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## With Hello Alfred Partnership, Related Seeks To Make Time The Hottest New Amenity In Luxury Housing

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Brian Jeffords spends 120 nights a year away from his Manhattan apartment. His work as a cyber-security consultant pulls him away, but when Jeffords finally returns home there are always fresh flowers on the coffee table, newly dry cleaned shirts hanging in his closet (plastic removed) and, if he chooses, his favorite foods in the fridge. "In my life convenience is so important," he says.

This busy professional's dream of freedom from nagging household chores is thanks to an unlikely ally—his landlord. Jeffords rents a studio at MiMA, an apartment tower in midtown Manhattan owned by Related Companies, the mega-developer behind Hudson Yards and a portfolio of over 67,000 apartments. Today Related will announce that it has partnered with startup Hello Alfred to provide on-demand butler services for residents living in its 11,000 luxury rental units.



Related tested the service in a nine-building pilot last year and rolled it out across all its rental buildings over the fall. As part of their monthly rent all residents now have access to weekly tidying, grocery delivery and online shopping return management, as well as move-in management. (Monthly rents in MiMA start at \$3,570 for a studio and reach \$6,070 for a two-bedroom, two-bath. Apartments in a few of Related's buildings can fetch as much as \$45,000 a month.) For a fee residents can request things like furniture assembly and donation coordination.

All of this is handled by on-site Hello Alfred staffers who residents direct via a mobile app. The startup's machine learning technology learns user preferences and habits, making sure you never run out of 2% milk for your coffee and the best place to buy cheese in your neighborhood. Tell the app that your mother-in-law is coming to visit and it will ask if you would like a bottle of her favorite chardonnay.

"It's a home that will anticipate you," says Hello Alfred co-founder and CEO Marcela Sapone. "Your home replenishes itself, so you always have the perfect amount of toilet paper and paper towels."

Building managers have long "played the amenity game," says Related Vice President Chris Schmidt. Across New York City well-heeled renters are lured with gyms, playrooms and inviting common rooms (spaces that often goes unused after move-in). "We wanted to complement [existing amenities] with an additional level of service," says Schmidt. "The element of time is so precious." Jeffords estimates he saves an hour or two each week.

The developer is not alone in trying to provide residents with more than a nice place to lay their heads. Just like retailers have become obsessed with providing experiences, residential building managers are increasingly focused on service.

At the high end, hotel brands Four Seasons and the Ritz Carlton now have over 50 branded residences between them, offering owners hotel-like perks such as in-residence dining and housekeeping. Last month ultra-luxury resort brand Aman announced its New York property, scheduled to open in 2020, will include 20



private homes. Meanwhile, startups like Ollie and WeWork's WeLive brand are marketing fully-furnished micro-apartments to young renters with promises of community and a helping hand on daily chores.

For Related, the partnership is a chance to test a new trend in housing and to gain an edge in attracting on-the-fence renters. For three-year old Hello Alfred the stakes are much higher.

Like many entrepreneurs, Sapone and co-founder Jessica Beck started Hello Alfred to solve a problem in their own lives: their studies at Harvard Business School left little time for grocery shopping or tidying. Their solution, which combines real people with automation, has since 2014 earned them \$23 million in venture capital funding and Sapone a spot on Forbes' 2016 30 Under 30 list.

The company originally sold its on-demand services directly to consumers, charging less than many city-dwellers spend on takeout, before pivoting to a business-to-business model this year. Now they sell to developers. Only residents of partner buildings can sign-up.

Currently Hello Alfred is available in buildings in New York, New Jersey, Boston and San Francisco. In 2018 they plan to expand to Chicago, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Atlanta and Miami. As part of the Related deal, the biggest test yet of the new model, Hello Alfred agreed to not sign on any none-Related buildings in Manhattan for at least two years.

"Urban dwellers are not just renting an apartment," says Sapone. "They are renting a lifestyle and an experience."