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Poblocki buys N.C. sign firm

It's the largest acquisition for the West Allis-based sign company

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Poblocki Sign Co. has acquired a North Carolina sign maker that will increase Poblocki's presence in the Southeastern United States.

Financial terms of the deal were not made public, but Poblocki said it was the company's largest acquisition.

The West Allis-based company said it had acquired Quality Sign Systems, a 20-year-old Raleigh, N.C., company with 55 employees.

Quality Sign is about half the size of Poblocki, said Poblocki President David Drury.

Quality Sign has sales offic-

es in North Carolina, Florida and Washington, D.C.

The Southeast seems to have been less affected by the recession, according to Drury, who also is a board member of Journal Communications Inc., which publishes the Journal Sentinel.

"We saw this as an opportunity to expand our reach while at the same time providing Quality with a broader array of products," Drury said.

"We are more of a custom sign company. They were a little less custom and were more focused on the exterior sign market," he added.

Quality Sign will continue

to be based in Raleigh and will now be called Poblocki Sign Southeast.

"They have some manufacturing space in Raleigh that will help us when we hit overflow points," Drury said. "They also have a very good sales capability throughout the Southeast."

In fiscal 2008, Poblocki had about \$25 million in sales. The company's signs are in hospitals, sports stadiums, office buildings and many other locations.

In 2009 the company installed signs in the Trump International Hotel & Tower in downtown Chicago.

Poblocki has been in the

Milwaukee area since the Great Depression and originally was called Electrolite Signs Co.

After World War II, the company made signs for automobile dealerships and banks that sprang up across Wisconsin.

It found work in dozens of small towns.

In the 1960s, Poblocki made signs for a little-known hamburger chain called McDonald's. The company put up signage for more than 1,000 Target stores and benefited from corporate takeovers and business name changes — all of which resulted in the need for new signage.