

This tech company is opening a call center for 400 workers—in Naperville

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One of Chicago's most closely watched growth-stage tech companies is planning a big expansion—in the suburbs.

SMS Assist, which specializes in coordinating maintenance providers for businesses with multiple locations, has opened a call center in Naperville that could employ up to 400 people. The company has subleased 35,000 square feet in CityGate Centre near Interstate 88 and Route 59. It will open the facility at 2135 CityGate Lane next month with about 30 workers, says [CEO Taylor Rhodes](#).

SMS, a unicorn company valued at more than \$1 billion, [raised \\$150 million two years ago](#) and is widely seen as an IPO candidate. It employs about 850 workers, most of them at its headquarters at 875 N. Michigan Ave. (the former John Hancock Building), up from 700 a year ago, Rhodes said.

“This is purely about expansion space,” he said. “We love the Hancock. But the Hancock is a skyscraper. We’re looking for something more open, for greater collaboration for customer service.”

SMS is expanding in the burbs at a time when suburban companies, such as McDonald's, continue to migrate downtown in search of labor. A handful of companies—such as Motorola Solutions, [Walgreens](#), Fieldglass and startup Catalytic—have locations in both the city and suburbs.

“You get a lot of great talent downtown,” Rhodes said. “There are other pools of people who look favorably at not having to get on a train and come downtown. We studied quite a few spaces before choosing this one. The labor, proximity to college-educated folks, the mix of type of talent was right. It also gives us a second site, which helps with disaster-recovery requirements.”