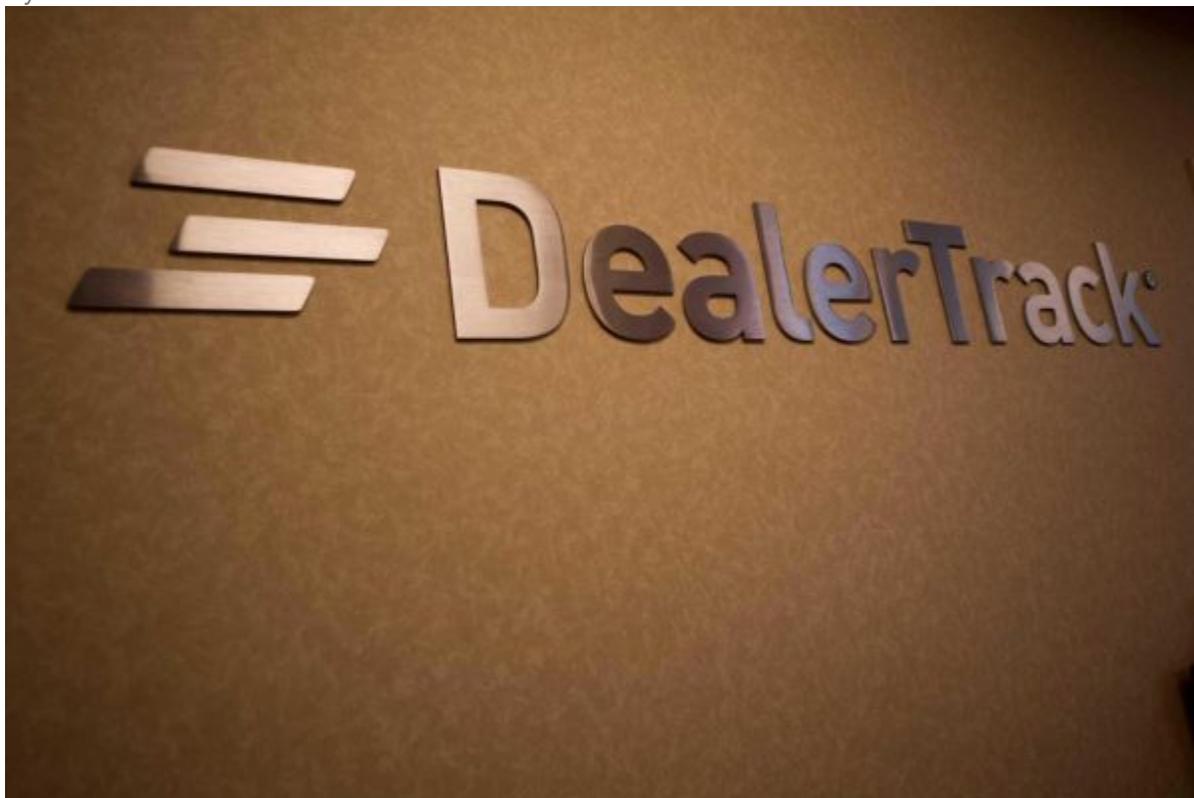


Dealertrack wins tax breaks from Nassau County for new North Hills headquarters

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By JAMES T. MADORE



Dealertrack Technologies, which makes software for auto dealers, got millions in tax breaks from Nassau County on Aug. 27, 2014, to stay on Long Island and move its headquarters from Lake Success to North Hills. This is a logo from 2012. Photo Credit: Newsday

Nassau County Wednesday night gave millions of dollars in tax breaks to a fast-growing computer software business to keep it from leaving.

In return for the help, Dealertrack Technologies Inc. has agreed to move its headquarters from Lake Success to North Hills instead of out of state. It also will protect 367 local jobs and add another 357. Records show that employees earn, on average, \$96,000 per year.

The aid package approved by the county's Industrial Development Agency consists of up to \$1 million off the mortgage recording tax, a \$5.7 million sales tax exemption and 19-year break on property taxes. The property tax agreement calls for the tax rate to be frozen at the current level for 12 years, followed by gradual increases in each of the next seven years.

Dealertrack makes programs for automobile dealers to improve their efficiency and profitability. Its products include an online credit application network connecting more than 20,000 dealerships with more than 1,400 lenders.

The publicly traded company, begun in 2001, has multiple offices throughout the United States and one in Canada. It reported a profit of \$6 million last year on sales of \$481.5 million.

IDA executive director Joseph J. Kearney said Wednesday night Dealertrack had considered moving its headquarters to Florida, New Jersey, South Carolina, Utah and Texas.

"Dealertrack was seriously leaving . . . They were going," he said.

He also praised Empire State Development, the state's primary business-aid agency, for providing Dealertrack with \$12 million in state tax credits and a grant. The state Power Authority also will reduce the company's utility bills over seven years.

Andrea Lohneiss, regional director for Empire State Development, said cooperation between state and county officials was crucial in keeping the Dealertrack headquarters here. Similar efforts helped to convince natural foods seller The Hain Celestial Group and photography giant Canon U.S.A. to stay.

Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano lobbied executives of Dealertrack and Hain. Of the Dealertrack deal, he said, "From creating new jobs to generating economic activity in our local economy, this . . . is a win-win for Nassau residents."

The new Dealertrack headquarters, valued at \$112 million, will be at 3400 New Hyde Park Rd. East Setauket-based TRITEC Real Estate Co. is developing the 233,000-square-foot building.

Gary N. Papilsky, Dealertrack's top lawyer, said he was relieved that the company was staying put in Nassau, where he also lives. He said, "I like Dealertrack and I love my home, and I didn't want to leave either."