

Facebook, with 2,000 employees in Seattle, expands into new building

March 16 2018, by Matt Day, The Seattle Times

Facebook, which has doubled the size of its workforce in Seattle in two years, has started moving into the second of four buildings the social-networking firm will be leasing in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood.

The inaugural workers in the office, members of Facebook's infrastructure team, didn't have to go far. The new digs, at 1101 Westlake Ave. N., are across the street from Facebook's offices at 1101 Dexter Ave. N.

Facebook, which has had engineers in Seattle since 2010, moved into the Dexter space with about 1,000 workers in early 2016. Today the company says its head count in the city totals more than 2,000 people.

The 150,000 square feet of office space at Westlake provides enough room for about 900 more.

Facebook is also leasing the Arbor Blocks, two buildings under construction along Eighth Avenue North between Harrison and Thomas streets that could potentially house another 2,000 employees.

That would make Facebook one of the largest occupants of booming South Lake Union, which Amazon helped reshape in the last decade into a corporate office park. More high-tech workers are coming. North of Mercer Street, construction is underway on an office complex being built for up to 4,000 Google employees.

Vijaye Raji, a vice president at Facebook and one of the leaders at the Seattle office, didn't have a timeline for the company's move into the Arbor Blocks.

But he said Facebook Seattle, the company's largest engineering office outside of its Menlo Park, California, headquarters, is becoming increasingly important to the company's product development.

Engineers in the city work on a wide range of projects, including chat applications, virtual and augmented reality, advertising and marketplace platforms, as well as the infrastructure that stores Facebook's range of digital services.

"You'll see more and more projects finding a home here, (or) being built entirely from Facebook Seattle," said Raji, who currently leads engineering and product teams working on Facebook's video-game platform. "It becomes easier to establish large teams and go after big projects" as the [office](#) grows, he said.

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