

# WireCo ties up new HQ in KC to improve recruiting

*Kansas City Business Journal* | Friday, February 8, 2008

By James Dornbrook – Staff Writer

---

A quest to find better recruiting grounds led WireCo WorldGroup to move its headquarters to Kansas City.

WireCo, which recently changed its name from Wire Rope Corp. of America Inc., moved its international headquarters to 12200 N.W. Ambassador Drive east of Kansas City International Airport. Keeping its manufacturing facility in St. Joseph, WireCo moved administrative functions in October, taking up the entire fourth floor of the building with an option to expand.

WireCo President Ira Glazer said the company is growing rapidly, with three business acquisitions in the past two years giving WireCo a significant international presence. He said the company had trouble recruiting for some professional positions when it was based in the St. Joseph area.

WireCo wanted to get closer to better recruiting grounds but not go so far that it became difficult for existing staff.

"This got us closer to the city and the suburb market, so people could commute from Overland Park and areas like that where a lot of the younger professionals are coming from," Glazer said. "Since we didn't go too far, we lost very few existing people."

The proximity to the airport was also a plus because many employees are frequent travelers and clients often visit the headquarters.

WireCo's need for professionals is going to continue growing. In the summer, it will open the largest single wire rope manufacturing plant in the world. The 1 million-square-foot facility in Wuhan, China, will be able to produce 50,000 metric tons of wire rope products. The company expects to double that output by 2010.

"We're doing some significant hiring right now," Glazer said. "We're expanding into very good jobs, and our need for professionals is only growing. So we're adding a worldwide growth organization to Kansas City. We're not that little company based in St. Joseph that we were a couple years ago."

Companies like WireCo can form a nucleus that attracts specific talents to the area, and that could lead to other companies considering the area for their corporate headquarters, said **Paul Scianna**, project director for **OneKC WIRED**, a federally financed partnership dedicated to work force and economic development, and executive director of the Alliance for Innovation in Manufacturing-Kansas City.

"Bottom line is that when you have a company that comes in looking for those knowledge-based, highly skilled workers, there is a likelihood that not only will they start to attract them, but you start to attract other workers looking for similar employment in the region and other companies looking for a similar work force," Scianna said. "What we're trying to do is make sure we have a versatile work force -- especially in the science, technology, engineering and math-based fields -- capable of entering some of the high-skilled, high-demand, high-wage positions in companies such as WireCo."

Glazer said those efforts are welcome and necessary. He particularly supports Kansas City publicizing itself more on the national scene because it helps his recruiting efforts. Glazer, a New Yorker, said people outside of the Kansas City area don't have a realistic impression of the area.

"They think the whole city is a reflection of the Kansas City Royals or something," Glazer said. "There is just so much money being invested and so many great things going on that a solid national publicity campaign would do wonders. That would help us attract the type of professionals we need because in many cases it is a relocation."

Glazer said the city also should reconsider its 1 percent income tax, which was an impediment for WireCo to overcome and almost caused him to change his mind about the move. WireCo had to make up the pay difference for its people who moved from the former St. Joseph location.

[jdornbrook@bizjournals.com](mailto:jdornbrook@bizjournals.com) | 816-421-5900