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[I can hear Denver-area hoteliers roaring | Jeff Higley](#)

HNN blog

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By Jeff Higley
Editorial Director
Hotel News Now
jeff@HotelNewsNow.com

Years ago, in my sports writing days, I had the chance to cover an NFL game at Denver's Mile High Stadium. I had been to many stadiums, including Ohio Stadium in Columbus and the Brickie Bowl in Hobart, Indiana, that shook when the home team did something good. But nothing was like Mile High Stadium. I wondered during the Broncos' victory over the Colts if the stadium was going to collapse from the rockin' that those Denver fans did. I mean, the stadium literally rolled like thunder when those Broncos fans were fired up.

Fast forward 20 years, and I wonder if it's going to be the same during the [Democratic National Convention](#) in Denver later this month. Organizers decided in June to move Barack Obama's acceptance speech from the Pepsi Center, an indoor arena where the convention's first three days will be held, to Invesco Field at Mile High, which replaced Mile High Stadium in 2001. Even with more than 50,000 people expected to attend the DNC event at the football stadium, it's doubtful that the place will rock like old Mile High Stadium.

But hoteliers in Denver must be rejoicing. The move to a bigger venue boosts the need for hotel rooms during the convention because roughly 30,000 more people will be able to attend the event.

To confirm this sentiment, I turned to the Denver experts I know best, the good people at [Hospitality Real Estate Counselors](#).

When I phoned Mike Cahill, president of HREC, for help, it was perfect timing that the firm has been surveying GMs at hotels to find out what's going on. Chris Stein, senior VP for HREC, got on board quickly and gave this report:

"For most of the upscale limited-service hotels and full-service hotels, a vast majority of the rooms have been booked by the various state delegations. For example, several general managers indicated that their hotels had been 'scouted' by advance teams as long as one year ago. Several hotels indicated that 80 percent to 90 percent of their rooms were booked nearly a year ago at a rate that was roughly 25 percent to 50 percent higher than their typical corporate rate, and that the remaining rooms were sold at a rate that was between two and four times their typical corporate rate. Most reported that those rooms were sold prior to the announcement that the venue was being changed to INVESCO from the Pepsi Center for Obama's speech.

"We did hear that there are a few rooms remaining in the Tech Center, and some of the outer-lying Denver submarkets, but those rooms are being offered at significant rate premiums—in the \$300-to-\$500 range for limited-service hotels. Many of the metro-area hotels that we spoke with reported that they have heard hotels are filling from Colorado Springs to Ft. Collins, and one GM had even mentioned that hotels as far north as Cheyenne, Wyoming, were getting requests for the DNC dates. To answer your question about the impact of the move from the Pepsi Center to INVESCO, it appears that the impact has been greater on the outer lying markets, since the vast majority of the hotels within the metro area have been booked for some time."

There are about 42,000 hotel rooms in the Denver area. Most of them are going to fetch a premium rate during the convention. That's good news, and certainly a bright spot in what has been a fairly non-descript summer for hotels in the U.S. That ought to keep the place rockin'.

Contact

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Editorial Director
jeff@HotelNewsNow.com

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