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How Antioch Checks All the Boxes

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Jennifer Grant, General Manager,
Markstein Sales Co.

Midway between Silicon Valley and Sacramento, Antioch, California, affords businesses and residents a more affordable location with easy access to the Greater Bay Area and the state capital. Located on the San Joaquin River, the city is about an hour's drive east of the Bay Area, and it's served by the BART commuter rail.

One of Antioch's oldest and largest companies is beverage distributor Markstein Sales Co., which has expanded and consolidated substantially over the years. In the following interview, Jennifer Grant, General Manager, explains how the city and its location have been central to the company's success.

Markstein Sales Co. has an impressive history and presence in Antioch. Can you provide an overview of the business — how it has grown over the years, for example, in terms of facilities and employees?

Grant: The company began over 100 years ago, in 1919, when Albert R. Markstein, Sr. bought a horse, wagon and six cases of beer to start the business. The company is now run by his granddaughter, Laura Markstein, and she moved the company headquarters to Antioch in 2007. Prior to that, Markstein Sales Co. was in multiple locations throughout the East Bay, but with continued success and expansion, we outgrew the other facilities. When we were looking for the best community in which to build, Antioch was at the top of the list because they were welcoming, fast and efficient, and it has remained that way ever since.

Markstein Sales Co. is one of the few beer and beverage distributors that is woman-owned and woman-managed, and that type of diversity is welcomed in Antioch. The company continues to grow, and we currently have 220 team members after our most recent acquisitions. We service over 3,000 retail accounts in Contra

Costa and Alameda Counties, and we sell, merchandise and deliver over 5 million cases of beer and beverages each year. Our headquarters is 123,000 square feet with space to grow.

Why has the company not relocated elsewhere in northern California during this time?

Grant: With the strict regulations surrounding beer distribution, our working territory is well defined, and we must locate our business within those parameters. That being said, the company was previously located in different cities throughout the region, but once we settled in Antioch in 2007, we've never wanted to leave.

The City of Antioch has been a tremendous supporter and they are committed to the economic development of the area and helping businesses and residents have the best chance at success.

How do the Antioch area's logistics assets (river, highway, etc.) factor into the company's ability to grow over the years?

Grant: Antioch is centrally located for a large portion of Northern California. We have easy access to the larger cities like San Francisco and Oakland and we are accessible to shipping companies near Sacramento. As for driving, Antioch provides easy access to Highways 680, 4 and 580. And if we ever need rail access, there is a railway located behind our building.

We are literally on the road every day of the week and we appreciate Antioch's location and infrastructure to help us reach our 3,000-plus customers.

How accessible are the workers Markstein requires, especially as functions become more automated?

Grant: Antioch is a great location for finding incredibly talented team members. It is a hard-working community that values a strong work ethic, community relationships and the desire to always keep learning, growing and helping others. Many of our team



members grew up here, and we are so glad to be located in one of the most affordable areas in the Bay Area, where our team members have better access to housing and shorter commutes.

As for functions becoming more automated, we are one of those businesses that can improve efficiencies and processes through technology, but the core of what we do is based on human relationships. From loading and stocking shelves, to building displays to interacting with customers and suppliers, everything we do is personal. Even when just stocking shelves, there is so much more to it. Sometimes a customer has a question. All of that requires human interaction.

We are proud to provide solid jobs and job development for our team members and the commitment to our customers that they always have someone they can talk with directly.

What are the primary ways a location in Antioch helps Markstein and other companies be successful?

Grant: In addition to what we've already mentioned, one of Antioch's greatest assets is the supportive community that

includes the city government and the community groups.

The City of Antioch is focused on economic development, and they work to attract new businesses and give ongoing help to those of us already here. We chose to build our headquarters here because the City was so easy to work with, fair, responsive and saw our value. We are now one of the largest private businesses in Antioch and strong advocates of this town.

The community groups located here are absolutely the best. They have been helpful and supportive from day one, and Markstein Sales Co. is committed to doing the same for them. We donate time, money, product and energy to multiple community organizations, and the entire Markstein team participates. We are involved with local groups and truly feel honored to give back to this community that has given us so much. ▼

This Investment Profile has been prepared under the auspices of the City of Antioch. For more information, contact Bret Sweet, Economic Development Program Manager, at (925) 779-6168, or visit www.antiochisopportunity.com