



Hi Kristi,

Spring is officially in bloom—well, kind of (hang in there, Canada)!

As we close out April and step into a new season, it's clear that 2025 is picking up serious momentum. With exciting growth across both Strategic Site Selection and Sandbox Events, we're reflecting on a season marked by movement, milestones, and meaningful connections. We've been out and about—meeting with partners, growing our reach, and deepening our purpose. And now, we're excited to share what we've been working on and what's been inspiring us lately.

In this edition of *SuiteTalk*, you'll find:

A fresh take on what it means to hold space

Our latest Destination Report

A recap of our unforgettable Advisory Council Retreat

A behind-the-scenes look at what we've been up to this season

... and more!

We're feeling especially grateful—for our incredible clients and partners, and for the incredible team that makes all of this possible. Relationships remain at the heart of everything we do, and we're proud to keep building something meaningful together.

Thanks for being part of our journey. Let's keep the momentum going!



As industry partners navigating the ever-evolving world of meetings and events, we understand how important it is to move quickly and strategically. But when it comes to requesting space for future programs, there's a quiet but critical part of the process we want to shine a light on: **holding space with intention**.

What Does It Mean to "Hold Space"?

In the events industry, *holding space* typically refers to requesting a hotel or venue to tentatively reserve rooms or meeting space for a future program while details are still being finalized. It's an important planning step—but one that comes with a shared responsibility.

Why Be Intentional?

When space is held, hotels are committing inventory to a potential client—sometimes turning away other opportunities during that hold period. While it may seem like a harmless "just-in-case" move to cast a wide net and request multiple properties, there are real impacts on both relationships and resources. We recommend being intentional and selective when requesting space—limiting outreach to no more than 3–4 hotels per destination.

Time is a Resource (and So Is Trust)

Behind every proposal is a person—someone in hotel sales who is taking the time to craft the best offer possible. Their time and expertise matter. When we send out broad, non-committal hold requests, it can strain relationships and lead to missed opportunities in the future. Just as we strive to be thoughtful and transparent with our clients, we believe in being equally respectful to our hotel and venue partners.

The Cost of Over-Requesting

In today's busy market, casting too wide a net can actually backfire. Here's how:

- **Hotel teams are stretched.** With countless RFPs coming in daily, sales teams are prioritizing serious and strategic leads. Unfocused requests can result in delayed responses—or lower prioritization for your program.
- **Holds impact availability.** Holding multiple blocks in one city—just in case—can prevent other planners from accessing needed space, creating congestion in the market and driving up costs for everyone.
- **Reputation matters.** Hotels remember who sends focused, high-quality leads—and who doesn't. Being known as a considerate, strategic partner opens doors to better service and better rates.

At SSS, we take a targeted and respectful approach to site sourcing. Before reaching out to properties, we work closely with our clients to refine program requirements, understand key priorities, and build a short list of hotel partners who align with those goals. This ensures that when we do hold space, it's intentional—and more likely to result in a successful partnership for all parties involved.

In a relationship-driven industry like ours, being intentional isn't just good etiquette—it's good business. It

helps us protect your reputation, build stronger connections with hotel partners, and increase your chances of securing the right space at the right time.

Thank you for trusting us to navigate these conversations on your behalf. Together, let's continue holding space—with purpose.



Exploring Unique Destinations: A Glimpse into Our Recent Venue Highlights

At Strategic Site Selection, we love seeing our clients' visions come to life in inspiring destinations around the globe—and this month, we're spotlighting a few standout programs that are setting the tone for what's shaping up to be an exciting year of international events.

In this edition, we're thrilled to highlight the incredible work of **Helene Getty**, our Director of Global Accounts, and **Sara Scott**, a powerhouse on our Key Account Management team. From charming canals to historic cobblestone streets, their clients are making bold moves in some of Europe's most iconic cities.

Dublin, Ireland

Hotel Highlight: [Anantara, The Marker](#)

Hotel Description:

Located in the heart of Dublin's revitalized Docklands, Anantara The Marker blends contemporary architecture with warm Irish charm. Overlooking scenic Grand Canal Square, this five-star hotel offers guests a unique vantage point to take in Dublin's vibrant culture. Inspired by Ireland's natural landscapes, the design balances clean lines with eye-catching accents—floor-to-ceiling windows, marble finishes, and tastefully bold pops of colour create a stylish yet serene atmosphere.

Why We Love It:

- Each of the 187 rooms and suites features floor-to-ceiling windows with stunning views of the city, canal, Dublin Bay, or nearby mountains.
- With over 7,500 sq. ft. of event space, including nine modern meeting rooms and a rooftop terrace, the hotel accommodates up to 350 guests.
- Forbes Street by Gareth Mullins offers a fresh take on modern Irish cuisine, while The Rooftop

Bar & Terrace provides 360° views of the city.

Standout Features:

- The Spice Spoons culinary experience with executive chef Gareth Mullins is a treat for food lovers.
- No check-in desk—guests are welcomed and checked in by hosts for a personalized arrival.
- Located steps from cultural landmarks like the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, 3Arena, and National Gallery.

Group Activities in Dublin:

- Wild swimming with expert coaches in scenic local sea spots.
- A literary-themed afternoon tea celebrating Ireland's iconic writers.
- A visit to the Irish National Stud and Gardens, guided by a professional horse trainer.

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Hotel Highlight: [Andaz Amsterdam Prinsengracht](#)

Hotel Description:

Tucked along the Prinsengracht canal in the Nine Streets district, the Andaz Amsterdam Prinsengracht is a boutique five-star hotel set in a former public library. Designer Marcel Wanders brings the space to life with playful, art-filled interiors inspired by Dutch culture and storytelling. With a welcoming, gallery-like lobby and thoughtfully curated design details throughout, the hotel blends creative flair with relaxed luxury—just steps from the Anne Frank House, the Rijksmuseum, and the city's best cafés and shops.

Why We Love It:

- The hotel celebrates Dutch artistry and history, offering guests a truly immersive cultural experience.
- Located in the charming Nine Streets district, it offers easy access to dining, shopping, and museums—without the tourist crowds.
- With just 122 rooms and suites, it's ideal for executive retreats and incentive programs looking for a boutique atmosphere.

Standout Features:

- Bold, creative meeting spaces perfect for small groups or VIP gatherings.
- Rotating art installations and local design elements throughout the hotel.
- Bluespoon, the on-site restaurant, offers inventive seasonal cuisine with canal views.

Group Activities in Amsterdam:

- Guided tours of the Rijksmuseum and Van Gogh Museum.
- Private canal cruises with drinks and hors d'oeuvres.
- Dutch cheese and genever tastings with local experts.

Stockholm, Sweden

Hotel Highlight: [Courtyard Stockholm Kungsholmen](#)

Hotel Description:

Just minutes from downtown, Courtyard Stockholm Kungsholmen offers a modern, tranquil escape with stunning views of Lake Mälaren and nearby parks. Its contemporary Scandinavian design, spacious guest rooms, and friendly staff create a calm, comfortable environment for both business and leisure travellers. Located in the vibrant Kungsholmen neighbourhood, the hotel is an ideal base for discovering Stockholm while enjoying a relaxed, local feel.

Why We Love It:

- The hotel offers 282 well-appointed rooms, many with views of the lake or park.
- 12 versatile meeting rooms and nearly 9,000 sq. ft. of event space make it great for conferences and workshops.
- A quieter neighbourhood setting allows guests to experience Stockholm like a local, with quick

access to central attractions.

Standout Features:

- Björk Bar & Grill serves Nordic and international dishes in a cozy, nature-inspired setting.
- A 24/7 fitness centre and nearby trails provide excellent options for wellness-focused guests.
- The hotel embraces sustainability with eco-friendly practices throughout.

Group Activities in Stockholm:

- Archipelago boat tours to explore the city's surrounding islands.
 - A private tour of the Vasa Museum to learn about Sweden's maritime history.
 - A Swedish *fika* tasting tour featuring local cafés, coffee, and pastries.
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STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH PURPOSE: SSS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETS IN NASHVILLE

Earlier this month, our Strategic Site Selection Advisory Council gathered at the beautiful **Omni Nashville Hotel** for two powerful days of intentional planning, meaningful collaboration, and forward-thinking strategy.

These semi-annual meetings are a cornerstone of our business—they offer us the dedicated time and space to align on our direction across every area of SSS, from sales and marketing to client experience and operational excellence.

With open, thoughtful discussion and the support of our incredible team, we laid the groundwork for how we want the next five years to unfold. We asked the big questions:

- Where should we grow?
- What should we refine?
- And what are we doing well that deserves to be protected through consistent delivery?

From these conversations emerged exciting ideas and clear priorities, including the creation of new roles and departments that will support our continued growth, all while staying true to our purpose and values. Every decision we make is centered around one core commitment: serving our clients with excellence.

We remain driven by our vision of being the number one site selection company in Canada, and we're hard at work expanding that on a global scale. Strategic planning sessions like this ensure we're not just growing—but growing with intention.

A sincere thank you to Omni Nashville Hotel and the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp. for your warm hospitality and for creating an inspiring environment that allowed our team to think big.

Here's to clarity, collaboration, and continued growth—for our team, our clients, and the future of our industry. Let's keep moving forward, together.



Where the global meetings, events and incentive travel industry comes together annually for the largest trade show of its kind in Europe.



The SSS Supper Series Returns: A Night of Connection at Park Hyatt Toronto

Very exciting news: **SSS Supper Series is officially back**—and what a way to kick things off! This month, we had the absolute pleasure of hosting a beautiful evening at the elegant Park Hyatt Toronto, where we gathered with some of our valued clients over an unforgettable dinner. These intimate evenings are designed to foster deeper connections beyond the day-to-day, offering space to share stories, insights, and inspiration.

The Supper Series is more than just a meal, it's a chance for meaningful conversations. We dove into insightful discussions about how Strategic Site Selection can support your upcoming programs and help bring your vision to life. From sourcing standout venues that align with your goals to collaborating with Sandbox Events to execute full-service event planning, we covered it all—deliciously and in great

company.

To our incredible clients who joined us: thank you. We treasure these opportunities to connect with you on a personal level, beyond the boardroom. Your presence made the evening feel truly special, and we're so grateful for the relationships we continue to build together.

A heartfelt thank you to the **Park Hyatt Toronto** team for delivering an exceptional experience. From the thoughtful service to the exquisite cuisine, your attention to detail elevated the night and made our guests feel celebrated and cared for.

Here's to more shared moments, impactful conversations, and growing together. We can't wait to host the next one. If you are interested in joining us in St. Regis, please reach out to us at

info@strategicsiteselection.com!



We're Hiring! Join the Strategic Site Selection Team!

Exciting news—we have **three amazing opportunities available** for talented professionals looking to grow in the meetings & events industry! If you're passionate about building relationships, driving business growth, and making an impact, we'd love to hear from you!

Director, Global Accounts – [Apply here](#)

Director, Business Development – [Apply here](#)

At Strategic Site Selection, we connect people and create meaningful experiences. If you're looking to grow your career with a team that values innovation and collaboration, we'd love to hear from you!

Know someone who'd be a great fit? Tag them or share this post!



The Countdown to Last Call Has Begun!

The excitement is building at Strategic Site Selection as we gear up for our annual Last Call celebration—one of the most anticipated evenings in the meetings and events calendar!

This year promises to be especially memorable as we mark 20 years in business. We're pulling out all the stops to create a spectacular evening in honour of our clients, partners, and the incredible journey we've shared.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available!

Want to showcase your brand in front of key players in the meetings and events industry? We're currently seeking sponsorship partners for this milestone celebration. It's a unique opportunity to connect, collaborate, and celebrate with an engaged audience of industry professionals.

Interested in getting involved? Contact us:

- ✉ Mark Dosman – markd@strategicsiteselection.com
- ✉ Kristi Piukkala – kristip@sandbox-events.com

Join us in making this year's Last Call the best one yet!

info@strategicsiteselection.com | contactus@sandbox-events.com



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