

## **Chicago Tribune: Asian real estate developers speed into future**

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/technology/chi-0407030103jul03,1,2451040.story?coll=chi-techtopheds-hed>

MY TECH by ALEX L. GOLDFAYN

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Geoffrey Kasselmann, 38  
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Geoffrey Kasselmann does not hesitate when he says a recent 12-day trip changed his life "in every conceivable way."

Kasselmann, a commercial real estate broker, and a group of five colleagues went on a whirlwind tour of 38 "smart building" developments in seven cities throughout Asia where they saw, quite literally, the future of construction.

"What they have out there are master-planned intelligent communities, filled with smart buildings," Kasselmann said. "We thought we'd see buildings--but they're building full-blown cities.

They all have 18-hole golf courses, parks, schools, retail shopping, hotels, and they're near a convention center or an Olympic stadium."

In Seoul, for example, Kasselmann previewed a development called Digital Media City (<http://dmc.seoul.go.kr/english/index.jsp>) which, he estimates, will span about three square miles and include about 60 million square feet of usable indoor space. (Chicago's Sears Tower, by comparison, has about 3.7 million square feet of office space.)

The city's main street is called Digital Media Street.

According to one of Kasselmann's tour guides, 74 percent of South Korean adults use high-speed Internet more than one hour each day.

In Malaysia, a development called Cyberjaya (<http://www.cyberjaya-msc.com>) will span 7,000 acres.

"It's a business park on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur that's committed to intelligent-building technology," Kasselmann said.

Which is the tie that binds these ultra high-tech communities together: They're prewired (and, of course, wirelessly enabled) for lightning-fast Internet

connections at speeds and capacities that will be considered cutting-edge in 50 years, based on what Kasselman was told by his guides.

By 2005, Seoul's Digital Media City, for example, plans to have network speeds of 51 megabits per second for homes in the community and an eye-popping 622 mbps at offices. Three years later, both speeds will approximately double.

By comparison, home-based cable-modem broadband speeds top out at about 3 mbps in the Chicago area.

"These developments are being built to withstand the test of time," Kasselman said. "Everything is measured in terabytes, gigabytes and megabytes while harnessing a broadband connection with a wireless overlay so they can shift gears in any kind of emerging environment."

For Kasselman and his companions, the outing was not a sightseeing trip. They were gathering data.

"We came back with about 50 gigabytes of digital photos and video and about 55 pounds of paper [materials]," he said.

Their goal: to duplicate what they saw in Asia here in the U.S.

"We want to develop a mixed-use office, residential, retail and maybe hotel building that's automated to an extent nobody has ever witnessed before," he said. "We traveled to the end of the Earth in search of the world's best ideas, and we want to combine them into one development."

The group is narrowing in on a city to focus their efforts. More critically, they are seeking funding, which, Kasselman believes, would need to exceed \$100 million.

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