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Spokane law firm expands to Texas

Lee & Hayes opens branch in Austin

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Spokane intellectual property law firm Lee & Hayes has added a four-person branch office in Austin, Texas, the company announced.

That branch is the third office for the company, based in downtown Spokane. In addition to about 40 attorneys in Spokane, it has 11 lawyers in Seattle and now three in Texas, said Lee & Hayes CEO Shaun Cross.

Heading the Austin office is attorney Emmanuel Rivera, who recently returned to Texas, where he lived before taking a job with Lee & Hayes six years ago. He'll be joined by two newly hired lawyers and a patent agent, who will soon become a full-time lawyer, Cross said.

Both the Seattle and Austin offices are prepared for continued growth as current and new customers add to the legal workload, said Cross.

With patent agents and other staff, the company employs 95 people, he said.

The company handles patent and intellectual property work for one-fourth of the 20 largest patent recipients in the U.S., including Microsoft, Hewlett Packard, Boeing and others.

Cross said the company also has lawyers around the country who take advantage of telecommunications to remain involved in everyday practice. One example is IP attorney Paul Balkan, who works for the company from his home in Burlington, Vt.

Lee & Hayes also announced it has hired former Washington Congressman Rick White as an adviser.

White will support the firm's continued growth through his interaction with tech industry officials.

White works as a consultant to technology industry companies. From 2001 to 2005, he was CEO of TechNet, a public policy advocacy organization for technology companies.