



# Time For Another Location?

## Dealers share advice for when & how to expand

Compiled by: Brent Hoskins, Office Technology Magazine

Following are two related questions submitted by a dealer member as part of BTA's Dealers Helping Dealers resource and many of the answers received. These answers and many others can be found in the members-only section of the BTA website. Visit [www.bta.org/DealersHelpingDealers](http://www.bta.org/DealersHelpingDealers). You will need your username and password to access this member resource.



### When is a good time to open a second location? Is it better to look into buying a smaller dealership?

"We have been looking at acquisitions of small dealerships as a means of expanding into new markets. However, we have also looked into second locations in areas we had a footprint in and started by establishing remote teams, followed by dedicated sales to get to a point of having another office presence."

*Nicholas Hinton, vice president of service  
imageOne, Oak Park, Michigan*

"When the MIF in that area justifies it. We have taken advantage of coworking spaces to help build an identity in the new area. Buying a business will help you grow more quickly."

*Mike Williams, president/owner  
iTech, Parkersburg, West Virginia*

"If buying a dealership, we have found it to be most effective if their manufacturing partner(s) align with ours. 'Flipping their base' is a lot easier said than done. And taking on that manufacturing partner as a new line needs to be scrutinized carefully."

*John Hastings, executive vice president, Imaging Division  
Loffler Companies Inc., St. Louis Park, Minnesota*

"If you are spread (sales territory) more than 60 miles from your location you may want to think about opening a second location. Buying a smaller dealership is a good idea if it has a good customer base to work with."

*Duffie Sams, owner  
Duffie's Copier Consultants LLC, Forest City, North Carolina*

"[A good time to open a second location is] when your processes are structured and sound, when your people and culture are strongly within your values, and when you have a strategic

game plan of expansion because you already feel confident with the market share of the existing market in which you operate."

*Brantly Fowler, co-president  
Zeno Office Solutions Inc., Lubbock, Texas*

"We opened a separate location organically and just recently purchased a company. Purchase if you can. There is a significant difference."

*Chris Stroud, vice president of sales  
Accent Imaging, Raleigh, North Carolina*

"Our experience is buying another dealership and MIF makes for success. [It is] too difficult to start from scratch with no MIF to support salespeople. Success takes far too long and the cost is too high. Sales rep turnover would be too great if you are not providing significant monetary guarantees, even if sales production is low."

*Richard Van Dyke, president  
Advanced Office, Irvine, California*

"I would recommend buying a smaller dealership. You will be able to run the admin through your main office, which should make it profitable right away."

*James George, president  
Donnellon McCarthy Enterprises Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio*

"It's better to buy a second location."

*Jeffrey Foley, co-owner  
Apollo Office Systems, Alvin, Texas*

"With the current environment and clicks slowing down, the best way to speed up growth is not only through organic growth, but also looking into buying more clicks through acquisitions."

*Brice Renegar, Pure Technology director  
Kelly Office Solutions, Winston-Salem, North Carolina*

Do you have a question for your fellow dealers? If so, email it to [brent@bta.org](mailto:brent@bta.org) with the subject line: "Dealers Helping Dealers." BTA will then share your question with the full dealer membership with a request for guidance from your fellow dealers. ■

*Brent Hoskins, executive director of the Business Technology Association, is editor of Office Technology magazine. He can be reached at [brent@bta.org](mailto:brent@bta.org) or (816) 303-4040.*