

Vanteon to add jobs as business rebounds

Tech company marks 25th anniversary, gets new HQ in Perinton

By **ANDREA DECKERT**

Technology firm Vanteon Corp., marking its 25th year in business, recently moved into new digs and is adding to its work force after undergoing layoffs in 2009. It is also scouting for acquisitions.

Vanteon is an electronic systems design and engineering company, with 45 employees and additional contract workers. That number is down from 54 in 2009.

Adding to its work force and attracting new customers are key areas the firm is focused on in 2011, Vanteon CEO Joseph Burke said.

"We are so excited about this year," he said.

Vanteon has several potentially large contract deals in the works, mostly with firms looking for radio frequency communication capabilities, Burke said. He declined to name those potential customers but said one is a Canadian firm and another is a New York-based business that traditionally outsources jobs overseas.

The market adoption of Vanteon's software-defined radio components, as well as increased demand for wireless communication devices for smart-grid and transportation applications, has permitted the company to grow in customers and sales, he said.

The company is projecting a year-over-year sales increase of at least 15 percent in 2011. Growth is coming from new business as well as more work from existing customers, he said.

Vanteon has a handful of engineering positions available, specifically for people with backgrounds in radio frequency communications and electrical engineering.

Vanteon's new headquarters is at 250 CrossKeys Office Park in Perinton. It had been in a subleased space on Woodcliff Drive, but the company was unable to negotiate a lease with the building's owner and began searching elsewhere.

In early November, Vanteon moved into the three-story CrossKeys building, which is owned by Uniland Development Corp. of Amherst, Erie County. Vanteon occupies the third floor and part of the second, a total of 20,000 square feet.

The space is roughly 6,000 square feet smaller than its previous location but is better configured for its needs, Burke said.

Since its inception, Vanteon—originally Millennium Computer Corp.—has completed more than 500 projects. It provides early-stage design, system component, software development and testing services. Its core competencies include embedded systems, printed circuit board design and layout, systems software and drivers and project management.

Burke noted that computer software and electronic systems developed by the company can be found in hundreds of commercial products.

Industry segments that use Vanteon's services include digital imaging, avionics, medical devices, communications and transportation. Vanteon has customers in New York, but its customer base extends along the East Coast, from New England to Florida.

The firm has worked with customers including Eastman Kodak Co., Hewlett-Packard Co. and Harris Corp.'s RF Communications division.

Vanteon took a hit in 2009 from the global recession, Burke said. It laid off some workers, mostly by scaling back its software development arm as that type of work went overseas, and other employees went to a four-day week. He declined to say how many people were laid off.

Things turned around last year, and toward year-end Vanteon was in a good position to grow, Burke said.

Burke, who co-owns the firm with David Wagner, took over the CEO spot from Wagner in early 2009. The two exchanged duties, and Wagner now serves as president and chief operating officer, focusing more on operations while Burke, in his new role, has more interaction on the sales side.

Wagner agreed with Burke that Vanteon has been focusing on the right markets since the recession and is poised for growth.

"We are proud to reach this milestone of 25 years, and we are especially excited to begin the next chapter of Vanteon in this beautiful new facility," Wagner said.

Acquisitions are another area the company could pursue, Burke said, noting that candidates could be firms that can provide a greater customer base or added capabilities. For example, the firm outsources some of its work, including some prototyping. An acquired company could fill that need, he said.

While Vanteon has not completed an acquisition in the 10-plus years when Burke has been there, he is familiar with the process from working as chief financial officer at Victor-based Flightline Electronics Inc.

"We are looking for something that will help enhance our deliveries to customers," Burke said.

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