

Executive Summary

Location Considerations for Software Companies

Baldwin County offers a unique set of assets for software publishing/development and data processing. Among these assets are the following: Telecommunications Infrastructure and Utilities, Quality of Life, Workforce and Training, Incentives, Available Buildings and Sites, and Great Transportation.

Telecommunications Infrastructure and Utilities

- Two Common Carriers in Baldwin County (BellSouth, GulfTel).
- Long Distant Carriers: AT&T, BellSouth, GulfTel, MCI, Sprint.
- Dark Fiber recently installed along major highways.
 - 264-mile sonet ring from Mobile to Pensacola.
 - 150-mile sonet ring in Baldwin County, Alabama.
- Redundancy available along major highways (Sonet Ring).
- Digital and Analog Central Offices.
- 16 ISPs Serving Baldwin County.
- Reasonable Cost, Reliable Electric Power.
- Self-Healing Networks.
- Favorable Regulatory Climate.
- Highest Switching Capacity: OC 192.
- Four Points of Presence in the County.

Workforce and Training:

Workforce Advantages

- Alabama is a Right-to-Work state.
- Low percentage of unionized workforce and no white-collar unions.
- A growing civilian workforce (63.5% growth since 1990).
- 2,717 people employed in the Baldwin County area that work in the software and computer industry which is 12% of the states workforce.
- 8,000 people employed in 504 businesses.
- Area Active Employment Applications on file: 16,863 (July 2004).
- Wage rates below the national average and competitive with other major cities for software and computer positions.
- 61,908 college students enrolled in the Baldwin County area.
- 3,759 college graduates at seven local colleges and universities provide a source of employment.
- Software College Graduates, 2004: 343
- Employee Benefits:
 - A percentage of compensation for the software industry in the Mobile/Baldwin area is 20 percent.

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Training:

- **Education**
 - **South Baldwin Center for Technology:** Offers the CISCO Network Academy Program and the Network Academy Program on the principles and practice of networking.
 - **Faulkner State Community College:** Offers Associates in Computer Technology and Computer science as well as several certificates.
 - **Southeast College of Technology:** Offers several programs such as Computer Information Services, Computer Network Technology and Internet Information Systems.
 - **University of South Alabama:** Offers degrees in Computer Sciences, Information Systems, E-Commerce and Computer Engineering.
 - **University of Mobile:** Offers a degree in Computer Information Services.
 - **Pensacola Junior College:** Offers associate degrees in Computer Information Services, Computer Science, Computer Programming and Network Services Technology.
 - **George Stone Vo-Tec:** Offers certificates in Network Support services, and a CISCO Networking Academy.

Incentive Plan:

- Infrastructure Development Grants for Renovating a Building or for Site Preparation.
- Property Tax Abatement up to 10 Years on Land, Building, Machinery, and Equipment.
- Sales and Use Tax Abatement on Construction Materials and Equipment Placed in Service.
- Low Interest and Zero Interest Loans.
- Venture/Seed Capital Network.
- Business Incubator Program.
- Other Federal, State, and Local Incentives:
 - State Capital Income Tax Credits of 5% of Capital Investment for 20 Years to Offset State Income Tax Liability.
 - Waiver on the Cost of Certain Local Fees.
 - Employee Intangible Incentives for Relocating Employees that Include Discounted Banking, Moving, Printing, and Hotel Services for House Hunting.
- Workforce Training Incentives:
 - AIDT: Helps new or expanding companies find and train workers at no cost to the company. AIDT specializes in program development, recruiting, assessing and training potential employees, providing on-the-job training, developing and

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producing training materials and videos, and locating facilities and delivering customized service.

- Alabama's Career Center System: Provides On-The-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and Customized Training to train employees who are upgrading their job skills at a low or no cost to the employer who meet eligibility criteria.
- Work Keys Program: A system administered by Faulkner State Community College that determines the skills and training needs required by employers, assesses individuals' proficiency in those skills and provides guidance in building those skills.
- Alabama Technology Network: Helps businesses to improve competitiveness through technical assistance, workforce training and technology transfer. ATN links the business with universities, colleges, businesses and government to improve efficiency and productivity.

Available Buildings:

- Reasonably Priced Space.\
 - Class A:
 - 6 buildings.
 - Between 750 to 8,250 square feet.
 - Lease rate between \$12.00 to \$16.50 per square feet.
 - Class B
 - 11 buildings
 - Between 1,500 to 38,189 square feet.
 - Lease rate between \$10.00 to \$12.50 per square feet.
 - Class C
 - 6 buildings.
 - Between 1,800 to 34,000 square feet.
 - Lease Rate between \$6.00 to \$8.00.

Available Sites/Parks:

	Location	Acres	Price
Daphne Business Park.	Daphne	56	\$24,000 - \$87,000
Daphne Commerce Park.	Daphne	40	\$42,500 to \$65,000
Daphne Commerce and Technology Center.	Daphne	215	\$25,000
Public Parks			
• Barin Field	Foley	350	\$20,000
• Bay Minette Airport Commerce Park	Bay Minette	110	\$15,000
• Robertsdale Industrial Park	Robertsdale	23	\$15,000

- Local authority build-to-suit, lease back options available.

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Great Transportation

- Central Time Zone - allows non-stop coverage of all U.S. Time Zones.
- Two interstate highways.
- Location is between two regional airports that fly to major business centers such as Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Houston, Nashville, and St. Louis.
- Award winning county public transportation system.
- Four general aviation airports.
- UPS terminal located in the County.
- Postal Service: 1st Class.

Quality of Life

Baldwin County's Quality of Life is high but the cost of living is not.

- EASI Quality of Life Index 178 (US Average 100)
- EASI Cultural Index 152 (US Average 100)
- Monster.com Cost of Living Index 62 (US Average 100)
- ACCRA cost of Living Index 89 (US Average 100)
- Great public school system
 - Stanford Achievement Test scores (measure of academic performance) have been above the national average for the past six years.
 - ACT scores have exceeded state and national averages for the past eleven years.
- Higher Education – There are five higher education institutions in Baldwin County.
- Three hospitals in Baldwin County and nine additional hospitals in the area.
- Abundant recreational opportunities.
 - 32 miles of gulf beaches and 26 miles of bay waterfront.
 - 18 championship golf courses located in Baldwin County.
 - Red Snapper Capital of the World
 - Regional renown Shrimp Festival and Fairhope's Arts and Crafts Festival.