

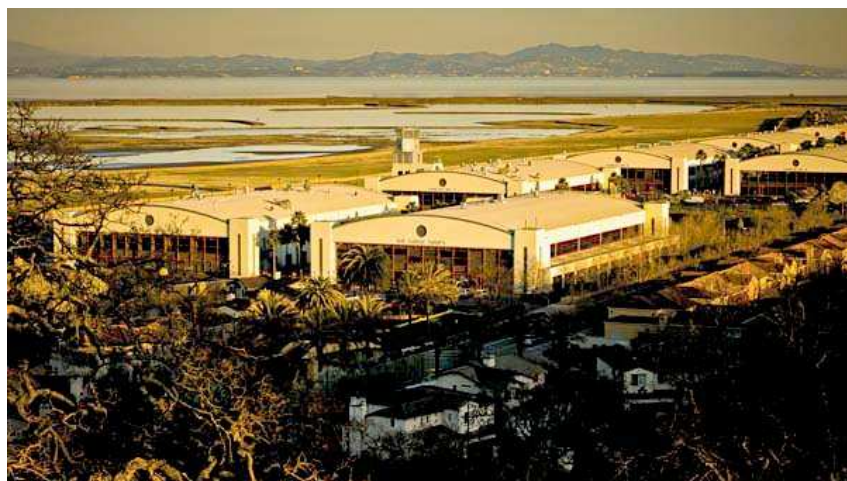
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[Local expansions fill long-vacant Disney offices](#)

Three Marin operations expand in Novato

By [Jeff Quackenbush, Business Journal Staff Reporter](#)



Take-Two Interactive, Raptor Pharmaceutical and EDG Interior Architecture are set to occupy almost all of two former ImageMovers Digital buildings, including this one with the landmark tower remnant of the shuttered air base.

NOVATO — The closure of The Walt Disney Co.’s digital movie magic group more than three and a half years ago left a 450-job, 120,000-square-foot hole in a large northern Marin County business complex, but planned expansions by three local operations are set to fill nearly all that next year.

From spring through summer of next year, a few hundred workers are set to move into two converted hangars that Disney’s ImageMovers Digital group occupied from 2008–2010.

Disney’s lease of the twin hangars-turned-office-buildings runs through January, but renovations already have begun to roll back some of \$40 million in tenant improvements that went into the space, according to Michael Barker, managing director of Barker Pacific Group, redeveloper of Hamilton Landing. That lease led to the completion of work to convert former Hamilton Air Force Base hangars to high-tech modern office buildings.

“It’s better in the long run that there’s more diversity and commitment to Marin companies in growth mode,” he said about replacing one tenant in 30 percent of the development with three.

Novato digital animation and video-game development studios of New York-based Take-Two Interactive (Nasdaq: TTWO) signed leases to expand its presence in the 403,000-square-foot Hamilton Landing office complex to 105,000 square feet. The Novato-based 2K group is set to occupy all but 15,000 square feet of 60,000-square-foot Hangar 9, one of the former ImageMovers Digital buildings.

The company declined to comment on how many employees it has now and what’s driving the expansion. A year ago before a 30 percent expansion in space in Novato, the company said it had more than 300 employees there. In spring of this year, the company started setting up a motion-capture, or mocap, studio in Petaluma.



Buildings 5 and 6 in the Hamilton Landing business complex

Recent projects credited to the Novato group include the 2K series of sports games as well as adventure games *BioShock 2* and *The Bureau: XCom Declassified*, which was released earlier this year.

Take-Two acquired the Marin group in 2005 from Sega and moved it to Novato.

Meanwhile, Novato-based Raptor Pharmaceutical (Nasdaq: RPTP) leased nearly 11,000 more square feet in 60,000-square-foot Hangar 7, adding to the nearly 31,000 square feet committed to in early summer.

The developer of treatments for rare diseases has about 65 employees at a smaller facility elsewhere in Novato and around the world, according to a company spokeswoman. Raptor outsources production of its lead drug Proscysbi, which is approved in the U.S. and Europe.

The company plans to roughly double its global workforce in the next 12 months and is hiring for medical, clinical, regulatory compliance, manufacturing, analysis, sales, finance and information technology positions.

Joining Raptor in the rest of Hangar 7 is set to be EDG Interior Architecture, currently in 10,000 square feet in downtown San Rafael. The firm leased nearly 19,000 square feet in Novato.

Jennifer Johanson, chief executive officer of EDG, said Hamilton Landing has been “thoughtfully developed” to welcome creative companies.

“As designers of world-class hospitality environments, we’re very selective about our space and wanted something that went beyond a traditional office interior,” Ms. Johanson said in a statement.

Formerly Engstrom Design Group, the firm got its start in 1987 when interior designer Eric Engstrom went out on his own. Ms. Johanson was a business partner for two decades, helping to build the firm from three employees to 50 now in San Rafael, Dallas, Singapore and Bangkok. Mr. Engstrom retired in 2007 and died in June at age 70.

Scott Ginsburg of Hughes Marino represented Visual Concepts Entertainment, Take-Two’s entity for the Novato group, in the recent lease deal. Drew Arvay and Doug Sharpe of Cassidy Turley represented EDG. Haden Ongaro, Brian Eisberg and Mark Carrington of Cornish & Carey Commercial Newmark Knight Frank represented Raptor in its expansion deal as well as the owners of Hamilton Landing in the recent deals and ongoing marketing.

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