



Rulon International scales growth with expansion of St. Augustine plant

By Colleen Jones
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Rulon International is riding a tide of success by expanding its corporate headquarters and manufacturing plant in St. Augustine.

The company's growth will also add approximately 20 more manufacturing jobs, according to Jesse Reyes, marketing and advertising manager with Rulon. The plant currently employs about 140 people.

The expansion will increase the footprint of the 85,000-square-foot facility by another 20,000 square feet. Rulon International, which produces custom wood ceilings and acoustical wood walls, moved its headquarters 15 years ago from Brunswick, Georgia, to the World Commerce Center in northern St. Augustine.

"The company was growing at such a high rate that we were outgrowing that location [in Georgia]," Reyes said. "Now, we are looking at that [issue] again. The economic climate is good for us moving into the future and to hire new employees."

Reyes said many of the company's clients include performing arts centers, universities, museums, airports and governmental buildings.

The St. Johns County Commission recently approved a \$129,000 economic incentive package for the expansion, which was approved July 18. The \$3 million project will add additional floor space and material storage areas.

Reyes said incentives by the county and state made continued investment in the facility a no-brainer.

Melissa Glasgow, St. Johns County director of economic development, said companies like Rulon International typically pay higher wages for skilled positions and provide a greater capital investment, which boosts the commercial tax base.

“Therefore, to compete on a national — and international — stage, it is important to have a flexible economic incentive program to vie for targeted operations like corporate headquarters and manufacturing facilities to locate in our community,” Glasgow said.