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Moo Print Ltd. of London leases space at Waterman Ave.

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Moo Print Ltd., a U.K.-based printing company that specializes in personalized cards, plans to open its first U.S. office in Rhode Island this spring.

The print-on-demand stationery company's local office will be located on Waterman Ave.

Brian Murphy, Moo's vice president of operations, who was recruited to manage Moo's launch, will head up the Rhode Island office. The company expects to open in East Providence with six to eight employees and expand to 10 by the end of the year.

Moo had been debating whether to expand into the Boston area or the San Francisco area, Murphy said. It decided to move to the East Coast "for a variety of reasons," including his personal fondness for Providence, he said.

Murphy explored leasing spaces in Providence's Jewelry District or on West Exchange St., but when neither option worked out he signed the one-year lease in East Providence, he said. The company could move closer to the capital city in the coming years, he said.

Moo, which was founded in 2006, decided to open an American office to reduce shipping times to U.S. customers, who account for more than 50% of the firm's sales.

Moo plans to hire an operations manager and a new customer service team to work out of the East Providence office.

The company, which currently has 35 employees at its two London offices, has received startup funding from The Accelerator Group, based in London; Waltham, Mass.-based Atlas Venture; and Geneva-based Index Ventures.

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