

# Room Block Piracy, What is it and How to Avoid it?

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Has a company ever called promising you a better rate for the hotel you are staying at for the upcoming [conference](#)? Whether it is at that hotel or not, there is a real possibility they are out to take your room and your money. These [poachers](#) offer a better rate, but mention nothing about the concession your event planner has negotiated or the fact that they have the right to change your room and rate at any time. The event planner also contracted the room block with the hotel that most likely contains an attrition clause that holds the association responsible for a certain amount of room nights during the event.



[Room block piracy](#) is something that is becoming even more prevalent today and not allowing meeting planners to fill [room blocks](#) and placing the associations in huge financial risks. It is not illegal running a third-party housing company; however, it is illegal if there is any misrepresentation, copyright infringement or fraud. More likely than not, the poacher does not have a room block with any hotel they are referring to and usually tries to change the hotel and/or rate as soon as you have paid or made a booking. The rooms are normally far from the meeting, not up to standard, or are not even close to any public transportation. As an event planner there are some steps you can take to avoid these poachers and allow for you to avoid [attrition](#).

Raising awareness that there is such thing as a room block pirate or poacher is the first step. By raising awareness you are creating an environment where the attendees are educated and know to avoid the situations and temptations of a promised lower room rate. What some attendees don't understand is the meeting planner has negotiated other concessions for guests within the room block, such as free internet or parking, breakfast or special services only available to those that booked within the room block. Also to let them know that there is suspicion of piracy they should reach out to the meeting organizer to confirm their assumptions.

Know your group and assure the room block that you have negotiated with hotel is consistent with the past history of the group; in doing so you will have more confidence that room block will be filled. Also, it is expected for you to try and negotiate the rate and concessions with the hotel. Remind the hotel that this is reoccurring meeting and if the association is amazed by what they receive they will be more willing to meet at the same location for years to come.

If your group is approached by poachers you have the right to [legal action](#). Whether it is a [cease and desist letter](#) or you should contact an attorney about any misrepresentation or tortious interference, make sure the company knows that you have the right to protect your group. Also, protecting the list from potential poachers could allow for your group to not be looked at as a potential victim. You can place the list of exhibitors and attendees behind a webpage that has an agreement that the viewer must abide by. This will protect any information that is on the following page taken by the poachers. You could also not place any names on the website and hand the information out in a packet given to the attendees that have already secured their room in the room block or to exhibitors.