



Convention & Visitors Bureau

News Release

125 S. Market Street • Suite 300 • San Jose, CA 95113
phone: 408-295-9600 • fax: 408-295-3937 • www.sanjose.org

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CONTACT: Marie Rothhauser, 408.792.4125
mrothhauser@sanjose.org

ANNUAL GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE GENERATED MORE THAN \$10 MILLION FOR DOWNTOWN SAN JOSE

Local Downtown Businesses Benefit from Attendee Spending and Continue to Support Convention Center Expansion

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA – The Game Developers Conference was held March 4-8, 2003, and featured industry experts representing the \$9 billion entertainment game industry. The five-day conference attracted more than 8,000 attendees and generated \$10.3 million in economic spending. This figure is based on the Bureau's annual visitor study conducted by CIC Research and the International Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau (IACVB) income surveys.

Located at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, the positive economic impact was felt strongly by downtown vendors who benefited from the influx of customers, and who hope to see even more activity with the future expansion of the convention center.

These types of large conferences represent an important component in supporting downtown businesses. Of the 8,000 total attendees, 6,800 were local residents who essentially could become repeat customers, adding to the recurrent flow of local patronage downtown.

"The convention center, which houses a variety of conferences, serves as a gateway to downtown San Jose," said Armand Tiano, Jr., owner of Stratta Bar and Grill. "Convention attendees, particularly those located in the Bay Area, have an opportunity to become exposed to the new restaurants and positive changes downtown San Jose is experiencing. Once they rediscover the city's rich culture, many will return with family and friends to experience more that the city has to offer."

San Jose's Convention Center competes directly with Anaheim (813,607 gross square feet), Los Angeles (770,000 gross square feet), San Francisco (900,000 gross square feet), and Sacramento (134,000 gross square feet), for the large California-bound conferences. Having 143,000 gross square feet of convention space as compared to the competition, averaging over twice its size, puts San Jose at a disadvantage as the city cannot accommodate or compete for the larger conventions.

"The more elements we can add to downtown to create that urban setting and generate a buzz, the more businesses can grow," said Steve Borkenhagan, owner of Eulipia Restaurant & Bar. "The expansion of the Convention Center would allow the city to

capture more conferences such as the Game Developers, and increase spending downtown.”

The San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau (SJCVB) is currently asking other local restaurateurs to participate in quantifying increases in spending during peak periods such as the Game Developers Conference.

“We are really trying to quantify the economic impact these events have on local vendors downtown,” said Dan Fenton, president and CEO of SJCVB. “It is apparent more spending is occurring, but we need to determine exactly how much. Measuring the real economic payback that large conferences bring to downtown, will allow us to realize how crucial the convention center expansion is in regards to the city’s development and growth.”

About The San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau (SJCVB)

The San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau (SJCVB) enhances the image and economic well being of San Jose by taking the leadership role in marketing San Jose as a globally recognized destination. The SJCVB offers meeting planners, tour operators, and individual visitors a team of professionals who can assist with their destination planning process from beginning to end. For meeting planners and delegates, the Bureau’s Destination Services department serves as the liaison for all convention facilities and hotels and event planning. For residents and visitors to San Jose, the Bureau’s Visitor Services department can provide tools for learning about and planning a trip to San Jose. For a calendar of events or to receive a copy of the Bureau’s Destination Planning Guide, please contact the San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1.888.SAN.JOSE (1.888.726.5673) or visit <http://www.sanjose.org>.

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