

# Drug development firm moving headquarters to Austin

*Pain Therapeutics, citing business-friendly environment, bringing offices from California*

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Austin's quest to become a biotechnology hub just got another boost.

**Pain Therapeutics Inc., a San Mateo, Calif.-based drug development company, plans to relocate its headquarters to Austin, the company's president and CEO, Remi Barbier, said Thursday.**

Barbier said his company plans to make the transition gradually, with all operations moved by the end of 2011. He said a decision on Austin office space is pending and that he plans to have that office up and running by Jan. 1.

**Pain Therapeutics has about 30 employees. It plans to hire 50 to 100 people in research and development roles over the next three years, Barbier said.**

He said with that growth, he wanted to find a location that was both pro-business and strong in the technology sector. He said he considered cities such as Seattle and Boston before deciding on Austin. Barbier said Pain Therapeutics received no incentives from the city or state to move to Austin.

"We're a business, and we look for business-friendly states and business-friendly environments, and we think Texas is one of the most pro-business in the country," Barbier said. "At the next level, we're a medical research company and \u2026 we think that Austin, Texas, is an up-and-coming cluster for biotech and biomedical research, and we'd like to participate in that."

Pain Therapeutics was founded in 1998 and is traded on the Nasdaq exchange. Pain Therapeutics had \$20.5 million in revenue in 2009 after topping \$60 million in revenue in both 2007 and 2008.

Dave Porter, senior vice president of economic development for the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, said Pain Therapeutics is part of a steady stream of companies that have moved from California to the Austin area.

Biotechnology "is one of our emerging industry targets, and we'll continue to see more success in not only startups of companies in biotech, but companies moving to take advantage of what Austin and Texas offer," Porter said. "We're building a nice cluster of biotech here."

Pain Therapeutics focuses on the research and development of new drugs. The company is awaiting approval from the Food and Drug Administration of a drug called Remoxy, which it describes as a controlled-release oral capsule form of Oxycodone. According to the company's website, Remoxy is "designed to resist common methods of prescription drug misuse and abuse."

Remoxy had previously been submitted for FDA approval in 2008. At that time, an FDA memo questioned whether the drug was tamper-resistant.

According to Pain Therapeutics' website, the drug is contained in a hard gelatin capsule that is designed to resist being crushed.

"Published data also show that freezing, crushing or submerging Remoxy in high-proof alcohol for hours at a time releases just a fraction of oxycodone at time points when abusers presumably expect to get high," according to the company's website.

Barbier said he was confident the drug would win FDA approval.

Pain Therapeutics has a \$400 million partnership with King Pharmaceuticals Inc. to develop and distribute Remoxy and three other painkillers, according to the company's website. iKing Pharmaceuticals was acquired by industry giant Pfizer Inc. this month in a \$3.6 billion deal.

Barbier said Pain Therapeutics development deal would continue with Pfizer, and said he was pleased with that development.

"Pfizer will be launching and selling our drug; that could get us pretty good revenues pretty quickly," he said. "We feel very good about it, and Pfizer feels very good about it, or they would not have bought our partner for \$3.6 billion."

**Courtesy of JB Goodwin**