

Community Chronicle



Spadina Address Joins King West Central Portfolio

The late September purchase of a 52,000-square-foot, fully-restored brick and beam office property at 99 Spadina is the first acquisition made by **Allied Properties REIT**, a real estate investment trust formed earlier this year. The purchase is in keeping with Allied's vision to grow the neighbourhood.



"Buying 99 Spadina is significant in a lot of ways, not the least of which is that it shows how we are continuing to invest in the neighbourhood," says Allied Properties REIT's president and CEO Michael Emory.

The six-storey edifice, located on the northeast side of the King and Spadina corner, was entirely retrofitted in 2000-2001, with two entire floors added in the process. Fully leased, 99 Spadina is home to four tenants.

Ground Floor

Diesel Fitness is an urban fitness and yoga spa that occupies the ground floor and lower level of 99 Spadina. The main floor features a large Atrium with a DJ booth on one end and a bank of televisions on the other – it's a space that's as ready to host a group coaching session as it is an evening event. Diesel also has spin studios, a cardio centre (featuring treadmills, elliptical trainers and recumbent bikes), a raw training facility (free weights) as well as yoga studios and a fuel bar, which offers a range of healthy snacks and juices as well as cappuccinos and lattes. www.dieselfitness.ca

3rd Floor

Blast Radius is a company that uses technology to help firms automate marketing, sales, and customer service to maximize return on relationships. Combining broad experience with technical and business knowledge in specific industries, Blast Radius offers a range of solutions integrating proven technologies. With offices in New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Vancouver and Amsterdam, Blast Radius has formed long-term relationships with companies such as Nike, Nintendo, Heineken, Kenwood, BMW, and Universal Studios. www.blastradius.com

5th Floor

DaviesHowePartners is a law practice that focuses on representation before courts and administrative boards where it acts on behalf of a full spectrum of clients, from small entrepreneurs to major Canadian and international corporations. This team of nine lawyers works with clients from a wide range of industries. Practice areas include Administrative Law, Arbitration and

Alternative Dispute Resolution, Corporate/Commercial Litigation, e-Litigation, Employment/Labour Law, Energy/Regulatory Law, Expropriations, Insurance, Land Use and Development, and Property Tax Assessment. And, given its expertise in these areas, the firm also does a considerable amount of work involving Developer Cost Sharing Agreements and real estate. www.davieshowe.com

6th Floor

Rhombus Media Inc., now celebrating its 23rd anniversary, is a production firm known the world over for its feature films and television programs on the performing arts. Rhombus productions have received numerous honours at many prestigious international festivals: an Academy Award for musical score for *The Red Violin*, seven Emmy awards - five International Emmys and two Primetime Emmys. www.rhombusmedia.com ■

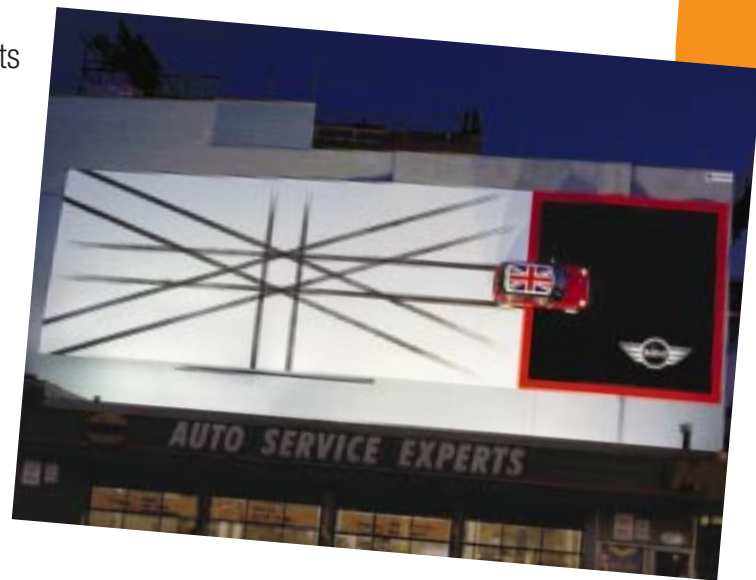
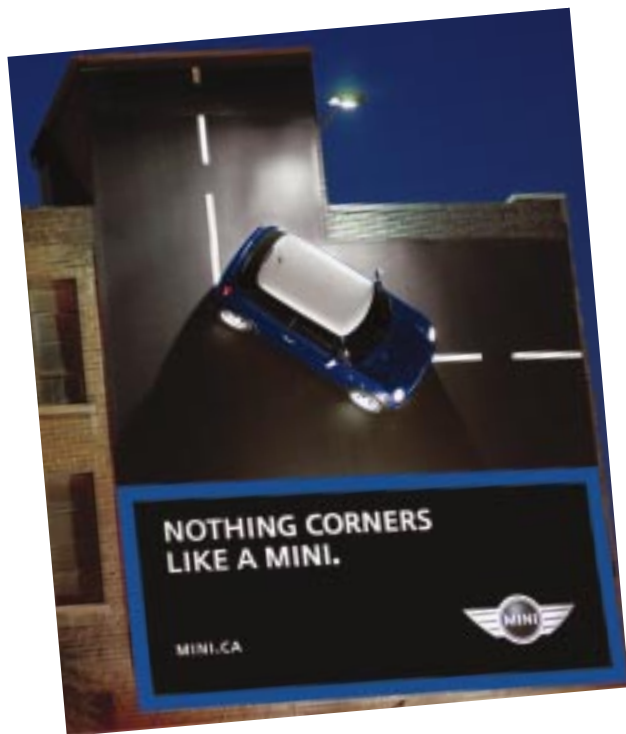
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– Yvan Marston

"Shell" Game

MINI billboards take outdoor advertising to new heights



Launched in July of 2002, MINI's innovative outdoor campaign in the area featured 660-pound fiberglass shells set on massive billboards, one located at King and John Streets, and another at the intersection of Spadina and Wellington. Created by Taxi advertising, the ads garnered considerable attention with the "union jack" billboard winning International Best of Show at the 2003 OBIE awards, which recognizes creative excellence in outdoor advertising.

Information Integration

Multidisciplinary Courtyard team tackles electronic health record project from King West Central

“Why do you have to repeat your medical history to every single healthcare provider you see?” Dave Wattling asks rhetorically. “The history hasn’t changed,” he adds.

We’re talking about the notion of electronic health records and the massive amount of money and work involved in implementing an individual-centric health information system. The history example is just one of the ways in which patients will see a difference once a system is set into place. And getting something into place is in part what Courtyard Group does.

Located at 445 King Street West, the professional services firm has a staff of 30 that combines a wide range of experience and formal training in health informatics with a host of other disciplines, including engineering, law, finance, business, operations management and clinical practice. Working on a number of consulting projects, Courtyard Group adopts a multidisciplinary approach, in tandem with a singular focus on the healthcare industry.

It conducts strategic reviews, does project management, performs systems integration (moving data between disparate computer systems) and helps hospitals with management and clinical decision support.

Its teams work throughout North America with initiatives currently underway in Toronto, Kingston, Edmonton and New York.



“We have a team of eleven working in New York managing the implementation of information systems for the US’s largest public healthcare organizations – one that encompasses eight hospitals,” explains Wattling, the firm’s Managing Partner. The Edmonton project, says Wattling, is a review of a large teaching hospital’s pharmacy operations. But much of the firm’s energy is currently focussed on electronic health record projects.

“It’s all about, if you go into your local GP and then you go into the hospital – neither party knows about the event in the other place,” says Wattling. “So the electronic health record and the integration of each place’s information allows the GP to know what has occurred at the hospital and the hospital to know what has occurred with the GP.”

The current system isn’t anywhere near this efficient and Wattling expects something of the type described above will prove a reality in the next five to seven years. It’s a complex matter and one in which Courtyard Group’s involvement is focused on the practical matters of sorting out its possible implementation.

Building on a national perspective, a rich culture of consultants and of course, some great brick and beam space in the King and Spadina node, Courtyard Group is helping shape the future of healthcare, right from the heart of King West Central. ■

– Yvan Marston

Screen Savers

New King West Central HR firm does swift business checking pre-employment candidates

While papers and pundits talk of a slowing economy, Clinton Fox's company is racing forward. Seems business is booming for the pre-employment screening firm that moved into King West Central in early October. Even with most companies tapering their hiring, pre-screening remains an active field.

"When companies slow down, it means they can examine how they hire and screen their people before they actually bring them on board," explains Fox who founded Infocheck Ltd. with partner Vincent Tsang, nine year ago.

According to their research, nearly 25% of job candidates misrepresent themselves, making reference checking the fastest growing value-added service available to hiring personnel. Knowing who you've hired can also save you money. Past settlements and court awards have ranged from \$25,000 to \$4.75 million as a result of crimes committed by employees - even at the level of part-time maintenance

workers - who were hired without reference checks.

Typically, bad hirings prompted companies to call pre-employment screening firms, but today, in the post

September 11th environment, security checks have become the rule rather than the exception.

"We get a lot more calls from companies that are simply being proactive now," explains Fox.

With 450 clients, most of whom are in the private sector, Infocheck expects to grow considerably - taking 3,900 square feet of space capable of housing up to 40 employees. Moving from a two-storey walk up in Yorkville with 21 employees, Fox says the new King West Central premises are in keeping with the warehouse, open-concept space

the firm had been looking for. What's more, a spot in King West Central provides easy access to Infocheck's Bay Street clients. ■

- Yvan Marston

THE VALUE OF BACKGROUND CHECKS

The costs associated with hiring, training and turnover can be reduced substantially by carefully investigating the qualifications and skills of potential employees before their first day on the job.

According to Infocheck research...

- 41.5% misrepresent their education.
- 36.0% misrepresent their employment history.
- 34.0 % were dismissed or not eligible for rehire.
- 27.0% have been involved in personality conflicts.
- 15.0% have punctuality or attendance problems.
- 8.5% exaggerate responsibilities and job titles.

Incoming!

The **Body Shop Canada's** Head Office is moving to a new home in the King West Central neighbourhood after more than 20 years in north Toronto. The move to the century-old, beautifully renovated building at 469 King Street West is an "exciting" step for the leading-edge cosmetics and body care company.

"It's obvious that someone had a great vision in mind when this area was redeveloped. It's full of heart and creativity and has a great funky feel to it. It's perfect for us," says The Body Shop CEO, Josée Paquin.

"We wanted to be in the midst of this kind of energy, especially with so many other retailers and particularly non-traditional retailers. It's a nice fit," she added.

It was time for a move as the company is evolving to offer its customers an expanded range of new products by aligning with the global company and sourcing a growing and

internationally-consistent product offering from The Body Shop International.



"As we are no longer manufacturing or distributing, the space we've had for the past 10 years in Don Mills really doesn't suit our needs any more. Now we can focus all our energies on being great retailers - pure and simple.

Happily, though, the new space has the same warm, open feel that we're used to," says Tony Hamill, the Communications Manager for the company.

Since its inception 23 years ago, The Body Shop Canada has striven to be environmentally aware and the fact that the area is easily accessible by Go Transit and the TTC is another draw for the company, Hamill says.

"Not to mention all the amazing restaurants and cafés!"

Space for Rant

Urban Living: Reap ALL the benefits

If you've chosen the King West Central community as your neighbourhood, you've made a wise choice. King West Central juxtaposes a variety of elements that create a vibrant, lively habitat: old meets new in handsomely restored beautiful architecture with theatres, galleries, and public transit right at your door, not to mention, parks, tennis courts, and swimming pools just minutes away.

But one thing separates the neophyte urban dweller from the seasoned downtowner: shopping. As a longtime downtown resident, I'm always amazed – and amused – to observe the shopping habits of my newer neighbours. They live, work, and relax in their new environment, but when it's time to shop, they hop in the car and head for a suburban shopping mall!

If this sounds like you, take it from me: you're missing out on the best of what your new neighbourhood has to offer. Hair salons, clothing shops, home furnishings, florists, outdoor and sporting equipment, groceries, organic produce, jewelry, art, music – even the best paint and wallpaper stores – they're all here in the King West community.

While there is a sense of security in following old routines, it may be time to shake up your old shopping habits. Get out there and explore! Ask your neighbours to recommend their favourite shopping haunts. Get to know your local shopkeepers. You'll be supporting the vibrant community you've chosen to call home, you'll be establishing yourself as an integral part of the urban landscape, and most of all, you'll be getting the most enjoyment and value out of your new neighbourhood. See you out there!

Eya Greenlanda

Eya Greenlanda is not a retailer but a longtime resident of the King West Central community and a strong supporter of living and shopping locally.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK! SEND US YOUR VIEWS, NEWS, BLUES AND OPINIONS ON JUST ABOUT ANYTHING. IF WE PRINT YOUR PIECE YOU'LL RECEIVE AN UTTERLY SPECIAL, TOO-COOL-FOR-WORDS PRIZE DESIGNED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE BREATHING SPACE! Please send your 'Rant' to Allied Properties, 469 King Street West, Toronto ON, M5V 3M4 or by email: memory@alliedproperties.ca

Shelter Interiors Expands its Offerings to Include Sofas, Area Rugs and Custom Furniture

Since opening its doors at 451 King Street West in June of 2002, Shelter Interiors has been busy growing and adapting. Owner Sophie Ratcliff speaks frankly about her learning curve. "When I opened the business, I thought it was about a certain thing but then the theory of the business plan was replaced with the reality of client demand, the opportunities that are specific to our King West Central location and the challenges of the new retail environment."

While antiques sourced from Northern China remain an important part of the Shelter collection, they are now being blended with more contemporary pieces and decorative accessories. And moving in a 'whole home' direction, the merchandise mix has recently been expanded to include sofas and area rugs.

Designed exclusively for Shelter, the sofa selection can be characterized as modern without being stark. They are pieces that blend beautifully with warm woods and antiques.

The area rugs and runners feature a variety of wool and sisal blends and patterns with edging in cotton (or optional, more decorative borders), and are custom

made, based on each client's preferences.

In addition to sofas and rugs, Shelter also produces wooden furniture such as beds, tables and cabinetry on a custom basis. "When I started, I didn't anticipate that custom orders would comprise such a significant portion of the business. However, most of my competitors either don't offer custom work or are very restricted in their custom offering, so there was a real opportunity."

While many custom orders are based on Shelter's existing line of contemporary pieces, other pieces have been created based purely on the client's vision.

With the recent launch of its Web site, Shelter offers inspirational furnishings on view at www.shelterinteriors.com

As a special promotion to King West Central tenants, Shelter is offering 20% off all custom orders from now to the end of November including casegoods, upholstery and area rugs. ■



Shelter's custom collection includes this 'ming' scroll table, slipper sofas and dramatic 'curio' shelf, behind.



This three piece set of nest tables is available in a variety of finishes.