Company linking restaurants, home delivery drivers to expand

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A southwest Louisiana company that links more than 500 Louisiana and Texas restaurants with drivers for home delivery plans to add 100 jobs at a technology operations center in south-central Lafayette.

Waitr Inc., based in Lake Charles, has 129 employees there and at offices in Lafayette, Baton Rouge, and the Houston area. The new center will let Waitr expand further into Texas, and into Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Arkansas and other Southern states, officials said.

"Having been advised that we should look outside of Louisiana to launch a technology venture, I am proud to say that we have proven that theory wrong," founder and CEO Chris Meaux said in a news release. "We haven't had a shortage of software engineers. We haven't had a shortage of talent. And I don't think we will."

He said Waitr also expects to enter the grocery delivery and restaurant reservation markets. The app currently lets diners pay from restaurant tables.

Meaux, Gov. John Bel Edwards and other state officials held a news conference Thursday in Lafayette to announce plans for the new center.

The 100 new jobs for software engineers and restaurant operations professionals will average $55,000 a year, they said. The company also plans to add 100 new driver positions to its current 300.

Waitr is expected to use a [software](#) development incentive program offering tax breaks on spending and payroll and a program that offers a 25 percent tax credit for investors, officials said.