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02/03/2010

Geaux Saints, part deux

Last week's blog posting concerned the impact of the Super Bowl on Miami, the host city, and New Orleans, the NFC representative in the big game. The discussion about the short-term impact on New Orleans included this:

As for the short-term economic gains, there will certainly be more retail purchases of Saints paraphernalia and additional revenue that having a successful sports franchise generates, but the intrinsic psychological impact on the overall recovery of New Orleans is immeasurable.

Gail Psilos, the Atlanta Fed's [Regional Economic Information Network](#) director in our [New Orleans Branch](#), adds some color this week. Gail and Bob Musso, the regional executive in New Orleans, have their fingers on the pulse of the New Orleans economy, and, as Gail notes, the impact of the Saints on the city is shaping up to be even greater than was conveyed last week:

The relationship between the City of New Orleans and the Saints is a very important part of New Orleans and Louisiana—emotionally, psychologically, and economically.

Spending increased significantly the weekend of the NFC playoff game against Arizona and even more the following week, when the Saints defeated Minnesota to earn a trip to the Super Bowl. Grocery stores saw increased sales as friends gathered, spending an average of around \$250 for their game-day home parties.

Playoff parties at bars and restaurants were well attended—not only in New Orleans but also throughout southern Louisiana and along the Gulf Coast. An owner of a popular sports bar said his business doubled the week before games and even more on game days.

Sports shops in New Orleans couldn't keep enough Saints gear in stock. This translates into increased sales taxes for the state and profits for retailers that would not have been had if not for the success of the Saints. When the team prevailed against Minnesota, the French Quarter was bursting with revelers celebrating the team's first NFC championship. Immediately after the game, retailers opened their stores and fans lined up to purchase their Saints NFC championship gear—some stores were still selling items well past midnight—celebrating while waiting in line! More tax revenues for the state,

more profit for retailers, and happy Saints fans.

This year, Super Bowl weekend coincides with Carnival and the run-up to [Mardi Gras](#), which draws people to the Crescent City in droves. According to [My New Orleans.com](#), "it's a little too early to estimate crowd sizes at Mardi Gras 2010, [but] industry sources seem to expect attendance at least equal to that of 2009," which was 800,000 to 900,000.

It's shaping up to be a great weekend in the Big Easy, and the New Orleans economy is clearly the big winner, no matter the outcome of the Super Bowl.

By Gail Psilos, Regional Economic Information Network director in the Atlanta Fed's New Orleans branch and [Michael Chriszt](#), an assistant vice president in the Atlanta Fed's research department

February 3, 2010 in [Retail](#), [Sports](#) | [Permalink](#)

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