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Doral data center up and running for large content providers

BY SUSAN DANSEYAR

EdgeConneX finished work converting its Doral warehouse into a data center a few weeks ago and is now up and running, serving large content providers.

According to Phill Lawson-Shanks, architect and the company's chief technology officer, the 32,000-square foot warehouse at 2132 NW 114th Ave. is aesthetically pleasing and looks like a large warehouse office.

Typically, he said, Virginia-based EdgeConneX purchases Class A warehouse facilities and puts in \$5 million to \$10 million to create data centers that are designed and deployed in collaboration with their customers for efficient placement of content delivery infrastructures.

The company, which purchased the new warehouse last fall, went through the process of changing the half-constructed building to industrial use and then spent about \$8 million to transform it into a data center. Now, Mr. Lawson-Shanks said, the free-standing property in Dolphin Commerce Center has a 30-inch raised floor and self-



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Work continued last week on the exterior of just-finished EdgeConneX data center at 2132 NW 14th Ave.

contained rooms that are environmentally controlled for heating, cooling and humidity.

Hidden from view, however, is some of the necessary infrastructure for a rigorous security system.

"All of our centers have dual entry for the Internet," Mr.

Lawson-Shanks said. "We build vaults [hidden holes in the ground] for Internet providers to bring their cable into the building."

Man traps have been installed so there's no clear path to the building. Mr. Lawson-Shanks said the facility has a series of

locked corridors.

"The internal structure is maintained regularly," he said. "We have remote sensors so we know everything that's going on inside."

Before purchasing the warehouse from PFR Investments LLC, EdgeConneX had been

searching for the right property for almost a year. The company, established in 2009, began with a focus on creating wireless solutions to enable connectivity at the edge of the Internet. It added data centers to its portfolio of services in 2013.

The Internet, originally designed for email, has become increasingly used for "rich media content" such as movies and Facebook, said Mr. Lawson-Shanks. When someone watches a movie on Netflix, for example, he said it can be a complicated process. The television or other device has to request the movie to start playing from another state to the host server.

With EdgeConneX now located in South Florida, he said, the content is delivered locally so the buffering is mitigated.

"The primary importance of this location is it is helping to extend Internet beyond primary points," Mr. Lawson-Shanks said. He said Miami has a large technology base and EdgeConneX hosts big content providers with enough bandwidth to get a strong amount of data.