



Nick Westover explains a specific production room to visitors at TechniGraphics during a summer open house for TechniGraphics University. "TechniGraphics has proven you can run a successful tech company in a smaller, rural community," says Rod Crider, president of the Wayne Economic Development Council.

TechniGraphics University Helps Put Leaders on Same Page

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WOOSTER - The past year was a difficult one for TechniGraphics, but it still managed to grow, just not at the pace initially expected.

"Growth was here, just not as fast as we would have liked," said Steve Nichols, director of marketing.

The company, a visual information company that produces digital maps, provides engineering services and offers product lifecycle management, expanded its world headquarters in 2009 with the March opening of TechniGraphics University, which represented an investment of about \$6.3 million. An open house was held in July.

The facility is about 26,000 square feet, and in conjunction with classroom, office and study space, it includes production space.

"We are really proud of it as a company," Nichols said.

Not only is the space used to train entry-level workers, but it is also the location of TechniGraphics' global management meeting. About 50 leaders from Wooster, Brunswick, Costa Mesa, Calif., Fort Collins, Colo., Alpharetta, Ga., Southfield, Mich., St. Louis, Bellevue, Wash., Steinebach, Germany, The Netherlands and Pune, India, participated in the week-long event.

The upper management team learned about accounting for managers, ethics and integrity, personality types and leadership, strategies for businesses during structural breaks in the economy and the company's philosophy of mergers and acquisitions.

Dee Vaidya, president and chief executive officer, said previously TechniGraphics University will help get the company's leaders all on the same page and identify rising stars.

The company also added another international location in 2009 when it opened an office in Madrid, Spain, making it the third TechniGraphics site in Europe, Nichols said.

Workers there are involved in digital mapping, and Nichols said TechniGraphics has formed a partnership with Amper.

Amper is a Spanish, multinational company that focuses on three areas: Defense, homeland security and telecommunications.

As Amper grows, Nichols said there is an opportunity for TechniGraphics to grow with them.

Rod Crider, president of the Wayne Economic Development Council, said TechniGraphics' growth over the years has been tremendous.

"It has evolved to offer new products and services to keep growth going," Crider said. "TechniGraphics is a leader in helping develop a high-tech cluster in Wayne County that was not as visible as it is now.

"TechniGraphics has proven you can run a successful tech company in a smaller, rural community."

Some have speculated a company could not attract a skilled work force for a high-tech company, but TechniGraphics have proven them wrong, Crider said.

TechniGraphics employs about 600 people around the globe with about 275 in Wooster. In 2009, the company created 31 positions and had a total of 78 new hires (some were hired to fill existing positions).

When the university had its open house, Wooster Mayor Bob Breneman said, "This is about as good as it can get to have TechniGraphics part of your city. They are making a great impact in Wooster. They are growing and growing. The best to them."

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