

Bay's big cash boost

Third Automotive Week catalyst for event tourism, says expert

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THE third South African Automotive Week (SAAW), which brings together industry experts from around the world, will inject more than R42-million into the Eastern Cape and Nelson Mandela Bay economy when it is held in the Bay in October.

According to project director for 2012 Andrew Binning, this year's event – occupying 10 000m² at Moffett on Main shopping centre in Walmer from October 10 to 13 – will be bigger than the 2009 event held in the same location, which studies revealed injected R42-million into the local economy.

"The South African motor industry has put its full support behind SAAW [which] will host several conferences, match-making appointments [between various motor component businesses from around the world] and the annual meeting of the National Association of Component and Allied Manufacturers [Naa-cam]," Binning said at yesterday's launch.

Companies in Malaysia, Korea, the UK, Austria, Germany and Italy had expressed interest in attending the event.

"We have commitment



AT THE LAUNCH: Association of Automotive Component and Allied Manufacturers director Roger Pitout (left) with business leader Alfred de Costa (middle) and working group member Gustav Meyer
Picture: BRIAN WITBOOL

that the Chinese presence will be bigger than the previous [event]. They definitely see Africa as a growth market and showed some interest in sourcing components and spares from South Africa."

The imminent establishment of Chinese truck manufacture FAW's plant at Coega was proof of this, Binning added.

At the previous Bay event, more than 300 meetings between various global com-

ponent companies were held, and more than 11% of exhibitors closed deals worth more than R500 000 each, he said.

Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber chief executive Kevin Hustler said the

event was a boost for the economy.

"The stands [at the event] are of international standard. As a city which is trying to promote events tourism, this is a wonderful catalyst for that," Hustler said.