

Martin Lippert
Executive Vice President, Global Technology & Operations
Groundbreaking Ceremony
Cary, North Carolina
November 1, 2013

Good afternoon Governor McCrory, Senator Burr, Commissioner Bryan, members of the press, distinguished guests.

I'm Martin Lippert head of global technology and operations for MetLife. On behalf of our chairman and CEO, Steve Kandarian, I'd like to welcome you to the groundbreaking of our Cary campus.

Today's groundbreaking would not have been possible without the hard work and determination of countless individuals throughout your glorious state, many of who are with us today.

I'd like to thank them as well as my colleagues at MetLife for the important roles they all played in making today happen.

The shovels before me represent the next step in what will undoubtedly be a long and fruitful relationship between North Carolina and MetLife,

We're pleased to be joining the other great companies that make up the state's business community.

MetLife is investing more than \$125 million here in Cary and Charlotte, and will be creating more than 2,600 jobs in state.

Charlotte will be a hub for our U.S. retail business employing more than 1,400 people in jobs as diverse as product management, marketing, sales and customer support.

This lovely site will be a hub for our global technology and operations and will employ about 1,200 people.

Cary was one of eleven sites we considered. In the end, the region's robust infrastructure, large talent pool, quality of life, and sense of community won us over.

I know that sense of community may fall a bit by the wayside when Duke, North Carolina, and North Carolina State play each other in basketball.

I am a huge basketball fan without a vested interest in any of the three, so I am personally thrilled that I'll be spending a lot of time here and will be able to take in some games. I promise to remain neutral!

In addition to hiring locally, we will be moving employees from locations in the Northeast to North Carolina, so it was extremely important to us that we selected a location that will afford them a superior quality of life. As you locals know and are doubtlessly proud of, The Research Triangle and Charlotte consistently rank among the country's best places to live.

And we would have been hard pressed to find another location as aesthetically and logistically pleasing as the one we are standing in today.

MetLife has grown a great deal over the last few years. We now serve nearly 100 million customers in more than 50 countries.

That growth, while presenting us with tremendous business opportunities, also has challenged us in ways that require us to rethink our technology and operations structure.

More than anything, except perhaps the human element, those two things dictate what kind of experience our customers have with us. Even the best effort by our talented employees may not be enough to create a positive customer experience if the operations end of our business isn't up to snuff.

The life insurance industry hasn't been known for providing exceptional customer experiences. For us, that is no longer acceptable.

Led by our CEO and cascading down the entire organization, the customer is now front and center of every decision and action we take. We are working hard to make customer centricity a competitive advantage for MetLife across all our products and markets.

Our move to Cary is part of that effort and a larger technology transformation at MetLife. We will be pouring \$300 million annually into technology projects and beefing up our staff as part of a company-wide initiative to better serve, understand, and retain customers.

There are a number of things we have to do here in North Carolina to make that happen.

First and foremost, we intend to become the employer of choice for the thousands of talented people living in North Carolina, including those graduating from your magnificent universities.

It's not just about offering great salaries and benefits, although those are important. Talented individuals will want to work at MetLife if they see us as being on the technology cutting edge.

Earlier this year, we rolled out what we have dubbed “The Wall.” It’s a Facebook like application that provides service and sales representatives in call centers with an overview of customers. As far as we know, no other life insurance or large financial services company has that capability.

MetLife also rolled out a program called Rise to the Top. The program encourages technologists to come up with revenue sharing ideas. If the projects are funded we let the technologists run them.

We envision our operations here in Cary as being a key catalyst of technological transformation at the company in the same way those two programs have been.

We are also reaching out to the local tech community directly. Today and tomorrow MetLife is sponsoring a first-of-its kind “Tech Jam” at the Research Triangle Park headquarters in Raleigh. Participants are being challenged to develop electronic health record software for the Veterans Administration and to make their solutions available publicly through open source code.

While life insurance companies may be considered stogy by many people, and, yes, Snoopy is still flying a WWI era fighter plane, and as far as I know will continue to do so, MetLife is hardy retro when it comes to technology.

We intend for our operations here in North Carolina and Cary to be at the forefront of what we see as a very exciting time at MetLife.

I look forward to returning for the ribbon cutting ceremony in 2015, and many times in between.

Thank you very much.