

# No Comdex this year?

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It always has been a hardware show that I didn't see a lot of value in," said Barry Cohen, vice president of technology at Atlanta-based Wells Real Estate Funds, a real estate investment management company. Cohen has never attended Comdex, avoiding it, he said, because it focused on hardware and glitz, rather than on IT issues. He'd prefer a venue where IT peers could meet to discuss IT problems and how to fix them.

"I would think it's not a high priority for IT professionals to see the latest products when their budgets don't allow them to purchase [anything] but the bare necessities," Cohen said.

San Francisco-based MediaLive International Inc., which has promoted the show since 2003, said Comdex was canceled this year largely as a result of a continuing lack of interest and financial commitments from major vendors. Last held in November 2003, the show had been set for Nov. 13-17, 2005, at the Las Vegas Convention Center. About 40,000 visitors attended Comdex 2003, down from some 200,000 in its heyday during the 1990s. A spokesman for the show couldn't be reached for comment despite several attempts.

Former Comdex attendee Bruce Barnes, a principal with Bold Vision LLC, a Dublin, Ohio-based IT consultancy, said Comdex was useful a decade ago but had lost its way.

"My interest and value-received are waning," Barnes said in e-mailed comments. "One of the largest 'telling tales' is the fact that the organizers have tried to revive the event by creating an advisory board of vendors, not consumers. This is crazy." He said Comdex should ask users for their input.

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