

Getting Google

Austin Business Journal - by [Jean Kwon](#) ABJ Staff

Google Inc. is nearing a final decision on coming to Austin by doing some searching of its own.

After months of speculation, sources have confirmed that the Internet behemoth is scouting for about 30,000 square feet downtown for a software engineering satellite office that would employ about 100 engineers.

Given the size of the office sought, Google could squeeze roughly 150 people into the office, according to standard square-foot allowances.

In June, Google posted a job on its Web site for an engineering director position based in Austin. That job is still open, say Google representatives.

According to sources, Google contacted and interviewed several people in Austin this summer, including **University of Texas** faculty members, for the engineering director position.

Mountain View, Calif.-based Google [NASDAQ: GOOG] is looking for a "funky," nontraditional space, says Dave Porter, senior vice president of economic development at the Austin Chamber of Commerce. Google is known for its youthful work-as-play culture, with employees navigating hallways on scooters and offices equipped with candy dispensers, pool tables and video games.

"Austin offers an incredible lifestyle, merging Texas and technology, and a rich and diverse talent pool," says Sunny Gettinger, global communications and public affairs manager for Google, in a statement.

Google representatives had no further comment about the Austin office. The Austin Google office will be a software engineering lab, which means it will not be a research lab, such as its Mountain View or New York office, which have PhD researchers. A director of engineering position does not require a PhD.

Google "has been on our radar for quite some time," says Porter. The chamber has been in touch with Google's Mountain View office for more than a year and a half, and met with Google representatives in the Bay Area earlier this year, he says. The chamber is always trying to get companies to expand and relocate to Austin, and California is one of the best markets to tap, Porter adds.

Google cannot qualify for city or state incentives because it intends to lease space, says Porter. To qualify for incentives, a company needs to make a large capital investment, such as building a large facility.

"For a company [like Google] to move to Austin speaks volumes about the Austin area. It keeps the growth fresh [because] Google is on the cutting edge," says Alisha Ring, president of the Austin Technology Council.

Google has recruited at the University of Texas since 2004 and has steadily increased its recruiting efforts here every year, says Nancy Hatchett, director of communications for UT's computer science department. Last month, Google recruiters came to campus during a series of talks by Google research scientists and workshops about acing a Google interview.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin