



TxA ANTI-SUITCASING AND OUTBOARDING POLICY

The Texas Society of Architects (TxA) is committed to providing a professional, welcoming, and equitable environment for all participants at the TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo, including attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, speakers, and guests.

Our exhibitors and sponsors make significant investments to participate in the conference. To protect the value of those investments and the overall experience of our attendees, TxA prohibits unauthorized marketing, solicitation, and promotional activities, including **suitcasing and outboarding**.

WHAT IS SUITCASING?

Suitcasing is the practice of attending the TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo for the purpose of marketing, promoting, selling, or soliciting business without being a registered exhibitor, sponsor, or other approved conference partner.

Suitcasing may occur when an individual or company attends as a regular conference attendee but uses the conference as an opportunity to promote its products or services without purchasing an appropriate exhibiting or sponsorship opportunity.

EXAMPLES OF SUITCASING INCLUDE:

- Soliciting business, selling products or services, or actively promoting a company on the exhibit floor without being an official TxA exhibitor or sponsor.
- Distributing flyers, brochures, samples, promotional materials, or other marketing materials in unauthorized areas of the conference.
- Approaching attendees for the purpose of soliciting business or promoting products or services outside of an approved exhibit or sponsorship activity.
- Promoting outside events, meetings, conferences, or competing programs to TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo attendees without prior approval.
- Sharing or subleasing exhibit space with another company without prior written approval from TxA.
- Using conference attendee lists, badges, or conference activities to conduct unauthorized marketing or solicitation.

EXAMPLE:

A company representative registers as a conference attendee and walks the exhibit hall distributing business cards and brochures to attendees while promoting the company's services, without having purchased an exhibit or sponsorship opportunity.

WHAT IS OUTBOARDING?

Outboarding is the practice of hosting or promoting meetings, events, hospitality functions, demonstrations, presentations, or other activities outside of the official TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo program or venue without prior written approval from TxA, particularly when the activity is intended to attract conference attendees away from official conference activities.

EXAMPLES OF OUTBOARDING INCLUDE:

- Hosting a competing event, reception, meeting, or hospitality function during official TxA conference hours without prior approval.
- Organizing an off-site event specifically targeting TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo attendees without TxA's prior written approval.
- Conducting product demonstrations, presentations, or sales meetings off-site for the purpose of attracting conference attendees away from the official conference.
- Encouraging conference attendees to leave the TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo to participate in an unofficial event or gathering.
- Promoting an unauthorized event to attendees through conference-related channels, materials, or communications.

EXAMPLE:

A company hosts a private hospitality event at a nearby hotel during official TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo programming and actively invites TxA attendees to leave the conference to attend.

WHY SUITCASING AND OUTBOARDING ARE NOT PERMITTED

Suitcasing and outboarding undermine the investment made by TxA's official exhibitors and sponsors and can negatively affect the conference experience for everyone.

THESE PRACTICES:

- **Reduce the value of the official conference:** Diverting attendees away from the exhibit hall or official programming can reduce meaningful opportunities for exhibitors and sponsors to connect with their target audience.
- **Undermine exhibitor and sponsor investment:** Official exhibitors and sponsors pay for opportunities to promote their businesses and connect with conference attendees.
- **Create confusion:** Unauthorized activities can make it difficult for attendees to distinguish between official TxA activities and outside commercial events.
- **Impact the overall conference experience:** Unsolicited marketing and unauthorized events can be disruptive to attendees and other conference participants.
- **Undermine the integrity of the conference:** TxA strives to maintain a professional environment where all participating companies and organizations have clear and equitable opportunities to engage with attendees.

ENFORCEMENT

TxA reserves the right to address violations of this policy and take appropriate action based on the nature and circumstances of the violation.

If an individual or company is found to be engaging in unauthorized solicitation, suitcasing, outboarding, or other activities that violate this policy, TxA may take one or more of the following actions:

- Ask the individual or company to immediately discontinue the activity.
- Require the individual to leave the exhibit hall or conference premises.
- Remove the individual or company from the conference without a refund.
- Restrict or prohibit participation in future TxA conferences or events.
- Restrict future exhibiting or sponsorship opportunities.
- Take other appropriate action as determined by TxA.

TxA reserves the right to interpret and enforce this policy in a manner that protects the interests of the conference, its attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, and partners.

REPORTING A VIOLATION

Attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, speakers, and other conference participants are encouraged to report suspected violations to TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo staff.

Reports may be made to TxA staff onsite or by contacting the TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo team. TxA will review reports and take appropriate action as warranted.

Thank you for helping us maintain a professional and equitable environment and for supporting the exhibitors and sponsors who make the TxA Annual Conference & Design Expo possible.