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Facebook's Palo Alto space more than doubles

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Facebook Inc. significantly expanded its footprint in Palo Alto's Stanford Research Park by signing a lease for another 265,000 square feet.

This marks the second move in a year for the social media company, which left downtown Palo Alto last spring for a 150,000 square foot building once owned by **Agilent Technologies**. The buildings at 1050 Page Mill Road had been vacated by the medical diagnostic firm, **Beckman Coulter Inc.**, several years ago.

The news of the new lease comes as a report by comScore said the social networking company passed 100 million users in the U.S. in November, more than double last year's total. Its global user base is now estimated at more than 350 million.

ComScore said on Tuesday that Facebook had passed AOL as the fourth most popular Web property in the U.S., trailing only No. 1 **Google Inc.** (NASDAQ:GOOG), No. 2 **Yahoo Inc.** (NASDAQ:YHOO) and No. 3 **Microsoft Corp.** (NASDAQ:MSFT).

CEO Mark Zuckerberg said in August that he expects to hire hundreds as he nears his goal of 1 billion Facebook users.

Zuckerberg said at the time that the company was looking to grow its 1,000-employee work force by as much as 50 percent.

He told Bloomberg that Palo Alto has been a great location for the company to grow. "No one else has been hiring. It's been a great environment for us because the economy has helped out."

The company moved to Stanford Research Park earlier this year after outgrowing the 10 downtown Palo Alto offices it had occupied since its early days.

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