

Square Footage

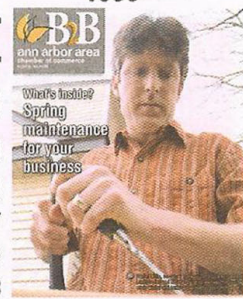
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Good karma for ex-Google space

SQUARE FOOTAGE

Paula Gardner



Attention follows Google wherever it goes in Ann Arbor.

Now that the company has moved its 50 or so employees to new offices in McKinley Towne Centre, many of us are looking for clues about what that new office may be like, how many people are there and just how cool the space is becoming.

Whatever is happening there – the company won't talk about it – symbolizes hope for the city's economic well being. Now, with the new office, Google has rooted itself in Ann Arbor.

But it also left an impact in the former office on South Main Street, above Vinology, where the Adwords division made its home for about six months after announcing that it would move to Ann Arbor.

I know nothing about feng shui, but I have to believe that any tech company could get a good vibe off of leasing the offices behind Google. The downtown location, exposed brick walls and high-tech wiring help, too.

Apparently, others agree. "Some people who are interested in office space are looking at the office because Google was there," said Greg Lobdell, an owner of the building. "It drew them to take a look at the space."

After all, if the space and technology met Google's standards, it can't be bad.

Lobdell and his partners – including restaurateur Jon Carlson – bought the building a few years ago and reworked the former Mayer-Schairer office supply store into a ground-floor restaurant, two office floors and an upper level condo that involved some new construction.

Timing on the project was nearly perfect, Lobdell said. Vinology moved in about a year ago, then the Google deal materialized as the upper floors neared completion. "We didn't have it vacant there for long," Lobdell said. "The timing worked out great."

Since then, media attention died down. So did the public's curiosity. But excitement about the space remains, Lobdell said.

The 7,000-square-foot space returned to the market, listed by Colliers International for \$29 per square foot.

"It was great having Google in our space," Lobdell said. "It's definitely made people in town aware of the building."

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