

Office Landlords Need to Include Tenant Experience Software: MIPIM Pros

BY LAUREN ELKIES SCHRAM MARCH 16, 2019 11:30 PM

REPRINTS



53 WEST 23RD STREET. PHOTO: COSTAR GROUP



“The landlord really has to provide more than they did in the past,” **Charlie Kuntz**, the innovation officer at **Hines**, said Thursday on a **MIPIM** panel, “Workplace Tech: Improve the Experience,” in Cannes, France.

To appeal to the connected generation that comprises an increasing part of the workforce, landlords have had to add technology, in its amenity enhancement and wellness form.

At Hines, there is a big focus on tenant engagement apps for things like climate control and having a sandwich to the desk, Kuntz said on another Thursday panel, “New Multigenerational Expectations: Rethinking Spaces.”

At the end of last year Hines announced a new collaboration with Paris-based **Workwell** to “introduce a market-leading digital experience in its buildings,” according to a press release about the deal. Hines launched the effort in the U.S. and internationally, including in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Houston and the United Kingdom.

“Mobile applications help us navigate nearly every part of modern life, and those services shouldn’t stop once you arrive at the office,” the press release indicates. “Hines will connect the dots between the physical and digital through this tenant engagement technology.”

Workplace tech panelist **Andrea Jang**, the head of growth in the Americas for JLL Spark—a **JLL** business that identifies and delivers new technology-driven proptech and real estate service offerings—said on the panel that her company invests in property management automation.

For example, this past September, JLL Spark was an investor in **Jones** insurance platform’s \$2.8 million seed round. Jones allows trade contractors to instantly obtain a certificate of insurance that complies with requirements via their smartphones. This frees up property administrators’ time to do more value-add work, Jang said. As tech takes over some of the functions of a property manager, landlords can hire a different type of candidate, like one with a “more hospitality-centric approach,” she said.

Jonathan Pearce, an executive vice president of leasing office and industrial in North America for **Ivanhoé Cambridge**, said on Thursday’s tech panel that technology is imperative to the tenant experience. “This isn’t optional,” he said. You’ve got to do it or be left behind.” He added that “major landlords and service providers are realizing this is absolutely key to driving value.”

Landlords are committing money money to tech as it relates to tenant experience. Last month, **Jamestown** invested in **HqO**, a tenant engagement platform for commercial real estate.

On Monday, Commercial Observer reported that **Isaac Morris Limited**, which makes licensed apparel, **signed a deal** at **48 West 37th Street** in part because the building features the **Equiem** tenant engagement portal. Equiem is a concierge platform providing tenants with access to services, events and experiences. Database software startup **Cockroach Labs** **decided to move** to **53 West 23rd Street** in October 2018 in part because of Equiem, which **Adams & Co.** deploys in the building as well as other properties in its Manhattan office portfolio, as CO reported. And this January **Global Holdings Group** appointed Equiem to implement its tenant engagement platform at **NoMad Tower** at **1250 Broadway**.

“The last five or so years have seen an enormous shift in occupier expectations,” **Gabrielle McMillan**, the CEO of Equiem, said in a statement to Commercial Observer. “Whereas tenants used to be satisfied with desks, filter coffee and water coolers, today’s occupiers now expect landlords to provide frictionless, engaging and tailored workplace experiences, events and services for their staff. As a result, owners need to work hard to understand the specific likes and dislikes of individuals, using technology like ours to analyze how people are interacting with their building and then adapt their offer accordingly. Ultimately, it’s landlords [who] have worked hard to deliver this type of hospitality-forward working environment that will satisfy occupiers and win the leasing battle.”