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UFC returns to Miami, multimillion-dollar economic impact expected



The newly rebranded Miami Arena as the Kaseya Center, formerly FTX Arena.

Jock Fistick / South Florida Business Journal

The Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) will return to the Kaseya Center in Miami for a second consecutive year, and the mixed martial arts league says its matches contribute millions of dollars to the Magic City economy.

In an announcement that promotes UFC 299's upcoming fight between Sean O'Malley and Marlon Vera on Mar. 9, the Las Vegas-based sports federation noted its last fight at the Kaseya Center generated \$47.7 million in economic activity in April 2023, according to research from Applied Analysis, a business advisory firm in Nevada.

The study found that last year's sold-out event attracted more than 19,000 attendees and recorded ticket sales of \$11.9 million, making it the highest-recorded economic impact for a domestic UFC event outside of Las Vegas.

The research firm found that 68% of the tickets purchased for last year's UFC fight were from fans who live outside of Miami-Dade County.

Of the estimated \$47.7 million in economic activity, Applied Analysis' study said \$23.7 million was spent directly in the local community.

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Unique Monthly Visitors: 383,700

“This study once again proves what we’ve long known — that UFC events are a tremendous tourism draw for the cities that host our events, and they provide a major boost to the local economy,” UFC Chief Operating Officer Lawrence Epstein said.

“Miami is a world-class city, and our events put a global spotlight on the best Miami has to offer, as our events are broadcast to over 975 million TV households across more than 170 countries,” he continued. “We’re thrilled to return again to this wonderful city and to Kaseya Center with another action-packed card of thrilling fights.”

Applied Analysis’ study also states that last year’s UFC fight at the Kaseya Center supported 517 jobs in Miami and generated \$20.3 million in wages and salaries.

Event attendees and visitors paid in excess of \$1.4 million in taxes for assorted purchases, tickets and pay-per-views, according to the research firm. Applied Analysis noted the April 2023 UFC fight generated \$1.2 billion in total media value for Miami across broadcasts, online news, print news and social media sites.

UFC announced its upcoming event will take place with support from the Miami Downtown Development Authority and the Greater Miami Convention & Visitor's Bureau.

The Miami DDA is an independent agency that’s committed to grow, strengthen and promote the economic health of Downtown Miami.

“Premier events like UFC 299 generate significant revenue for our local businesses, restaurants, hotels and more, while highlighting everything that makes us special and unique,” said City of Miami Commissioner Manolo Reyes, who’s also chairman of the Miami Downtown Development Authority’s board of directors.

The GMCVB is a not-for-profit sales and marketing organization whose mission is to attract visitors to Greater Miami and Miami Beach for leisure, business and conventions.

“It is our hope that thousands of fans continue to call on Greater Miami and Miami Beach as future UFC extravaganzas are hosted here,” said GMCVB President and CEO David Whitaker.

UFC is owned by Endeavor, a global entertainment, sports and content company headquartered in Las Vegas.