



Absorb Software a success story for Calgary's high-tech industry

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Absorb Software is another great example of the growth of the high-tech industry in Calgary. Launched only 17 years ago in a tiny 200-square-foot space, the company has become a wonderful success story.

Dan Harmsen, partner and vice-president of Barclay Street Real Estate, has helped with several moves to accommodate the company's need for more space, and now he and associate Cassandra Hansen have cemented a deal to move Absorb into five floors of the 60-storey TELUS Sky tower.

"Calgary has been a great home for Absorb, and since our business has grown so rapidly in recent years, it was time for us to move into a location better suited to accommodate our current team and anticipated growth," says Absorb CEO Mike Owens. "We are thrilled we can remain in the area. Moving to this unique and impressive tower — a transformative landmark for the city — will not only provide Absorb with the tech-focused amenities necessary to support the company's ongoing expansion, but help us to attract and retain the best talent."

The learning technology firm is headquartered in Calgary with global offices in London, Dublin, Singapore, Shanghai, Sydney, Boston and Salt Lake City. Its flagship product, Absorb LMS, is an industry-leading and award-winning Learning Management System for businesses, higher education, governments and non-profit agencies around the world. Absorb Infuse is the next generation learning solution empowering the ultimate in-the-flow learning experience.

Absorb has signed a multi-year lease for 80,000 square feet of office space in TELUS Sky, located on the downtown corner of 6th Avenue and Centre Street S.

Owens says he didn't want to leave his current location in Inglewood but needed more space to satisfy Absorb's growth. And he considers being in the core a big bonus in welcoming clients — of the 1,300, only a handful are local — to show off our city and the number of related technology companies they might be interested in getting on their radar.

A proud Calgarian, Owens was brought up in rural Alberta but has lived in the city since attending the University of Calgary to achieve degrees in political and computer sciences. While



a reservist with the Calgary Highlanders during his university years, he worked on online basic training and decided he could design better software for the task. Absorb was launched soon after; his knowledge and creativity has grown it to a global success with 250 staff in the Calgary office, and Owens expects that figure to grow to more than 400 in the next three to four years.

TELUS Sky — designed by global architectural firm Bjarke Ingels Group in association with the Calgary office of Dialog, the architect of record — is purposed to meet and exceed the expectations of the city's growing creative and technology sectors.

"We are excited to welcome Absorb knowing the company will make full use of the amenities the building has to offer," says Roz McQueen, leasing executive with Westbank, the developer of TELUS Sky in partnership with Allied and TELUS.

Amenities include a wellness centre covering a full floor that includes state-of-the-art equipment as well as health food offerings. It also has 28 residential floors offering 326 homes for short or long-term stay that may be an attraction for Absorb's international talent.

Attractive retail spaces are located along Centre Street, where the entrance to the 11-storey atrium lobby area features a living green wall.

Absorb's move into TELUS Sky means that 40 per cent of the commercial space in the mixed-use, 422,000-square-foot landmark tower has now been leased.