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Domain bucks N. Austin office trend

Leasing activity strong in upscale project

Austin Business Journal - by [Kate Harrington](#) ABJ Staff

When **Convio Inc.** took a lease in Domain 5 in July 2007, its decision was shaped in part by the master-planned development's future allure of a dense community.

Now that retailers and restaurants are filling in space in the posh Domain, that vision has helped prompt the company's decision to move its Austin headquarters completely into Domain 5, one of **Endeavor Real Estate Group's** two multitenant office buildings in The Domain.

"From employees' perspective, as it's growing, it's getting a mini-downtown feel," said Convio spokesman Tad Druart. "Some employees have apartments right across the street" in The Domain.

In January, Convio expanded from 67,000 square feet in Domain 5 to 90,000 square feet. Druart said Convio, which employs 275 in Austin, will add employees with the move, but declined to say how many.

Convio's expansion along with a new December 2008 lease from **Kingsisle Entertainment Inc.** for 18,000 square feet brings the 180,000-square-foot Domain 5's occupancy rate to 98 percent, from 35 percent leased 18 months ago, said Travis Dunaway, a vice president of office and industrial leasing with Endeavor.

Russell Young and Mike Kennedy of Commercial Texas represented Convio. John Childers, vice president with **Jones Lang LaSalle** in Austin, represented Kingsisle. Dunaway and Jonathan Tate, also a vice president of office and industrial leasing with Endeavor, represented the landlord.

Given that the last 18 months have seen a significant amount of office space added to North Austin and high vacancy rates, Dunaway said he's more than pleased with The Domain's draw.

According to a January report from Oxford Commercial, the vacancy rate in the north Austin office market has hovered at about 17 percent in 2007 and 2008.

"What we're hearing from decision makers and experiencing on the ground is that The Domain possesses a unique combination of location, building quality and amenity base that helps companies recruit and retain talent," Dunaway said.

Domain 2, Endeavor's other existing Domain office building, has leased about 114,500 square feet out of its 150,000-square-foot total. The Texas Culinary Academy is the major tenant in that building. And the 92,000-square-foot The Offices at The Domain, developed by **Simon Property Group Inc.** (NYSE: SPG), has also seen steady leasing activity since its first leases in March 2007, said Greg Johnson, a vice president at **Transwestern**. Transwestern is handling the leasing for that building and a second Offices at The Domain office building that is under construction.

Johnson said that with a 7,600-square-foot lease from **Absolute Software Corp.** in December, The Offices at The Domain is 70 percent full.

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Nick Simonite

Bleu River Chef Greg Ritter takes the order of several Convio employees who said The Domain is a great place to work due to its amenities.

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