



Stephen H. Johnson, Acting Director

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NEWS & INFORMATION

Seattle is the nation's #1 strongest economy



The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan area has been recognized in a new study as the strongest economy in the country. According to Florida-based economic research firm Policom's "Economic Strength Ratings - 2010," a study of local and state economies, Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue rates No. 1, moving up from last year's No. 12 ranking. Policom used 23 different economic factors to analyze the 366 metropolitan statistical areas; most of the highest-ranking areas shared rapid, consistent growth in both size and quality for an extended period of time. The greater Seattle area has remained within the top 12 for 3 years after bouncing back from being the 51st spot in 2006. William Fruth, President of Policom, points out that, after a major loss of manufacturing jobs in 2002, "Seattle [had] the resiliency to fight back," recapturing about 15,000 jobs and rebounding quickly in adverse economic conditions.

- [Download the Policom study: "Economic Strength Ratings - 2010"](#) (PDF)
- [Read the Puget Sound Business Journal's coverage of the study](#)



Seattle named one of *Kiplinger's* '10 Best Cities for the Next Decade'



Kiplinger's Personal Finance this month ranked Seattle No. 2 in a feature on the "10 Best Cities for the Next Decade." Jane Bennett Clark of *Kiplinger's* writes, "Home to a well-educated workforce, a world-class research university, and innovators Amazon, Boeing, and Microsoft, Seattle crackles with creative

energy. Also thriving is the life-sciences industry, a staple of the Seattle business scene, thanks to the University of Washington's billion-dollar-a-year research budget and a cluster of topflight medical and bioscience centers." The article highlights Seattle's leadership in healthcare, clean technology, aerospace, and academic research as well, and talks with University of Washington President Mark Emmert; Washington Global Health Alliance Executive Director Lisa Cohen; and the Seattle Office of Economic Development Acting Director Steve Johnson, who attributes Seattle's success to a newly "aggressive," rather than "laissez-faire," approach to business development.

- [Read the *Kiplinger's* article](#)
- [Read the Mayor's press release on the ranking](#)

Mayor McGinn, OED welcome Facebook to Seattle



Seattle's Office of Economic Development, together with Mayor Mike McGinn and numerous business and technology leaders, this month welcomed Facebook's senior engineering team to Seattle at a private reception at City Hall. Facebook announced last month that the company would opening

an engineering office in Seattle and will be hiring approximately 30 staff in the coming year. The company's decision to expand in Seattle - the company's first office outside its headquarters in Palo Alto, CA - underscores Seattle's wealth of technical talent and engineering expertise. The welcome reception was attended by Mayor Mike McGinn; City Councilmembers Mike O'Brien, Nick Licata, and Sally Clark; representatives from the city's Office of Economic Development and Office of Film + Music; Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce; enterpriseSeattle; the University of Washington; Seattle Sports Commission; Alaska Airlines; Fuzed Music; Amazon.com; and more.

- [Read the *Seattle Times*' coverage: "Facebook's move to Seattle: The backstory"](#)

- [Read TechFlash's coverage: "Video: Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn welcomes Facebook"](#)
- [Read the Seattle P-I's coverage: "Why we're rolling out the red carpet for Facebook"](#)
- [Read Prosperity Blog's coverage: "Economic Development: A Love Story"](#)

Study: Half of Washington's jobs are tied to technology



A new study released this month by the Technology Alliance revealed that nearly half of all jobs in Washington state are tied to the technology industry. Between direct employment and jobs supported through the multiplier effect, the study found that the state's 'innovation sector' supports more than 1.2 million jobs, or about 42% of total Washington state employment. The report emphasizes that this sector depends heavily on an educated and dynamic workforce with diverse skills. Technology Alliance Chair Jeremy Jaech, also CEO of Verdiem, explained, "It is important to recognize that software, aerospace and other high-tech industries don't just employ scientists and engineers...there are also marketing and sales forces, administrative and technical support staff, legal and accounting professionals...who are vital for companies to function well and compete effectively."

- [Read the Technology Alliance press release](#)
- [Read TechFlash's coverage of the study](#)

Hard Rock Café Seattle grand opening features hard hats, smashed guitars, and rock 'n' roll



Hard hats and safety goggles were the accessories of choice at the grand opening of the Hard Rock Café at 1st and Pike this month, as 16 faulty Fender guitars were smashed by local music celebrities (including Sir Mix-a-lot) in lieu of a formal ribbon cutting. Seattle Office of Film + Music coordinator Rachel White represented the Mayor's Office at the event, reading the Mayor's Proclamation of "Hard Rock Café Seattle Day" to an enthusiastic crowd of event attendees, onlookers and local press. The 14,000-square-foot Hard Rock Café location, which includes seating for 425 and an upstairs live music space, supports 150 new jobs and fills a long-vacant retail space mere steps away from the Pike Place Market.

- [Visit the Hard Rock Café Seattle website](#)
- [Learn about the Seattle Office of Film + Music](#)

Seattle International Film Festival kicks off May 20th, continues to June 13th



Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF), the premier film event in the Pacific Northwest and one of the biggest film festivals in the world, kicked off May 20th in downtown Seattle at Benaroya Hall with the premiere of the oddball comedy *Extra Man*, starring Kevin Kline, Paul Dano, John C. Reilly, and Katie Holmes. The 2010 festival runs from May 20th to June 13th and will screen 256 features and 150 shorts from 67 countries at venues around the city. Six locally-produced and filmed movies feature in the SIFF lineup: *Bass Ackwards*, *Dear Lemon Lima*, *Morning*, *The Penitent Man*, *Perfect 10*, and *Senior Prom*. "We're working with our Office of Film + Music to make [locally-produced films] happen," said Mayor Mike McGinn. "We're the City of Music, and it would be great if we could become the City of Film too."

- [Investigate the full SIFF lineup](#)
- [Watch the Seattle Channel's coverage of opening night](#)
- [Learn more about the Seattle City of Music Initiative](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Green Energy Technology (g.e.t.) forum examines smart fuels - June 3rd



This coming Thursday, June 3rd, the Washington Technology Industry Association will present a half day forum on the exploding energy technology market, bringing together leading business, technology, finance and policy experts to provide businesses and entrepreneurs with the latest information and connections in the field. Topics and presentations will emphasize alternate fuels for transportation, consumer, and commercial purposes, including BioMass, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), plastic, waste oils, agricultural products and algae. The keynote speaker is Dr. Yong Wang, Associate Director of the Institute for Interfacial Catalysis at Washington State University; with an additional finance and policy keynote by the Washington Department of Commerce, and presentations by Blue Marble Energy, Farm Power Northwest, and General Biodiesel.

- [Learn more or register to attend](#)

Call in to "Ask the Mayor" to talk live with Mayor McGinn - June 10th



"Ask the Mayor" gives Seattle residents a chance to speak directly to Mayor Mike McGinn, live on Seattle Channel 21. Host CR Douglas and Mayor McGinn will respond to constituents' phone calls and e-mails on Thursday, June 10th at 7:00 p.m. Previous "Ask the Mayor" topics have included SR 520, the Police Chief search, transportation challenges, and 2011 municipal budget. Anyone interested in submitting a question for Mayor McGinn ahead of time can do so through Seattle Channel's "Ask the Mayor" website.

- [Submit a question online or watch old episodes of "Ask the Mayor"](#)

Seminar teaches small businesses to successfully commercialize technology - June 14th



Washington Small Business Development Centers, Washington Technology Center and Washington State economic development agency Sirti will present a one-day seminar on how small businesses can successfully commercialize technology. Two sessions will be offered - a morning seminar for new participants and an afternoon seminar for participants who have attended previous Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) based trainings. The seminar is an overview of the process of commercialization including how to: determine entry level markets; find customers; develop a commercialization strategy; find commercial partners and funding; determine royalty rates; conduct negotiations; and more.

- [Learn more or register to attend](#)
- [Read about Washington Small Business Development Centers \(WSBDC\)](#)

Incredible Feast: Where the farmers are the stars - August 22nd



Conceived by Tamara Murphy of Brasa Restaurant and Elliot Bay Café, Incredible Feast is one of Seattle's premier food events and showcases an astounding variety of local flavors, all prepared using fresh farm ingredients. Held outdoors at the University District Farmers Market site, guests can sample over 30 gourmet dishes, enjoy excellent local wines

and beers, and meet the chefs and farmers behind the food. The event also features country-fair-style games with prizes and live music. All proceeds from the event support the Good Farmer Fund (emergency relief for local farmers in need) and the Northwest Farmers Market Alliance's educational programming. Tickets go on sale June 1st through Brown Paper Tickets.

- [Learn more about Incredible Feast](#)



Send submissions, questions, or comments to oed@seattle.gov.