

A Growing Firm

We occupied the Pabst Building, 110 E. Wisconsin Avenue, after our founding merger. By 1961, we occupied 12,000 square feet in the building and desperately needed additional space. In December 1963, we moved down the block to a more modern office, leasing 15,000 square feet at 743 N. Water Street.



“The main office of Milwaukee’s largest independent investment firm has a hushed, library-like quality that blends with a rich, conservative décor,” observed business reporter Ray Kenney in a 1968 issue of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, adding that he “felt a spark of energy immediately beneath the surface of calm.”

By 1969, we needed even more space and added 12,000 square feet next door at 721 N. Water Street, the old M&I Bank building. We stayed on Water Street until our move to Milwaukee’s tallest building, then known as the First Wisconsin Center, in 1974.



Above: original headquarters

Left: current headquarters

Technology at Baird: The Early Days

Through the early 1960s, we employed women like “Apple Annie,” with her ink-stained hands and sailor’s mouth, to provide stock quotes for our brokers.



“You would call for a quote and Annie was sitting next to the ticker tape and she’d go through the ticker tape one at a time looking for the last sale of GM or GE, and it would take her five or ten minutes to find it,” remembers former president Fred Kasten, who joined us in 1963.



“It might have been two hours old or maybe two days old, but it was the last trade, and that was our intercom. That’s how you got quotes for your clients.”

The first Quotron desktop terminal was invented in 1960, the same year Mr. Baird retired as chairman. Thanks to this new product, brokers could punch in stock symbols and the last price would be printed.

By the late 1960s, we transitioned to Ultronic Stockmasters, a more advanced product from a Quotron competitor. We also started logging our transactions via teletype in the centralized bookkeeping system of the Midwest Stock Exchange Service Corporation in Chicago. The days of calling “Apple Annie” were over.



Photos of changes in technology throughout Baird’s history.