

Analysis: Moogfest economic impact totaled \$14 million

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Moogfest, a now biennial event designed to bring technologists, entrepreneurs and music fans to Asheville, produced a \$14 million economic impact, according to an analysis done by the Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce.

The study found that several things happened during Moogfest 2014, a five-day event this spring:

- » \$4.7 million in additional labor income was generated for residents in Buncombe County.

- » State and local tax revenues increased about \$696,000.

- » Federal tax revenues increased by about \$996,000.

- » 147 jobs in Buncombe County were supported, and for every job supported directly, another 1.1 jobs were supported indirectly.

- » Out-of-town visitors stayed an average of 4.6 days and spent an average of \$910 per person over the course of their stay.

- » Total economic output, which includes labor income and tax revenues, increased by about \$14 million.

The Economic Impact Study also found hotels were one of the local industries most positively affected, with a sales increase of \$1.7 million generated from visitors attending Moogfest.

The Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce produced a year-over-year analysis of Buncombe County hotels that found that throughout the four nights of Moogfest:

- » The average daily rate increased by 13 percent.

- » Revenue per room increased by 25 percent.



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Nile Rodgers, left, and Bernard Edwards jam out during the CHIC feat. Nile Rodgers show during this year's Moogfest. The now biennial event produced a \$14 million economic impact to the area.

- » Occupancy increased by 10 percent.

The group looked at the hotel numbers to see if this data was in line with the economic impact estimates, said Paul Szurek, EDC Chairman. "They seem to tell the same story," he said.

Szurek said the study used survey data about the festival attendees, collecting information about what they did while they were in Asheville, what they purchased, etc.

This data was then put into an economic model software, IMPLAN.

The 35-year-old IMPLAN software produces data for more than 2,000 public and private institutions.

This program defines economic impact in several ways:

- » Direct impact, meaning income associated with new jobs and new spending.

- » Indirect, meaning supplier purchases, goods and services.

- » Induced, meaning household spending and purchases.

- » It also accounts for tax revenue.

Szurek noted that the EDC is more interested in "ongoing, long-term economic impact." However, the organization wanted to offer help with the economic impact study for Moogfest because of the vision behind the event.

Mike Adams, CEO of Moog Music, "has a great vision of this being more than a five-day tourist event and actually generating leads for companies to come to Asheville or to help recruit talent to Asheville," he said.

The event may also showcase Asheville companies and talent, he added.

Moogfest was created in 2004 to celebrate the innovative spirit of Moog Music founder, Bob Moog. It returned to Asheville, the adopted home of the late Moog and the current headquarters of his electronic

music instrument manufacturing company, Moog Music, in 2010.

In 2014, the event expanded into a five-day event focused on art, technology and entertainment. The event featured 100 music performances, 105 speakers, panel discussions and workshops and five days of free daytime programming throughout 20 downtown venues.

Moogfest 2014 received \$90,000 in funding from the county and \$40,000 from the city of Asheville, along with another \$50,000 in in-kind services.

It attracted 7,000 badge holders, with some traveling from as far as Tokyo and Guatemala to attend. More than 25,000 people filled the streets of downtown for the free programming.

In July, festival organizers announced the festival would return in 2016, becoming a biennial event.