

How do the actual economic impacts
of the Super Bowl and Coachella
compare to the implications set by the
companies and the media?

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Abstract:

The Super Bowl and Coachella are known for being huge events, bringing in millions of dollars every year to the Coachella Valley and the host city of the Super Bowl. These events enhance tourism by encouraging attendees to eat at restaurants and stay at nearby hotels. However, in recent research, the Super Bowl and Coachella's estimated financial effects have been shown to be inflated in comparison to the actual results. Using research papers and news articles, I aim to analyze how the actual economic impacts of the Super Bowl and Coachella compare to the narratives portrayed by the companies and media.

Introduction:

The United States is known all around the world for being the hub of entertainment and sports; with its many concerts and games, there are many ways to see the best in music and sports. However, some events are more popular than others, so popular, in fact, that people will spend hundreds of dollars on plane tickets and hotels just to make sure they can attend, along with thousands of dollars for tickets. Two of these events are called Coachella and the Super Bowl, and they are the most admired events in the sporting and music industry, with thousands of people attending them every year. While other global events, such as the World Cup, also take place in the US at times, the Super Bowl and Coachella are solely the US's heart and pride.

The Super Bowl started in 1967, due to a merger between the NFL and the AFL, and it was broadcast on live television for many to see. It was nowhere near as popular as today, however, as the crowd in the stadium was "less than sellout" (Carroll). The name 'Super Bowl' and the use of roman numerals were eventually introduced in 1969 (Carroll). Nowadays, it's extremely popular as it is an unofficial national holiday of sorts, with people looking eagerly to see who will win and making bets on it, spending money on takeout food, and hosting parties with loved ones. On the corporate side, companies are spending millions of dollars on 30-second advertisements, trying to acquire new customers in the limited time they're allotted, or even signing up to be official sponsors of the Super Bowl. For example, Apple Music has been an official sponsor for the past 3 years. In the process of being a sponsor, they have acquired 5 million new subscribers, going from 88 million in 2022 to 93 million in 2025 (<https://www.facebook.com/kulwant.nagi>). This shows that their brand has gotten a lot of awareness and a lot more publicity due to this sponsorship, which, in turn, increases their revenue. Often, these advertisements and the halftime show are considered the best part of the Super Bowl, appealing to even those who don't understand the game.

In the music industry, Coachella is known for having some of the biggest pop stars come and perform. It initially started in 1999 and has only grown bigger since, even sparking inspiration for copycat festivals like Fyre. Artists such as Lady Gaga, Post Malone, and Travis Scott headlined the 2025 festival, but additional artists like Benson Boone and Ed Sheeran also performed. Many people are attracted to Coachella as it gives them the opportunity to see many of their favorite artists without spending money on concert tickets for each artist, and also to meet influencers who attend these events. It also enhances tourism to the Coachella Valley,

bringing attractions to small businesses in the area, which in turn boosts the local economy. In contrast to the Super Bowl, Coachella does the majority of its advertising through influencers on social media, paying them thousands of dollars for one post.

Some main differences between Coachella and the Super Bowl are that Coachella takes place over three days for two consecutive weekends in April in order to accommodate the many people who want to attend, and the Super Bowl takes place on one Sunday in February. Additionally, the Super Bowl takes place in different cities, its location changing each year, but mainly in the big stadiums such as Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara and SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles. In contrast, Coachella takes place in the Coachella Valley each year, hence the name "Coachella." In terms of ticket pricing, Coachella tickets range from around \$589 to \$1,299 for weekend 1 and \$539 to \$1,139 for weekend 2 (Coachella 2020 | Pass Types), whereas the Super Bowl spans \$3,000 to \$12,000 on Ticketmaster (Czachor). As a result, according to the media, the overall projected profits for the Super Bowl and Coachella in 2025 were \$1 billion and \$700 million, respectively. Finally, Coachella is owned by GoldenVoice, and the Super Bowl is controlled by the National Football League (NFL).

Over the years, the media has stated that the economic impact of these events has been huge, leading many cities to compete to try to host the Super Bowl. Additionally, Coachella has become increasingly popular in the news with its significant impact on the local economy. However, recent research has come to light stating that the Super Bowl numbers have been vastly inflated and the actual economic impacts are only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the projected amount the NFL states, whereas Coachella's numbers have also been inflated, but to the extent it is still being discovered. Nevertheless, using research papers and news articles, I aim to analyze how the actual economic impacts of the Super Bowl and Coachella compare to the narratives portrayed by the companies and media that cover these events. Some of the indicators I will use are the number of attendees, hotel or Airbnb reservations, the total profit, and tourism activity. As part of my literature review, I will use specific examples of recent Super Bowls and Coachella festivals in the last 5-10 years.

Methodology:

My methodology is that I will analyze news articles and research papers from various sources, such as the US Chamber of Commerce, [WeRave.com](#), HolyCross, NBC, and Digital Commons. I will use 10-15 research papers and 3-5 news articles as part of my research. I have 11 sources for the Super Bowl and 9 sources for Coachella. To ensure an unbiased outlook, I chose these sources because they provide different perspectives and information on these topics.

Literature Review:

This section analyzes the overall state of the US economy during the 2025 Coachella and Super Bowl dates, then looks at Coachella and Super Bowl's individual economic impact both in 2025 and years past, and lastly explores their similarities and differences.

This section analyzes the state of the US economy during February and April 2025, which is when the Super Bowl and Coachella were held, respectively. In February, Consumer Confidence decreased from January 2025, falling to 98.3, a steep drop of 7 points. This type of steep drop had not happened since August 2021. The Expectations Index (the short-term outlook of market conditions) of Consumer Confidence dropped to 72.9, indicating a recession ahead since it was below 80. The unemployment rate stayed the same at 4.1%, but the Federal Labor Department added 151,000 new jobs, increasing the workforce. Additionally, GDP decreased by 0.5% during the first quarter of 2025 (January, February, and March). These numbers were all influenced by current politics, such as Trump's threat of tariffs, inflation rates (**2.8%**), and volatility in the technology sector, with concerns about new advancements in AI, such as companies like DeepSeek emerging. Overall, February was showing more positive trends, but still weaker than the final quarter of 2024.

In April 2025, which is when Coachella was held, Consumer Confidence hit its lowest since August 2020 with a score of 86.0, and Expectations Index hit its lowest since October 2011 with a score of 54.4, indicating a major recession. Additionally, the unemployment rate remained steady at 4.2%, with 177,000 jobs added. GDP fell by 0.3% after a 0.2% increase in March, but still showed a total 0.7% increase from January to April. All of this was due to President Donald Trump announcing his tariffs on various countries, also known as "Liberation Day" on April 2nd. As a result, retaliatory tariffs were announced from places such as China, and also contributed to the influence on stocks and these numbers. Fear from consumers also led to this crash. The inflation rate was 2.3%, which was a decrease from February 2025.

In terms of individual markets, the US music tourism market was estimated at 27.58 billion in 2024 and expected to grow at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 15.5% from 2025 to 2033, according to GrandViewResearch. As for the US sports market, it was estimated at an annual revenue of 150.0 million in 2024, and it's expected to grow to 208 million by 2030 with a 5.6% CAGR, as stated by GrandViewResearch. These numbers show a sign of positive economic growth for these two industries, which is important because it indicates that

these industries will continue to flourish for a long time. Additionally, arts and cultural economic activity accounts for 4.2% of the GDP, equaling around 1.17 trillion, according to Statista. Their percentages of profits in comparison to the GDP, however, are too small to compare.

The Super Bowl in 2025 was held in New Orleans, and according to the Louisiana Economic Development Organization (a state organization that helps support businesses, similar to the US Chamber of Commerce), it had a “positive economic effect on the Louisiana economy,” generating an estimated \$1.25 billion and over 100,000 visitors from out of state, totaling around 115,000 attendees for the actual event. Around 9,800 jobs were created solely for this event, and \$395 million in wages were given. Coachella Valley’s economic impact, according to NBC Palm Springs, was around \$704 million, and ticket revenue was strong, at around \$128 million. The PSP (Palm Springs International Airport’s Operations) created around 18,000 jobs during that month. According to the Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce, it included jobs from festival tourism, and it’s likely that those numbers went down after the festival since those jobs were no longer needed.

Super Bowl

The US Chamber of Commerce is a government organization that supports businesses, both large and small. They also have a partnership with the NFL called the “Brought to You by American Business” campaign, which showcases the positive economic impacts the Super Bowl has on a host city. According to the US Chamber of Commerce, the projected profit for the 2025 Super Bowl, held in New Orleans, was estimated to be about \$500 million, but “the final figure could be much higher.” They also projected 125,000 visitors and \$200 million in spending, with an additional \$53 million in spending from natives in the area. However, the Louisiana Economic Development stated these numbers ended up being significantly higher than the numbers previously projected above. But these numbers do not match Statista, since according to them, the total number of visitors for the 2025 Super Bowl ended up being only around 65,000, as shown by Figure 1. Statista is an online platform that specializes in data gathering and visualization and uses information from market reports, online research, and more. It also goes through a rigorous peer review process when publishing this data.

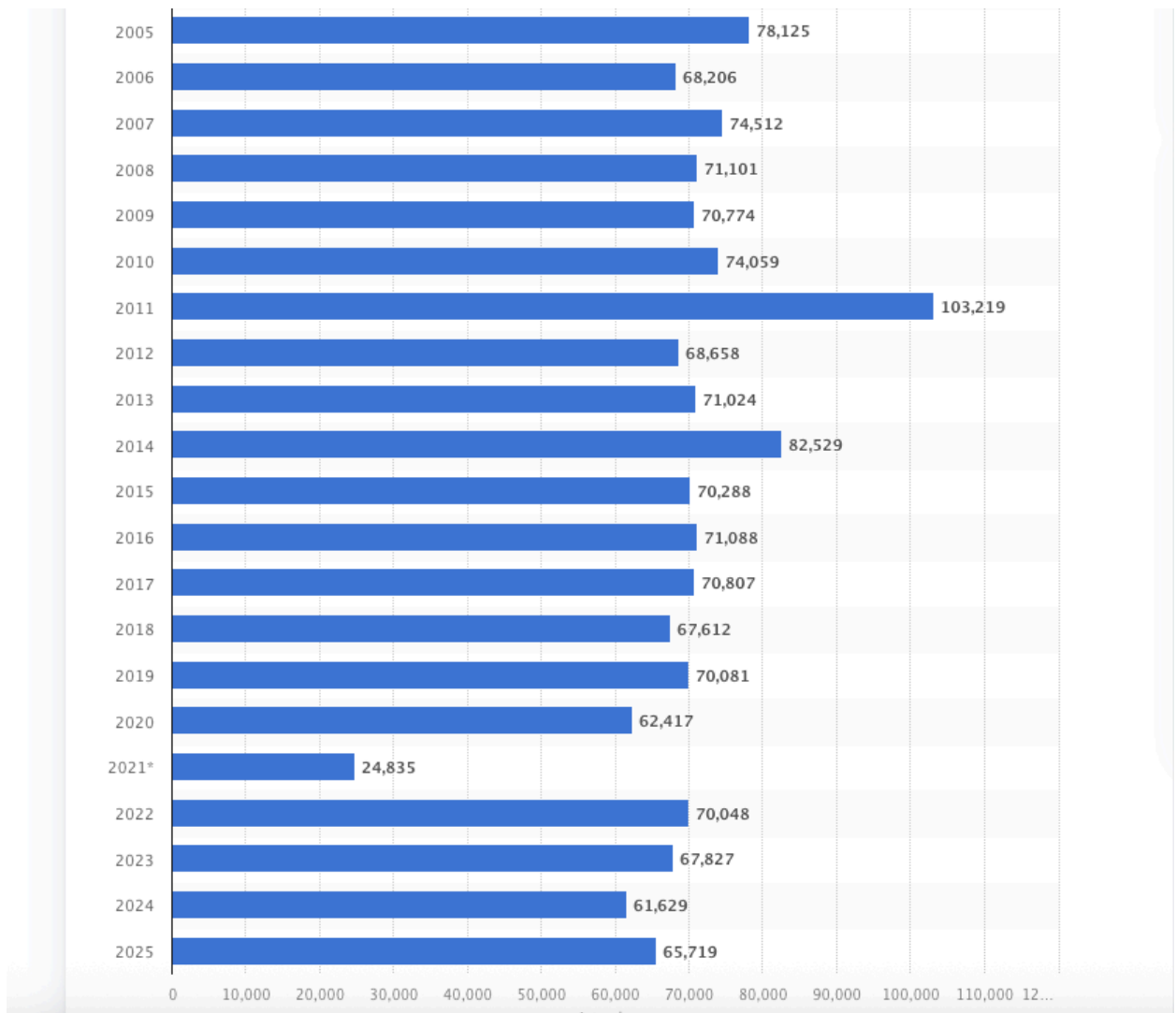


Figure 1: Attendance at the Super Bowl from 2005-2025 -
www.statista.com/statistics/1362951/super-bowl-attendance/

However, this could indicate bias as the NFL wants cities to host the Super Bowl, and since both the US Chamber of Commerce and Louisiana Economic Development partner with them, they can influence the numbers in their favor. This also makes sense why these numbers ended up being significantly higher than other research papers have stated. For example, for the 2001 Super Bowl, Victor Matheson and Robert Baade from their study, “Assessing the Economic Impact of the Super Bowl,” demonstrated the notion that host cities couldn’t make more than \$300 million, since other costs significantly consume their profits. From 1995 to 2003, \$6.4 billion would have been spent cleaning up these stadiums and ensuring they’re ready for hosting,

which is a significant number considering most of this funding comes from state and local governments, where the money could be used elsewhere. This is because the NFL has certain requirements for its stadiums to host. Other states like Arkansas and Georgia were estimated to have millions of dollars in spending as well, ranging from 11 million to upwards of 42 million in spending, which is not corroborated by what the US Chamber of Commerce stated.

On the other hand, the Super Bowl creates lots of new job opportunities. As mentioned above, the 2025 Super Bowl created 9,800 jobs, according to Louisiana Economic Development. These numbers are corroborated by a research paper by Jason Luo, who found that between 2010-2022, when the data was collected, the unemployment rate for host cities is lowest in the time of 3 months before the event, with the greatest increase in the labor market happening 1 month before the event. The unemployment rate then becomes the highest 1 month after the event, before returning to its normal state in about 3 months. This corroborates what we've seen with the number of jobs created in the area, as you can see by the table below, with January 2025 having the highest amount of jobs and a decrease in employment afterwards for 2 months before returning to normal levels.





Data Series	Back Data	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	June 2025
Labor Force Data							
Civilian Labor Force(1)		2,077.4	2,073.4	2,071.1	2,069.4	2,071.2	(P) 2,074.3
Employment(1)		1,983.4	1,981.3	1,979.5	1,978.4	1,978.8	(P) 1,981.6
Unemployment(1)		94.0	92.0	91.5	91.0	92.4	(P) 92.7
Unemployment Rate(2)		4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5	(P) 4.5

Table 1: Louisiana Labor Force Data

In conclusion, the Super Bowl's economic impact has not been the same in expectation and reality, especially with the number of people attending the event and spending, but the labor market has been the same in reality and expectation.

Coachella

In 2025, as previously mentioned, the ticket revenue was estimated to be over \$100 million, since an estimated 250,000 visitors attended across both weekends, according to Matchfy. According to a research paper, however, from 2013 to 2015,, the estimated ticket sale

revenue was around \$13 million. This could be due to a few reasons. For example, over time, inflation has significantly risen (1.3% in 2013 versus 2.7% in 2025), and only 25,000 people attended in 2013. The inflation rate difference leads to ticket prices being different because, to keep up with profits, they have to price tickets higher, which makes the overall profits seem higher. This is because Coachella was also not as popular back in 2013 as it is now, since there wasn't as much emphasis on its marketing and its performer lineup. In contrast to the Super Bowl, since Coachella is held in the same place every year (Coachella Valley in Indio), most of the refurbishments can be reused from year to year, significantly lowering costs for them in that aspect. However, costs from marketing and performers are insignificant; according to Yahoo Entertainment, they're paid anywhere from \$600,000 to upwards of \$12 million, depending on the performer. Bigger performers, like the Weeknd or Ariana Grande, receive more money. Marketing costs are around the same, with around \$600,000 for one 30-second ad, but a lot of their advertising comes from influencers and also mentions and hashtags on pages like Instagram and TikTok from people who attend these festivals. According to Hammerhead Global, about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the money Golden Voice makes from Coachella gets injected back into Indio (around 36 million for 2023). These numbers are slightly different from NBC Palm Springs, which projected around a \$100 million profit in Indio, and even bigger in Matchfy, which estimated \$700 million.

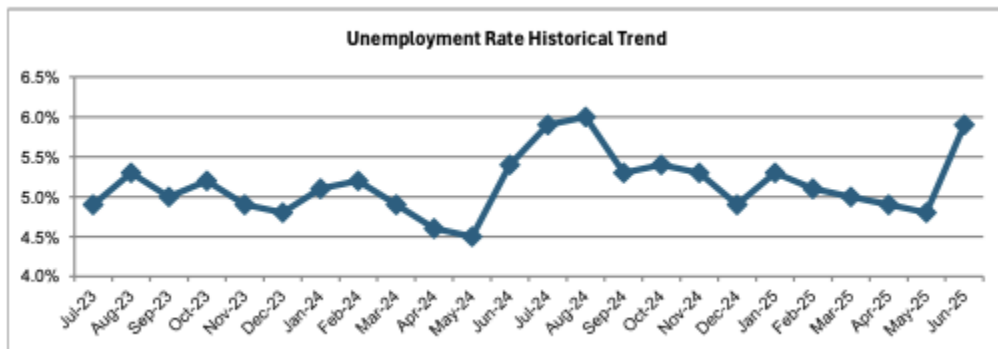
The reason for these discrepancies is due to a few reasons. For one, these sources could be biased, since they may partner with Coachella directly to come up with these numbers, similar to the Super Bowl. Additionally, the performers who performed that year, the state of the local economy, and the inflation rates can all affect the overall profits, but not to this significant extent, to where there's a 600 million difference in profit from sources in one year. However, all the sources agree that when Coachella was not held during the pandemic, it caused a significant economic depression for Indio. Spending in Coachella for 2025 had significant impacts, according to Fox Business, as tickets, food, hotel stays, and flights end up being around \$3,000+ for a consumer. The exact spending numbers were not provided for 2025, but it's estimated to be in the millions if every consumer is spending around this much. Some sources corroborate these numbers (Julian Perez, 2017, and Statista, 2025).

For their job market, as previously mentioned, it was estimated to have a significant impact, creating 18,000 jobs.

Data Not Seasonally Adjusted

	Jun 24	Apr 25	May 25 Revised	Jun 25 Prelim	Percent Change	
					Month	Year
Civilian Labor Force (1)	2,186,700	2,233,800	2,231,700	2,232,400	0.0%	2.1%

**Table 2: Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario MSA Press Release -
labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/riverside-county.html.**



**Table 3: Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario MSA Press Release -
labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/riverside-county.html.**

2025	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemp. Rate
January	1,194,000	1,130,200	63,800	5.3%
February	1,192,800	1,130,900	61,900	5.2%
March	1,201,800	1,140,700	61,100	5.1%
April	1,193,800	1,135,400	58,400	4.9%
May	1,193,000	1,134,800	58,200	4.9%
June	1,193,500	1,121,900	71,700	6.0%

**Table 4: Riverside County Labor Force Data -
labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/riverside-county.html.**

The data from Tables 2, 3, and 4 are from Riverside County, the county where Coachella is held. According to the US Department of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate became its lowest during the months leading up to Coachella (February and March) and after Coachella (May) before shooting up again in June, indicating that the setup and clean up, the hotels, and all the other labor they need in those months employ a significant amount of people. This has been the trend for the past 2 years, as shown by Table 3. All of this says the same thing, which is that Riverside County had a significant labor market impact during the months of Coachella. In

conclusion, Coachella's overall revenue numbers have discrepancies from source to source, but the labor market and ticket market numbers are around the same across sources.

Limitations:

Some limitations encountered while creating this literature review were biases from various sources, especially governmental or news organizations. This is because many of these governmental organizations partner with the NFL to come up with these numbers, so they get their data from them, which, as we saw, ended up being inflated. There were not many research or academic papers available about Coachella, whereas the Super Bowl had a lot of information previously researched and available. The Coachella section mainly used blogs and news articles, which could mean bias towards the numbers and the information available since they don't come from research-driven methods, but rather, information that's already public. Finally, the economy at the time of this data analysis (February and April 2025 and past years) was influenced by other external factors, such as in April 2025 when tariffs and Liberation Day were announced, already bringing down numbers like Consumer Confidence and stocks. In February 2025, AI and volatility in stocks were a worry for many consumers as well. In the past 10 years, other events such as fluctuations in the stock market, rising inflation rates over this period, and other announcements during these times would affect the local economy as well. This is due to uncertainty among consumers, which leads fewer people to want to attend these events or pay money for tickets.

Recommendations:

This research suggests that cities considering hosting the Super Bowl should examine all the numbers involved (number of attendees, labor, refurbishing, etc.), not just profit. For both events, a recommendation is to do more research on the overall profits and make sure that the data going into it is accessible for everyone. Some areas for further investigation are hospitality rates in both cities, whether hotel rates increase because of these events, and how that affects numbers, as well as looking at more trends across longer periods of time. One final recommendation is to perform similar research for other events around the world and look into these indicators to see if they follow a similar pattern.

Conclusion:

To compare the Super Bowl's and Coachella's overall expectation versus reality, we can see that both Coachella and Super Bowl have had the similar increase in jobs from media and research, showing a steady growth in jobs leading up to the event, a significant amount before and during, and a drop after to its previous levels, indicating the importance of the event for temporary employment. For Coachella, the ticket revenue ended up being around the same range, agreeing on about \$100-\$130 million in ticket revenue across both weekends. In contrast, the Super Bowl's spending and visitor numbers, which contribute to ticket revenue, differed significantly from research and statistics (from Statista and other sources). Finally, their overall profits were very different from the media, with Coachella numbers ranging a significant amount (\$30 million to \$700 million). Super Bowl's overall profits had discrepancies between the government organizations(US Chamber of Commerce) and the state departments(Louisiana Economic Development and Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce), but the research paper profit numbers (Jason Luo, Robert Baade, and Victor Matheson) were relatively the same throughout.

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