



# MGPHO Conference Policies

## Suitcasing / Outboarding Policy

Due to numerous complaints about suitcasing and out-boarding over the last few years our exhibitor's and attendees have asked us to put a policy into place to prevent this practice from impacting the business practices of legitimate exhibitors. The problem is really starting to affect our exhibitors and their ability to do business on a level playing field when they have a competitor not paying to exhibit and they are trying to take away their customers. This has become such a large problem nationally that most trade shows have adopted suitcasing/outboarding policies to help protect their exhibitors and the cost they put out to market and exhibit at trade shows.

MGPHO wants to create a level playing field for all exhibitors and is doing its best to help all exhibitors have a successful show. As such, we are mandating increased measures to protect exhibitors from suitcasing/outboarding at the show. This is MGPHO's suitcasing and outboarding policy, which will be posted on signage around the exhibit hall.

## What is Suitcasing?

Suitcasing is a parasitic business practice in which unethical companies will gain access to an event by obtaining some type of event credential attendee badge and then solicit business in the aisles or other public spaces used for the conference. This practice skirts the support of the organizer and the industry. This does not pertain solely to soliciting the attendees of an event. As we all know, some of your biggest customers/vendors can be other exhibiting companies. So, when a salesperson for "Joe's Manufacturing" (who is not exhibiting) shows up in your booth in an attempt to earn your business as a sub on your next big contract, they are suitcasing. Suitcasing includes any business trying to solicit business at the trade show without exhibiting. In addition any outside event or trade show/conference attempting to promote at the show that is not affiliated with MGPHO and trying to solicit exhibitors or attendees to attend their show is also considered suitcasing and this conduct will not be permitted without written consent from MGPHO.

## Some Examples of Suitcasing:

Passing out marketing materials or business cards

Attempting to sell product on the show floor without exhibiting

Dropping of marketing materials on tables, counters or in booths

Promoting outside events, trade shows or conferences

Booth sharing with a company or person that is not exhibiting

Approaching people on the show floor or at offsite events and soliciting them.

Basically if anyone does not have an exhibitor badge or consent from MGPHO they cannot solicit you or anyone else at the show or any of its events.

## MGPHO's Official Suitcasing Policy

MGPHO has a zero-tolerance policy regarding suitcasing. Please note that while all Trade Show attendees are invited to the exhibit floor, any attendee who is observed to be soliciting business in the aisles or other public spaces, or in another company's booth, will have their badge removed and will be asked to leave immediately without refund.

MGPHO recognizes that suitcasing may also take the form of commercial activity conducted from a hotel guest room or hospitality suite, a restaurant, or any other public place in proximity to our event. For the purposes of this policy, suitcasing violations may occur at venues other than the exhibition floor and at other sponsored events. It is for this reason MGPHO must be informed of any hospitality suites where business is being transacted, and expressed consent must be obtained from MGPHO prior to the event.

### What is Outboarding?

Outboarding refers to an individual or firm who attends the conference in an official or unofficial capacity and hosts unauthorized exhibits, meetings, demonstrations, presentations, events, and any such related activity, in any space in the conference hotels, restaurants, nearby properties or at their own personal business without consent of MGPHO. This includes any exhibitor at the event. You must have written approval from MGPHO to hold any onsite or offsite events. This policy was put into place to protect our sponsors from losing the opportunity to have as many attendees show up at their approved sponsored event. Bottom line is, if you want to hold an event or get together and solicit MGPHO attendees or exhibitors to attend, it must be approved by MGPHO.

### Some examples of outboarding:

Holding any type of event/gathering while in town for the event with non-employees without consent from MGPHO.

Dropping of marketing materials on tables, counters or at events without approval from MGPHO.

Approaching people at sponsored onsite or offsite events and trying to solicit business when your company is not the sponsor.

Soliciting attendees or exhibitors to attend an offsite non-sanctioned event by any means of promotion including social media posts prior to or during the event.

### MGPHO's Official Outboarding Policy

MGPHO has a zero-tolerance policy for outboarding.

Each person must register individually, under their company name, and must wear their official conference badge to enter conference spaces and the exhibit hall. A person using a badge under false credentials will be required to forfeit their badge and leave the conference.

Non-exhibitor or non-sponsor attendees are prohibited from soliciting business or distributing marketing materials in any part of the conference venue, exhibit hall or offsite properties.

Exhibitor and sponsor attendees are prohibited from soliciting business or distributing marketing materials in any part of the conference venue or exhibit hall outside their assigned booth space or designated sponsorship. All requests for event or meeting space, whether onsite or offsite during an MGPHO Show/Event week require MGPHO's approval. Any request made directly through the hotel for event or meeting space, including hospitality suites, will be forwarded to MGPHO for approval. MGPHO reserves the right to decline any event request and cancel any unapproved events or bookings. The reason for this is conflicting events can be detrimental to approved sponsors success. In order to protect their investment all events, meetings and gatherings in the town of the event must be approved by MGPHO.

Meeting rooms are generally unavailable at MGPHO conferences. If any meeting rooms become available, they will be offered to sponsor firms only on a seniority and first come first serve basis. Prior year sponsors have a

first right of refusal to any current years event that they sponsored the previous calendar year. No attendee, exhibitor, or sponsor may extend invitations to activities, events, and meetings or gatherings during any time of the day or night during the week of the event including set-up, conference event days or teardown without the express written consent of MGPHO.

#### Violations:

Any attendee or firm observed to be engaging in outboarding will be required to stop their activity and may be forced to cease all business opportunities for the remainder of the show including booth space being closed down and badges being forfeited without refund. Additional penalties may be applied at MGPHO's discretion including being banned from future events.

#### What to Look For?

Identifying potential "suitcasers" is fairly simple. First, look for those non-exhibitor attendees who appear to be initiating contact in the aisles or in booths. Look for people handing out fliers/business cards or dropping marketing materials on tables. Any attendee who appears to be handing anything out in the aisles is suspect, because as we all know, distribution of anything is restricted to one's booth space unless otherwise approved by MGPHO. Identifying an outboarder is straight forward.

#### Suitcasing Procedure:

Identify the person suitcasing or outboarding

Try to contact us while the infraction is occurring so we can confront them immediately.

Take a photo/video of the infraction and send it to us.

Immediately contact show management or

After we get the report we will immediately assess the situation and take action to rectify the problem.

The exhibit manager will investigate all complaints of suitcasing / outboarding as quickly as possible. We prefer you try to keep the suspect party in your presence while we make our way over to confront the party.

Upon receipt of a complaint from an exhibitor/attendee, MGPHO will review the complaint with the reporting party and, if possible, observe the suspected suitcaser / outboarder. MGPHO will then address the issue directly with the subject of the complaint. If found to be valid, the complaint will be resolved by show management immediately.

#### Code of Conduct

We expect all Exhibitors and Attendees that attend a MGPHO trade show or convention (or any of its affiliated events) to engage in respectful, considerate behavior towards each other and refrain from engaging in behavior or speech that is demeaning, discriminatory or harassing in any manner.

MGPHO's Code of Conduct defines unacceptable behavior as behavior that includes (but is not limited to) the following:

Creating a disturbance that is dangerous or interferes with the ability to transact business on the show floor, or creates apprehension in another person.

Engaging in any aggressive or unwanted physical contact with other vendors, attendees and/or general staff.

Making defamatory, harassing or demeaning remarks.

Using of profanity, sexually explicit/suggestive or offensive language, racial, religious or ethnic slurs.

Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated in the facility, on the show floor or at any MGPHO events.

Participants determined to be in violation of these policies in the sole discretion of management will be asked to immediately discontinue their inappropriate behavior. If the behavior continues, management reserves the right to take immediate action to bar the attendee or the exhibitor from further participation in the MGPHO show without the right of refund for unused days of attendance, seminar or event tickets, or any booth fees or any costs associated with the trade show.