

An open letter from Las Vegas.

Recently, a prominent financial firm cancelled a meeting in Las Vegas and moved it to another city because of the perception that Las Vegas is a "fun" trip or an unwarranted extravagance.

We admit, Las Vegas is more fun than any other place on the planet. Guilty as charged. However, serious business is done here every day.

Las Vegas has been the No. 1 destination for meetings and conventions for many years now. We have more meeting space, more convention space and more hotel rooms in a concentrated area than any other destination in the world. It's the perfect infrastructure for successful meetings.

There were more than 22,000 serious business meetings here last year alone. And don't forget the impressive list of conventions held here like the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES), hosting the latest innovations in electronics; MAGIC, the preeminent trade event in the international fashion industry; and the National Association of Broadcasters, whose convention alone creates \$68.6 billion in commerce worldwide*. The tourism industry isn't the only engine that keeps the men and women of Las Vegas working. Conventions and meetings account for a large percentage of the travel here. And like most of America, jobs are in the balance.

Facts: Las Vegas is home to three world-class convention facilities totaling 6.7 million square feet with an additional 3 million square feet of meeting space at individual properties. The city hosted 22,454 conventions and meetings that attracted more than 6 million business people and conventioners in 2008. It accounted for an economic impact of \$8.5 billion, employed more than 46,000 Southern Nevadans (75,000 with indirect employment), and represents close to 15 percent of the city's total visitation.

Don't get us wrong. We don't think taxpayer dollars should be spent for any unnecessary expenses. But at a time when America is getting back to basics, there is no room for playing the perception game. Las Vegas has been doing business for decades and has the track record to prove it. That's the reality. If you're looking for places that are less fun than Las Vegas, you could find them easily. Close your eyes and point at a map. If you're looking for a destination that has the chops for business, check out the facts. Sincerely, Las Vegas



*Source: National Association of Broadcasters

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