

Economic Engines Honoree

Category: Products



THE
THUNDERBIRDS

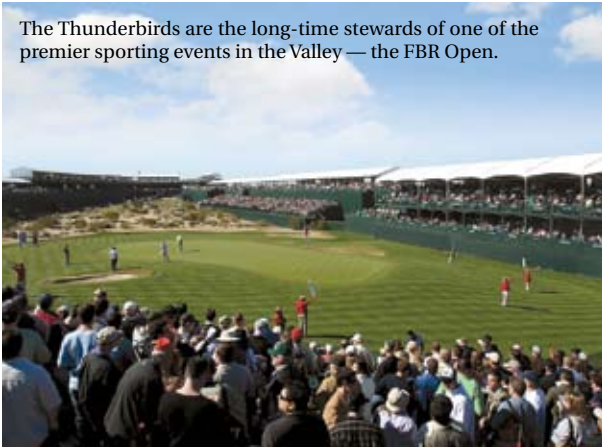
The Thunderbirds

www.fbropen.com



Photos: The Thunderbirds

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The Thunderbirds are the long-time stewards of one of the premier sporting events in the Valley — the FBR Open, formerly the Phoenix Open. And that's no small task. The 2008 FBR Open attracted more than 538,000 fans, a PGA TOUR attendance record. Not surprisingly, the FBR Open pours millions of dollars into the state's economy each year.

An economic impact study conducted by the W.P. Carey MBA Sports Business Program at Arizona State University found that the 2007 FBR Open pumped at least \$180.4 million into the state's economy. The study also found that non-local attendees spent an average of \$271 per day, for a total of \$61.8 million during their stays in the Phoenix area.

The Thunderbirds, the PGA, and others associated with the tournament injected an additional \$53.3 million in direct expenditures in staging the tournament. The expenses for undertaking the open are numerous and include tents and equipment, advertising, food and beverages, administration, the tournament purse, parking and security.

The spending associated with the 2007 FBR Open also generated demand for labor that was equivalent to 1,516 full-time jobs. For a short-term event such as the FBR Open, peak employment levels are much higher than the full-time equivalent figure. In addition, direct sales tax revenue was estimated to be \$4.5 million, using combined rates for the city of Scottsdale, Maricopa County and Arizona.

Besides organizing the FBR Open, the Thunderbirds have the equally important mission of supporting numerous Arizona charities. Since the early 1990s, more than 200 Arizona charities have received nearly \$53 million from the Thunderbirds.

Formed in 1937, the Thunderbirds consist of 55 Active Members and more than 300 Life Members. All Thunderbird activities and events are the prime responsibility of Active Thunderbirds. When a Thunderbird reaches the age of 45, his status changes from Active to that of Life Member. Although they are relieved of continuous duties, it is not unusual to see a Life Thunderbird lending a helping hand at a golf tournament or other Thunderbird-sponsored event.

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Tim Louis is the Big Chief, or president, of The Thunderbirds.

Year Established

1937

AZ Employees

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