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YANKEE$ PUMP UP THE CITY

By FRANKIE EDOZIEN

This year's World Series could inject about $100 million into the city's embattled economy, Mayor Giuliani said yesterday before hosting a pep rally for his favorite team at City Hall.

And the bonanza will begin next week.

"Starting on Monday, there'll be a large number of people coming into the city to cover the World Series — the national media, international media," Giuliani said.

"It means a lot of people stay in hotels."

And, he added, tourists will come to town to watch the games and spend money at restaurants still reeling from the terror attacks.

"It's a big boost to the economy," Hizzoner said.

He pointed out that the games will also provide free advertising for the Big Apple at a time the city is spending millions in a campaign to lure tourists.

Officials at the city comptroller's office were considerably more conservative. They said last year's Series poured about $18 million a game into the city's economy.

They predicted the figures this year would be similar, even though last year, there was a Subway Series, with the Yankees facing the Mets. So, if there are three home games, the economy would reap a minimum of $54 million.

The first two games of the Series against the Arizona Diamondbacks will be Saturday and Sunday in Phoenix. The best-of-seven Series then shifts to New York for Games 3, 4 and, if necessary, 5.

Meanwhile, more than 1,000 screaming Yankees fans showed up for the rally, where Giuliani was joined by Edward Cardinal Egan, Yankee manager Joe Torre, left fielder Chuck Knoblauch and a host of city officials.

Knoblauch, standing at a dais on the City Hall steps, told the crowd his team was inspired by the determination of New Yorkers.

"We could not do it without you," he said. "Hopefully, we'll give it back to you with the world championship."

One lucky fan, Octavio Matos of New Jersey, won two tickets to Game 3: the prize for which anyone with a gold "apple" pin at yesterday's rally was eligible.

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