

Finding a Lot to Love About Locating in Nebraska

Doug McGregor, CEO of WebEquity Solutions, admits that the nature of his company would have made it easy to find a home beyond the firm's original location in Glenwood, Iowa. WebEquity provides commercial lending software to community and regional banks, and it's the kind of business that any city wants to claim: a high-tech company in a growth industry that offers higher-paying jobs to well-educated employees.

In fact, McGregor's equity firm, which acquired WebEquity, was considering a relocation to San Francisco when the company's chief operating officer, Jim Gleason, encouraged a look at his hometown of Omaha. McGregor said, "We have equity partners in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minneapolis and Boston; it just made sense to move to one of those cities, but I followed Jim's suggestion and met with the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce."

McGregor was impressed with the talent pool from Creighton, UNO, UNL and Peter Kiewit Institute, and with the fact that Omaha is home to 20 companies with more than a billion dollars in revenue. Plus, the Chamber explained that the Nebraska Advantage Act provides financial incentives for companies that create jobs in the state.

The section of the Act intended for high-tech was originally created to provide tax breaks for companies that sold products deliverable by mail. At the time the legislation was enacted, no one anticipated the emergence of "cloud-based software" or other services delivered via the Internet. The state – as well as its citizens and the

companies it wanted to attract – stood to benefit from a timely updating of the law.

McGregor became actively involved in working with the Chamber and members of the business community to help develop legislative messaging reflective of today's technologies. He even met with officials from

downtown office space in the World-Herald Building. Finding a strong banking partner was the next priority. First National Bank skillfully fulfilled this requirement.

Concurrent with the acquisition, McGregor and his equity partners were looking at a number of strong major banks

building a strong business relationship with our company," McGregor continued. "Steve told us, 'You're local, and we want to bring businesses like you here to our area,' I've met lots of bankers, and he's one of the best I've known."

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First National Bank is also a satisfied user of the WebEquity lending software. It isn't the only one. The company's sales increased 69 percent in 2010, and 84 percent in 2011. By 2013, Gartner is expected to rank it the number one provider of commercial lending software in the U.S. A couple of years ago, WebEquity wasn't even ranked.

More than 100 Nebraska community banks and 750 banks across the nation are among the institutions that now rely on WebEquity to streamline the lending process and improve profitability. "Additionally," McGregor said, "we help the banks comply with regulatory requirements and maintain a solid foundation for managing credit risk."

Since moving to Omaha, WebEquity has increased its employee base by about 50 percent and that growth continues today. Minnesota native McGregor is now established here as well, having moved his family from Minneapolis. "I've even found rich family tree connections here I didn't know I had," he said. "We love being here."

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Jim Gleason (COO), Kenneth Bachulis (President) and Doug McGregor (CEO)

the Revenue Department to familiarize them with the cloud-based business model. The Nebraska Unicameral passed new incentive legislation with a view to keep it aligned with business developments. "Governor [Dave] Heineman said, 'We're probably going to have to upgrade the law every two years just to keep it current,'" McGregor said. "And he's right."

Confident of a future in Nebraska, in 2009 McGregor signed a seven-year lease for

to finance a portion of their acquisition of WebEquity. McGregor explained, "Initially we weren't considering a local bank, but again, Gleason suggested First National Bank of Omaha. It's a super regional bank with around \$15 billion in assets, which he felt was well qualified for the task. We engaged First National and were presented with a very competitive term sheet."

"I was very impressed with Steve Knapp and his team's approach to really



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Born and raised in Omaha, First National Bank is passionate about helping local businesses like WebEquity Solutions. Because when businesses thrive, so does our community.