

THE OUTDOOR HOSPITALITY OPERATOR SERIES

ISSUE NO. 2

Reservations & *Revenue*

Every empty night is money you can never earn back. This issue is about selling the right site, at the right price, to the right stay — and turning every inquiry and every cancellation into revenue you'd otherwise leave on the table.

BUILT FOR EVERY FORMAT

RV parks · glamping · campgrounds · cabins · marinas · boutique lodging

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OPERATOR SERIES · 2 OF 6

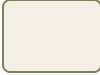
Nights are perishable. The moment a date passes unsold, that revenue is gone forever. A hotel room, an RV site, a glamping tent, a boat slip — you can't discount it later, you can't stock it on a shelf, you can't sell yesterday twice. This single truth should shape every pricing, booking, and cancellation decision you make. The operators who internalize it stop thinking like landlords collecting rent and start thinking like revenue managers filling perishable inventory.

1 night

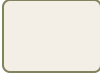
unsold is revenue you never recover. The goal is simple to state and hard to execute — the right site, at the right price, to the right stay, filled as close to capacity as your market allows, every night of the season.

PRICE LIKE THE INVENTORY IS PERISHABLE

A flat, one-rate-all-year approach leaves money on the table in peak season and empty sites in the shoulders. Rate should move with demand — that's not gouging, it's matching price to what the night is actually worth.

 **Seasonal tiers:** set distinct peak, shoulder, and off-season rates rather than one blended number.

 **Premium site/unit pricing:** waterfront, pull-through, or the best view should never cost the same as a standard spot.

 **Event & weekend premiums:** local festivals, holidays, and Fri–Sat nights justify higher rates — demand is already there.

 **Last-minute vs. advance:** reward early bookings that lock in occupancy; hold firm on rate when you're filling up.

PROTECT THE REVENUE WITH BOOKING POLICIES

A reservation isn't real until it's protected. Loose booking policies fill your calendar with holds that evaporate and leave you scrambling to resell perishable nights at the last minute.

 **Take a deposit at booking** — at least the first night's rate. A site held on a promise of payment is not a booking.

 **Set a clear cancellation window** and enforce it consistently — inconsistency is what guests learn to exploit.

 **Require a valid card on file** at the time of reservation, every time, no exceptions.

 **Charge for the specific-site guarantee.** If a guest wants a particular spot locked in, that certainty has value — price it.

TURN CANCELLATIONS INTO RETAINED REVENUE

When a guest calls to cancel, most operators simply process the refund. That's a reflex, not a strategy. A cancellation is a fork in the road — your goal at every step is to keep the revenue in the building. Work the ladder in order:

- 1 • Reschedule first.** "Would a different set of dates work?" A moved booking keeps the revenue and the guest. Always the opening move.
- 2 • Offer a credit.** If the dates won't work, offer the full amount as a credit toward a future stay. The money stays with you and gives them a reason to return.
- 3 • Refund last, minus the fee.** Only if a credit is declined, refund per your stated policy — less the cancellation fee that protects you for the perishable night you now have to resell.

OPERATOR'S EDGE — Train every team member to walk this ladder the same way. The difference between a team that refunds on reflex and one that reschedules first shows up directly on your revenue line — with no additional marketing spend and no new guests required.

THE INQUIRY IS A SALES MOMENT

Every reservation call is a chance to convert — not just process a transaction. The guest is already interested; make booking easy and give them no reason to hang up and "think about it." Gather what you need, and close.

Open the booking	"Let's start with your name, and I'll get that reservation started for you."
Get the dates & length	"What dates are you looking at? ... And how many nights will you be staying with us?"
Match them to a site	"Tell me about your setup so I put you in the right spot — rig type, party size, or unit preference."
Surface a discount	"Do you qualify for any of our discounts — military or first responder?"
Close on the card	"I have everything ready. I'll just need a card to lock in the reservation."
Confirm & reassure	"You'll get a confirmation with all your details. Anything else before your stay?"

LENGTH-OF-STAY & INVENTORY OPTIMIZATION

Not every booking is equally valuable. Two nights that block a holiday weekend can cost you more than they earn. Managing which stays land where is how you protect your highest-revenue nights.

 **Set minimum stays** on peak weekends and holidays to prevent one-night bookings from fragmenting prime inventory.

 **Watch for orphan nights** — single gaps between bookings — and price or bundle them so they don't sit empty.

 **Match the stay to the site:** put long stays on sites suited to them and keep flexible inventory open for high-value short bookings.

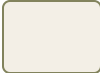
 **Balance long-term vs. transient** so steady base revenue never crowds out your most profitable peak nights.

THE REVENUE MOST OPERATORS LEAVE BEHIND

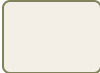
The reservation rate is only the beginning. Ancillary revenue — the add-ons and premium options guests happily pay for — often carries the highest margin in the whole operation, because the guest is already on your property and already spending.

 **Premium placement:** waterfront, extra-large, or best-view sites and units at a clear upcharge.

 **On-site retail:** the essentials guests forgot, priced for convenience.

 **Early check-in / late checkout:** a small, availability-based fee for flexibility guests genuinely value.

 **Package & bundle:** combine site, add-ons, and an experience into one higher-value booking.

 **Add-on experiences:** firewood, equipment rentals, guided extras, welcome baskets, pet packages.

 **Memberships / return credits:** reward repeat stays and pre-sell future occupancy.

ONE PRINCIPLE, EVERY FORMAT

RV Parks & Campgrounds — premium pull-through and FHU sites, seasonal rate tiers, and minimum stays on event weekends.

Glamping & Cabins — price like a boutique hotel: experience packages, curated add-ons, and strong weekend and peak premiums.

Marinas — premium slip sizing and location, transient vs. seasonal balance, and haul-out or service add-ons.

Boutique Outdoor Lodging — dynamic pricing by demand, high-margin ancillary experiences, and direct-booking incentives that protect margin.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Revenue in outdoor hospitality isn't won with a single big move — it's won in the discipline of a hundred small ones. Price to demand instead of habit. Protect every booking with a deposit and a policy you actually enforce. Work the cancellation ladder instead of reflexively refunding. Treat every inquiry as a close, and every guest already on your property as a chance to add value they'll thank you for. Do these consistently and you'll lift revenue without adding a single site — because you finally stopped letting perishable nights slip away unsold.

Next issue → The Daily Operations Rhythm — the open-to-close system that keeps a property running like a business instead of on luck. Follow along so you don't miss it.

Amity Outdoors provides consulting for RV parks, RV resorts, campgrounds, glamping destinations, boutique hotels, marinas, and outdoor hospitality businesses. We help operators strengthen operations, revenue optimization, guest experience, and hospitality leadership — grounded in real owner-operator experience across every format.