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## **New data centers just keep on coming**

L.A. Lorek - Express-News

Westover Hills on San Antonio's Northwest Side is getting another data center.

The latest project is a \$165 million data center by Power Loft of McLean, Va.

The company purchased 23 acres near Wiseman Road and Impala Summit and plans to build a 100,000-square-foot, two-story "green" data center expandable to 200,000 square feet, said James F. Coakley, the company's CEO and president.

Privately held Power Loft builds data centers on speculation for government and business clients. The San Antonio project could begin later this year, Coakley said.

That news comes on the heels of Frost's announcement that it will build a \$50 million, 71,013-square-foot data center at 10010 Roger Run, also in Westover Hills.

In the digital age, Frost sees the need to securely store an increasingly large amount of data, CEO Dick Evans said after a news conference Thursday morning at the company's downtown headquarters. Today, 60 percent of Frost's retail customers and 40 percent of its business customers use the Internet to interact with the bank, he said.

"As that expands, we need additional capacity," he said.

Data centers, which look like giant storage sheds, house thousands of computer servers. Those computers deliver up everything from e-mail to Web pages to consumers and businesses globally. Large data centers can also gobble up an annual 30 to 40 megawatts of electricity each.

"We love the available power," said Coakley with Power Loft.

CPS Energy has some of the lowest commercial energy rates in the country, Coakley said. The national industrial rate for power is about 9 cents per kilowatt-hour, while San Antonio's rate is about 5 cents. That's helping to attract all kinds of data centers to the area.

In the past two years, the area has landed seven major data centers and seen the expansion of two existing ones at Wachovia's campus and at American Funds Capital Group, said Charles "Marty" Wender, Westover Hills' developer.

Microsoft Corp. is nearing completion of its 470,000-square-foot, \$550 million data center on a 44-acre site in Westover Hills.

"We get calls daily from people looking for data center sites," Wender said.

San Antonio is experiencing a data center clustering effect, said Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff. At the Frost news conference, Wolff praised Frost for “underscoring its commitment to San Antonio” with the new center. After the conference, he talked about San Antonio’s success in attracting such multi-million-dollar projects.

“Once you land a really big fish, and that big fish for us was Microsoft, other data centers follow,” Wolff said.

Power Loft just finished building a 215,000-square-foot data center in Virginia. Coakley said Power Loft is seeking Leadership in Energy and Environment Design Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council for the project. LEED recognizes new or remodeled buildings that “reduce waste sent to landfills, conserve energy and water, and reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions.” Coakley hopes to replicate that building in San Antonio with some adjustments.

The Westover Hills center will feature solar panels on the roof and an energy-efficient design that will save up to 50 percent of the power of a traditional center, Coakley said.

“The demand for digital content is going right through the roof,” he said.

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