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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
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COMMISSIONS

Report on THE SPORTS TRAVEL INDUSTRY

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INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) as a service to its membership and on behalf of the sports events industry. The NASC promotes industry best practices through its web site and its many meetings, workshops, and webinars.

INDUSTRY AT A GLANCE

Key Statistics

Visitor Spending in 2011
\$7.68 billion +

Growth Since 2010
6.5%

Event Growth Since 2010
10.5%

Sports Visitors in 2011
23.9 million

NASC/Ohio University Industry Study, 2011

The sports travel industry consists of many different forms of individual and team travel. There are regular season professional, collegiate, and scholastic events. There are championship events and an entire universe of participation based amateur events. Some travelers are part of a team, while others are parents and family of competitors: they are along to support their family member(s) and also enjoy the trip itself. Still others travel to participate in activities like climbing, camping, cycling, scuba diving, tennis, golf, birding, hunting and fishing. Nostalgia also plays a role: visits to sports halls of fame, participation in a fantasy camp, and tours of famous sports facilities. Still other travelers decide to purchase tickets to an event during a trip made for a very different reason (a business person goes to a baseball game while on a business trip). All can be included in the sports travel industry.

Although reasonable people have been known to disagree on how to compute the economic impact of sports travel everyone will agree visitors have a beneficial impact. They come, they stay, and they spend. The new dollars entering the local economy benefit local businesses and produce new jobs and taxes.

Some travelers are “day trippers.” Their impact on the local economy is welcome but not as great as that of an overnight visitor.

Communities have learned that visitor expenditures on room nights, restaurant meals, and retailers are good for the economy. Just as cities have competed for decades for meetings, conventions, and traditional tourist travel they now compete to host sports events or attract the pursuit of favorite sports activities. Cities have also learned that most of the events take place whether the economy is good or in recession. This element of resistance to economic downturns

has brought new cities and suppliers to the industry. Historically the job of attracting visitors has been the responsibility of a convention and visitors bureau (CVB) and/or state department of tourism. Meetings, conventions and traditional tourism are based upon the available mix of meeting facilities, types of accommodations, and the number and kind of attractions. Marketing campaigns are developed to stress the advantages offered. These campaigns are targeted to the market segments best served by the destination.

Sports travel shares some of the characteristics of traditional tourism: if the purpose of a trip is to participate in an individual sports activity like golf, the benefits of the area to golfers are the message. Golfers are targeted through media like the magazines they read and tournaments they watch. This area of sports tourism remains the focus of destination marketing professionals and the venues they serve.

Team travel or an individual travelling to compete in an event can present quite different circumstances. To prepare for and run the event can take many months and sometimes years. A local organizing committee is needed and must be staffed. Fields or courts must be found, evaluated, scheduled and prepared. Courses must be established and outlined. Suitable accommodations must be found. Brackets must be prepared. Tickets and sponsorships may need to be sold. In short, there are many details that are not part of traditional tourism or even meetings and conventions.

Most conventions and meetings employ meeting planners who work with the local venue. This person will sometimes request assistance from the CVB to prepare for the event.

With sports, however this is not usually the case...sports events have special needs, so "the work STARTS after the sale is made!"

Many cities have realized sports travel is a specialty. They have created sports commissions or sports authorities staffed by experts who understand these special needs. These experts understand where events can be found and have relationships in place with many event owners.

About 110 of these special sports organizations can be found today. Some are affiliated with a CVB or chamber of commerce. Most are independent organizations. The National Association of Sports Commissions, the industry's trade association, estimates that of the 110 sports commissions about 20 are affiliated with a CVB. The other 90 markets have both: a CVB and a sports commission.

A CVB is staffed with destination marketing professionals. Commissions are staffed with sports event specialists who can sell and produce events. In general, the larger the market the more likely it will be to find both.

It is the purpose of this report to examine the roles of CVBs and sports commissions and recommend ways in which they can combine resources to the benefit of the markets they serve. We will also discuss other parties to the process including the event owner (sometimes referred to as the event rights holder), hotels and sports venues, and housing bureaus.



THE ROLES OF SPORTS COMMISSIONS AND CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAUS

It is a fortunate destination that has both a CVB and sports commission. The combination provides the best of both worlds. The ability to combine strengths can produce an effective strategic plan and agreement on role sharing. Historically CVBs have billed themselves as “one stop shopping” for visitors. This is not true for sports events. CVBs need to establish partnerships that will provide the event assistance needed. It is the sports commission that offers everything possible in terms of what it takes to obtain and produce a sports event.

A commission will know what kinds of sports facilities are available for which sports, age groups, and levels of expertise. They will also know how many of these facilities are “tournament friendly.” It is not enough to know the number of baseball fields in the destination. It is necessary to know how many are *suitable* for the level of play of the event, how many fields the event must have, and where the fields are in relation to each other and overnight accommodations.

Sports commissions have relationships with venues. They also know most of the event owners who have events suitable for these venues. The importance of personal relationships cannot be overemphasized.

Commissions, however, will not usually have an understanding of the number and kind of hotel rooms available at various prices during the time the event is scheduled to take place. They probably do not have the capacity to book rooms. They also may not have promotional material on the features of a visit to the area.

Interestingly, most sports commissions are led by executives committed to the cities in which they live. They usually do not move from market to market during their career. When a job becomes available, it can be difficult to convince an executive to switch markets. This difference can be very important: commission staff members are often referred to as “lifers” because of their passion and expertise in their business community. It is easy to understand how important this can be when selling sponsorships, selecting fields or courts, recruiting volunteers, knowing where sport-specific expertise can be found, etc.

Sports commissions may receive financial support from their CVB. Those that do have demonstrated the ability to produce significant numbers of room nights.

It should be apparent that bids which draw on the expertise of both organizations can produce the best results. Conflicts have occurred, however. The recession has placed a spotlight on the ability of sports events to withstand economic downturns. This makes them attractive to any destination. Problems can begin with a lack of understanding of the market’s ability to support events and what it will take to be successful. Event owners may demand incentives that cannot be met. Common mistakes include bidding without an understanding of the requirements and assuming all it takes is more sales calls to produce dozens of additional events each year.

The latter issue can be crucial. If a CVB sees that the sports commission is successful they could be tempted to assume all it will take is more sales people and a bigger travel budget and the number of events will rise dramatically. Unfortunately it usually turns out that the area cannot support financially many more events, or that the facilities are not available often enough, or there is simply not enough expertise available.

Perhaps worse, there remains the feeling that somehow (and magically) success will come by obtaining sales leads at a trade show booth. The old mentality of “get a booth and we will get leads” disregards the role of personal relationships and event expertise that goes into a successful bid (and event!).

Room nights...a crucial factor

There is another fundamental difference between CVBs and sports commissions. *CVBs are supported completely or in very large measure by the room tax. This means a focus on generating room nights.* Increasing the number of overnight visitors through meetings, conventions, and traditional tourism is the central role of the CVB. Sports events are now seen as a dependable source of room nights.

Sports commissions share interest in visitors, but they are also concerned with additional measures of success.

As a general rule, sports commissions are interested in attracting and producing sports events. This is what they understand and do. It is in fact their passion. The generation of economic impact through visitor spending is an important element for any commission. Since a sports commission is not primarily funded by a room tax (except in those cases where the commission is a department of the CVB), they are also concerned with quality of life issues. This interest stems in part from their primary source of funding: the corporate community.

Corporate supporters want their commissions to find events that become “big ticket” events that they and their employees can enjoy.

They may also want to know their commission is actively encouraging young people to participate in sports. The issue of childhood obesity has become an important local issue for many sports commissions.

Economic impact, quality of life, televised events and other media coverage, and the production of local sports events are of concern to sports commissions. Some are also involved in local sports programming. They can be particularly interested in managing or creating sports events where they can share in revenues. *So, for a sports commission, room nights are not the only focus.*

This difference in the degree of importance of room nights is an important distinction when considering the roles of sports commissions and convention and visitors bureaus. It is also the fundamental reason why they can work so well together.





THE BID PROCESS

We have established the scope of sports travel and the basic differences between sports commissions and CVBs. Because producing room nights are part of what one and virtually all of what the other does, it is appropriate to cooperate in preparing a bid. Most cities divide responsibilities between preparing for and staging the event and finding suitable accommodations. Both will usually share in the preparation of the bid and will often join for the presentation. However, when responsibilities are assigned, they must not duplicate each other. From time to time there have been instances where the relationship has not been as strong as it should be. Personalities are usually the cause, and care must be taken to resolve such issues before prospects recognize what is happening.

The NASC was founded in part to assist its members in the evaluation of bid opportunities. This is a subject that has received a great deal of attention over the past twenty years.

The most popular events can demand bid fees or guarantees. These events develop a track record that shows potential bidders what they might expect if chosen. A potential host organization may learn that an event has a record of bringing 5000 or so people to town. If the average length of stay can be determined it is not difficult to assemble a projection of the total room nights and approximate visitor spending. These numbers can be crucial to the decision to bid and whether to offer incentives.

The recession has affected the ability to pay bid fees. Room nights may be up on a per night basis, but many destinations have seen a drop in the number of nights in each stay. This has had an impact on budgets.

Fewer destinations are prepared to write checks. What they are doing is seeking ways to offset event expenses so the rights holder comes out of the event with the right balance between revenues and expenses.

Some destinations have decided not to pay bid fees. They rely on their reputation as an excellent host, bid on events with no fees, or develop their own locally produced events.

Other events may be connected to a prestigious organization. As one good example, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) conducts men's and women's basketball championships in various divisions but they also conduct dozens and dozens of other championships as well. These events are usually sought by communities wishing to attract visitors and the honor of hosting an important event. Some come with regional or national television coverage. This coverage supports destination promotional activity.

Steps in a bid

The first step is to determine what the event owner is looking for. Only then can it be decided if the destination matches up with the requirements. Many events are offered through a Request for Proposal (RFP). If the event owner has done research on their own event(s) they will know how to describe their needs. The process is more art than science. Potential bidders need to determine the results obtained in other cities. These results are then compared to the RFP. Differences must be resolved before submittal.

As noted, the event should be able to list the number of fields or courts needed and how close they need to be. Some events want to use only one or two sites for all of their competition. Logic suggests that the closer the sites are to hotels and restaurants, the better the match. These hotels must also be the right kind (e.g. select service hotels with a "free" breakfast and the right number of rooms with double beds, etc.). The harder it is to gather good information the more careful the city should be. Experienced bidders have found that limited event histories usually suggest more care in negotiations.

The quality and characteristics of facilities must be right for each event. For example, younger age groups use smaller fields. Every field must be in acceptable condition, and only experience will help in this determination. Bidders must know the correct dimensions and features necessary to a successful event.

Volunteers can be an issue. Event owners will welcome or require volunteers. The volunteers need to know what to do, when to do it, and will need food, beverages, and parking. They may also need uniforms and credentials. The longer the event runs the higher the investment in volunteers and the greater the risk of “burn out.”

The best way to evaluate the potential return on investment (ROI) is to assemble the people needed to administer the event if the bid is successful. This group should always include experts in the sport in question, people with some connection to the event owner, those who can find funds if needed, the source(s) for volunteers, and representatives from the sports commission and/or CVB. Since CVBs are not generally able to produce sports events, the people who do must be on the team.

If the bid does succeed, the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) is created from this core of volunteers. The LOC will cooperate with the event owner to produce the event.

There may be staging expenses: signs, banners, sound systems, highway directional arrows and many others. Portable restrooms, seating, and even temporary lighting may be required.

In the 1980's the industry was in its infancy. Event owners were more relaxed in their requirements and less was expected by competitors, coaches, family and friends. This has changed: the business of amateur sports has become just that, a business. When cities and event owners approach negotiations with a business-like attitude, the chances for success improve.

Most popular events will select cities at least one year in advance. Many times bids are accepted several years out. This can present problems reserving fields and rooms and predicting the level of financial support.

Bidding is a matter of knowing what the market can handle and searching for events that can be satisfied with those capabilities. A good fit requires very close cooperation between the prospective host and event owner.

Accommodations

Each event has its own housing requirements. Many team events are looking for “double doubles” and a free breakfast. Others are more focused on single or double occupancy while still others prefer camping or spaces for recreational vehicles.

The system used to book hotel rooms must be understood at the outset. Some events want the host to handle the job. In these cases the CVB will probably step in and help. Other event owners retain the services of companies skilled in finding and booking rooms. These housing bureaus or third party booking services can be helpful in locating the right properties and negotiating favorable rates.

What can be an issue is a tendency for some event owners to permit third party housing bureaus to select host cities. If the event will take place in a convention center, it is feasible to believe the booking service can help select the site. If the kind and quality of courts and fields are important, as they always should be, a housing service should not be involved. There have been cases where hosts have been selected as much for their ability to produce commissions and rebates as their ability to provide a proper competitive experience.

Contractual issues can become crucial: some event owners may want a guaranteed room block and prices but no contract. They may also object to an attrition clause, which could apply financial penalties if the room pick-up is less than projected.

Room contribution systems are common. Every room carries an additional fee. This fee will vary from event to event, market to market, and be divided between one, two or even more entities at the conclusion of the event. Provision to collect these fees must be made in advance of the event. It is important for all parties to agree in advance on how these rooms will be tracked and confirmed as part of the block reserved.

Another factor must be considered: “stay to play” systems are becoming more common. In these cases teams select from a hotel on the approved list or are assigned to specific hotels. Each hotel agrees to collect the fees and forward them to the appropriate entity.

Some teams would rather not pay the fee and have been known to stay a considerable distance from town to avoid the block. Under the “stay to play” system, each team or individual must stay at a property within the block or they will not be able to participate. It is extremely important to disclose in the promotional material any and all rebates and commissions. It is anticipated that “stay to play” will be utilized more and more every year.

Event owners and host organizations would do well to recognize that any room contribution system is a tax on participants. Visitors must be happy with their experience. Many event managers feel the team registration fee should be all-inclusive, with no extras.

Everyone needs to realize that travelling team parents are investing thousands of dollars a year, often per child, to participate in these events. The more they have to pay, the less tolerant of additional fees they are.

“Stay to play” systems can work very well on new events. They may not work as well on an established event. Repeat participants usually know where they want to stay, and restrictions on this right can cause problems. Most events using the system take care to be certain room rates are competitive, if not lower than what might be available on the open market.

It can be difficult to determine room rates. There can be group rates, discounts from a variety of membership organizations, specials on the hotel web site, or still other rates from an on-line discounter. Stay to play can avoid these issues.

Once the analysis is complete, decisions can be made. It is inevitable that not all events will be suitable for the market. The investment may be too high for the budget. There may not be sufficient sports facilities and rooms in the right categories at the right time. There may not be sufficient local expertise. It may not be possible to close the right streets and roads to insure the safety of participants. The solution is to look for events that better fit capabilities.

The bid itself

Every bidder wants to stand out. They will work to get decision makers to their destination to check things out before the bid. Failing that, they will try to insist on a visit before decisions are made. This may require covering the expenses of an evaluator or an evaluation team. Basically, the goal is to get the prospect to town before site selection.

Videos can be effective. The bid team may dress in special uniforms or clothing. The bid packages may be full of color and contain lots of photographs. Officials from the public sector may join with the bid team. Celebrities or local experts in the sport may be called to participate.

Whatever the strategy, there are no unimportant questions in the RFP. Every question is asked for a reason, and every question must be answered. Nothing should be left to chance. If, for example, the RFP requires four softball fields that meet or exceed specifications, these four fields should be included in the bid package. This is not something to leave until a site visit unless, of course, you have so many field choices that you want the event owner to make the final selection.

An example of something that can be left for a later decision would be the location for an opening picnic or closing banquet. If you have multiple ideas, include them in the bid with the note that a final determination can be made later. When responding to an RFP, avoid the use of “not applicable.”

With the rapid growth in host organizations and event owners, as well as the number of events, it should not be surprising to learn of the failure of some to do appropriate homework. Some cities are promising to deliver before understanding what they are promising. There are rights holders who are growing so fast details are not pinned down and misunderstandings occur along the way.



EVENT OWNERS

It is not possible to produce a comprehensive list of all of the event owners with events able to select destinations. Although the NASC has compiled a list of about four hundred of the best known event owners, the true number is closer to twice that.

There has been no attempt to compute the total number of events that attract visiting teams or athletes, mostly because the overwhelming percentage are locally produced and will not change locations. The NASC suspects tens of thousands of events fall in this category. These events are valuable because they are repeated year after year and cannot be lost in a competitive bid.

Some of the most recognized event owners include the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) in every Olympic and Pan-American Games sport. These include USA Gymnastics, USA Swimming, USA Track and Field, etc. etc. Each has a full-time staff and is interested in options for their events.

Every other organization with an event is an event owner or an event rights holder. They have at least one or perhaps hundreds of events. These events can be national championships or regional and even local events. They can be part of a special tour or an exhibition. They can be international “friendlies” where teams from the USA compete against international squads, usually among elite athletes and normally through an NGB.

Event owners include the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA), National Softball Association, and hundreds of others.

When an event owner wishes to attract the attention of bidders, it is important to describe completely all of the requirements and provide a history for the event. In today's economy, potential host organizations need to know precisely what they are being asked and know what has happened previously in other cities. As we have observed, economic pressures have made it more difficult for cities to “buy” events. In fact, events that

can be “bought” may not be a good potential partner. The emphasis on site selection should be placed on the quality of the facilities and pledges of local support.

It has been noted some communities will not pay bid fees. Others have either emphasized locally grown events or turned exclusively to events that will stay where they are and grow over the years.

There can be confusion over what constitutes an event owner and a “tournament director.” It is probable that an event will provide the tournament director. This person will be an employee or someone retained to serve in that role.

All of the events developed and produced locally have tournament directors. These events have been around for many years and do not move. There are cities that have multiple local events that attract hundreds of visiting teams.

Soccer is an example of a sport where tournament directors can gather and discuss issues of importance. The United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) is an example. The USYSA holds an annual workshop where tournament directors and organizers can exchange information on best practices. It should be evident these same dedicated professionals are not event owners looking for new host cities.

So, communities bid on events, create their own, or assist existing local events in their efforts to attract more visiting teams and the beneficial economic impact of their visit. Many CVBs have learned the fastest way to increase room nights through sports is to assist local tournaments in attracting more visiting teams.





FACILITIES

Every event has its own facility requirements. As noted, they can vary within a sport. Younger participants may participate on a “short-sided” team that requires a smaller playing surface. Soccer commonly has 6v6, 8v8, and the traditional 11v11 formats. Basketball has become well-known for its commitment to the 3v3 game, which uses a half court. Rugby is emphasizing 7v7 and that version has been accepted for the 2016 Olympic Games. Even American football is seeing growth in the 7v7 game.

Softball might need a field with 300 foot fences (slow pitch) or 200 to 225 foot fences (fast pitch). A 200 foot softball field might also be used for youth baseball. Or, it is increasingly common to find fields that can be converted to any age group and skill level. They have removable fences and moveable bases.

There are softball fields that also have soccer fields running across all and more of the outfield grass.

The point is that potential hosts must know exactly what kinds of facilities are necessary. The owner must spell out these needs. Then, condition can become an issue. Too many fields, for example, have bare spots that could cause injury to participants. Potential hosts need to realize that someone, somewhere, has more fields or courts that are in better condition or are all located on one site. If one or more of those cities are participating in the bid process chances are they will be favored.

There is a good deal of experience and skill involved in selecting sites and negotiating rates.

When on-campus facilities are considered it will become apparent they are not available for most of each year. Needing campus facilities for an event and being able to schedule them at the right time and for an acceptable price can present challenges.

So, every city must know exactly how many facilities are available during the dates requested and whether they are appropriate to the event.

A facility audit can uncover tournament quality facilities. It will also uncover needed modifications or improvements. And, it becomes the foundation for new facilities that can serve both the unmet needs of residents and those of tournament directors. It is very important to select a qualified supplier to conduct the audit. In this process, every tournament quality facility is surveyed. The audit will determine whether a facility is tournament ready and for which age groups and levels of skill. It will also determine those sports that should be emphasized and why. Finally it should offer reasons for every selection, provide a list of event owners with events that could fit, and recommendations as to modifications and improvements to each facility and the impact these changes could have each year.

Many communities create a sports facilities guide to assist event owners. Every community maintains a web site that demonstrates the capabilities and experience of the host organization.

There has been a substantial increase in the number of amateur sports complexes. These can be indoor or outdoor or a combination thereof. They are being financed through municipal bond issues, an increase in the sales or restaurant tax, or with a portion of the room tax. Many are private developments. These are designed to emphasize service to the local market and the capability to host tournaments that will attract visitors. A privately developed complex will have its attention focused on profitable operations. If tournaments take place that also attract visitors that is fine but not the focus of the enterprise.

Most private operators want to host tournaments.

It has been observed that communities are either modifying or improving their facilities, building new complexes, or falling further behind. New facilities must be developed with tournaments in mind. Experts are available to assist in these processes.





IN CONCLUSION

Sports commissions, CVBs, event owners and facilities play roles crucial to success in the sports travel industry. As the sports segment of the overall domestic travel industry continues to expand, more potential host organizations begin to focus on the segment. Every year some events are cancelled and new ones come on line.

Many regional competitions come about because a host organization asked the event owner what they could do to support them. Rather than lose a prospective host, the event owner allows the interested host to create a regional event that brings a significant number of teams to town without bid fees or guarantees.

Host organizations should never lose sight of the fact that there are more average to below average teams and athletes (in terms of their playing ability) than their more talented competitors. Regional events tend to draw well because of this fact plus a shorter drive time. There may even be more time for each team or family to enjoy additional things to see and do before or after the event.

The NASC expects a significant amount of new facilities development. Many of these will contain multiple courts or fields designed specifically to meet the needs of tournaments. One of the most active groups is local soccer organizations/clubs. They are raising money, buying property, and building their own fields. Doing so simplifies scheduling of practices and games and makes it possible to limit use and protect the turf for tournaments that are becoming major fund raisers for the owning club.

The NASC has served the needs of the sports travel industry since 1992. Some of its members were fully engaged in the industry long before a description for the business was developed. Very few people will remember Los Angeles was the only bidder for the 1984 Olympic Games. International politics certainly played a role, but there were no other bidders. Today each Olympic bid cycle attracts several attractive potential hosts and years of spirited competition.

Although it is possible to start from scratch and make all the mistakes others have made, especially in the past

three decades, it makes a great deal more sense to join the NASC and begin a much more rapid process of “getting up to speed.” The NASC has a comprehensive web site with invaluable tips and techniques available to members only. The association also sponsors a series of meetings each year where members or prospective members can participate. In addition to sports commissions and CVBs, departments of parks and recreation have begun attending these events. Because these departments often operate some of the most useful sports facilities they are becoming a fast growing new partner to many host organizations.

The NASC offers its annual Sports Event Symposium in April, a series of market segment meetings (where participants are broken down by type of organization), and regional workshops for members and prospective members. More than 90 percent of all attendees at the Symposium report they will do business with another attendee.*

The NASC Certified Sports Event Executive (CSEE) Program is the industry’s only professional certification program. Certification requires completion of a series of modules over several years and actual experience in the sports event industry.

For more information on the NASC and its many member services and benefits, please call 513.281.3888 or visit www.SportsCommissions.org.

** (Source: Enigma Research Corporation, official research supplier)*





GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Below are commonly used terms, phrases, and acronyms that all professionals in the sports event industry must know!

Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) – A resource for sports event planners bringing events to their community. Provides services, including, but not limited to, hotel & restaurant information, calendar of events, visitor guides, housing, attraction & shopping information.

Economic Development – Occurs at the state, regional, or municipal level, or in public-private partnership organizations that may be partially funded by local, regional, state, or federal tax money. These organizations seek out new economic-generating opportunities while working to retain their existing business wealth.

Economic Impact – Net change in an economy caused by activity involving the acquisition, operation, development, and use of sport facilities and services.

Event or Tournament Management – Process by which an event is planned, prepared and produced. Encompasses the assessment, definition, acquisition, allocation, direction, control and analysis of time, finances, people, products, services and other resources to achieve objectives.

Event Manager – Responsible for overseeing and arranging every aspect of an event, including researching, planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating an event's design, activities and production.

Event Owner – Youth sports, multi-sport, national governing bodies (NGBs), grassroots programs and any other organization that owns events that are bid out and/or awarded.

Facility Guide – Document or online listing of sports facilities in the local area that can be utilized for hosting sporting events. Should include details of facilities including seating capacity, floor dimensions, lighting available, air/heating system, etc.

Grassroot Event – Sports competitions featuring amateur athletes from “8 to 80”.

“Heads in Beds” – Occupying hotel rooms with guests.

Host Organization – Sports commission, convention and visitors bureau (CVB), park and recreation department, venue and any other organization who host sporting events.

Local Organizing Committee (LOC) – Group of individuals in the community who form an ad-hoc committee to manage the procurement and running of sports events.

National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) – The leading not-for-profit association of sports event travel industry professionals that provides professional development, industry research, and networking opportunities; also the producers of the NASC Sports Event Symposium.

National Governing Body (NGB) – The organization that represents each Olympic or Pan-American Games sport and is a member of its International Federation.

Request for Proposal (RFP) – A document that outlines the requirements to host a sporting event. Should include requirements for the following: hotel rooms, bid fee, facility/fields, estimated # of participants, complimentary services, etc.

Sports Commission – Organization created to support the development and hosting of amateur sporting events in their community. May be born out of a chamber of commerce, convention and visitors bureau (CVB) or be a department within a bureau.

Sports Event Travel Industry – Niche of the tourism industry that uses the hosting of sporting events to attract visitors to communities in order to drive economic impact.

“Stay to Play” – Rule used by some events which requires participants to utilize certain hotels in order to be eligible to participate in competition.

Supplier – Hotels, sports publications, insurance companies, consulting and research firms, housing services and any other company that supplies products and services to the sports event industry.

United States Olympic Committee (USOC) – Not-for-profit organization recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the sole entity in the United States whose mission involves training, entering and underwriting the full expenses for the U.S. teams in the Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American and Parapan American Games. The USOC oversees the process by which U.S. cities seek to be selected as a Candidate City to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games (winter or summer), or the Pan American Games. In addition, the USOC approves the U.S. trial sites for the Olympic, Paralympic and Pan American Games team selections.