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Office Amenities Play 'Follow the Leader'

As new amenities enter the office scene, property managers and owners have to keep up on the latest trends to compete for tenants. "It's almost a herd mentality," said Joe Bellina, executive vice president of property management for Newmark Knight Frank. "Everyone wants what others have."

Although offices have been slow to adopt technological amenities, Bellina noted some demand for new security monitors, card access systems, work request portals, state-of-the-art elevator systems and now informational video screens in lobbies, a feature that once was exclusive to elevators.

Demand for this perk is concentrated in Class A office space, noted senior managing director of GVA Williams' management services group Robert Frankel. In Class B buildings, the desire is more limited, though his company has used video screens to divert attention from slower elevators.

New programming options beyond traditional television broadcasts also are becoming available, and they may drive demand for the video service.

The WSJ Office Network, a joint venture between Office Media Network Inc. and Dow Jones & Co., for example, installs 37- to 47-inch flat-panel LCD screens in lobbies and other high-traffic areas, allowing landlords to deliver building information, customized announcements, security alerts, advertisements and real-time business news from *The Wall Street Journal*.

The service launched this summer in 40 office buildings—owned by the former Trizec Properties Inc.—in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington, D.C. Office Media Network founder & CEO James Harris said the service has been met with great interest and that the company is now in continuing talks with other landlords

that would like to use the network.

"We've engineered a unique way to communicate with tenants," Harris said, explaining that the network can be used to supplement traditional

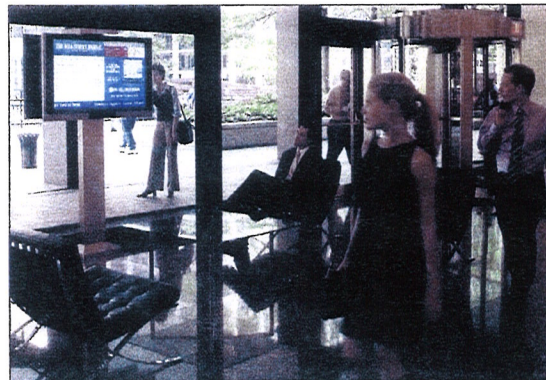
the idea of such a network. Neither were involved in the implementation of the service.

"It brings communication to the forefront," Brod said. "We're used to having computer screens on our desks. It's an instant messenger, at best, and it's much more advanced than (other methods of delivering information to tenants)."

Glickman added, "People want to be informed," noting the success of similar products in elevators. "They're busy, and 30 seconds of information is valuable to them. They would be appreciative of this."

Although a product like WSJ Office Network may reach trend status, there is some doubt as to whether it will penetrate the market. "Many people don't have time to sit, watch and wait for the information," Frankel noted, and they can just as easily get real-time information from products like BlackBerrys. However, he said he was interested in seeing what the service has to offer.

—Amanda Marsh



The WSJ Office Network delivers real-time news and building announcements to tenants and visitors.

means of disseminating information, including memos, posted paper notices, public address systems and lobby easels.

John Brod, a principal with PBS Realty Advisors, and Paul Glickman, a senior vice president with Cushman & Wakefield Inc., both are active brokers in the office market and praised