

# CASE STUDY



## WaMu Center

CBRE's Move Management Services and Facilities Management teams in Ann Arbor and Seattle relocated 5,300 WaMu employees from 12 locations into WaMu Center in Seattle, a 42-story, 1.2-million-sq.-ft. building home to offices, shops and the future expansion of the Seattle Art Museum.

### CHALLENGE

In 2003, Washington Mutual commenced its plans to construct a new headquarters building, WaMu Center, in Seattle. Moving into the new building would require the relocation of thousands of employees from 12 other properties without disrupting the company's day-to-day operations, and WaMu needed both a property manager for the new property as well as an occupancy manager for its existing locations while construction was still underway.

WaMu initiated its search for a property management firm, requesting proposals from four major real estate companies, including CBRE.

### SOLUTION

In preparation for its pitch to win this major assignment, CBRE's Facilities Management team worked on the development of a mock facility plan, budget, and move management proposal, while the CBRE Move Management Services team gathered information and created a detailed moving plan. CBRE's comprehensive proposal was a perfect fit with the timetable for the construction of the new building, lease expirations and other business requirements, and WaMu engaged CBRE to launch its plan in March 2006.

The CBRE team compiled a comprehensive internal communications plan, under the theme "WaMu Coming Together—It's Your Move." WaMu employees received a steady stream of information from e-mails, a website and four newsletters dedicated to the relocation project, as well as moving instructions and checklists before and during packing and document purging. All of the communications encouraged interactive exchanges to keep the relocation advancing seamlessly.

In addition, CBRE and WaMu recruited more than 100 WaMu employees to act as "Move Coordinators"—an assignment beyond their normal job functions. CBRE created a separate communications campaign to train and motivate the Move Coordinators, who would ultimately guide their fellow employees through the move process. Before moving, the CBRE team also conducted training sessions to orient Move Coordinators and employees to their new surroundings.

All told there were 30 move phases, varying from 100- to 350-person moves per weekend. The moves to the lower floors began during the completion of the construction to the upper floors, and prior to each move, the CBRE teams turned the "construction complete" floors into "tenant ready" spaces. All moves were scheduled during the weekend, and everything was in place when employees arrived at their news desks on Monday. WaMu employees were greeted with a "welcome mat" on their desks, and had access to troubleshooters as needed.

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## RESULT

The weekend moves were executed flawlessly, as CBRE's Move Management Services and Facilities Management teams successfully relocated 5,300 WaMu employees from 12 other buildings into WaMu Center, while ensuring limited downtime.

The WaMu Center is now fully occupied and running. All services have been integrated, including a two-course, daily buffet service (provided by Columbia Hospitality) as well as a Starbucks and sundries store.

The assignment for the 1.2 million-sq.-ft. WaMu Center has been a huge win for the entire team, and CBRE's facility management and seamless move migration capabilities were the primary reasons for the success of the overall contract. CBRE also provides WaMu with transaction management, project management and portfolio management.

## TEAM

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