

Meeting Professionals International (MPI) is aware that a number of businesses are contacting potential attendees for MPI's conferences and representing that they have blocks of hotel sleeping rooms for sale. If they, in fact, have such room blocks and they make no misrepresentations in contacting potential attendees, this practice is legal and MPI cannot prohibit anyone from doing business with them.

Nonetheless, potential attendees must be very careful in dealing with anyone for hotel rooms except for MPI and its official agents for sale of rooms. MPI negotiates with hotels for blocks of rooms and obtains concessions from hotels if MPI meets its guaranteed room blocks. Rooms sold through anyone other than MPI and its official agents may not be credited to MPI's room blocks by the hotels, and, if MPI's room blocks do not fill, MPI could be held liable to the hotels for attrition fees.

MPI also cannot and will not vouch for the business practices of all those who are offering hotel rooms for MPI's conferences, and cannot completely police or be responsible for them. Some of these businesses engage in the following practices that hurt attendees as well as MPI:

Selling fictitious reservations and credit card fraud: With this practice, conference attendees believe they have made a reservation. However, they arrive at a hotel to find that no reservation was made and their credit cards may have been charged.

Misrepresentations resulting in bookings outside the block: These businesses may misrepresent themselves in many ways in order to entice attendees to book through them. Examples include "bait and switch," where they sell reservations that are inferior to what was promised (such as further from the conference site), or say that the official hotel blocks are full when they are not.

Trademark infringement: In this case, these businesses will utilize MPI's name and trademarks, including logos and conference names, when corresponding with conference attendees in order to make it appear that they are official agents of MPI or the hotels when they are not.

Unauthorized access, use and selling of data: These businesses may obtain lists of past, current or prospective conference attendees through a variety of means, including unauthorized use of websites or data bases. In some cases, they may also purchase lists from sources that are not authorized to sell the data.

Obtaining inventory through misrepresentation or omission: In many cases, these businesses obtain room inventory by deceiving the hotels or their wholesalers through misrepresentation or failure to disclose their intent.

Because MPI and its conference attendees can suffer great injury from the activities of businesses purporting to sell hotel rooms for MPI conferences, MPI contracts with official hotel

room providers who can provide this service for attendees. You can obtain information on MPI's official providers by contacting MPI. Please notify MPI should you encounter any contact with you by some company offering hotel reservations.

MPI, however, cannot warn potential conference attendees strongly enough that they are at risk in dealing with anyone other than MPI and its official providers. Attendees must protect themselves by being very careful in doing so. An old legal maxim applies here: LET THE BUYER BEWARE.