

Hello, everyone.

Today's topic must be a popular one because there are over 100 registered and ready to learn, and I am so thrilled.

Thank you to each and every one of you that expressed interest and those that are viewing live and those that will view later.

My name is Heather Reid.

I use she, her pronouns.

And for those using accessibility technology, I am a 61-year-old white female and I've got ash colored hair, red glasses, and I'm wearing a navy top, and I'm coming to you from my home office.

As a reminder for every episode of event contracts exposed, I am not a lawyer and nothing that we discuss here should be considered legal advice.

This is all about education insights, and practical strategies.

After last month's episode, I received valuable feedback from some listeners.

I learned that I give away way too much information at one sitting and that I need to use visuals more often to help learners follow along.

So I thank those that took the time to give me that feedback because my mission is to share knowledge with you in a way that you can learn.

And I've implemented changes to this episode.

So I will be mindful of those that feedback for sure.

So

when I was putting together the content for today's episode,

I realized, okay, I had published the description before

I got the feedback and I promised way too many

takeaways for 25 minutes.

So I've broken the topic into two episodes today

and then the next one on Wednesday, October 15th, right here on LinkedIn.

So when we are done here, I would encourage you

to register right away for the October session.

So let's get into the learning.

Today's topic, as I said, is a popular one

Heads in beds negotiating room blocks.

So, a room block, a

room block, or what I often call a sleeping room

block, are a central part of event and hospitality contracts,

because they directly affect both the client's obligations

and the venue's revenue forecasting.

So in the most simplest of terms,

a room block is a group of sleeping rooms created that

contains a specific number and type of sleeping rooms

that have been negotiated and contracted typically at

group rates and under specific conditions for a meeting or an event.

A sleeping room block is a contractual

agreement with a venue to reserve a set number of rooms for attendee at a special rate with terms around dates, rates, deadlines, and potential penalties.

When you have reviewed enough sleeping room blocks in proposals or in contracts, you will begin to realize that there are typically one or two different formats that we see most often.

The examples shown on the screen here is a sleeping sleeping room block that has been organized by date and that date is shown in the left hand column.

And it shows the various types of sleeping rooms in the columns that are moving towards the right.

The far right column has a total number of sleeping rooms for that specific date.

And then the bottom row of the chart shows the total number of sleeping rooms by type over all of the dates.

So that's one format.

The second typical or popular format is shown in this chart, whereby the sleeping room block has been organized by room types in the left hand column and then shows the contracted dates in the columns moving towards the right.

The far right column shows the total number of sleeping rooms by type over all of

the dates, and then that bottom row of the chart shows the total number of sleeping rooms contracted on each specific date

And then this graph shows a much improved format number three, which is organized by room type, room design bedding, and room view, all itemized in the far left column and then shows the contracted dates in the columns moving towards the right.

So this is one that I would be a fan of.

It is obvious that this detailed sleeping room blockchart does not leave any room for ambiguity.

It leaves no room for errors in what the client is actually booking for their sleeping room block.

You will see under room type that we have descriptions like standard, deluxe, and executive suite that describe design and layout.

And then we have Queen queen, or king, which describe the size and number of beds in the sleeping room

Then we have Ocean View and City View, which describes the location within the venue.

And you will also notice that we have included special requests, like fully accessible rooms, and separately categorized staff rooms.

So this fully explicit breakdown of sleeping room options captures the full expectations of the client while holding the venue accountable for ensuring that they provide the client's expectations, the contracted rooms.

So while there may be a wide variety of sleeping room options within a venue, it is prudent for the client to request as much detail about the sleeping rooms that they want to be assigned and have reserved for them and to have as much detail in the chart so that it is reflected and there's no ambiguity.

So we will look for things like descriptive terms that are used to categorize sleeping rooms.

So we could look at occupancy, for example how many people can stay in one sleeping room?

So you may see terms like single, double, triple, or quadruple rooms.

I don't see a lot of those terms expressed in contracts, but there may be cases where this room is only for a single occupant. Quite often we will see size and number of beds.

So how many beds are in the sleeping room?

And what is the size or sizes?

So you may see terms like twin room

or queen room, king

room, double, double room, or studio room.

So that gives you a flavor that there's one twin,

there's one queen bed, one king bed

Perhaps there's two double beds

to queen beds, etc.

Then we go to design and layout.

So these may describe the floor plan and

or the furniture in the sleeping room.

You may see terms like standard room, deluxe

or superior room, executive suite, or junior or minis suite

There is no existing industry

standardization of these terms.

So while we might want to make assumptions

about what each of these terms means, it is

best for the client to ask every single venue

what their room titles actually mean.

Then we get into amenities.

Amenities are desirable or useful features

of a thing or a plates.

So for sleeping rooms, amenities are those items

that help to provide comfort, convenience, and enjoyment.

So you may see specific amenditiesities

attached to specific room designs, such as deluxe room with private balcony or executive suite with Jacuzzi or club room with private lounge access.

Then we look at view.

If a venue has more favorable views over others, the client may wish to be very specific about the sleeping room views that are included in their room block

You may see terms like standard room with city view, or standard room with patio view, or deluxe room with ocean view.

And one of the things that I've encountered when I'm reviewing contracts is asking about views that are partial views or full views.

So if one has to crank their neck over the balcony to be able to see a little sliver of the ocean you want to make sure that that is labeled as a partial view.

So make sure that you're clarifying exactly what your attendees are going to be able to book.

And then we have the category other, and labeling it as others, does not minimize the importance of the considerations that would fall into here or the descriptors.

Here, you may have sleeping rooms that need to be contracted that are connecting rooms or adjoining

rooms, or adjacent rooms, smoking

rooms, pet friendly rooms, hypoallergenic rooms

And here we would also be covering accessible rooms  
and fully accessible rooms.

Now, I could go on for the rest of the  
day about the needs for accessible rooms  
and fully accessible rooms, but we will be doing that  
in future episodes of event contracts exposed.

So a popular format for  
contracting a sleeping room block in a venue  
is by the client accepting a run-of-house  
structure or ROH, as it might be stated.

So attendees will be assigned any  
available room type at the venue's discretion,  
rather than being guaranteed a specific room type or  
layout, or view, or amenities.

At Attendees may get very different room types.

Some may luck out with premium views, while  
others get standard rooms.

Typically, with run of house blocks,  
the client has been able to negotiate one flat  
group rate that is applied to all run of house rooms in the block

So for the client, the risks may be the lack of

control over who gets assigned better rooms

than those that are less desirable rooms.

And they open themselves to potential attendee dissatisfaction

if expectations are not managed.

It is essential that every

client asks and understand how each

individual venue defines run of house

Venues may have different definitions, and thus the

application of the concept of run a house may

be very different than what you would expect or have experienced previously.

So as the slide suggests, typically,

sleeping rooms are either given out at random, according

to availability when the reservation is either made, or the attendee checks in

or it is a flat rate for which a venue agrees

to offer any of its available rooms, and

there's always some caveats or exceptions.

However, in all cases, it is the venue.

The venue is the entity deciding on the

final assignment of rooms available to the client's attendees.

So when you are reviewing

a room block, I have four simple

tips to consider when you're looking at that sleeping room block chart.

And I would encourage you to look at that block with fresh eyes

at three different times.

The first one is when you see the block chart

in the proposal from your RFP, you want to scrutinize it carefully.

The one that you see in the first version of the draft contract that you receive

and then all the way through all of the iterations and

absolutely look and carefully scrutinize the

one that you see in the final version of the negotiated

contract just before you sign the contract.

In this digital era, there are so many opportunities

for changes to be made, and it is our responsibility as event organizers

to ensure that all of the information in

the sleeping room block chart are accurate.

So here are my four tips.

Absolutely check the listed calendar

dates against an actual calendar for the contracted year.

I've seen many, many, many mistakes

made in contracts that I review.

Check the number of sleeping rooms per room

type by date to to ensure that

they match either your requested number in the RFP or

if they match all of the negotiated changes that

you've put through over the course of the negotiating journey.

Number three, check the mathematical

edition of both columns and rows as applicable.

Always be doing the math.

And then if the features of your room

block, and this is particularly when you start the negotiating journey,

if there are features that are missing, such as totals,

such as names of the days of the week

So if it's like 02 slash 03 slash

2025, does that mean it's February 3rd or does that mean

that it's the 2nd of March?

So always be putting in names of the days of the week

or even the year, if that's missing, and

make sure that it has room-type descriptions, along

with room views, along with amenities, along with floor plans.

So if any of those things are missing, it

is your responsibility, and I would empower you

to ask for those changes to be made into the chart.

That chart will become the booking

Bible, and you want to make sure that you have that chart

as rigorous and as reflective of what you have booked as possible

So, in addition

to creating an appropriate configuration of sleeping

rooms in the client's sleeping room block, equally

important are the contract deals about what is included

or not included in sleeping room rates.

So I am going to briefly cover five

sleeping room rate pricing approaches that venues commonly use

And I have to say, it was a long time before I realized

that there was any other pricing model than just the sleeping room only.

I had associations as clientsients, and it was typically

in a hotel and it was strictly

sleeping room price only, and then everything else was extra.

But when I started reviewing client contracts,

that's when I realized there's a whole lot of other pricing models.

So let's start with the first one, the European plan

The European plan refers to sleeping room

rates that reflect only the price

of using the sleeping room.

So that's the one I was most familiar with.

The sleeping room rate may vary dramatically within a European plan

as the sleeping room rates are often tied

to room type, room occuppupancy,

room layout, or room view variables.

But to remember that the European plan only

factors in the price of an attendant occupying a sleeping room.

The continental plan, however, has

more included than just the price of occupying the sleeping room.

The continental plan also includes, whoa,  
continental breakfast for the persons that are occupying the sleeping rooms.

So if a client is negotiating this kind of  
a rate plan for their room block, please  
take the time to negotiate specific specific language  
into the contract that I identifies  
the individual items that are actually included  
in that continental breakfast.

If this itemized list is not negotiated  
specifically, there's very little leverage left for the client.

If the venue significantly changes the breakfast inclusions.

So if you have it clearly identified that  
it was a hot item and that there were some  
extras in that, quote, continental breakfast  
you want that to be in your contract so  
that you can go back and leverage that that's what you agreed  
to with that sleeping room rate.

Then we have the American plan.

The American plan is a pricing plan that includes  
the use of the sleeping room, as well as all meals.

In a similar way as I just encouraged all  
clients to itemize the inclusions of breakfast  
here, clients may want to negotiate and include

language in the contract about what constitutes all meals.

And you may want you may

base that all meals on what has been itemized in the venue's proposal

or what you've experienced on a

site visit or what you've had discussion about what

exactly do the meals look like?

So in this case, it would be three meals, a breakfast, a lunch, and a dinner.

Then we have a fourth model,

which is the all inclusive plan.

So that's building on the American plan,

but the inclusive, all inclusive plan typically includes the use of the sleeping room

and all of the meals, snacks, and alcoholic beverages.

And this pricing format for sleeping rooms

is commonly used in resort and cruise ship settings.

So your attendees, if it's an incentive trip,

for example, they're going to be able to go and not have to

open their wallets for food, for snacks

for drinks, because all of that is included

in their sleeping room rate.

And then finally, we have the complete meeting package.

So here you might encounter what's called a CMP

not to be confused with certified meeting planner, but

it's the complete meeting package, and

that's a pricing plan for sleeping rooms.

So the complete meeting package pricing plan typically includes the price of sleeping in the room all of the meals, continuous nutrition breaks, and support services such as meeting room space, AV, and on-site amenity use.

So the charge is broken up so that each attendee helps to unwrite, if you will, the offering of meeting space, AV support, and other onsite amenities.

So when the client is using a venue that features the complete meeting package plan it is essential that the inclusions and the exclusions to the plan are itemized in the negotiated contract.

Assumptions about inclusions should not be based on its experience at that site should not be based on site vis visits only or even worse based on website information.

All of that information about what's included and even what is excluded needs to be put in writing in the contract.

So as you can tell, we are running out of time for today.

I don't want to, bamboozle you.

You're drinking water from a fire hose.

So I've taken this and broken it down into two sessions

So I would encourage you to register today

on Planner Protects LinkedIn profile

for the continuation of this topic

and that is being held on Wednesday, October 15th.

You can find all of our episodes on

the Planner Protects YouTube channel.

And as I always say at the end of an episode

a well-negotiated event contract isn't

just a document.

A well-negotiated event contract is is your

power, it's your protection

and it's your peace of mind.

Bye for now, folks.