



NEWS

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**JANUARY 20, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

SAN DIEGO CONVIS HIGHLIGHTS TOURISM INDUSTRY, HONORS LOCAL TITANS

The San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau (ConVis) addressed the state of the regional, national and global tourism industry this morning during its annual meeting held at the San Diego Convention Center. Themed “Titans of Travel,” the event highlighted the value of tourism, the third largest industry in San Diego, and honored those individuals and organizations that made a significant impact on the local tourism industry.

“I stand amongst you humbled by the extraordinary work each and every one of you have done during these tough economic times to keep San Diego one of the top travel destinations in North America,” stated Joe Terzi, President and CEO of the San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau, in his State of the Industry remarks. “It has been a very challenging time for our industry, but the signs are pointing to a strong recovery in the next several years, and San Diego is positioned to take advantage of growth in both leisure and group travel,” Terzi added.

With an annual economic impact of nearly \$7 billion, tourism employs more than 160,000 San Diegans. Despite the economic challenges of recent years, San Diego is poised to take advantage of the recovering economy through ConVis’ efforts promoting and selling the region as a leading leisure and meeting destination.

In keeping with its “Titans of Travel” theme, the meeting featured a keynote discussion panel composed of leading international and national tourism experts including Stephen J. Cloobek, Chairman and CEO of Diamond Resorts International and Chairman of the Corporation for Travel Promotion; Roger Dow, President and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association; and Caroline Beteta, President and CEO of the California Travel and Tourism Commission and Vice-Chair of the Corporation for Travel Promotion.

During the event, ConVis also presented the following awards to recognize the industry’s “Titans of Travel:”

- **ConVisionary Award:** Presented to **Council President Pro Tem Kevin Faulconer**; this award is presented annually to an individual or organization that has shown tremendous vision and leadership in proposing, pursuing and executing projects or programs that benefit San Diego’s tourism industry, as well as the community at large. As a councilmember since 2006, Faulconer has served District 2, a diverse group of communities in San Diego including Downtown, Mission Bay, La Jolla and Old Town. A true collaborator in the community, he has also embraced the North Embarcadero Visionary Plan and the NTC Park Development and supported the foundation of the San Diego Tourism Marketing District.
- **Client of the Year:** Presented to **Comic-Con International**, the world’s largest comic book and popular arts convention of its kind, for generating significant long-term business for the destination by bringing more than 126,000 attendees to San Diego and generating \$25 million in hotel revenue each year. Celebrating their 42nd year in 2011, Comic-Con International is

expected to have an economic impact of more than \$480 million dollars over their next three years in San Diego.

- **Industry Partner of the Year:** Presented to the **San Diego County Regional Airport Authority**, dedicated to improving and growing a crucial part of the San Diego tourism infrastructure, the San Diego International Airport. The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority projects that passengers travelling through the airport will increase annually from 17 million to over 27 million by 2030. To meet this need, the Airport Authority launched a \$1 billion project, the “Green Build,” which will add 10 new gates, 12 additional security lanes and nearly 1,000 jobs by 2013.
- **President’s Award:** Presented to **Chuck Hansen**, Vice President of Community Relations with Viejas Enterprises; this award is bestowed annually to an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to our visitor industry. Hansen’s years of service across multiple organizations include serving on the California Travel Industry Association’s Board of Directors and as the Governor appointed commissioner for the California Travel and Tourism Commission. A current Board Member of ConVis, he has tirelessly participated in the region’s most important tourism initiatives, and his extensive leadership career includes positions with Atlas Travel and America’s Cup Services.

Emceed by Bill Menish, former morning anchor of NBC San Diego, the program also featured remarks by San Diego Councilmember Todd Gloria and ConVis Chairman of the Board Brian Hughes and video remarks from San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders.

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