

EBay expands presence in Utah, plans to hire 1,600

PAUL FOY - Associated Press - Associated Press

EBay Inc. said Friday it is launching a significant expansion in Utah with a new operations center and eventual plans to add 1,600 or more jobs.

The Internet company showed off a 241,000-square-foot building in the Salt Lake City suburb of Draper. Gov. Gary Herbert was on hand for the dedication.

EBay, based in San Jose, Calif., has been in Utah for 13 years and employs about 1,800 people in customer service, corporate functions and technology.

It is among a number of technology companies being drawn to Utah with tax incentives. Others include Adobe Systems Inc., IM Flash Technologies LLC, and most recently Vivint Inc., a home security and automation company.

An eBay executive said Utah's workforce has technical know-how and speaks many languages, a useful skill for the customer service center, where 20 percent or more of the calls come from a foreign country. The figure is 25 percent for eBay subsidiary PayPal.

"The talent pool in Utah is incredible," said Scott Murray, vice president of global customer experience, citing the availability of software engineers and Mormon missionaries with foreign language skills.

The company said it has room to grow at a Draper corporate park, where it owns 37 acres and could expand beyond that.

EBay is consolidating employees at the new Draper location. It has a data center in nearby South Jordan.

The company is aspiring for a special environmental designation for its building, made of recycled materials, with a place to store bicycles and privileged parking for low-emission vehicles.

Nearby, a FrontRunner commuter rail station is "a huge benefit for our employees," Murray said.

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