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Downtown lures Brown Deer software-maker

PKWare will relocate in September

By TOM DAYKIN

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Software-maker PKWare Inc. is moving its headquarters from Brown Deer to downtown Milwaukee, a small victory in downtown's campaign to attract technology-oriented businesses.

PKWare will lease 14,500 square feet at the ASQ Center, the office, hotel and retail complex converted from the former Marshall Field's building, 101 W. Wisconsin Ave. The company will move from 9025 N. Deerwood Drive by September, said President Timothy Kennedy.

PKWare, with 80 employees, makes software that compresses computer files. It has been searching for new space for more than a year, Kennedy said.

The company's owners, led by investor George Haddix of Omaha, Neb., wanted more efficient space than the 10,000 square feet leased in Brown Deer, Kennedy said. He said PKWare also wanted a more central location for employees who come to Milwaukee from the firm's other offices in Omaha; Dayton, Ohio; Redwood Shores, Calif., and London.

Please see **PKWARE, 5D**

Downtown lures software-maker from Brown Deer

PKWARE, From 1D

"It's much more convenient to be downtown to have access to hotels and restaurants as opposed to being in some isolated location," Kennedy said. "I know a lot of employees who come here will enjoy coming downtown."

Kennedy himself is a resident of downtown's Cudahy Tower apartment and condominium building. He said the higher cost of parking downtown compared with the suburbs doesn't override the advantages of a downtown location for PKWare.

The higher cost of parking was cited as a major factor in GE Healthcare's recent decision to locate a new headquarters building for some of its divisions in the Milwaukee County Research Park in Wauwatosa instead of downtown.

Milwaukee, under Mayor John O. Norquist and then Acting Mayor Marvin Pratt, has pursued tech firms. Tom Barrett, who last week succeeded Pratt as mayor, also has said Milwaukee needs to focus on attracting high-tech jobs.

PKWare has been in Brown

Deer for several years. It was founded by Phil Katz, a former computer programmer at Allen-Bradley Inc., who died in 2000.

Haddix, former chief executive officer of U.S. West Network Systems Inc., and his partners bought PKWare in 2001. PKWare in 2002 bought Ascent Solutions Inc., a Dayton firm, and took over its operations.

Kennedy declined to disclose sales for the privately held company. He said the company expects to continue most of its growth in Milwaukee.

The lease — brokered by Dave Barry and William Quinlevan, of James T. Barry Co., and Jack Quinlevan, of Quinlevan Commercial Real Estate Inc. — will fill one of the few remaining vacancies at the ASQ Center, said building owner William Orenstein. The 390,000-square-foot building has about 14,000 square feet of vacant office space, and 9,000 square feet of vacant retail space, he said.

The ASQ Center includes the headquarters of the American Society for Quality, the Marriott Residence Inn and Borders Books.