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Georgia welcomes NCR to new headquarters

By Patrick Fox
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State and local officials formally welcomed NCR to Georgia Tuesday -- a boatload of good news for a state grown accustomed to economic trauma.

The technology giant says it will create 3,000 new jobs in Georgia within five years and has already hired 1,000 since announcing in June that it was moving from Ohio to Gwinnett County. On Tuesday, ncr.com listed 170 available positions for the company's Georgia operations.

"Everything's been going according to plan," said NCR spokesman Cameron Smith. "We're actively hiring and recruiting for new positions."

NCR chairman and CEO Bill Nuti on Tuesday joined Gov. Sonny Perdue and dozens of other business and government leaders for the official opening of NCR's new corporate headquarters on Satellite Boulevard.

"We're building our future in Duluth," Nuti said. "This is a company that has been around a long time, and I hope we can have a successful 125 years here in Duluth and in the state of Georgia, much like we've had in the city of Dayton."

State and county industrial recruiters lured NCR with more than \$100 million in incentives, and they landed a very big fish -- a Fortune 500 company with revenues in 2009 of \$4.6 billion. Rajeev Dhawan, director of the Economic Forecasting Center at Georgia State University, said Atlanta returned to its 1990s economic development roots when it snagged NCR.

"Atlanta's business model has been to bring in companies from high-cost areas and put their headquarters here," he said.

But others may not follow any time soon, he said, citing the nations' depressed housing market among the reasons.

Housing prices have fallen so low in some markets that employees won't move: Companies can handle a little moving-related attrition, but not a lot, Dhawan said.

Among the incentives used to attract NCR: The company gets a corporate tax break, \$15 million in free training and research help and the ability to keep the state payroll taxes it deducts from its workers' paychecks. But Nuti said an array of factors -- Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, Georgia Tech, affordable housing, reasonable cost of living and an "innovative culture in Georgia" -- played an equal

role in the decision.

"This is a state that is committed to attracting high-tech companies," Nuti said. "They're certainly doing a good job of that in fostering relationships between communities, businesses and educational institutions that cultivate talent and develop groundbreaking advances in technology."

Perdue told the crowd that he wants the state to continue building its reputation as a magnet for commerce with a business-friendly tax and regulatory environment, global access through the Atlanta airport, a deep talent pool and a leading workforce development program, such as Quick Start.

At a news conference following the ceremony, the governor defended the incentives used to attract NCR.

"Good companies and good states make investments in their future," he said. "This is an investment that will pay great dividends for a long time. We also do our due diligence. We don't just open up the checkbook when companies come calling.

"The rewards of this kind of investment far outweigh any temporary incentives that may have been issued," he said.

In Duluth, NCR executives will occupy a six-story building across from Gwinnett Place mall, less than a mile from a facility the company already owns where 300 employees work. NCR said the move will bring 1,250 jobs to Gwinnett. In addition, a new NCR manufacturing plant in Columbus will create 870 jobs, and another 900 jobs will be created at a service center in Peachtree City.

Jim Maran, president of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, said the move will draw more technology-based companies to the area.

"We have a state department and a governor who are very positive about economic development, a school system and colleges that can recruit and nurture new technology," he said. "We have Georgia Tech and Gwinnett Tech to help develop the latest technologies and provide training for engineers. We've got the whole package here."

Amid the celebration, Nuti acknowledged that Dayton had suffered a blow.

"This was a difficult decision for that city and for our employees and a difficult decision for all of us," he said. "As a result, a great city with a long history and legacy with our company certainly was impacted by it. And I wish them the best of luck in their future."

About NCR

NCR was born in 1884 as the National Cash Register Co., maker of the first mechanical cash register. Ninety years later, it changed its name to NCR Corp. as the cash register morphed into the computer age.

Now the company makes, among other things, ATMs, check-in kiosks at airports, self-service checkout stations at supermarkets and kiosks at fast-food restaurants that enable the customer to order and pay by machine.

Employees: 21,500

2009 revenue: \$4.61 billion

Headquarters: Duluth

Major job openings in Gwinnett

NCR isn't the only company hiring in Gwinnett. Here's a list of other recent business moves that have generate job openings.

Wolf Cabinetry

relocate distribution facility

Jobs: 15

Capital Investment: \$1.5 million

Visit: wolforg.net

Spectral Response

expansion

Jobs: 135

Capital Investment: \$2 million

Visit: spectralresponse.com

Qualtex Laboratories

expansion

Jobs: 125

Capital Investment: \$12 million

Visit: qaiteqlabs.org

Kaiser Permanente

New medical office

Jobs: 15

Capital Investment: \$2 million

Visit: kaiserpermanente.org

Web Industries

plant expansion

Jobs: 25

Capital Investment: \$6 million

Visit: webindustries.com

Encompass Group Affiliates

relocation



Jobs: 100

Capital Investment: \$250,000

Visit: encompass.com/GreenChoice.aspx

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