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Four Lancaster city businesses—Sir Speedy Printing, CDstock.com (formerly Cicero/Donnelly Photography), Diversified Machine and Kerr Glass Manufacturing—played musical chairs recently to help each solve a space problem. Pictured from top to bottom are CDstock.com at 841 N. Prince St., Sir Speedy Printing at 854 N. Prince St., Diversified Machine, and Diversified Machine's new space.



Intelligencer Journal photo by Barry Zecher



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Let's make a deal

City businesses find four-way swap that solves their space problems, at least for now

BY PATRICK BURNS

Intelligencer Journal Staff

Like an episode of the popular cable TV show "Trading Spaces," several Lancaster companies recently swapped locations and added space to their growing businesses.

Four Lancaster businesses — Sir Speedy Printing, CDstock.com (formerly Cicero/Donnelly Photography), Diversified Machine and Kerr Glass Manufacturing Corp.

—linked together in a string of real estate transactions assisted by the city and a pair of real estate businesses.

W. Edwin Miller, a commercial real estate agent with Remax Associates of Lancaster, and Rich Heslin and Dan Burger of Commercial Industrial Brokers Inc. worked closely with Charles H. Maneval III, director of Economic Development to facilitate the transactions.

Despite their varying situations, each business was committed to staying within the city, said Miller.

"It is a unique situation. I've never seen anything like this before," Miller said. It all started with Mary Kohler, whose Sir

Speedy Printing business shared the building in the 800 block of North Prince Street for 13 years with CDstock.com, a commercial photography company.

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Deal: Space swaps benefit four city businesses

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In case of perfect timing, Kohler—also the owner of the building—happened to be looking to expand Sir Speedy at the same time CDstock.com owners Brian Donnelly and Steve Cicero needed more-space.

“Within two Businesses looking to expand in the same building something had to give,” Donnelly said.

CDstock.com had to go , but it didn’t have to far. Miller suggested the Donnelly simply had to look out the window to find a suitable building.

Diversifies Machine Co., located directly across Prince Street from Kohler’s property, had also grown too large for its building and owners Jim and Tammy Hains were seeking a bigger building to house its large machines.

So, with the help of Miller, CDstock.com purchased Diversified’s 6,000-squar-foot machine shop property for \$315,000. Meanwhile, Sir Speedy increased its Businesses by 30 percent by going from 15,000 to 20,000 square feet.

Both Kohler and Donnelly said their businesses had survived the recent economics downturn well, and they both believe being in the city benefits their businesses.

“We were planning on expanding before the poor economy, Kohler said. “When things were and our businesses didn’t rise or fall, it

stayed about the same. But now we’re finding new businesses all over Lancaster and central Pennsylvania, and we need more space.

Donnelly and Cicero has scouted around the city for a new location in 1989 for almost a year before landing office space inside the Sir Speedy building that formerly housed a burlap bag printing company, the company took off as the Internet boomed.

Donnelly said electronic image technology has helped grow the stock photography business, which sells photographs from a large inventory acquired during 23 years in business. CDstock.com sells Images to advertisers and marketing companies.

“All of the major stock agencies still use the traditional paper method, but once buyers are equipped with the right technology, they prefer to receive the files electronically, Donnelly said.

“After cleaning about 20 layers of grease and grime, all we had to do was paint, Donnelly said. “Most places we would have gone to would require a lot more work and could cost up to \$100,000 to renovate. This has high ceilings and the wide open spaces you can’t even find in warehouses.

Before Miller linked CDstock.com with Diversified, He introduces Jim and Tammy Haines to Heslin a Commercial Industrial Brokers. Though they had

considered moving Diversified to various vacant downtown facilities, Heslin found a quick sale in the Kerr Glass Manufacturing Co. facility on 430 N. Franklin St.

Miller and Haines paid \$850,000 for a 66,000-squar-foot building, know as Kerr Building 25 Diversified is currently occupying only about 22,000 square feet of the building, but hopes to utilities more of it as of the business continues to grow.

“It’s a perfect building for us; everything is here - an overhead crane, electric, compressors... The building was used for pharmaceuticals, so everything had to be sterile; even the doorknobs are stainless,” Jim Hains said.

Diversified, a sprint car component manufacturer, had watched its business grow exponentially since it opened 10 years ago in Jim Haines, Mannheim Township garage. Despite renovating the Prince street Building twice—doubling its size only two years ago—the company outgrew it.

“I don’t know what people are talking about; the economy has been good to us, said Jim Haines. “Racing is very hot item. We’re just finishing the season, so teams are rebuilding, and in Australia the season is just starting, so they’ll need parts.”

Specializing in magnesium, aluminum, titanium, and steel components, Diversified splits its business about evenly between tradi-

tional machine work and racecars. Diversified makes a complete kit for building sprint cars from the frame up while operating as a “job” shop, having the ability to quickly make specialized parts for area business.

Kerr Groupe Inc., which closes its plastic-bottle manufacturing business at the Franklin Street facility in 2000, still owns other building and about nine acres there. It continues to operate its corporate headquarters in New Holland.

Miller said the City of Lancaster helped expedite the real estate transactions by rapidly coordinating the efforts of the streets, water, fire, building and electrical inspections departments.

Keppin Sir Speedy, Cdstock.com and Diversifies Machine in the city helped maintain at least 47 jobs and provided growth space that is projected to create 39 new jobs over the next two years, Miller said.

“It’s great just to be part of a project where everything works out perfectly for a large group of interconnected real estate deals; it’s not something that happens every day,” Miller said.

“The City was also very helpful and contributed to make it a success for everyone involved. The mayor’s administration was very helpful in resolving the many problems and concerns which arose.”