

telecomm/the internet & communications

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Internet: Company wants to be digital mall

The building, which now has 24,000 square feet of data center, is preparing to open another 14,000 square feet on the first floor and 4,684 square feet upstairs. In addition to data center space, Global Access provides office space for customers who prefer to have their technology workers at the station.

"We provide the digital roadway," Anderson says. "They drive their cars on the road."

Plans for the next phase call for a mezzanine in the Grand Hall that would preserve the open feel of the room while adding square footage for office space. The company can also add another 6,000 square feet on the western end of the building.

Companies these days want their main and backup data centers more than 100 miles apart, so they are not subject to the same area disasters such as tornadoes, and less than 400 miles apart.

That puts South Bend, already a hub for fiber optics because of its situation near the tip of Lake Michigan and on railway and highway routes favored by fiber installers, in an ideal position. It's 2 milliseconds by light from downtown Chicago, close enough for most businesses.

Union Station has 2,224 fibers

coming into the building, and advances in optical technology are poised to vastly expand what each can carry - 100 gigs for each of the 32 colors instead of 10 - by replacing the equipment at each end.

The company also owns data centers on the Toll Road and in Indianapolis, providing a sufficiently distant backup for local companies.

Smith says improvements at Union Station will make the facility able not only to optimize its energy use with artificial intelligence but also to communicate with other data centers on a grid to use the most optimal center available for a job at any time.

"The intention is to have an intelligent data center," he says.

See Global Access Point's Web page at www.global-access.us.

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Strong

The company has 30 employees and serves a 2-hour radius, guaranteeing timely customer service.

"Technology is continually changing," Schmidtdorff says. "That is the most challenging thing. We are committed to continually re-educating our staff to provide our customers with the best technology solutions."

The company is a union shop with the IBEW. Technicians have

completed college, apprenticeships and manufacturers' certifications as well as the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies.

For more information on the Communication Co. see the Web site at www.communication-co.com.

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