



As pair of California tech firms get cozy in Austin, city woos others

Accruent, ShoreTel plan to add workers locally.

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Two California-based high-tech companies are expanding in Austin, with plans to add more jobs here.

The news comes as Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce officials and local business leaders are visiting dozens of companies in Los Angeles and San Diego this week, extolling the virtues of Central Texas as a place to do business.

Susan Davenport, the chamber's vice president for business retention and expansion, said there has been some "natural interest" in Texas, especially from states like California that have been hard-hit by the recession.

"We've frankly gotten a lot of proactive calls, from them to us," she said.

Santa Monica, Calif.-based software company Accruent Inc. said Tuesday that it has opened an operations center at the Braker Pointe office complex in North Austin. Officials for Accruent, which specializes in real estate and facilities management software, say they expect to employ 50 people locally by year's end. The employees will work in product management, engineering, operations and support.

Sunnyvale, Calif.-based ShoreTel Inc., which sells Internet-protocol business phone systems, is holding a grand opening today at its Austin location on River Place Boulevard in Northwest Austin. The company employs more than 90 people locally, and officials expect that number to double over the next two years.

ShoreTel is based in about 30,000 square feet, but officials predict that figure will expand.

"We looked at a number of locations outside of California, and Austin exceeded our expectations in many criteria, including work ethic, quality of education, local vibrancy and talent pool," said ShoreTel CEO John Combs .

Bart Matheney , a principal with the real estate firm Aquila Commercial LLC, is among the Austinites in California this week. He said the reception has been "unbelievable."

"I think people understand that Texas is a state that's easier to do business in than California," he said, adding that Austin's quality of life is similar to what Californians are used to. "You can't say that about Houston or Dallas," he said.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin