



Upgrading buildings in N.Y.C. top focus for prop. managers

June 23, 2014 - Front Section

Building owners and property managers in Manhattan are looking for ways to differentiate themselves in an ongoing effort to attract desirable tenants who are searching for new, quality space here in the city. In the past few years alone, N.Y.C. has experienced a real shift in the real estate market when it comes to tenants looking for new space in which to relocate their offices. In the past, these decisions have largely been based on price and geographic location, but now what is really driving these decisions? Technology innovations and fiber availability are both driving facts that are heavily considered before a lease is signed. Today's property managers are looking to bring in the "best of breed" technology so that they can compete in the commercial leasing space and attract tech startup companies moving into N.Y.C.

To do so, companies such as The Kaufman Organization, a diversified New York-based real estate company active in ownership of commercial and residential property, office leasing, management and acquisitions, are partnering with select management firms, such as Business Communications Management (BCM), to help develop and improve their buildings. Founded in 1992, BCM helps business clients manage their telecommunications solutions and vendors.

"We point out what property managers don't always look for - the importance of upgrading riser infrastructure, a locked meet me room or cage in the basement, and technology options such as Tier 1 fiber for diversity and redundancy," said Catherine Boyce, senior account executive for BCM. "Case in point is our recent work with The Kaufman Organization, which owns several buildings within the garment district of N.Y.C., an area that has struggled with poor telecommunications infrastructure and unreliable service. In response, Kaufman reached out to us to make recommendations and improve their buildings in this area. By upgrading the buildings' riser infrastructure through modern renovations, building out new conduits for fiber delivery, and implementing a locked Meet Me Room, The Kaufman Organization is one of the N.Y.C. property management firms that is setting the bar and distinguishing themselves in the industry."

To date, BCM represents over 43 suppliers, and assists in designing, implementing, and project managing voice, data, and cloud solutions globally for its clientele. In N.Y.C., the company works directly with carriers such as tw telecom to bring in new proprietary fiber networks, providing tenants with built-in redundancy, and carrier diversity outside of legacy Verizon.

"One of the strongest carriers for our fiber solutions has been tw telecom," said Boyce. "I work hand in hand with tw telecom's sales and engineering teams to ensure the right design is in place before the fiber build construction begins in the buildings. Given that today's market is so competitive, it is highly important to choose the right carrier. Over the years, tw telecom has proven their expertise and professionalism and always delivers a solid client experience to our customers. tw telecom has gone above and beyond to make the transition seamless and deliver carrier services to my clients in an expedited fashion. The tenants have been extremely happy."

To date, BCM has worked with tw telecom on fiber builds for Kaufman Organization at 100-104 Fifth Ave., 519 8th Ave. and 242 W 36th St. locations. Grant Greenspan, principal of The Kaufman Organization worked with BCM to evaluate his buildings and bring in new technology for his tenants. Most recently, improvements that have been made specifically at 100-104 Fifth Ave. include:

- * Two diverse entry points into the building offering geographical redundancy;
- * Multiple secure risers;
- * Locked meet me room in the basement with ample power, heating and cooling; and
- * Three on-net fiber solutions, providing over twenty carrier options, including tw telecom, for existing and new tenants.

As a result of these improvements, Kaufman is able to market these renovations on their website and throughout the real estate community. This led to signed multi-year leases from technology driven companies including the following: Apple, Yelp, Net-a-porter, Timberland, and Virgin USA.

Both tw telecom and BCM have joined forces with WiredN.Y.C., the city program that certifies and ranks buildings by their broadband capabilities and Internet infrastructure. WiredN.Y.C. has taken BCM's initiative to the next level, certifying buildings, such as Kaufman Organization's, that meet new edge technology needs. Collaboratively with tw telecom, the organizations share the vision of where technology is headed and the impact that is driving the future of commercial real estate sales. Resources like WiredN.Y.C. offer potential tenants an easy approach to research the available technology in N.Y.C. buildings.

Like the quest for high quality broadband, upgrading N.Y.C. buildings to meet today's technology demands is ongoing and requires the cooperation on behalf of many parties that include building owners and property managers, technology management firms like BCM, the city of New York, organizations like WiredN.Y.C., and of course, the city's top service providers, such as tw telecom, offering its resilient fiber network infrastructure that delivers to N.Y.C. businesses economic value, industry-leading quality service experience, and improved business productivity.

Robert Bianco, VP and general manager of tw telecom Manhattan, New York, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540