

Short-term leasing companies merge

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Regus Group Plc, a London-based operator of temporary office centers, agreed to buy **HQ Global Workplaces Inc.** for about \$302.5 million.

HQ operates 12 temporary office centers in Manhattan, including centers at the Helmsley Building at 230 Park Ave. and the Chrysler Building at 450 Lexington Ave. Regus operates short-term office space on two floors at 245 Park Ave. The rival firms, which entered preliminary talks last month, both emerged from Chapter 11 earlier this year.

The two firms had considered a merger in 2001, when Regus planned to buy Dallas-based **HQ** for \$650 million in stock, but Regus shareholders were unhappy with the deal and the plans were dropped. In 2002, **HQ** and Regus' U.S. division separately filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.