

Why stay at the conference hotel? It's the center of conference activity, that's why! You'll be able to network easily with other conference attendees. It's a quick trip to get to the program and functions, and just as quick to nip back to your room for a break. You'll have a better conference experience

That's obvious. But there are other things that you need to consider before you look at another hotel.

The conference leaders have taken their role of finding a conference site very seriously. They looked at a number of locations. The needs of attendees as individuals in addition to the conference meeting space were considered.

Everyone enjoys meeting in a comfortable conference venue, offering quality service and support for workshops, tutorials, plenary sessions, etc. As the quid-pro-quo for that service and support, the conference guarantees that a percentage of attendees will stay in the hotel. The hotel generally discounts the rate for conference attendees from their normal charges.

The hotel rates are negotiated based on the number of expected attendees and the meeting space required to comfortably accommodate them. The basis for negotiation with the hotel is statistics from that conference in prior years. The contract with the hotel then guarantees specific numbers of sleeping rooms will be used each night during the conference. A complex negotiation of meeting room space, functions and events (with food), and sleeping room provides the most value per dollar for the conference and those attending it.

If the conference does not meet the contracted sleeping room commitment, the hotel gets paid anyway. Unfilled rooms can cost the conference thousands of dollars. (The conference does not get credit for the re-sale of sleeping rooms unless the hotel is completely filled.) The next conference in the series cannot negotiate as beneficial a hotel contract, and the registration fee is then under pressure to increase unreasonably.

On occasion, one of the many internet providers or sometimes the hotel itself will offer a few rooms in their inventory at a lower price than the conference is offering. There are often restrictions and penalties associated with these rates. If you somehow obtain a better rate than the one offered by the conference, your stay will still be counted toward our required room block.

What if we don't contract for sleeping rooms? Attendees will pay more to stay at the conference hotel. The conference will incur additional expenses for meeting room rental fees, which can be quite costly. The hotel will not hold a block of rooms for attendees, which may leave some people quite a distance from the conference venue. In short, the conference ends up with higher expenses, many of those attending will pay a higher price for their hotel rooms, and future conference registration fees will be pushed higher.

Please support the conference and the SIG by staying at the conference hotel.