



2024 Ones to Watch - Innovators in CRE: Katharine Lau, Stuf Storage

November 26, 2024 - Spotlights



Katharine Lau
CEO and Co-Founder

Stuf Storage

Lau is the CEO and co-founder of Stuf, overseeing the company's strategic vision and execution of the company's growth goals. She works closely with her small team of less than 20 employees on day-to-day operations, helping them learn about the industry and grow the business, providing mentorship and support for all sections of the business. With her commercial real estate background, she is responsible for leading the supply acquisition of new locations throughout the country. Prior to starting the company in 2020, Lau led supply growth at Industrious, the nation's largest premium shared workplace provider, where she built and managed a 20+ person team and oversaw the company's rapid expansion while developing go-to-market strategies for new digital products and tenant experience services.

Innovative Solution:

The pandemic sparked tremendous growth in the self-storage industry, which is often described as resilient or recession resistant. This has certainly been true from my experience running a national self-storage company over the last few years. At Stuf, we're constantly thinking about innovative ways to define the future of storage, and we believe AI will be a critical ingredient. Right now, we're scaling our physical network rapidly, so our ideas can more easily become mainstream.

We're focused on creating a storage solution that is extremely customer friendly and well branded, and with our revenue sharing business model, property owners have the opportunity to monetize their underutilized space in a unique way, which is especially important in today's challenging commercial real estate market.

Innovative Outlook:

In the self-storage industry and broader commercial real estate space, I think we'll start to see companies apply AI in their sales, collections, and customer service processes. For industries like self-storage, and what we are focusing on with Stuf, is drawing in Millennials and Gen Z users with authentic, mobile-first and tech-forward user experiences. People want convenience and more multi-dimensional communities, a place where they can live, work, play and maybe even store their extra belongings.

As the office sector continues to reckon with the "we're never going back to pre-pandemic days," commercial property owners will continue to seek innovative ways to monetize empty space, making room for a company like Stuf to come in and bring new life into these buildings.

"Kat has turned her startup into a successful business model that is revolutionizing the self-storage industry. Stuf is a tech-enabled self-storage solution that partners with property owners to monetize underutilized space while providing a new amenity to the local community. Kat's inventive solution is changing the perception of self-storage from something typically seen as eerie and undesirable, to a

safe, well branded and welcoming place people are comfortable storing and accessing their belongings.” - Tara Saglimbeni, M18 Public Relations.

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