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Granite adds more than 100 jobs in Quincy in the past year

Granite Telecommunications has added at least 100 jobs to its Quincy work force within the past year as the company continues to land new corporate clients eager to save money and consolidate their phone bills.

Granite CEO Rob Hale said his company now employs about 775 people, including about 725 at its North Quincy headquarters. The company's revenues climbed from \$355 million in 2008 to \$437 million in 2009, and they're on track to exceed \$500 million this year.

Granite works with clients that have many locations, such as big national retail chains, to combine their numerous landline phones into a single account. The move streamlines bill paying and allows Granite to offer clients a discount over what they would pay on a location-by-location basis.

Hale said big chains such as Wal-Mart, CVS or Walgreens can save \$60 to \$80 a month, per store, on their phone bills. That's one reason Granite thrived during the recession.

"We're fortunate that, in this economy, we present savings as part of our solution," Hale said. "Obviously, in this economy, savings are more important than ever."

Hale said the two biggest remaining Baby Bell companies, AT&T and Verizon, are more focused on growing their wireless operations and not as interested in landline accounts for businesses.

"Their lack of interest is opportunity for us," Hale said. "Yes, landlines are tapering off. But there are millions of them and will be millions of them for years to come."

The company is still being creative in the ways it addresses its parking shortage in North Quincy; plans for a garage that would have been partially funded by the state fell through more than a year ago. Among other things, Granite leases about 100 spaces during the day from an adjacent restaurant.

Granite essentially has been expanding since it was founded in 2002. The company outgrew its old headquarters on Copeland Street and moved into its North Quincy building in 2006. Hale said it's important to keep the company in Quincy, partly because nearly 30 percent of Granite's headquarters employees live in the city.

With the local work force growing by more than 15 percent in the past year alone, Granite has quickly become one of Quincy's top employers. In recognition of the company's successes, Ernst & Young last month named Hale one of its "Entrepreneurs of the Year" for the New England region.

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