

NSI

Sherwood, Oregon

Growing regional leadership
in the semiconductor
manufacturing supply chain

NSI

An Exyte Group Company



At the heart of the Silicon Forest are people, and at semiconductor industry supplier NSI in Sherwood, you can't miss them.

Before anyone enters the pristine manufacturing floor, they walk by portraits of all 90 NSI employees. They are the ones manufacturing critical components essential to the production of semiconductors and solar panels – some across the Pacific, some a few miles away in Hillsboro. Those faces were also at the center of NSI's biggest business decision in its history.

In 2022, NSI, which stands for Nuance Systems Inc, had maxed out of its 14,000-

square foot space in Tigard. Business was booming for their ultra-high-purity gas and chemical delivery systems, and the company had just been purchased by Germany-based fab builder Exyte.

When NSI could have gone anywhere in the world, they stayed in Greater Portland, choosing nearby Sherwood.

"If we moved, we'd lose the people who built this," said Ray Morgan, NSI managing director. "Business does not have to be just business. It's absolutely two-way. The happier the people, the happier the business culture," said Morgan.

Sherwood – where the city council had recently voted unanimously to annex 200 acres of industrial land – started work with Trammell Crow to support development of a 478,000-square foot industrial park. Completed in 2022, one of the buildings quickly moved to the top of NSI’s list.

Small Town Living with Global Talent

The question still remained – could the now-global employer stay local and still have the world-class talent base it needed to match its growth?



Trammell Crow designed the Sherwood industrial spaces with semiconductors in mind. The high ceiling and high-power buildings made space for NSI’s clean room (pictured).

Sherwood economic development manager Bruce Coleman left the meeting with NSI in March 2022 and took that question to Greater Portland Inc. He needed some data on the talent base. By the time he got back to his office, he had the numbers he needed to make the case.

“We pride ourselves on being data driven because we know those numbers drive business decisions,” said GPI president and CEO Monique Claiborne. “Sherwood and Greater Portland have the top tier talent advanced manufacturers need and that powers our region’s global semiconductor leadership.”

NSI signed a 10-year lease and moved in to a 62,000-square foot building that April – a location within commuting distance of three of Oregon’s top five most populous cities.

Back in Germany, Exyte leadership was fully on board. “They have faith in the region, like the community, and want to be a part of it,” Morgan said.

At Trammell Crow, Kirk Olsen, managed the development of the land from start to finish. He knew firsthand that Exyte was open to NSI moving beyond the Silicon Forest.

“They were looking at other markets, but the power of their employee base and their adjacent suppliers is a powerful draw,” he said.

And their new building is a gem within the industrial segment, featuring above-standard

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–Monique Claiborne
President and CEO, Greater Portland Inc

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Sherwood Industrial Land

1.5 million sq. ft

industrial park space coming online

250-acre

technology innovation park planned

power supply on site and higher than usual clearances – enough space for NSI to build its own clean room self-contained within the manufacturing floor.

Building with the End in Mind

“We designed the buildings for companies just like NSI. We had a feeling that we were going to get some interest from manufacturers,” said Olsen, but he credits the City of Sherwood for making that possible. “Sherwood’s smart industrial zoning and economic development efforts got us interested and enabled us to make the investment that is required for an industrial park like this.”

Morgan calls the building “a show piece,” and a recruitment tool in its own right. “This is today’s manufacturing,” he said.

Trammell Crow took five years to develop the site, but longer-term work from the city of Sherwood made this part of Greater Portland the growth hub it has become.

A City Committed to Economic Growth

“My predecessors were smart about land use, the urban renewal agency was smart about growth,” said Sherwood Mayor Tim Rosener. “We try to be pragmatic, and that got us focused on advanced manufacturing and semiconductor jobs.”

With a city budget of around \$20 million, like most cities in Oregon, Sherwood’s approach

to economic development does not rely on any cash incentives to move businesses to town. They lean on their staff’s flexibility instead, the willingness of everyone from a city councilor to a city engineer to bring a collaborative, problem-solving mindset.

“It’s our focus on working with industrial park developers existing and new businesses - in partnership with Greater Portland Inc - that has helped make us an economic development success story,” said economic development manager Bruce Coleman. “We really want to show how our city can help our businesses to grow with all available resources.”

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