

CORPORATE EXPANSION & RELOCATION

Ventura County: Business Growth to the North of Los Angeles

PEOPLE often think of Ventura County as the scenic pass-through between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. Yet the county also boasts a healthy billion-dollar agricultural industry and quietly has become a hotbed of growth in multiple business sectors. Ventura County was singled out this year in *Business Xpansion* as being well suited to support activities in growing industries.

What is Ventura County's allure? For ZPower, a manufacturer of high performance rechargeable silver-zinc batteries headquartered in Camarillo, the benefits are many. "The local government's receptivity to locating businesses here is very strong," said Dr. Ross Dueber, president and CEO of ZPower. "The available talent pool—both from top-notch universities

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Ventura County has become a hotbed of growth in multiple business sectors.

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and the general workforce—is very beneficial. It's an ideal area for light manufacturing and R&D. We've had great success filling positions, both skilled and professional."

Nearly 30 percent of the Ventura County workforce has bachelor's degrees or higher and 82 percent hold high school diplomas, according to the American Community Survey.

Dueber also noted that for a precision product manufacturer such as ZPower, there is an abundance of specialty suppliers in the area. "I'm pleased with the sup-

ply chain infrastructure," said Dueber. "We have the right type of manufacturing support and services companies available to us here in Ventura County."

Distribution channels are also strong in the county. "U.S. 101 gives businesses convenient access to Los Angeles and points north," said Steve Kinney, president, Economic Development Corporation of Oxnard. "Highways 118 and 126 link to Interstate 5 and Metrolink and Amtrak serve commuters from six stations in the region. The Port of Hueneme is a deep-water 'break-bulk' facility with foreign trade zone status. Airports in Camarillo, Oxnard and Santa Paula can accom-

Expansion & Relocation Spotlight

modate small-winged planes, with Camarillo and Oxnard handling corporate jets. Plus, LAX, Burbank and Santa Barbara airports are only about 45 minutes away."

Combines sense of community with global commerce

Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics in Port Hueneme annually processes three million cars and rolling equipment worldwide, servicing key customers Mitsubishi, Suzuki, Land Rover, Maserati, Jaguar and Volvo from the port.

"Ventura County and Port Hueneme welcomed the type of roll-on, roll-off business that is central to Wallenius' business," said Jerry Mahoney, director of

business development. It's not every port where we would be recognized as a priority. That's important to us and our customers. Ventura County is friendlier than most places where I've done business—not just in California but in the world."

Wolfgang Bullmer, CEO of Transonic Combustion, a company specializing in ultra-high-efficiency fuel injection technology for internal combustion engines, said that Camarillo is an ideal location for his business. Not only is it "outside the hustle and bustle of Los Angeles while still able to draw upon the rich pool of engineering talent in the area," but Ventura County is "10 hours from Europe and 10 hours from Asia, mid-way between our key clients." Bullmer believes that "living and working here are hard to beat."

Not surprising for a region known for its protection of open space, Ventura County attracts emerging green businesses that promote sustainability. One such company is Solarsilicon Recycling Services, the world leader in processing silicon waste for use by the solar industry. "Most of our sales are overseas," said Rob Bushman, CEO and founder. "We could move somewhere else and get great incentive packages, but I don't want to live anywhere else. Quality of life is everything, and Ventura County offers that."

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ROB BUSHMAN, Solarsilicon Recycling Services

Solarsilicon Recycling Services currently employs about 70 workers; Bushman expects the number to reach 100 by the end of the year. The company is moving from Camarillo to larger facilities in Ventura this spring. "All of our talent is here in Ventura County. We have very low turnover. We take care of our workers and our workers take care of the company."

Ventura County's 10 key cities are Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Thousand Oaks, Santa Paula, Simi Valley and Ventura. "Each of these cities is attractive to businesses in its own way," said Kinney. "The ability to locate a business in an area where employees can function with less stress, enjoy a higher standard of living, reduce commute times, and yet has all the business tools and resources to excel professionally is an enormous strategic advantage."

For more information about locating a business in Ventura County and direct links to county and city contacts, go to www.ventura-countygrowsbusiness.com or look for Ventura County Grow Business on Facebook.

Local expertise, global strength.

DEXUS is a leading global real estate group with a corporate history of over 25 years and more than \$13 billion of properties under management.

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For property acquisitions and leasing contact Bryan Bentrott on (949) 655-8226 or bryan.bentrott@dexus.com

For development opportunities contact Bruce McDonald on (949) 655-8227 or bruce.mcdonald@dexus.com

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CORPORATE EXPANSION & RELOCATION

Getting the Finance and Technology Help Needed

By **FRANCES MORENO** and **STEPHEN SMITH**

OVER the past several months, Vaco Los Angeles LLC has seen increased requests for recruiting the right finance, accounting and technology professionals for a wide array of special projects and new full time openings. The uptick in demand for hiring specialized skill sets in our marketplace signifies an expectation of corporate growth and expansion. From start-up companies to internet firms, service providers to publicly traded companies, growing organizations are calling us to assist them in identifying consultants and employees for special projects and to fill open positions.

Whether for organic internal growth, or to support a merger or acquisition, hiring is slowly on the rise across several key industries such as: entertainment; hospitality; retail; and manufacturing. Because the economy shows positive signs of recovery, business-savvy managers are now taking certain measures to ensure they acquire the best help available and are not caught short staffed.

The hiring demand follows a predictable pattern through an economic recession and recovery. During a downturn, a severe risk to any growth strategy is excessive overhead, and initially, all hiring seems to come to a screeching halt. Eventually, management opts for bringing in contract/temporary professional services rather than having the overhead of adding full-time employees. The consulting professionals most frequently engaged for strategic projects are those at the manager and director levels. This reas-

market when in previous years their headcount was frozen as were consulting budgets. To find good employees this year and beyond, hiring managers no longer shy away from candidates who they perceive to be overqualified, fearing that the candidate would likely entertain another opportunity with a more suitable title when the market turns. The market is turning so slowly and the circumstances surrounding each candidate have become so unique (e.g., a quest for work/life balance, financial situation, desired career path, willingness to learn a new industry, etc.), many have learned that some candi-

dates previously overlooked are currently adding tremendous value to companies willing to bring them aboard.

We have also noticed that the "contract-to-hire" method to filling open positions is gaining popularity among many of our clients who often view that option as an extended working interview. Many clients not only need talent quickly, but also need the professional to potentially consider staying to fill open head count beyond the contract period. At Vaco, we are pleased to see the positive hiring trends coming back to Los Angeles in support of expansion and growth in our

region. Now is the time for companies to start planning how to get the best help.

Frances Moreno and Stephen Smith are partners of Vaco Los Angeles LLC, a Los Angeles-based resource company specializing in contract and direct hire resources for accounting, finance, tax, audit and technology professionals. Vaco was named #1 Best Place to Work in its industry in 2009 and 2010 and was recently ranked #15 of 100 Fastest Growing Privately Held Companies by Los Angeles Business Journal. More information on Vaco can be found at www.vaco.com/los-angeles or by calling (310) 693-0490.

From start-up companies to internet firms, service providers to publicly traded companies, growing organizations are calling Vaco to assist them in identifying consultants and employees for special projects and to fill open positions.

ures management that any changes or revisions to existing processes will be properly implemented prior to adding staff and entry-level personnel for day-to-day operations. Staff and seniors professionals are then hired in full-time positions, and once management's strategy is firmly in place and results begin to materialize, manager, director and executive-level full-time hiring takes place in order to eventually transition out the project consultants who have worked on the interim basis. Those senior-level project consultants are then redeployed to organizations for special strategic initiatives to support corporate growth as economic conditions continue improving.

Many expanding businesses partnering with us are willing to take a fresh look at sourcing candidates in 2011. This means corporations are expanding in today's



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CORPORATE EXPANSION & RELOCATION

DEXUS Property Group: Blending Local Expertise with Global Strength

By BRIAN BENTROTT

IN June 2010, DEXUS Property Group announced the opening of a new US management office in Newport Beach, the expansion of its US management team and strategic plans to redeploy more than \$600 million in US industrial real estate assets to core west coast markets.

The vision: to become a market leader in industrial real estate primarily in Southern California, the Bay Area and Seattle, offering clients more than 25 years of corporate expertise backed by the strength of a global organization with total properties under management of more than \$13 billion.

Real Estate Leadership Spotlight

Less than a year later, DEXUS is already delivering on this vision in the US.

Today the Group owns 98 industrial properties in North America totalling 25 million square feet and valued at more than \$1.3 billion. In addition, DEXUS now manages over \$300 million in third party assets in Southern California.

Local expertise, global strength

In the US since 2004, DEXUS is one of the world's leading real estate groups headquartered and publicly traded in Australia. Mirroring a strategic approach that has proven successful in Australia, the



DEXUS Property Group
Offices in Newport Beach

company recently charted a new course in the US to concentrate assets in key markets to maximize the portfolio's value and performance, as well as to best serve the industrial real estate needs of clients.

The DEXUS journey in the US is driven by a focused management and investment strategy based on concentrating efforts into three west coast core markets. This

strategy solidifies the Group's long-term commitment to the US and enables DEXUS to achieve a critical mass of property in each market to best service the needs of clients and investors.

As part of its commitment to this strategy, DEXUS appointed a Head of US Investments, Jane Lloyd in February 2010 and opened a local office in Newport

Beach, Calif. In June 2010, DEXUS expanded with the recruitment of the Master Development Corporation (MDC) team. Adding eight people, this transition immediately brought extensive local industrial real estate management, acquisition and construction expertise and experience to the DEXUS platform.

The Newport Beach office now operates with 17 real estate professionals who are managing and accounting for \$1.6 billion in real estate assets.

Acquisition and asset accomplishments

With a vision to become a leading industrial real estate player on the west coast, DEXUS has already made major strides in the span of only nine months. The Group has made a series of initial acquisitions and internalized portfolio management activities in its core markets.

On the acquisition front, the company made its first Southern California purchase in October 2010 when it acquired a 157,329-square-foot multi-tenant industrial property in the City of Industry for approximately \$14.4 million. Shortly thereafter, DEXUS completed its second deal in the region with the acquisition of a 278,000-square-foot Living Spaces retail and warehouse building in La Mirada for \$26.25 million in January 2011. Both acquisitions dovetail with the company's emphasis on strengthening its market

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DEXUS Commerce Center at 9370 Buffalo Ave. in Rancho Cucamonga

leadership in Southern California.

Also in January, DEXUS completed its planned management internalization strategy for its industrial properties in the West Coast, a process which had begun in August 2010. As part of this, the Group assumed management responsibility for more than \$700 million in properties totalling more than 10.7 million square feet of industrial space. Since then, DEXUS has taken occupancy rates from 86 to 95 percent through an active, hands-on leasing effort in conjunction with its listed brokers.

World class, integrated services

DEXUS offers world class comprehensive, integrated expertise and experience to own, manage, develop, build and service world class industrial real estate.

In addition to the Group's acquisition and asset internalization activities, DEXUS is also active as a third-party developer. This includes offering their experience and capabilities to deliver build-to-suits with an emphasis on LEED design and sustainable building features.

Combined, these integrated capabilities

enable DEXUS to provide clients the complete range of industrial real estate services — all under one platform.

Moving forward

As DEXUS approaches its first full year at its new Newport Beach headquarters, the Group is poised to carry forward its strategic growth initiative and long-term investment approach. The company continues to proactively seek out high quality prospects for leased core assets, sale/lease backs, value-add/vacancy opportunities

and land for development.

With the ability to offer the best in local expertise and global strength, DEXUS is fast evolving as an industrial real estate leader on the US west coast.

Bryan Bentrott is Managing Director, Acquisitions & Leasing with DEXUS in the US. Contact Bryan at (949) 655-8226 or at bryan.bentrott@dexus.com. For more information on DEXUS in the US, visit www.dexus.com/us.



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