

California Dreaming: Mayumi Hotel, Culver City, California

Is it a hotel? A dormitory? A co-living space? Whatever you call this new micro-community, gigabit connectivity is an essential amenity. Our thanks to Alexander Bird, co-founder of Mayumi, for his help in gathering the information for this profile.

By Masha Zager / *Broadband Communities*

For the last six years, HQ Development, a Los Angeles real estate group, has converted warehouses and industrial buildings into workspaces for the LA-area creative set, especially in the media and tech industries. As developer Alex Bird explains, HQ's Creative Office subsidiary aims to give smaller companies the same amenities found in Google or Facebook headquarters. Its buildings feature open spaces, high ceilings, high-end materials, modern kitchens, natural lighting, outdoor walkways – and, of course, “nooks and crannies for employees to use their laptops.”

In the last few years, HQ began hearing similar laments from many clients: The thriving creative industry in Los Angeles was drawing on a nationwide talent



pool, but employees relocating to Los Angeles had difficulty finding flexible space to rent and developing a sense of community. “That resonated with us,” Bird says, because he and Robert Herscu, CEO of HQ Development, were both immigrants – Bird from the U.K. and Herscu from Australia.

“We came here not knowing anyone,” Bird continues, “and we didn’t know how to make a community. It took a long time, and connection to people is everything in our society.”

A new arrival in LA had a choice of renting a hotel room by the night – an expensive, anonymous option – or committing, sight unseen, to a longer-term rental in an apartment community. Herscu and Bird began to brainstorm about an in-between space, “someplace where people could stay for a night or a month and it felt like community.”

Around this time, they came across an old motel property in Culver City, west of Los Angeles, in an area soaked in moviemaking history (Sony Pictures Studios in Culver City now occupies

PROPERTY OF THE MONTH HIGHLIGHTS ~ Mayumi Hotel, Culver City, California ~

- Flexible-stay hotel encouraging community building for newcomers to Los Angeles
- Caters to creative employees in the technology and media industries
- Gigabit internet access, smart TVs and smart-home amenities provided as part of room rental
- Vendors include Frontline LLC, SonicWall, Juniper, Ruckus and APC



the legendary MGM lot). Current-day Culver City has plenty to keep any newcomer busy, including dining, nightlife, art galleries and playhouses.

HQ decided to renovate the motel as a flexible living space called Mayumi, using the same design aesthetic it had used for creative commercial spaces. As Herscu notes, “Essentially, we’ve applied the same high-end product, beautiful design and turn-key model that our creative office tenants have enjoyed to the hospitality community living concept.”

In some ways, Mayumi is hotel-like, with luxuriously furnished private rooms and housekeeping services, but guests can stay indefinitely on month-to-month leases. In addition, it’s a community. To encourage guests to engage with one another, there are attractive community spaces, including a courtyard and a kitchen. Weekly activities, for those who aren’t content just sitting around the fire pit or the water feature, will include influencer panels, fitness classes, culinary events



Back view of the Mayumi

and film screenings. There’s even a fleet of bicycles for guests to use.

Mayumi (now a new subsidiary of HQ Development) expects to get plenty of guest referrals from HQ’s commercial clients, but it is also marketing the space – and the concept – by holding events there. Bird hopes this visibility, as well as word of mouth, will bring still more guests. And the story won’t stop in Culver City; the founders are actively developing new flexible-stay sites.

Technology amenities are an important part of the Mayumi package – not surprisingly, as tech industry

employees are a target audience. Bird consulted with commercial clients during the design phase to determine what their employees would need in terms of technology. For guests to work, a gigabit network was a given; private networks in each room were also required for security. Guests would also expect smart-room amenities such as controls for thermostats, shades and lighting in their rooms, as well as an internet-connected TV. The community room, which can serve as a site for small conferences, has surround sound, a projector and electronic blinds.

PROPERTY OF THE MONTH



Gigabit internet access is available everywhere in Mayumi, including the communal workspace and dining room.

VITAL STATISTICS

Property Description: Mayumi is a boutique hotel in Culver City on the west side of Los Angeles, opening May 2018. The hotel was renovated to offer an unparalleled experience crafted on a foundation of design, flexibility, and community. Guests enjoy luxurious private rooms and common areas to connect with others and get inspired. Mayumi allows guests to access the vibrant creative, startup and events scene nearby.

Demographics: Newcomers to Los Angeles working in the creative industries

Greenfield or retrofit? Complete renovation

Number of units: 35

Style: Mid-rise

Time to deploy? One year

Date services started: March 2018

SERVICES

Services offered or planned on the network: Internet (1 Gbps speed), DIRECTV video, access control. All services are included with room rental.

Provider choice: None

Technical support: Provided by property manager

BUSINESS

Which parts of the network are owned by the service provider, and which are

owned by the property owner? The property owner owns the network from the main point of entry.

Is there a marketing agreement with the property owner? No

TECHNOLOGY

Fiber to the building with home runs from the main point of entry to each individual room. Internet access is delivered via Ethernet cable and Wi-Fi; video is delivered via coax cable.

Vendors include the following:

- Frontline LLC – Network design and support
- SonicWall – Firewall
- Juniper – Switching
- Ruckus – Wireless LAN
- APC (Schneider Electric) – Uninterruptible power supply

LESSONS LEARNED

What was the biggest challenge? Building a complete renovation that caters to



The courtyard is intended as a place for guests to socialize and build community.



Luxuriously furnished rooms have private networks and 50-inch smart TV sets.

the new startup and tech scene with focused amenities.

What was the biggest success? Maintaining community areas to promote interaction and connection.

What feedback does the hotel staff get

from guests? The property is set to launch May 2018, and the property-wide Wi-Fi with in-room private networks has been a big success.

What should other owners consider before they get started on a similar

deployment? Pick a vendor that is willing to pay attention to detail. ❖

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