

NMHC Suitcasing and Outboarding Policy

NMHC is serious about protecting the investment of our exhibitors and sponsors and ensuring their success at our conferences. As such, the NMHC Suitcasing and Outboarding Policy is strictly enforced. Attendees who engage in suitcasing or outboarding gain an unfair competitive advantage over our exhibitors/sponsors who have dedicated money and resources to fairly participate in the conference. These actions diminish the size and diffuse the quality of the audience available to exhibitors and sponsors.

NMHC strictly prohibits solicitation, “suitcasing” or “outboarding” by attendees who conduct business at the conference and do not have an exhibit or sponsorship investment at the conference.

What is Suitcasing and Outboarding?

“Suitcasing” and “Outboarding” are unethical practices in which attendees conduct, transact or promote business at the conference and do not have exhibit or sponsorship.

“**Suitcasing**” refers to non-exhibiting/non-sponsoring companies or individuals who go to conferences as an attendee and solicit business in the tradeshow aisles, session rooms, or hotel lobbies and common areas.

“**Outboarding**” refers to non-exhibiting/non-sponsoring companies or individuals that host meetings, events, or demos, etc. outside of the exhibit hall, such as in hospitality suites, restaurants, or public places in close proximity to the conference, and encourage conference attendees to leave the conference to attend their events.

Attendee Policies:

- Individuals/companies may not engage in sales activities while in any official conference space (such as breakout session rooms or in the Expo) or any surrounding public hotel space, including hotel lobbies and restaurants. In no case will the use of conference space or common space for this purpose be permitted.
- Individuals/companies may not display or advertise products or services of any kind outside of an official exhibit space at conferences where exhibits are present.
- Individuals/companies may not alter official conference badges, lend their badges to colleagues, or register individuals as representatives of their company in order to extend a complimentary registration or discount. The use of deceptive or false registration credentials and/or unethical methods to obtain information and/or gain an advantage over a competitor may result in expulsion of the individual from the conference and future NMHC meetings.
- NMHC asks that attendees do not engage with individuals who are engaging in Suitcasing or Outboarding activities.

Consequences of Suitcasing or Outboarding

Any attendee or company who is observed to be suitcasing or outboarding will be given a warning and asked to stop their activity. NMHC reserves the right to shut down on-site events, including meetings and demos, if the event is found to be in violation of this policy and the NMHC Event Policy and does not have prior authorization from NMHC to take place. Companies/attendees who do not comply will be asked to leave the conference immediately and may be banned from attending future NMHC meetings and conferences.

If you observe an act of suitcasing or outboarding, please alert NMHC staff immediately or submit a complaint to Melissa Rowan, Director, Sponsorships & Exhibits, at mrowan@nmhc.org. NMHC will investigate the complaint and determine the appropriate course of action.