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ABTS Convention Services Launches Industry Campaign in Support of Booking Official Housing Through Associations for Medical Meetings

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Over \$50,000,000 lost due to "Around the Block" booking in international housing alone means major detriment to medical associations' annual meetings revenues and hundreds of millions lost for the industry.



ABTS Convention Services, a global company specializing in serving medical associations in the US has developed "Support Associations, Book Official!", a meetings industry awareness campaign designed to counteract increasingly larger industry challenges caused by "around the block" booking. The campaign seeks to create awareness with associations, meeting planners, hotels and annual meeting attendees about the impact and financial losses to associations which result from booking outside official housing blocks and the steps which can be taken as an industry

to protect against these.

Economic Impact

"Around the block" booking impacts association revenue both directly, through attrition fees charged to associations for unused pre-contracted rooms, and indirectly through the loss of negotiating leverage. Guaranteeing room blocks gives associations the opportunity to negotiate concessions, such as better room rates, less expensive food and beverage, VIP airport pickups, free Internet, rebates off the master bill, having a pre-set shuttle service, etc. Housing is a key component in how this leverage is measured and 'around the block' booking decreases the association's negotiating power, ultimately making the meeting more expensive and more complicated. Higher attendance costs also translate into fewer attendees for the meetings, which in turn mean loss of revenue not only for associations, but also for the hotel, restaurant, transport companies and the venue city.

Unsolicited or unofficial housing claims often confuse and disappoint members, registrants, and exhibitors, and can lead to hidden penalties for them as well. When attendees stay outside the official housing hotels, they do not have access to room drops, announcements, free shuttles, free or reduced meals, networking events and other happenings that are a big part of the annual meeting experience. These attendees often end up paying more in fees and transport and disappointed overall with the experience.

With 'around the block' booking becoming a major industry challenge, ABTS Convention Services' "Support Associations, Book Official!" awareness campaign will be introduced to industry leaders and will be rolled out to ABTS partners, clients, associations, colleagues and press through www.SUPPORTASSOCIATIONS.com, a shareable website designed to build momentum in the industry. An onsite calculator will allow associations, planners and anyone interested to estimate their own revenue loss and take action to support the campaign by sharing the information with their partners.

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