A New Office For A New World

Byte & Mortar offers alternatives to working from home or coffee shops.

Daniel Haberman

The broad-based approach is a part of the plan. "Some people are looking to escape a home office environment — or supplement it. Some who have been working in a coffee shop are ready for a next, more productive step. Even for someone who is very comfortable working from home, for a very low cost, this adds a layer of professionalism, stepping it up a little in their clients' eyes."

Haberman, the company's president, has been getting the word out about the new venture through social media campaigns, Google, Craigslist, online aggregators and local brokers. "Interest has been fantastic," he says. "It's been a nice startup."

Byte & Mortar clients get a shared receptionist, WiFi, tea, coffee and use of the facility at any time. "If they're productive in the middle of the night, they can come then. We're a highly secure facility with programmed after-hours access."

Haberman, 39, grew up in Detroit near Seven Mile Road and Livernois. Haberman Fabrics has been the family's business for decades. He attended the University of Michigan before getting a law degree at Georgetown. Daniel, his wife, Joanne, and 1-year-old daughter, Ella, live in Birmingham and worship at Temple Sh'monai in West Bloomfield.

Daniel's brother Jeremy owns the Magic Bag Theatre in Ferndale. The two brothers owned the Bocca, a popular lounge next to the theater, for 10 years before selling it in 2011.

"My dad always says that none of us in the family are hirable, so we always just do our own projects," he chuckles. Haberman says his new venture taps into his experiences in law, real estate and hospitality.

"I'd love to see this company continue to grow and reach into new areas," he says. "There's a broad appeal. A company from India toured recently, looking for a North American branch. We've had a number of European companies looking for North American offices. I anticipated none of that."

"The goal is to master it here, make sure we've got it operating perfectly, and then to reach out and expand into additional markets."

"What we do is provide this extremely flexible use of office space. What is it going to be in five years? There's almost no way to know exactly how offices are going to change. We just have to keep being there and being as flexible as possible."

 Byte & Mortar offers mail services for $59 a month, call services for $119 a month and coworking memberships for $159 a month. A variety of private offices are also available. The campus-like setting features a patio surrounded by greenery in the summertime. Decor is modern with furniture from Michigan-based Steelcase and Haworth and custom pieces from Scott Klinker, Cranbrook Academy of Art's 3-D Designer in Residence.

For more about Byte & Mortar Offices, visit http://byteandmortar.com.

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Coworking is a growing trend in cities like Detroit that have a lot of entrepreneurs.

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