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**MCCA INTRODUCES FREE WIRELESS AT BOSTON CONVENTION CENTERS**  
*First Major Convention City to Offer Wireless Internet Free of Charge*

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) today announced that it will offer free wireless Internet access at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC) and the Hynes Convention Center beginning tomorrow, May 17, 2006, becoming the first major convention city in the country to offer the service free of charge.<sup>1</sup> The decision comes on the heels of customer satisfaction survey results calling for free wireless in the technologically-advanced BCEC and a successful pilot program during the month of April.

“The MCCA is constantly looking for creative technology solutions and added amenities that enhance the customer experience in Boston,” said James E. Rooney, Executive Director of the MCCA. “Our clients are looking to us to partner with them on things that will help boost attendance and make their show attractive on multiple levels to attendees. Providing free wireless requires very little overhead on our part, but delivers a premium service to our guests.”

In response to strong customer feedback urging free wireless, the MCCA launched a pilot program in April to test usage at both the LinuxWorld Conference & Expo and EMC World Boston 2006. With free wireless accessible, nearly 13 percent of the 6,000 attendees at LinuxWorld used the service and nearly 50 percent of EMC’s 3,500 attendees used the service. The usage compares with an average of less than one percent of attendees using wireless Internet when they were charged to access the service.

“After arranging for and paying high hourly or daily rates for Internet access at other meeting and convention facilities, having free wireless at an event was a major perk for us as well as our attendees,” said David Korse, CEO of IDG World Expo, which produces LinuxWorld Conference & Expo. “We were able to experience one less frustration when we held our first-ever Expo at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center and we believe that this will greatly improve attendee satisfaction and increase the chances of return for future events in Boston.”

With 108 access points in the BCEC, the facility has complete wireless coverage and visitors are able to access the web anywhere in the building. An improved wireless infrastructure was recently installed at the Hynes Convention Center, giving attendees virtually complete coverage at that facility as well. In the past, the service could be accessed by individual purchase or if show management purchased the service as part of their contract. General attendees at events will benefit the most from the free wireless program, as show management and exhibitors will

continue to purchase the traditional hard-wired Internet service. The MCCA's hard-wired service guarantees a secure network with high data-transfer capacity dedicated to each user.

The free wireless program will be fully implemented for the opening of Heart Rhythm 2006, the 27<sup>th</sup> annual scientific sessions of the Heart Rhythm Society, which is scheduled to begin on May 18<sup>th</sup> and is projected to draw more than 14,000 attendees to the BCEC.

The MCCA is preparing to host one of its busiest convention summers in history, with 12 major events scheduled at the BCEC and the Hynes, including Microsoft Tech Ed, Lions Club International, Microsoft Worldwide Partners, the American Federation of Teachers, ACM SIGGRAPH 2006 and the American Society of Association Executives. In total, these events are expected to attract more than 75,000 attendees to the Boston convention centers, and all attendees will benefit from the free wireless program.

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority owns and oversees the operations of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA and the Boston Common Parking Garage. In 2005, the MCCA hosted at the BCEC and the Hynes 263 events with 588,632 attendees that generated 392,897 hotel room nights and \$239 million in economic impact for Greater Boston.

<sup>1</sup>*Based on an informal survey of convention cities listed in Trade Show Week's Data Book Top Ten List of Convention Cities, which ranks cities by the number of conventions with more than 100 exhibitors a city will host in the upcoming year.*

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