

SkylesBayne settles in Nokonah

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Nick Simonite

From left, Justin Bayne and Chris Skyles.

SkylesBayne Co. has established a beachhead of sorts with the installation of prominent signage at its new offices at West Ninth Street and North Lamar Boulevard.

“It’s somewhat symbolic, but the signage is really a big deal,” said [Justin Bayne](#), co-founder of SkylesBayne, a commercial real estate brokerage that represents tenants exclusively. Laying claim to prime space is important for a business built around finding such for others.

Custom Sign Creations in Pflugerville made and installed the signs — for about \$13,000 — on ground-floor commercial space that SkylesBayne bought at the Nokonah residential project in northwest downtown.

The site had been occupied by AvenueOne Properties Inc., a residential brokerage that went out of business in late 2011. SkylesBayne bought the 4,500-square-foot retail portion of the Nokonah development from a local investor and closed on the building late this summer.

“We’d been patiently looking for the right opportunity when we heard about this,” co-founder [Chris Skyles](#) said.

Bayne and Skyles financed the purchase with a loan from Wells Fargo & Co., splitting the down payment. Neither would disclose the price.

SkylesBayne, which has eight brokers and interns, previously occupied 1,200 square feet at 1801 Lavaca St. The company has grown from a two-person shop since it was created in July 2006.

The young brokerage isn't the only one in town with an independent spirit and determination to grab market share from the big firms. Equitable Commercial Realty is growing rapidly since its one-person beginning in February 2010.

The company now has eight licensed personnel, including its founder and managing principal, [Matt Levin](#).

Levin believes being in the downtown core is essential to ECR's success — “We have clients in the immediate area,” he said — though he thinks SkylesBayne has hit a home run with an office on North Lamar Boulevard.

“I think that's a good strategy and space for them,” Levin said