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Twitter plans new data center in Salt Lake area

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Social networking phenomenon Twitter, which is beset by computer-capacity issues, announced Wednesday it is moving its data center operations to the Salt Lake City area.

In a blog post, Twitter Engineering Program Manager Jean-Paul Cozzatti said the new custom-built data center is necessary to help Twitter keep up with growth.

The company, headquartered in San Francisco, declined to give additional details.

A top official at C7 Data Centers, a Lindon-based provider of large banks of computers for commercial operations, said he wasn't authorized to provide information when asked about whether it was Twitter's local partner. He referred questions to C7 CEO Nathan Hatch, who did not immediately return e-mails seeking comment.

Twitter spokesman Matt Graves said only that the company would be hiring locally for the new data center. He would not say how many jobs might be provided.

Twitter operates a social networking site that enables people to share information with followers in the form of "tweets" or messages limited to 140 characters. More than 300,000 people sign up for Twitter accounts on an average day.

But that explosive growth for the privately held company has severely strained its computing capacity.

"Keeping pace with these users and their Twitter activity presents some unique and complex engineering challenges," said Cozzatti in his blog. "Having dedicated data centers will give us more capacity to accommodate this growth in users and activity on Twitter."

The Salt Lake City area is becoming a hub for large data centers because of the availability of relatively low-cost electricity and a high-speed communications network that allows the rapid transmission of huge volumes of data.



Oracle Corp., a major supplier of computer software and hardware, is building a \$300 million data center in West Jordan. And the online auction company eBay in 2008 announced a center in Draper.

The National Security Agency is lining up contractors for a \$1 billion data center at Camp Williams at the southern end of the Salt Lake County. It is expected to feature 100,000 square feet of computer space with up to 200 full-time employees when it is completed in June of 2012.

C7 already has four facilities in the area for co-location services in which businesses contract with it to provide data processing.

Cozzatti said the new Twitter center in Utah will give it the ability to accommodate growth, plus more control over its network and more flexibility to quickly make adjustments as demands for its service fluctuate.

The company will continue to work with its current provider, NTT America, but plans to add additional managed data centers of its own over the next 24 months.

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