

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Now Hiring
 Kohl's looks to employ 150 for new Tolleson store. **D3**

Due soon
 A new...

Market
 ...

SEP 100
 ...

Investment
FLYING HIGH
 SkySong shade structure gets finishing touches. **D3**

BUSINESS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2009 THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC WORLD-ASCENTRAL.COM SECTION D

SHEDDING JOBS
 Recession-fueled employers eliminated 598,000 jobs in January, the most since the end of 1974.

STEERING UNEMPLOYMENT
 The U.S. unemployment rate catapulted to 7.6 percent, the highest since September 1992.

GRIM OUTLOOK
 Job losses for February could be just as bad. Economists don't expect a healthy labor market until 2011.



Thousands of people line up at Linco's Motor Speedway in Concord, N.C., this week to apply for work at a new resort near Charlotte, N.C.

Nation faces 'wall of worry'

U.S. employers eliminated 598,000 jobs in January

By Betty Kroll
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

A grim day is nigh: For some of the nation's laid-off employees, getting workers up and back to work is the effect of mounting, unrelenting gloom.

The statistics are tough: For some of the nation's laid-off employees, getting workers up and back to work is the effect of mounting, unrelenting gloom.

Everyone is afraid to spend, including companies who have jobs and can't be sure they will keep them, he said.

The job of spreading the business impact, such as layoffs, is off more companies, creating a vicious spinning rapidly accelerated.

"There is a deep chasm with respect to confidence, with consumers, investors and business," Williams said. "Confidence is at historic lows."

Job losses near
The monthly unemployment rate for the year is reaching 8 percent.

Joblessness grows
What it means: The growth rate, selected by the U.S. Labor Department, shows a further gain that the economy has made a dramatic recovery of an economy.

Who was hit hardest?
A business lost 222,000 jobs in January, partly as a result of the loss of 127,000 jobs in the construction industry. The professional and business services sector shed 127,000 jobs. Airlines eliminated 45,000 positions. The health and hospital industry lost 28,000 jobs.

Job applicants wait for interviews at a temp agency in Atlanta, N.C., on Friday. The average time to find a job has risen to 10.3 weeks.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Friday that employers eliminated 598,000 jobs in January, the most since the end of 1974. That brought the total number of people who have lost jobs to 10.3 million.

For UNEMPLOYMENT Page D1

IN BUSINESS SUNDAY: Saying goodbye to last-of-its-kind... easy... ignoring... start... for handling the situation.

Road warriors get home — aloft

By William Hermann
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Tempe's first new hotel in 10 years plans to cater to road warriors, those frequent business travelers whose second home is an airplane.

Jamie Metzger, manager of the \$25 million aloft hotel at Rural Road and Loop 202, says 30 years of traveling 40 weeks and more per year on business has taught him what those weary warriors want.

"There's no food on a plane, you're told you must sit here," Metzger said. "There's no food. Can't use your phone or computer, fasten your seat belt, don't use the restroom — you have no control. But at this hotel, from the moment you check yourself in, choose your own room and get your key at a kiosk by the front door — or use the check-in desk — you are in control."

Metzger said that aloft, a new chain from hotel giant Starwood Hotels and Resorts, provides amenities that business travelers crave. Metzger calls this aloft's "anything/anytime culture." It's similar to sister chain W Hotels' "whatever/whenever" culture.

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The lobby of the new aloft hotel in Tempe is designed to serve the needs of people who travel. The theme is "anything/anytime."

TASK TIP
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NEAREST NEWS OR CELEBRATION

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WILLIAM HERMANN/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

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See ALOFT Page D2

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Road warriors get home — aloft

ALOFT

Continued from D1

Part of the culture: The “a” is not capitalized.

Each of the 136 rooms in the five-story, 68,000-square-foot hotel has two phones, is set up for wireless or wired computer use, has a generous, well-lit workspace, easy-access closets, comfortable beds, tasteful furnishings, a 42-inch high-definition television and a refrigerator. There’s a fitness center, a bar where food is served, a gourmet snack center, a gift shop and a swimming pool.

“There are no barriers here — you get control back into your life,” Metzger said. “You wake up at 3 a.m. and want a snack — the refuel gourmet center is open 24 hours. So is the gift shop, so is the fitness center. We want to remove the barriers and make everything easy.”

Having everything made easy isn’t cheap. Rates run \$189 to \$359 a night, which is competitive in the Valley market.

Tempe officials have welcomed the hotel, which opened Thursday, and predict it will do a brisk business despite the economic downturn that has hobbled the Valley’s hotel market. Last year, the Greater Phoenix market was the worst-perform-

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Manager of aloft, a new hotel near Town Lake in Tempe

ing of 25 major markets tracked by Smith Travel Research, with occupancy down 11.2 percent.

Tempe officials say the hotel’s location near the airport, Arizona State University and freeways will make it attractive.

Tempe Convention and Visitors Bureau officials say the reason for the long drought in hotel construction is that in 1998, new hotel construction added 17 percent more rooms to Tempe’s inventory, and it has taken a decade for demand to exceed supply. The new hotel brings Tempe’s hotel-room inventory to 5,497 rooms.

Michael Martin, vice president of the Tempe Convention and Visitors Bureau, said he be-

lieves aloft “will do very well.”

“It’s a trendy, hip, new place that will be very attractive,” Martin said. “And in this time of economic downturn, when corporate business travelers are hitting the streets and they’re watching their bottom line, they want to be where they can save on transportation costs. That bodes well for aloft and all airport-area hotels.”

Martin noted that the location of the hotel was also handy to some big Valley athletic events.

“They’ll get plenty of business travelers, but they’re also near the finish line of the Rock ‘n’ Roll marathon and the Ironman race and that will bring them a lot of customers too,” he said.

The new aloft was developed by Triyar Hospitality and Warburg Pincus Real Estate and is managed by Starwood. Triyar also developed the new W Scottsdale. That hotel’s lender has started foreclosure proceedings, and several contractors have filed liens and lawsuits against the developer.

Officials with the LA developer have declined to comment on the W’s financial troubles.

Reporter Dawn Gilbertson contributed to this story.