



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**  
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**Agenda Item Number:** 2

**Agenda Date:** May 27, 2025

**In Control:** Economic and Workforce Development Committee Meeting

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**DEPARTMENT:** Economic Development Department

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Brenda Hicks-Sorensen

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Launch SA, the small business and entrepreneur support center in San Antonio.

**SUMMARY:**

Launch SA will provide an update on its progress of the current Professional Services Agreement with Geekdom, LC, "Geekdom". The briefing includes information on current and future efforts to serve small businesses and entrepreneurs under Geekdom's operations.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

After City Council approved the Economic Development Department's (EDD) Strategic Framework in October 2022, EDD recognized an opportunity to re-imagine and align Launch SA with the Framework's goal of supporting small businesses by providing more effective and efficient assistance to sustain and grow the base of local firms. In addition, it would continue to build off the success and groundwork of Launch SA's (previously branded as Café Commerce) work from 2013 to 2023. During this period, Launch SA documented over 14,500 unique walk-

ins, hosted 5,600 events, and assisted more than 37,000 clients. The small businesses it served reported a 64% increase in sales, secured \$4.5 million in investments, and generated over 1,000 jobs.

In September 2024, Geekdom was recommended for a professional services agreement, and City Council approved a three-year professional services agreement (options for two, two-year renewals) with Geekdom to manage and operate Launch SA, for a total amount of \$1,743,668 over the initial three-year period. This level of funding would also be leveraged through Geekdom's commitment to raise and match 100% of City annual funding after initial startup costs.

In FY 2024, Launch SA had a transformative year dedicated to establishing a strong foundation, expanding network reach, and enhancing support for entrepreneurs and small business owners across San Antonio. It involved Launch SA upgrading meeting facilities and technology, developing a robust team, creating meaningful partnerships, and delivering consistent, high-quality support through programs, events, and resources for our community.

In year one, Launch SA provided significant direct technical assistance through its events. These events included a weekly series, One Million Cups, where small business owners refine their business pitch, access training programs, and engage with other businesses to work through challenges and identify opportunities. Another event, the Retail and Restaurant Level Up Series, provided support for brick-and-mortar businesses. Access to capital was a pivotal theme throughout these events, with partners like LiftFund and the US Small Business Administration offering guidance on financial resources.

## ISSUE:

In the second year of its strategic plan, Geekdom continues to scale up its operations while refining its core offerings: business assistance & advising, events & program, and tools & resources. FY 2025 will also concentrate on growth, expanding key partnerships, activating space, supporting entrepreneurs, and amplifying brand awareness and engagement. The table below shows Geekdom's FY2024 and FY2025 metrics through April 30, 2025:

Metric	FY2024 Target	FY2024 Actual	FY2025 Target	FY2025 Actual
Business events/workshops	35	71	75	129
Number of attendees	350	1,430	750	2,430
Clients supported/assisted with technical services	90	747	400	438
Volunteer/mentor hours	150	176.5	200	156
Businesses connected to funding opportunities	20	15	50	5
Capital infused	\$200,000	\$427,000	\$250,000	\$110,000

During Q1 and Q2 of FY 2025, Launch SA has seen significant engagement from San Antonio small businesses and those looking to start a small business, and it is working to further ensure that

its resources are reaching the intended target audiences. To support this effort, Launch SA has hired a full-time marketing & event coordinator, held nine community outreach events in FY 2025 throughout San Antonio, and has added 61 partner organizations to the Launch SA Link platform - a free platform to help connect small business to the resources they need most.

Launch SA's strategic plan outlines clear pathways to provide the resources needed by small businesses and gather feedback to respond to the needs of the small business community through tailored services. Through continued collaboration with partners, strategic outreach, and targeted programming, Launch SA will further solidify its role as a hub for local small business and entrepreneur support.

The Small Business Advisory Commission (SBAC) received a briefing about Launch SA on May 13, 2025.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

N/A

**ALTERNATIVES:**

N/A

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff does not recommend any action.