

Over 600 Amazon.com jobs for W. Valley

by **J. Craig Anderson** - Jun. 18, 2008 12:02 PM
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Online retailers promise to make 2008 a better year for Goodyear by bringing nearly 2,000 new jobs to the house-poor city.

Amazon.com, a subsidiary of Seattle-based Internet retailer Amazon.com Inc. announced plans Wednesday to open a 500,000-square-foot order fulfillment center in Goodyear, adding more than 600 full-time jobs to the local economy.

The company expects to fill another 700 temporary positions during the holiday season.

Amazon.com's announcement comes just a month after Cincinnati-based Macy's Inc. opened a similar facility for its e-commerce businesses, hiring a workforce of 150 with plans to expand that number to at least 500.

Amazon.com officials said the company has leased a warehouse at 16920 W. Commerce Drive. It would be the second Valley facility operated by Amazon.com, which opened a fulfillment center in [Phoenix](#) in the fall.

Goodyear officials say Amazon.com, a Fortune 500 company with more than \$10 billion in annual sales, could provide a significant boost with its jobs and tax revenue.

"This is a huge deal for Goodyear," city spokeswoman Nora Fascenelli said.

Goodyear economic development director Harry Paxton said city officials are working hard to bring in new employers and broaden

the community's economic base, which is heavily skewed toward the now-struggling housing industry.

In addition to e-commerce, leaders of the West Valley city also are courting professional services, biotech and other high-technology firms, he said.

"It's important to be balanced," Paxton said.

Amazon.com spokeswoman Patty Smith said the West Valley is a good fit for her company because of its proximity to southern [California](#) and abundance of skilled workers.

Smith did not know the pay range for jobs in the planned Goodyear facility but said wages would be competitive with what similar businesses in the market are paying. She said that Amazon.com offers company stock and health-care benefits to all employees.

Amazon.com has dozens of fulfillment centers all over the world for faster delivery of its products, which include books, music and software.

"We want to get the products close to where

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our customers live," she said.

Arizona State University economist Tom Rex said Arizona has become an attractive location for companies that ship products to the West Coast because of its lower costs and growing population.

"Because of California being such a large target for their shipments, it makes the West Valley more sensible," said Rex, associate director of ASU's Center for Business Research.

Goodyear officials are expecting another 400 new jobs later this year with the planned opening of a for-profit hospital to be operated by Cancer Treatment Centers of America Inc., medical and alternative therapy business based in Arlington, Ill.

Greater Phoenix Economic Council president and chief executive officer Barry Broome said Goodyear is bucking the trend in a year when few major corporations are opening job centers in the Valley.

"Especially in today's economy, several hundred jobs is a good thing for Arizona," Broome said.

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