



**Office of the Mayor
City of Los Angeles**

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LA CONVENTION BUSINESS SOARS TO RECORD HIGHS

*Bookings increase by 29 percent, pumping millions
into local economy*

LOS ANGELES – Delivering good news in a tough economic year, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa today announced that downtown revitalization efforts have resulted in a record high number of convention bookings that will pump hundreds of millions of dollars into the Los Angeles economy.

LA INC. The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau booked an unprecedented 53 citywide conventions in Fiscal Year 2007/08, with a projected economic impact of \$360 million. This 29 percent increase over last year's record-setting bookings – coupled with a 22 percent increase in hotel room nights booked – bodes well for Los Angeles' growing reputation as a hot convention destination.

"The tourism and travel industries are keeping us strong despite a slowdown in the national economy and we are adding new attractions to make sure this upward trend continues," said Mayor Villaraigosa. "The record high number of convention bookings in Los Angeles is a testament to the strength of the hospitality sector, which is a cornerstone of our local economy."

The big increase in convention bookings is in large part attributable to downtown LA's resurgent nightlife, which has greatly benefited from the opening of L.A. LIVE and Nokia Theater. LA's efforts to attract conventions have also benefited from direct involvement from Mayor Villaraigosa and executives from AEG, which owns L.A. LIVE.

“Los Angeles has always been a first-tier destination amongst domestic and international visitors. Over the past few years, we have also witnessed record demand in the meetings world and we are seeing a trend develop in favor of near-term bookings,” said Mark Liberman, president and CEO of LA INC. “Of the 53 conventions booked in FY 07/08, more than half will take place before the end of the 2010 calendar year.”

By March 2010, the final phase of L.A. LIVE will be completed. The \$2.5 billion downtown sports and entertainment complex being built adjacent to the Los Angeles Convention Center (LACC) will open up even more options for meeting professionals and provide one more reason to book conventions in LA. The JW Marriott Hotel Los Angeles and the Ritz-Carlton, Los Angeles will serve as two new convention center hotels housed in a 54-story tower.

Among LA INC.’s recent bookings are two Microsoft Corporation conventions: Professional Developers Conference (2008) and TechEd-IT Professionals Conference (2009). Both conventions were booked in FY 07/08 and collectively will account for more than 57,500 room nights and more than \$32.5 million in economic impact for Los Angeles.

“As bookings continue to increase, the citywide convention sales team has implemented maximization strategies to utilize every square foot of exhibit and meeting space available at the Los Angeles Convention Center,” said Michael Krouse, LA INC.’s senior vice president of sales. “The LACC’s one million square feet of exhibit and meeting space has the capacity to accommodate conventions of all sizes. More than three million people each year have the chance to see why our convention center is one of the most efficiently designed, technologically advanced and eco-friendly facilities in the nation.”

LA INC. The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau is a private, nonprofit business association whose primary mission is to market and promote Los Angeles as the premier site for meetings, conventions and leisure travel. Though not part of city government, LA INC. is recognized as the city’s official tourism marketing organization. For more information, visit the official visitor information Web site of Los Angeles at www.discoverLosAngeles.com.

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