



## Best Practices for Piracy and Poaching Prevention and Responses

Room block pirates and poachers are businesses that actively seek to recruit or divert event participants, primarily attendees and exhibitors, away from official room blocks and into other hotel bookings, using a range of techniques to approach event participants and gain their business.

### Examples of Piracy and Poaching Practices:

- 1. Selling fictitious reservations and credit card fraud:** With this practice, event participants believe that they have made a reservation, however, they arrive to find that no reservation has been made and their credit cards may have been charged by pirates and poachers.
- 2. Misrepresentation resulting in bookings outside the block:** Pirates and poachers may misrepresent themselves in many ways in order to entice participants 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 event site), or say that the official hotel blocks are full when they are not.
- 3. Trademark infringement:** In this case, pirates and poachers will utilize the trademarked/servicemarked property of the event owner (such as the logo or logotype or the unique meeting name) in correspondence to event participants in order to appear to be an official agent for the event.
- 4. Unauthorized access, use and selling of data:** Pirates and poachers obtain lists of past, current or prospective attendees through a variety of means including unauthorized use of websites or databases. In some cases, they may also purchase lists from sources that are not authorized to sell the data.
- 5. Obtaining inventory through misrepresentation or omission:** In many cases, pirates and poachers obtain room inventory by deceiving the lodging establishment, such as a hotel, or the hotel’s wholesalers through misrepresentation or failure to disclose their intent.

### Stakeholders:

Prevention and response practices’ implementation related to piracy and poaching involve the following stakeholders.

1. Event organizations or their official housing bureau
2. Hotels
3. Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)
4. Industry organizations