

IT'S NOT THE ECONOMY, STUPID

Why Competition is Killing Atlantic City and

The 5 Things Atlantic City Must Do Immediately to Survive

For the better part of 30 years, Atlantic City enjoyed a near monopoly (a wonderfully relevant word) on East Coast gaming. Today, with casinos in Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware and Maryland, the challenge is how to revive Atlantic City in the face of such daunting competition. The stakes are high; the divisions running deep.

During our January 25th meeting at the Palm at Tropicana, speaker Wayne Schaffel shared his five ideas for turning around Atlantic City. Schaffel is a former Atlantic City and Nevada casino marketing executive, and now president of his own consulting firm, Public Relations Network.

1. Invest in the airport. This is the first action we should take and the most important, as it will bring conventioners and tourists who will spend money in Atlantic City. At the same time, it will not overcrowd the city's parking garages.
2. Provide incentives for Fortune 500 companies to locate in Atlantic County
3. Lower the gaming age to 18. This greatly expands our player base. Other states have done this successfully, and kept the drinking age at 21.
4. Create a must-see winter attraction. The indoor ski resort in Dubai is one example of what could work in Atlantic City.
5. Make Atlantic City safe. Bring in the national guard, if need be.

Schaffel went on to provide three more ideas:

6. Put 750 slot machines in Newark International Airport and 250 slot machines Atlantic City International Airport to supplement the revenue from the Atlantic City casinos. These machines can be taxed to the fullest extent. Their revenue would help us to "buy time" while we determined the next steps.
7. Eliminate tolls on the Atlantic City Expressway on Fridays and Sundays, to encourage people to come for the weekend.
8. Eliminate the parking tax at the Atlantic City casinos.

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Public Relations Council of Greater Atlantic City <http://www.PRCouncilofAC.org>

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