Firm gets more Air Force work

BY SHERRI BURI MCDONALD

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On Time Systems, a Eugene software optimization firm, announced Monday that it has landed another contract with the U.S. Air Force, worth an estimated $5 million over the next three fiscal years.

The company "is stepping up its role considerably" in the fuel-saving routing system the Air Force uses for noncombat flights, CEO Matt Ginsberg said.

Over the past decade, On Time Systems has worked as a subcontractor developing the optimization piece of the route planner, while technology for other parts of the planner was developed elsewhere.

"Now, we'll have primary technical responsibility for that entire system," he said.

Moving all the technical work under one roof should be more efficient — saving the government hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in software development costs, Ginsberg said. It also should result in even more fuel savings for the Air Force, he said.

Even before the announcement, On Time Systems had been on the lookout for computer programmers to add to its 15-employee work force.

"I'm now redoubling my efforts to find them," Ginsberg said.

He said the contract is "roughly a four-person job" for On Time Systems. Ginsberg said he can handle the job with current staff, but he'd like to hire a few more programmers.

In the past, the company has hired programmers with varying education and experience, from people without bachelor's degrees to people with Ph.D.s, he said.

On Time Systems offers employees some unusual perks in addition to more traditional benefits, such as health, vision and dental insurance and 401(k) retirement plans.

The company pays a massage therapist to give workers a 30-minute massage at work every other week, Ginsberg said. Employees can take a month off a year at half pay.

"It's wonderful, especially for people in their 30s, having the flexibility to do something different and not feel like they're being trapped in their jobs," he said.

And the company will pay for the employees working on the Air Force project to obtain a pilot's license, which costs $5,000 to $6,000, Ginsberg said.

"The government's not paying for it," he said. "We're using our internal money because we feel it's a good investment in our people. It gets our people excited about working on this particular product."