

THE BROADMOOR EXHIBITION HALL EXPANSION
Hotel to offer wide open spaces to draw meetings
Trusses, carpeting, parking part of project
By RICH LADEN THE GAZETTE

The Broadmoor hotel isn't just a run-of-the mill inn, and its new exhibition hall won't be just another plainly wrapped big box.

At least that's the contention of hotel executives, who say an innovative design and aggressive marketing strategy will help them woo meetings and events from other cities to their new Broadmoor Hall, scheduled for completion in October.

During a tour of the hall's construction site Wednesday, hotel executives touted the building's column-free exhibition space, which will give exhibitors and meeting attendees more maneuvering room.

Many halls use pillars; Broadmoor Hall will rely on seven trusses for support, creating a wide-open floor.

The building also will have a fully carpeted floor that will save exhibitors the sometimes expensive cost of laying their own floor coverings.

Three levels of underground parking will house nearly 1,000 vehicles; the structure's underground first level of 106,000 square feet also could be used to accommodate exhibitions from larger trade shows.

Meanwhile, The Broadmoor will make the hall available nearly free of charge to groups that book huge blocks of the hotel's 700 rooms, while they also discount some of those rooms during the slower winter and spring months.

A hotel room that goes for \$400 a night during the peak summer tourist season might go for \$135 or \$150 to groups meeting in November.

The Broadmoor also says it's struck a deal with other nearby hotels, including the Sheraton and Cheyenne Mountain Resort. If The Broadmoor has a big enough event, it will send overflow guests to other hotels.

The Broadmoor already is an internationally known resort with golf courses, a spa, pool complex and other amenities that have earned it the highest ratings among travel industry publications.

But by muscling up in the highly competitive events center industry, Broadmoor executives expect the exhibition hall to add to the resort's reputation and put even more heads in beds — the primary goal of any hotel.

"You need a niche, (in the events center market), you need a hook," Broadmoor president Steve Bartolin said of the exhibition hall, going up next to the existing 20,000-square foot International Center and 18,000-square-foot Colorado Hall.

The three buildings are across the street from the main part of the hotel, along Lake Avenue on Colorado Springs' southwest side.

Last year, The Broadmoor announced plans to build the exhibition hall, along with 160 luxury condominiums and townhomes circling the hotel property, as part of a \$160 million improvement project.

In addition to 60,883 square feet of exhibition space that will accommodate 300 10-foot-by-10-foot booths, Broadmoor Hall will have 7,415 square feet of space for registrations, coat rooms and other uses; a 7,000-squarefoot kitchen; a 7,192-squarefoot restaurant; state-of-the-art audio, video and lighting systems; and wireless Internet and high-speed Internet.

The building also will have 3,140 square feet for meeting and training rooms; two separate exhibitor offices; and second-floor offices for the hotel's sales and marketing and human resources departments.

The building is scheduled to host its first event — the annual meeting of the Colorado Association of Realtors, which traditionally meets at The Broadmoor — in early October.

The hotel has events booked as late as 2010.

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