21:39,166 --> 00:21:43,833  
So making sure that there are always, um, uh attached and connected.

370  
00:21:43,849 --> 00:21:45,983  
So and then

371  
00:21:47,216 --> 00:21:49,216  
okay.

372  
00:21:49,216 --> 00:21:50,250  
So I have one.

373  
00:21:50,250 --> 00:21:52,066  
I have so I know this is a long answer, but this is this is really you

374  
00:21:52,066 --> 00:21:56,016  
and really where. um so so we say we've done our

375  
00:21:56,033 --> 00:21:59,566  
very, very best and we we've tried to uncover as much as we can.

376  
00:21:59,566 --> 00:22:02,566  
There may always be some that

377  
00:22:02,566 --> 00:22:04,966  
are some fees that escape us or

378  
00:22:05,566 --> 00:22:09,333  
whatever. We want to look at including

379  
00:22:09,349 --> 00:22:12,883  
language in our contract that talks about no

380  
00:22:12,900 --> 00:22:16,250  
undisclosed fees.

381

00:22:16,750 --> 00:22:18,750

So

382

00:22:18,750 --> 00:22:21,716

I cannot and will not give legal language,

383

00:22:21,716 --> 00:22:25,733

but I can and how I've built my practice is I

384

00:22:25,733 --> 00:22:28,966

try to dissect language and what

385

00:22:28,966 --> 00:22:33,033

are the questions that I can ask to get to good language?

386

00:22:33,049 --> 00:22:36,099

And so you want the venue

387

00:22:36,116 --> 00:22:38,266

to recognize that

388

00:22:39,250 --> 00:22:42,900

they have disclosed

389

00:22:42,900 --> 00:22:46,733

in writing in the contract all fees,

390

00:22:46,733 --> 00:22:52,666

surcharges, penalties, administrative charges, etc., prior to contract signing.

391

00:22:53,250 --> 00:22:56,450

So that's one element that you can be given the assurance that they

392

00:22:56,450 --> 00:23:00,216

have you've done your very best to um uh



393

00:23:00,233 --> 00:23:03,400  
disclose known fees.

394

00:23:03,416 --> 00:23:07,733  
And then you want um the supplier partner to

395

00:23:09,116 --> 00:23:12,116  
offer in writing that no additional

396

00:23:12,116 --> 00:23:17,983  
mandatory fees will be added without consent with the client.

397

00:23:18,000 --> 00:23:21,000  
So that it's it's that they've disclosed as

398

00:23:21,000 --> 00:23:24,299  
best they can, and then the client doesn't

399

00:23:24,299 --> 00:23:27,900  
want any new mandatory fees added after contract signing.

400

00:23:27,900 --> 00:23:31,016  
We're assigning for a piece of business at a certain point in time for

401

00:23:31,016 --> 00:23:33,716  
a certain amount of revenue, etc.

402

00:23:33,716 --> 00:23:35,933  
So we want that element reflected.

403

00:23:36,233 --> 00:23:39,533  
and then we also want to reinforce

404

00:23:39,533 --> 00:23:43,066  
that if there are any undisclosed fees

405

00:23:43,066 --> 00:23:47,866

identified after the contract is executed,

406

00:23:47,866 --> 00:23:53,200

that they will be invalid and the client is not responsible for payment of such fees.

407

00:23:53,750 --> 00:23:56,750

So it's kind of a three-hold approach

408

00:23:57,466 --> 00:24:00,166

to that one clause, if you will.

409

00:24:00,166 --> 00:24:03,216

But I think what I really

410

00:24:03,233 --> 00:24:06,533

want planners to know is that show that

411

00:24:06,533 --> 00:24:09,533

you know that you can ask for this language.

412

00:24:10,250 --> 00:24:13,433

putting showing that you are aware of that

413

00:24:13,433 --> 00:24:17,383

there are hidden fees that we're we're not, you know, being reactive.

414

00:24:17,400 --> 00:24:20,816

We are proactively approaching this discussion,

415

00:24:20,816 --> 00:24:24,466

and then having the supplier back it up in writing,

416

00:24:24,466 --> 00:24:28,366

that they have disclosed fees, that they will not,

417

00:24:28,366 --> 00:24:31,666

you know, the client's not required for new fees

418

00:24:32,033 --> 00:24:35,799

and that anything does not disclosed will be

419

00:24:35,816 --> 00:24:38,150

at the discretion of the.

420

00:24:38,150 --> 00:24:40,150

Wow.

421

00:24:47,633 --> 00:24:50,799

So what I heard was, build out your own list based

422

00:24:50,816 --> 00:24:53,983

on what people contributed here and you know from friends and colleagues

423

00:24:54,000 --> 00:24:57,349

of all the potential quote unquote hidden fe.

424

00:24:58,366 --> 00:25:01,900

And then no no to look for them in contracts

425

00:25:01,916 --> 00:25:05,333

and to look for contract language like additional charges or

426

00:25:05,333 --> 00:25:08,500

additional fees, so kind of generally taking responsibility.

427

00:25:08,516 --> 00:25:10,516

And then having that list

428

00:25:11,000 --> 00:25:14,450

requ including language about no disclose, no undisclosed

429

00:25:14,450 --> 00:25:20,016

fees, no additional fees being added after the signed contract.

430

00:25:20,033 --> 00:25:23,200

And the RP, that was an impressive one, too, about saying the

431

00:25:23,216 --> 00:25:26,450

RP will be considered incomplete if you haven't included

432

00:25:27,000 --> 00:25:29,000

a list of the defined fees.

433

00:25:29,000 --> 00:25:31,716

And that and that may like that may be

434

00:25:31,733 --> 00:25:36,349

unrealistic in some settings, but I think if we if we collectively

435

00:25:36,349 --> 00:25:39,766

and more proactively and more aggressively require

436

00:25:39,766 --> 00:25:44,316

these kinds of of practices, we'll move the needle.

437

00:25:44,333 --> 00:25:47,450

We have we have to change in order for

438

00:25:47,450 --> 00:25:50,566

us to get change. um and we as planners need

439

00:25:50,566 --> 00:25:52,716

to to make and move the needle.

440

00:25:53,033 --> 00:25:56,333

There was a really good question by Will there that I'd love to um if

441

00:25:56,333 --> 00:26:01,366

the event is three to five years away, have you had success in locking in those prices that are that far out?

442

00:26:01,366 --> 00:26:04,599  
Well, yes and no.

443  
00:26:04,616 --> 00:26:07,849  
So success in attaching

444  
00:26:07,849 --> 00:26:11,083  
a current year price list

445  
00:26:11,750 --> 00:26:14,816  
and using that as the benchmark

446  
00:26:14,816 --> 00:26:18,533  
for future years so that um success

447  
00:26:18,533 --> 00:26:21,833  
in saying that it may be a percentage

448  
00:26:21,833 --> 00:26:27,833  
increase per year in some of those pricing things that might help.

449  
00:26:28,250 --> 00:26:31,250  
The other thing is, is that asking that at

450  
00:26:31,250 --> 00:26:34,733  
a certain point, so I know when I was actively planning,

451  
00:26:35,250 --> 00:26:38,933  
you know, the the journey started 18 months out for an association  
conference,

452  
00:26:38,933 --> 00:26:42,349  
but we really honed in on that budget, you know, that nine,

453  
00:26:42,349 --> 00:26:47,016  
ten, 11 months out, and maybe building in an opportunity at that  
point,

454

00:26:47,333 --> 00:26:49,333  
I'm just going to use a quick example.

455  
00:26:49,333 --> 00:26:52,116  
If your event is on December 31st of a calendar

456  
00:26:52,133 --> 00:26:55,900  
year, then maybe you ask in

457  
00:26:55,916 --> 00:26:59,216  
contract that as of March 1, 202

458  
00:27:00,750 --> 00:27:04,016  
five, okay, let's use next year, that you, those

459  
00:27:04,016 --> 00:27:09,166  
priceless are disclosed and that you as the client are held to that pricing.

460  
00:27:09,166 --> 00:27:12,166  
So it won't give you exactly what you're looking

461  
00:27:12,166 --> 00:27:15,633  
for, you know, locked in, but

462  
00:27:15,650 --> 00:27:19,483  
I I would say that, you know, um I use example of food and beverage.

463  
00:27:19,500 --> 00:27:22,549  
We know how dramatically that has changed and you'd

464  
00:27:22,549 --> 00:27:27,700  
find it really hard for a supplier partner to agree to um locked in pricing.

465  
00:27:27,716 --> 00:27:30,716  
But what you can do and to help manage the budget would be

466

00:27:30,716 --> 00:27:33,883  
to build in a date and time at which you agree

467  
00:27:34,433 --> 00:27:37,483  
the supplier partner offers you the pricing. and it's

468  
00:27:37,500 --> 00:27:41,099  
not I've seen some that say that, you know, the pricing as of the BE0.

469  
00:27:41,099 --> 00:27:45,166  
Well, folks, that's 30 days out sometimes three weeks out.

470  
00:27:45,166 --> 00:27:48,933  
That's not going to have a good impact on your on your budget.

471  
00:27:48,950 --> 00:27:50,950  
So so maybe that

472  
00:27:50,950 --> 00:27:53,150  
a little gold nugget in there for you will, I don't know.

473  
00:27:53,150 --> 00:27:55,150  
So, I hope.

474  
00:27:55,150 --> 00:27:56,750  
Great.

475  
00:27:56,750 --> 00:27:58,500  
So just a time for the hour crap.

476  
00:27:58,799 --> 00:28:02,333  
Yeah, yeah, we're we're getting we want to be able to send people away on time.

477  
00:28:02,333 --> 00:28:06,099  
So, a quick answer, Heather, to an important question.

478  
00:28:06,116 --> 00:28:10,183

You mentioned your certification earlier in um our conversation.

479

00:28:10,200 --> 00:28:13,916

So, you know, I'm assuming there are a ton of other undisclosed

480

00:28:13,916 --> 00:28:17,333

fees that the people here today and people watching the replay

481

00:28:17,816 --> 00:28:19,816

will be concerned about or want to know about.

482

00:28:19,816 --> 00:28:23,683

How can planners who want to avoid undisclosed fees?

483

00:28:23,700 --> 00:28:25,700

What can they do?

484

00:28:25,700 --> 00:28:26,349

What more can they do?

485

00:28:27,750 --> 00:28:30,766

Well, okay.

486

00:28:30,766 --> 00:28:33,333

The first is how can work?

487

00:28:33,349 --> 00:28:37,250

That's not my that's not my initial reaction.

488

00:28:38,750 --> 00:28:41,933

think it upon yourself to become a champion of not

489

00:28:41,933 --> 00:28:44,633

falling victim to any more undisclosed fees.

490

00:28:44,633 --> 00:28:49,250

Um, you know, and and one of the ways is here here's just a simple thing.



491

00:28:49,250 --> 00:28:54,099

Go back and relisten to this recording and review the LinkedIn comments that are here.

492

00:28:54,116 --> 00:28:56,116

There's been some fantastic

493

00:28:56,116 --> 00:28:59,266

examples and you can build your

494

00:28:59,266 --> 00:29:03,466

own disclosed or defined fee checklist

495

00:29:03,466 --> 00:29:06,466

and use that in every negotiation.

496

00:29:06,466 --> 00:29:09,883

You can build that uh checklist

497

00:29:09,900 --> 00:29:14,033

really robustly by paying attention to posts of your peers in

498

00:29:14,033 --> 00:29:17,200

the slack channels, et cetera. um Every time a new one

499

00:29:17,216 --> 00:29:20,266

pops up, pop it into your own document.

500

00:29:20,566 --> 00:29:23,566

And then I will say if you don't have

501

00:29:23,566 --> 00:29:26,983

the bandwidth, if you don't have the capacity or actually

502

00:29:27,000 --> 00:29:30,650

the interest in forensically, and that's the keyword,

503

00:29:30,650 --> 00:29:34,716

forensically digging into event contracts, I'd love to have a discussion

504

00:29:34,733 --> 00:29:37,900

with you because it's my total jam, and we do

505

00:29:37,916 --> 00:29:40,133

offer a certification program that

506

00:29:40,500 --> 00:29:43,916

will, we hope, become the number one resource

507

00:29:43,916 --> 00:29:48,116

to help planners achieve the strategic

508

00:29:48,116 --> 00:29:52,316

and effective and forensically negotiated event contract.

509

00:29:52,316 --> 00:29:55,183

So it's Heather at [plannerpotect.ca](mailto:plannerpotect.ca).

510

00:29:55,200 --> 00:29:57,200

Pretty simple.

511

00:29:57,200 --> 00:29:58,333

Love it.

512

00:29:58,333 --> 00:30:01,733

And your focus, which I really appreciate you started off the bat with it too, is fair and balanced.

513

00:30:01,733 --> 00:30:06,833

So it's not about any either side getting more for themselves than they deserve.

514

00:30:06,833 --> 00:30:08,833

It's about fair balanced.

515

00:30:08,833 --> 00:30:10,033

Great.

516

00:30:10,033 --> 00:30:10,900

Well, I want to be respectful of people's time.

517

00:30:11,500 --> 00:30:13,500

Thank you, Heather.

518

00:30:13,500 --> 00:30:14,799

I'll thank you to wrap up.

519

00:30:14,816 --> 00:30:16,816

Awesome.

520

00:30:16,816 --> 00:30:18,716

So thanks for being here with me and thank you for keeping me on track and uh

521

00:30:18,716 --> 00:30:22,066

I really appreciate that and I'm so proud to have you on my team.

522

00:30:22,066 --> 00:30:25,299

Our next episode is Wednesday, January 15th at 2:30

523

00:30:25,316 --> 00:30:30,416

PM Eastern. and the topic next month is case studies enforce measure.

524

00:30:30,416 --> 00:30:33,533

So if you thought it was relevant only to hurricanes

525

00:30:33,533 --> 00:30:36,883

and global pandemics, think again, um I want

526

00:30:36,900 --> 00:30:41,700

to discuss two real life scenarios that didn't involve COVID

527

00:30:42,000 --> 00:30:45,466

and how um I was able to carefully negotiate

528

00:30:45,466 --> 00:30:50,016

language and work with clients to protect their events and their budgets.

529