

Ninth Street Rooms — “Book”

Rehearsal and tracking rooms · six rooms, hourly · Richmond, Virginia

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ALSO IN THE ROOM	Tobin Achterberg-Rhys, evenings · Sunniva Kalu, desk
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1 · The decision

In one sentence, what decision does this dashboard exist to get made?

Which empty hours we discount before they expire, and which ones stay empty on purpose.

Who opens it, and when?

Me every morning and again about nine at night, and whoever is on the desk when the phone rings. It is on a screen behind the counter.

How does that decision get made today, without it?

The booking system, which shows me what is booked. That is the one thing I can already see. Nobody has ever built me a screen about the hours that are empty, and the empty hours are the entire job.

Is there a rule the decision follows? Write it out, in the order it applies.

1. Only inside forty-eight hours. 2. Never the weekday evening block — it sells itself and a discount just moves a booking that was coming anyway. 3. Never the day block, because a daytime booking needs somebody on the desk and two hours of wage is more than the discount. 4. Never below the price of the room underneath it. 5. Held hours are not discountable at any price.

Should the dashboard apply that rule, or only display it?

Apply it and print it. But it must not print the discount. The moment a percentage is on that screen it becomes the price for everybody who works here, inside a fortnight. What the hour goes for is decided on the call.

Tell me about the hours that are never for sale.

Four rules. Sunday before five is a written agreement with the two houses backing onto the load-in door and it is not for sale at any price. Room 4 cannot be sold while Room 3 is tracking, because they share a wall. Friday late in the two live rooms is held for the term bands who run over. And Monday daytime in Room 3 is the week's line check, which we sold twice by mistake in June.

Should those hours count against occupancy?

No, and this is the one I feel strongly about. Buried in the denominator they are four or five points that look like a sales problem, and the fix for a sales problem is to sell more — which here means selling a Sunday morning and losing the licence. Take them out, put them on their own screen, and put a price on each one so I can be argued with.

What is the most common way you are caught out?

Occupancy. Room 6 is the cheapest thing in the building and it is always full, so occupancy says it is the best room we have. The accounts do not agree. I want what each room earns per hour it could have sold, empty hours included.

Anything you specifically do not want on it?

No printed discount. No figures for the people on the desk. And do not show me a revenue target — I have never met one that survived a band breaking up in March.

Where will it be used?

A screen behind the counter in a converted warehouse with two windows, and most of these decisions get made after eight at night. Make it dark.

2 · Screens requested

SCREEN	WHAT IT IS FOR	WHAT IT MUST SHOW
The week	Six rooms, seven days, and what is still open.	Every block marked booked with who, held with the rule that closed it, or open with its list value — and the open blocks inside forty-eight hours marked as discountable.
Rooms	What each room earns per hour it could have sold.	List rate, held hours, sellable hours, booked hours, occupancy, revenue, revenue per available hour, and the same figure four weeks ago.
Held open	The hours we never sell, and what each refusal costs.	Each standing rule with its hours a week, its cost at list price, the written reason, and the specific blocks it closed this week.

3 · Figures, and the comparison each one carries

FIGURE	MUST APPEAR AGAINST
Occupancy	Sellable hours only, with held hours stated separately
Revenue per available hour	The same room four weeks ago
Open hours	Split by whether they are inside forty-eight hours
Held hours	Priced at list, as a ceiling on what the refusal costs

No figure appears on this dashboard without the comparison beside it. A number with nothing to compare it against is not information, and the component that renders these will not accept one.

4 • What this must not do

- 1. No discount percentage printed anywhere.
- 2. No figure for anybody working the desk.
- 3. No revenue target.
- 4. Held hours never counted inside an occupancy denominator.
- 5. Nothing that takes a second horizontal bar away from the grid.

Treated as binding rather than as a preference. Every item above is checked again before the tool is handed over.

CONFIRMATION

The answers above are mine and may be used to build the tool described. Ninth Street Rooms is a fictional business profile supplied for demonstration and testing; every figure appearing in the delivered dashboard is sample data.

SIGNED — ODALYS BRENNAN-IFILL

DATE