

Swag distributor snags more space

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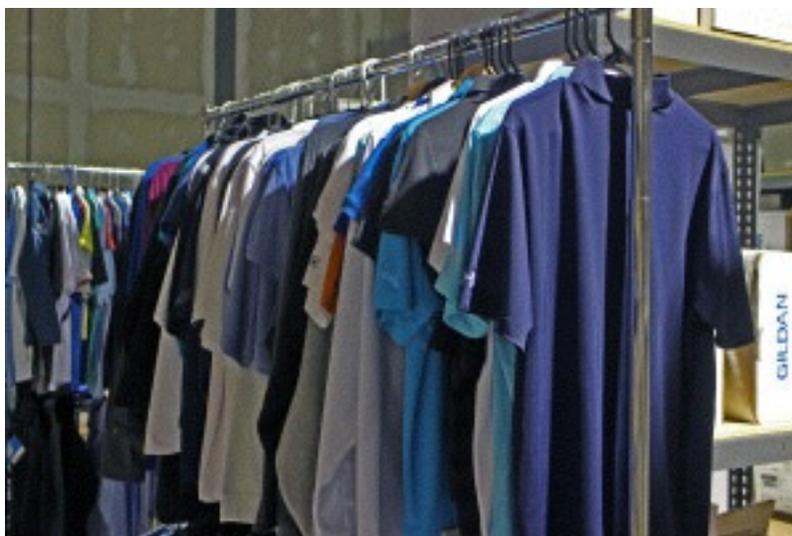
Michael Lovern is expanding his promotional marketing firm. *Photos by Michael Thompson.*

A local firm's success in the business of swag has led it to expand its Henrico headquarters and add personnel out-of-state.

Brandito, a West End-based distributor of promotional products, is adding about 3,000 square feet of office and warehouse space to its operations at 2830 Ackley Ave. The expansion more than doubles the size of its home base.

The company has also recently opened a new one-person office in Raleigh, North Carolina, to keep up with the firm's rapid growth.

Brandito was named the fifth fastest-growing local company in the [2014 RVA 25](#), and founder and CEO Michael Lovern said business is up 80 percent from this time last year.



The bulk of Brandito's business comes from branded apparel.

“This just fuels that fire,” Lovern said of the new office. “Raleigh is a very hot market right now.”

Brandito works with 3,000 suppliers to distribute corporate marketing products, often called swag or advertising specialties. It also builds companies' e-commerce sites for the materials and offers storage and fulfillment services. It's done work with CarMax, Capital One, Owens & Minor and McGuireWoods.

“We service folks all over the country,” Lovern said. “We have clients that order once a year and clients that order once a week.”

Lovern founded the company in 2009. With the addition of a sales rep in Raleigh, Brandito now has six employees.

He said Brandito will look to make inroads with clients in the healthcare, higher education and research industries in North Carolina. Lovern said the goal is to eventually have five to six employees in the Raleigh office. In Richmond, Brandito will look to hire two more employees this year.

Brandito's growing 3-year-old shipping and fulfillment operations are fueling the need for more space. Lovern said the expansion is being financed by the company's growth.

“In our industry, there are a handful that will do the online store piece, but there aren't a whole lot who have the personnel to do the fulfillment side of it,” Lovern said. “The demand has been there, and we've reacted.”

Lovern already has his eye on other markets for expansion.

“We're doing a lot of business in Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C.,” he said. “As that continues to grow, that's probably the next step.”