Cajundome turns highest profit so far

Just halfway into its fiscal year, the Cajundome is turning up a $247,000 profit, about $150,000 more than any profit ever made by the facility, officials report.

Greg Davis, dome assistant director, said new dome director Mike Noah, who took over the facility last summer, should be credited with the profit made since Nov. 1. "He's been beating the bushes on bringing events here," Davis said.

Noah is the fourth dome manager, replacing Davis, who was interim director after Ken Young and Mike Barber left the job.

Noah said he told the Cajundome Commission when he started the job that it would take about eight months "to fire the building back up again."

"It's not just me, it's better marketing," Noah said. "It was pretty much a neglected building before I got here. Directors were relying on promoters to sell the building.

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Acadiana Promotions Inc., a local group, that Noah said people report are offering more services and doing a better job.

Davis reported that the dome's productivity in the past seven months has meant an $11.2 million economic impact to the city and $224,907 in spin-off city sales taxes, according to analysts estimates.

The city funds the facility $500,000 annually, so any profits the dome makes below that amount means the city won't have to put up that much money next year, he said.

But USL receives 20 percent of all profit so if the dome earns $500,000 this year, $100,000 of that goes to USL and $400,000 goes toward the dome's operations next year, meaning the city will have to put another $100,000 back in the pot, Domingue said.

Dr. Ray Authement, USL president, said all of USL's share of the profits go into a capital improvements fund for dome maintenance and improvements specifically important to the university's needs, such as parking lot re-surfacing and upkeep of the basketball floor and goals.

Rucks said the commission would also put any profit beyond $500,000 into capital improvements and maintenance and "we look forward to that."

Davis said he doubts the $500,000 profit mark will be reached this year, and Noah said August will be a slow month at the facility.

But Noah said soon "we'll hit a homerun."