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From the Phoenix Business Journal:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/news/2016/08/11/mesa-gaming-convention-draws-thousands.html>

Mesa gaming convention draws thousands

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The Game On Expo, held at the Mesa Convention Center last weekend, attracted 7,156 unique attendees and 17,791 total visitors over three days.

The event, held Aug. 5-7, focused on all types of games such as retro arcade machines, card games, modern titles and video game consoles.

John Lester, co-owner of the convention, said the event helps fill a gap in gaming-centered events and happens between other geeky conventions such as Phoenix Comicon, Phoenix Fan Fest, and Japanese Anime convention Taiyou Con.

In only its second year, the convention nearly doubled its unique visitors from 4,072 last year.

Lester said the increased traffic could be attributed to the addition of guests and video game voice actors that came in for signings and photo ops with fans and an increase in the arcade game selection.

"I really liked our location, it was close the light rail and had free parking, which was nice," he said.

Additionally, the spokesman said the convention was able to branch into the Marriott hotel next door, allowing for more programming and activities.

The expo offered a free child ticket for every parent who bought a badge, and \$10 for every child after, making the event a draw for families looking to escape the summer heat.



ASJR PHOTOS

Cosplayers at the Game On Expo in Mesa.

In the future, Lester said he would like to expand convention activities to PC gaming, eSports, and table top games.

"We aren't a bunch of business suits throwing money around at a show, we are passionate small three-man team of gamers, doing everything grass roots and face to face, building relationships with the local community we love and support," said fellow con co-owner Jason Heine, in a statement.

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