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SMALL BUSINESS

Betty Brigade now in moving business

By Terry Jacoby

news@mbizreview.com

The Betty Brigade's motto is simply to "help make people's lives easier." That formula has helped make the Ann Arbor company prosper since it was founded in 2003 by current president Sharon McRill. And with most successful companies, growth is usually followed by expansion.

For the Betty Brigade, a full-service personal assistance/concierge business, this means expanding into the business world. But the motto basically remains the same. It's all about making things easier, more convenient and more dependable.

"We used to be strictly residential moves, but we recently started doing moves for businesses," said McRill, an Ann Arbor resident and 1994 graduate of U-M. "I figured we are so good at this, we need to expand."

"Helping businesses move is no different than helping people move. We work with the client the same way and we know what needs to be done."

McRill, who said the company has done more than 70 residential moves and already helped with a handful of business relocations, likes to talk specifics when describing what the Betty Brigade can offer when moving a company across town or across country.

"We take care of the big things and the little things," she said. "The other side of the move is just as important as the place you're leaving."

"When an employee shows up to organize his or her desk, we want all of their supplies together and in the right place. We work with the IT department and the phone company and the Internet company to make sure everything is where it needs to be."

McRill's company even looks for unique ways into turning losses into profits.

“Companies will throw out a lot of equipment and supplies they don’t use anymore rather than moving them to their new location,” McRill said.

“We look for places to donate these things and get the client tax write-offs. We help turn these items into cash.”

With five full-time employees, the Betty Brigade works with residents and businesses within a 60-mile radius of Ann Arbor.

Franchise Plan

The company has done so well and McRill believes so much in the concept that she is entertaining offers for franchise opportunities.

The plan is to keep the base in Ann Arbor while opening offices in West Bloomfield and other Detroit suburbs.

“Our percent of growth was up 550 percent from the previous year,” said McRill.