

North Liberty firm takes over MCI call center

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Jan. 4--IOWA CITY -- A direct marketing firm has leased a former MCI call center in Iowa City to market voice over Internet protocol, or VoIP, an emerging voice and data communication service.

TMONE said Tuesday it plans to add 200 jobs to market VoIP, a phone service that uses broadband Internet connections rather than traditional phone lines. The 27,000-square-foot call center at 1925 Boyrum St., which closed in September, has a capability of handling 300 individuals per shift, according to TMONE.

8x8 Inc., a Santa Clara, Calif., VoIP and videophone communications provider, contracted with TMONE in August to provide direct response marketing and contact center services for its business and residential Internet phone and video phone service.

North Liberty-based TMONE was founded in 2002 by two former MCI call center managers, Anthony Marlowe and John Burchert. The company has been actively marketing on behalf of telecommunications and information service providers.

Marlowe, president of TMONE, said the call center can handle up to 50,000 subscribers a month and support millions of customers. He said TMONE may ultimately hire close to 1,000 to handle anticipated VoIP marketing and customer service.

"We are happy to locate ourselves in Iowa City and the old MCI facility is a perfect fit," said Burchert, TMONE chief operating officer. He said many of the new positions at TMONE will require the same skills as the MCI jobs.

MCI, with peak employment of 630 in Iowa City, laid off more than 100 when it closed the center and offered an additional 60 people positions in Cedar Rapids.

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