

Major, Hagen & Africa

Attorney Search Consultants

8080 N. Central Expressway

Suite 401

Dallas, Texas 75206

(214) 750-6655

Fax: (214) 750-6670

Email: knoblin@mhaglobal.com

Website: www.mhaglobal.com

New York

Palo Alto

Philadelphia

San Diego

San Francisco

Seattle

Washington, D.C.

Atlanta
Chicago
Dallas
Hong Kong
Houston
Los Angeles
Milwaukee

Dallas Market Overview

Kelly Noblin

The City of Dallas has a population of approximately 1.2 million people, and the greater Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area has a combined population of 5.2 million making Dallas the ninth largest city in the United States and the largest metropolitan area in Texas. Dallas is home to Fortune 500 companies (ranked 6th nationally with 9 Fortune 500 headquarters), Forbes 500 companies (ranked 2nd nationally with 12 Forbes 500 headquarters), major league sports teams, a well respected medical community, and thriving universities. The Dallas economy began as an agricultural trade center and has since grown into a distribution hub while developing diversified industries that flow from its strength as a trade center. The great diversity of the Dallas economy has allowed the area to weather tough downturns in key sectors by countering with gains in alternative industries; as a result, Dallas has found itself to be the leading commercial, marketing, and industrial center of the southwest. Dallas has a great appreciation for culture and community and provides ample opportunity to enjoy the performing and visual arts. Dallas boasts a young and diverse population (the median age is 32.1 which is below the national average of 35.3), and it ranks fifth in the nation as the best place for entrepreneurs.

Real Estate

The Dallas area is one of the least expensive real estate markets in the nation. With affordable rents for commercial office and industrial space, Dallas ranks sixth in the nation in existing office space and fourth in industrial space. Recently, demand has been high for retail, health care, and school buildings. Dallas is the home to major real estate developers and brokers including The Staubach Company, Wyndham International, FelCor Lodging Trust, Crescent Real Estate, Trammell Crow, La Quinta Corp., American Realty Investors, Prentiss Properties Trust, and PMC Commercial Trust.

Health Care

Dallas is home to a major medical center that has 50 hospitals and is an international medical center for burns and trauma care. Additionally, Dallas is a leading transplant center for the southwest. Parkland Memorial and Baylor University Medical Center are ranked among the top hospitals in the country. This tradition of medical excellence gives rise to Dallas schools exclusively devoted to higher education in the health care and life sciences fields. These schools include Baylor College of Dentistry, Baylor University School of Nursing, Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, UNT Health Science Center, and the University of Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas (which ranks among the top American research universities).

Technology

The Information Age took off in 1958 when the first microchip was invented at Texas Instruments in Dallas. Approximately 460,000 people work in the technology field, and Dallas generates more technology jobs than Houston and Austin combined. The Dallas technology sector is well diversified and is home to high tech industries ranging from electronic instrument manufacturing to computer manufacturing to telecommunications. Many industry giants call Dallas home including Electronic Data Systems (EDS), Texas Instruments (TI), Affiliated Computer Services, Perot Systems, Allegiance Telecom, and i2 Technologies. It's no surprise that Dallas has been dubbed "silicon prairie."

Transportation

Dallas is known as a hub for international air travel. DFW International Airport, due to its central location and large foreign destination service, is one of the most convenient ways to coordinate international business travel. DFW is served by six international airlines, including Dallas-based American Airlines. Home to Southwest Airlines, Dallas Lovefield Airport is just minutes from downtown, making transportation within the state very easy. While Dallas does not have access to the Gulf of Mexico like Houston, Dallas is known as the nation's largest inland port due to its status as a principal trucking and freight distribution center. All of the nation's large rail lines serve the Dallas area. More than 50 million people can be reached from DFW overnight by vehicle or rail, and 98% of the U.S. population can be reached within 48 hours.

International

The DFW airport system makes Dallas a center of international business activity. There are 28 consulates, 12 foreign trade offices, and 11 foreign banks that serve the Dallas area. The District Office of the U.S. Customs Services is housed in Dallas, and the regional offices of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. State Department Diplomatic Security Bureau are located in Dallas. There are also more than 160 international organizations in Dallas offering business and cultural programs.

Energy

While Houston is the undisputed energy powerhouse in Texas, Dallas is also a major player providing support and housing branch offices for many energy companies including ExxonMobil and TXU Corp. Dallas is also a center for the sale and distribution of natural gas with companies such as Atmos Energy, Crosstex Energy, and Quicksilver Resources. Thanks to Pioneer Natural Resources Co., XTO Energy, Comstock Resources, Range Resources, Encore Acquisition, and Remington Oil and Gas, Dallas plays a significant role in oil and gas exploration and production.

Education

The Dallas Independent School District is the thirteenth largest school district in the nation and serves over 1,700 schools and over one million students. Dallas is the home to both public and private universities. Among the most notable are Southern Methodist University and University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, which collectively employ thousands of workers.

Retail

Dallas is ranked as the tenth largest retail market in the nation. The Dallas Market Center is the world's largest wholesale merchandise mart and is housed in a complex of six buildings totaling 6.9 million square feet. The Market Center hosts 400,000 buyers annually. Retailers such as J.C. Penney Company, Neiman Marcus, Michaels Stores, and Pier 1 Imports make Dallas their home.

Tourism and Services

Dallas is one of the most popular travel destinations in Texas and attracts over 14.2 million visitors a year. There are more than 110 institutions devoted to the arts including the Kimbell Art Museum, the Amon Carter Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art. Downtown Dallas was revitalized through the creation of the 60 acre Arts District which is the largest urban arts district in the United States. The district is anchored by the Dallas Museum of Art, the Meyerson Symphony Center, and the Nasher Sculpture Garden. There are several entertainment districts in the city including Deep Ellum, Greenville Avenue, McKinney Avenue, Oak Lawn, and the West End Historic District.

With nearly 6,000 eateries, the Dallas area has more restaurants per capita than New York City. The Six Flags Over Texas amusement park is located near Dallas. Dallas proudly hosts several professional sports franchises – the Dallas Mavericks (NBA), the Texas Rangers (MLB), the Dallas Cowboys (NFL), and the Dallas Stars (NHL). In addition, Dallas is home to some of the best shopping in the world, from high-end luxury shops to massive outlet centers.

Practicing Law in Dallas

The Dallas legal market is dominated by a combination of large home-grown, Dallas-based law firms and a group of Houston-based and out-of-state law firms. The Dallas-based firms include Locke Liddell & Sapp, Haynes and Boone, Winstead, Sechrest & Minick, Jenkins & Gilchrist, Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, and Gardere Wynne Sewell. These firms can have several hundred attorneys and provide full-service practices, with most opening smaller offices in D.C., Houston or New York City. The other group of large firms in Dallas includes the Houston-based powerhouses that have prominent Dallas offices. Firms like Baker Botts and Vinson & Elkins have sufficient history, clients and local power that they do not feel like satellite offices. Other Houston-based firms with a strong presence in Dallas include Andrews & Kurth and Fulbright & Jaworski. New York-based Weil, Gotshal & Manges and Cleveland-based Jones Day have established successful Dallas offices that are now part of the local landscape.

The robust business climate of Dallas, the growth of the city, and the strength of legal talent have given rise to many smaller start-up firms and offices. Top-flight litigation boutiques such as Figari & Davenport and McKool Smith are Dallas born and bred, but have national clients and cases. Several national firms have recently opened smaller Dallas offices, such as Fish & Richardson, Kirkpatrick & Lockhart, and Piper Rudnick.

In addition to law firms, Dallas corporations offer many varied opportunities to practice law in-house. Companies such as American Airlines, J.C. Penney Company, Inc., and Kimberly-Clark have large legal departments with positions for junior and senior attorneys. Smaller companies typically have only one or two in-house attorneys and generally seek significant experience. Southwest Sports Group (the company that owns the Texas Rangers and Dallas Stars), Hicks Muse (a private equity fund), and Hunt Oil Company each have only one in-house attorney. The DFW metroplex is home to a growing number of companies and industries and presents a target-rich environment for in-house attorneys.