

SoCal party rental company to open office in Northgate area

Classic Party Rentals works with local clients through Modesto office

KELLY JOHNSON | STAFF WRITER

A national company that rents supplies for events as simple as a birthday party or as elaborate as the Academy Awards is expanding in Sacramento.

It's the first time Classic Party Rentals has started a stand-alone office from

Classic Party Rentals

Headquarters: El Segundo

Founded: 1997

Operating units:

36 in 12 states, plus Washington, D.C.

Employees: More than 3,000

Annual revenue: More than \$300 million

Same-store sales growth: Fiscal-year

2008, 7 percent;

fiscal-year 2007, 11

percent

Web site:

classicpartyrentals.com

scratch rather than acquiring a business to enter a market. The industry's only national player had three people in a downtown office that was a satellite of its Modesto branch, but in early December the company expects to launch in the Northgate area of Sacramento with at least 25 workers.

The 26,000-square-foot site, leased last week, could employ as many as 100 within a year or two, said Loren Marple, general manager of

Modesto and Sacramento.

El Segundo-based Classic Party Rentals has enough Greater Sacramento business to keep staffers making deliveries from Modesto five days a week, Marple said. The company can attract many more local customers with a full-service office, staff and rental equipment based here, he said. Besides Modesto, the company has Northern California offices in Napa and San Francisco.

Classic Party Rentals completed 12 acquisitions last year and seven this year, but Sacramento is its first ever startup location, Marple said.

The new location at 900 National Drive is being subleased from Superior Pool Products LLC; Matt Cologna and Bryce MacDonald of Grubb & Ellis Co. represented Classic Party Rentals in the deal, while Ben Caputo of Colliers International represented Superior.

STIFF COMPETITION

Even with the economic slump, Classic

Party Rentals considers Greater Sacramento to be a great market with a lot of business potential. "We want to be a part of it," Marple said.

The arrival of the national operator could challenge the smaller outfits in town, said Lisa Hurley, editor of Special Events, the industry's trade magazine.

"On one hand they raise the profile of the industry," she said. "They certainly draw attention to the business."

But Classic Party Rentals also "can be a formidable competitor," Hurley said.

Event planners and caterers gravitate to Classic Party Rentals because they can get everything they need — down to specific types of glasses or flatware — from a single provider. "The level of sophistication they bring is pretty great," she added.

Classic Party Rentals can provide everything from tents and dance floors to custom lighting and its own line of furniture and china, Marple said.

He estimated that 70 percent of its business is corporate accounts, with the balance from private parties.

It is not unusual for people who attend an event supplied by Classic Party Rentals to want to one-up their hosts by hiring the company themselves for their next event, Hurley said.

LOCAL PLAYERS

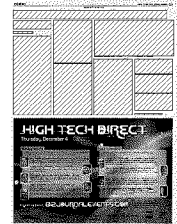
Nancy Vasquez expects Classic Party Rentals will have little impact on her business. Vasquez is president of Made in the Shade, a family-run company in West Sacramento that rents tents and other supplies for special events. Made in the Shade occupies 20,000 square feet indoors and 10,000 more in outdoor storage.

The "strength in our business is the owner on-site," she said. Customers appreciate that they can reach her at any time.

They also like the personal attention they get with a local company, said Donny Vasquez, marketing and event specialist.

Made in the Shade, which expects sales to grow 10 percent this year, has access to tables, chair, linens and other supplies through its relatively new sister company Tableaux Event Rental, and additional event supplies through an agreement with Hartmann Studios.

The Sacramento Sports Commission



has used Classic Party Rentals for its NCAA track and field competitions and other events. The company offered favorable prices and was reliable, said John McCasey, executive director of the sports commission.

Monty Montgomery, co-owner of All Seasons All Reasons Catering in Sacramento,

said he's been waiting for a full-blown Classic Party Rentals shop in Sacramento. He already uses the company every week and appreciates staffers' professionalism and the deep inventory. He uses other rental supply companies if there's a chance he'll need last-minute items and can't wait for them to be delivered from Modesto.

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Classic Party Rentals provided the tent and other equipment for this recent private party in the Sacramento area.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CLASSIC PARTY RENTALS