

PI buys HQ, plans to expand in W-S

Piedmont has made a series of real estate transactions that will enable us to expand in Winston-Salem and add about 300 jobs in 1988 in the community. Chairman Bill Howard made the transactions public January 12 following a meeting of Piedmont's board of directors.

The transactions include:

- The purchase of our seven-story corporate headquarters building, One Piedmont Plaza, and the adjacent seven-story office building, Two Piedmont Plaza, as well as a 797-space parking deck and additional parking lots. The property was purchased from First Associates, a partnership in Winston-Salem, from whom Piedmont has been leasing One Piedmont Plaza.
- First Associates has purchased 17.35 acres from Piedmont in order to develop property near our Winston-Salem reservations center on Griffith Road. The transaction includes the center which we now lease from First Associates. First Associates will construct a 110,000-square-foot office building and parking deck on a portion of the property and lease a substantial portion of the building to us.
- The construction of a three-story addition to our reservations computer center at Madison Park. The 68,280-square-foot building will be constructed by The Shelton Companies, in

addition to a new parking deck at Madison Park. We will lease this building from The Shelton Companies.

"We're very excited about the new reservations support building," Don Shanks, vice president-customer relations, said. "It will accommodate support areas for reservations and, at the same time, free-up agent positions at all six of our reservations centers, all at a considerable cost savings for us."

When the building opens late this year, about 1,000 employees in international, rates, customer service, queues, frequent flyer, ticket-by-mail, groups and tours, schedule change, and the CRC departments will work in the new facility. Most of these departments are currently located at Madison Park.

"One of the reasons for moving these departments from Madison Park is that the space is needed by revenue accounting," Leonard Martin, senior vice president-passenger services, said. Revenue accounting has grown from 159 employees at the close of 1982 to the current 367. The department occupies three of five floors of Building C at Madison Park. By the end of this year employees will number well over 420 and be in need of the remaining two floors.

The new five-story reservations building will be next door to INTRO. The parking deck will

add approximately 1,150 parking spaces giving us a total of 1,600 for employees working in both locations.

The new three-story building at Madison Park will be immediately adjacent and attached to our present computer reservations center. There will be access between the two structures on the first floor.

"All three floors will be designed for computers," Ted Celentino, vice president-computer and communications services, explained. "By the end of the second quarter of 1987, our present building will be at capacity and we will need this additional space."

"Initially, only the first floor, which will house computers, will be used. Later in 1988 we will move people to the third floor. The second floor will be for future growth."

Construction has already begun at Madison Park on the six-story, 1,380-space parking deck, located across from the entrance to our computer reservations center. Employees are currently using a remote parking lot with shuttle service.

Construction of both the new facility at Madison Park and the office building near INTRO will begin next month with completion of both projects set for the end of the year.

Baggage CAREsystem makes it easier to give good service

"I can't find my luggage."

With over two million passengers traveling on Piedmont each month who either check or carry-on an estimated four million pieces of baggage, losses do occur.

Now employees have a new, fully-automated tracking system, Piedmont's Baggage CAREsystem, which is aiding them in their work. For the agent, the system cuts down on paperwork and helps provide better and faster customer service. For the customer, the system is much more efficient and gives him or her answers now in minutes instead of days. For Piedmont, the system reduces complaints and costs resulting from mishandled baggage.

"Agents really like the program," Cam Morgan, GSO agent, said. "It cuts down on paperwork and does what we previously had to do manually."

Cil Ward, MIA agent, agrees. "It's easy to work with and does a good job simplifying our work."

"I like it for a number of reasons," ORF Agent Glenn Stanley explained. "First, when a passenger reports lost baggage, we can usually locate his bag on the spot through the tracking system, and then tell him exactly where the bag is. Also the new system generates messages on its own to other stations and makes automatic matches. It's a good system for us."

The opportunity to design our own automated Baggage CARE-system came in the fall of 1985 when we opened our new computer reservations center at Madison Park.

"Eastern, who had handled our reservations system for a number of years, did not have room in its system to handle a baggage management program," Allen Johnson, director-baggage services, said.

"Having our own computer reservations system opened the doors

for the new Baggage CAREsystem. Phase One of the program has been to get the system up and in place, and we accomplished this objective in late January when the last of our stations cut over to the new system. During Phase Two, we plan to get a handle on baggage problems at each station and determine how best to deal with them."

In the new Baggage CAREsystem, a fill-in-the-blank form appears on the screen. An agent just completes the form with individual passenger information, and the baggage is then traced in-house. If not found, it automatically goes into Easy Trac, a primary industry-wide baggage tracing system. If the baggage is still not located, the system goes to ACTS, the Airline Computerized Tracing System.

"In the past, agents have had to fill out parts of the reports manually. The new system increases productivity and automatically gives them access to information quickly. It's really a problem-solving system for us," Johnson said.

Piedmont purchased the software program from another airline in the spring of 1986 and began installing it into our computer reservations system last July. By late September, the system was ready to be tested, and training classes, held in Winston-Salem and Syracuse, began the following month.

Employees in many areas of the company are responsible for successfully getting the program off the ground, Johnson noted.

Ed Wright, manager-applications development, worked with Johnson to determine baggage services' needs. Programmer/Analyst Lou Kirk was the team leader for the project; Nick Thomas, senior analyst; and Ben Keith, chief programmer. Tommy Jonas served as baggage services coordinator. Sky Day, manager-training stations,



Above: (standing, l to r) Lou Kirk, team leader; Ben Keith, chief programmer; Tommy Jonas, baggage services coordinator; Ed Wright, applications manager; and (seated) Nick Thomas, senior analyst; are responsible for putting together the computer program. Left: Instructor Jim Martin (standing) shows agents Connie Parks, JAX, and Ron Archer, SDF, how to use the system.

and Eric Morgan, instructor-station training, coordinated the training program.

"The basic system is now in place with many enhancements yet to come," Wright said. "We had an ambitious schedule. To install a program of this magnitude can take up to a year. We received support from many departments,

especially systems, data base and coverage whose cooperation proved to be the key to our success."

Thomas added: "Our job is to help make it easier for employees to give good customer service. The new system does just that."