



VENUE CONTRACTS

The next time a venue contract lands on your desk, read it twice. First read what is there and identify the terms that need to be rewritten, changed or deleted. Then, read it for what is not there and needs to be added. The following checklist will help you determine what to look for and to understand what is missing.

General Contract Issues:

- Complete names of all parties, addresses, and contact information as well as the name of the conference
- Be sure the contracting party is not listed as the name of the conference; they are often not the same
- Actual dates of the conference
- Statement of whether the contract is a first or second option. A first option should specify the date by which the contract must be signed and returned to the venue. A second option should include the above, as well as the date by which the venue must notify you of its decision
- Ensure that when you receive a first option agreement it's a contract, not just a proposal

Sleeping Room Block:

- Arrival and departure dates
- If "shoulder nights" (days immediately before and after the conference) are needed, ensure they are listed in the contract with the same rate
- Specify breakdown by type(s) of rooms/suites and number(s) per night
- Beware of attrition clauses that lock you into payment for the entire contracted block
- Be aware of release dates and penalties

Sleeping Room Rates:

- Specify rates by room type (e.g. single, double, deluxe, suite, non-smoking, smoking, etc.), and the percentage for each category
- Applicable taxes (sales, occupancy) are outlined
- Applicable charges for extra person in room are outlined
- If the contract was initiated in another country, rates are usually quoted in that country's currency
- Ensure commission percentage, and who it is paid to, is identified