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AirWatch expansion could add more jobs

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BY J. SCOTT TRUBEY - THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

Mobile device management company AirWatch made waves early this year when it announced it would create 800 new jobs at its Sandy Springs headquarters. But that was apparently just the start.

AirWatch officials said Thursday the company expects to meet its earlier jobs announcement and could add up to 350 more locally within the next two years.

AirWatch, launched in 2003, specializes in helping companies manage and secure mobile devices. It's a booming segment in digital security as more businesses adopt mobile products and as more companies allow their workers to use their personal smartphones, tablets and computers for work. AirWatch said in January it had about 650 employees in the metro area.

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State and metro economic development officials have pivoted some of their recruitment efforts to cultivating startup companies and jobs that create new technologies. Though corporate relocation recruitment is

still very much in the playbook, recruiters say cultivating locally grown companies and innovation will be a key growth source for the state's economy.

AirWatch's decision earlier this year to invest and grow in its hometown, which came with about \$7 million in tax credits tied to creating jobs, appears to be bearing that out.

Metro Atlanta is a hub both for information security and mobile communications, said Tino Mantella, president of the Technology Association of Georgia.

"With the talent that's already here and the university talent (in metro Atlanta), this is a great place for a company like (AirWatch) to build



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and grow,” Mantella said.

AirWatch’s continued expansion follows a \$200 million investment this year in the company from a group led by Insight Venture Partners.

AirWatch has about 9,000 clients worldwide, and is adding hundreds per month, Chairman Alan Dabbiere said in an interview with The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

He told a group of commercial real estate leaders in Midtown Atlanta on Thursday that the company has grown from a little more than 100 people three years ago to 1,500 people today.

“We will need to fill another 1,500 seats ... in the next 12 months,” Dabbiere said during a technology panel held by real estate investment firm Hines.

Later in an interview, Dabbiere said that current business conditions could support that level of hiring, not that the company was making such a commitment.

Justin Grimsley, an AirWatch spokesman, said it is difficult to predict the exact amount of employees the company will hire globally in the next year, given the company’s explosive growth.

The privately held company does not release revenue or profit information.

The AirWatch news comes a day after the close of Venture Atlanta, an annual gathering aimed at connecting promising technology startups with major investors.

“Being headquartered in Atlanta gives us huge advantages. It is a mobile city,” Dabbiere said at the Hines event.

AirWatch is not Dabbiere’s first fast-growing tech company. He founded Manhattan Associates in California in 1990, and moved the logistics software firm to metro Atlanta and later took the company public.

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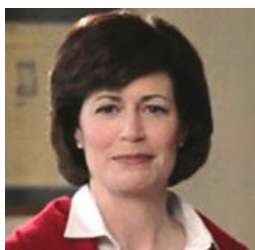
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