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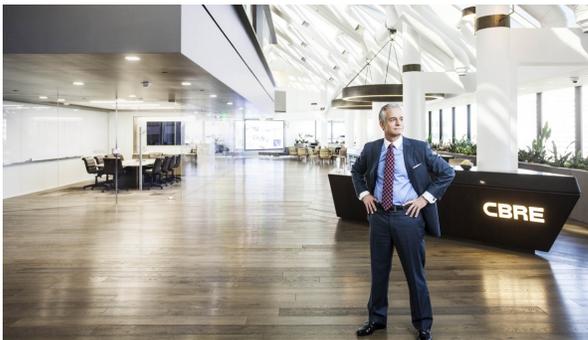


Kathryn Dill Forbes Staff

The workforce, the workplace, and the future of both.

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Inside Commercial Real Estate Giant CBRE's Office Of The Future

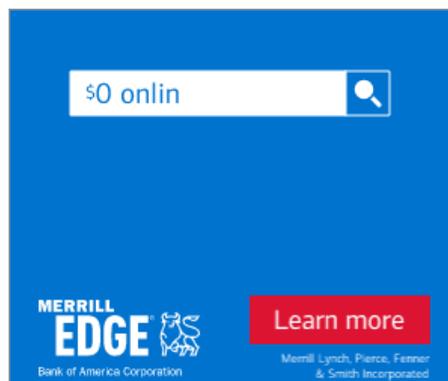


Lewis C. Horne, President of the Greater Los Angeles-Orange County Region for CBRE, Inc., photographed in the CBRE offices in downtown Los Angeles, CA. Ethan Pines for Forbes

CBRE has built an \$11 billion (2015 revenues) business helping clients around the world buy, lease, manage and finance commercial [real estate](#). The Los Angeles-based company has more than 70,000 employees in 400 offices in 68 countries and ranks 15th on our annual list of America's Best Employers. Its secret? Using cheap and reliable networking technologies to (finally) implement some of the ideas that have been bouncing around corporate boardrooms since the first Internet bubble.

[In Photos: CBRE's Better, Faster, Cheaper Office](#)

There are no assigned desks at CBRE headquarters (and no private offices, though employees can log into an app to reserve an "office for a day"), and all personal effects—family pictures or anything printed on paper—must be stashed in a high-school-size locker at the end of the day. Workers are encouraged to store all records and notes digitally, which they can access



from their smartphones. It's not exactly a paperless office, but the resulting space is remarkably efficient and clutter-free.

More On Forbes: Ongoing Coverage of Best Employers 2016 Employees across the U.S. are in the best position to say which companies and organizations are offering the strongest opportunities—so we asked them.

The ideas might be 20 years old, but the tech is now ubiquitous and reliable enough to make it work (mostly) seamlessly—and when it doesn't, a roving IT assistant can be instantly summoned. Even better, it is cheaper than a traditional office. When CBRE relocated its headquarters within L.A. in 2013, it was able to fit 245 people into 48,000 square feet versus 191 folks in 61,000 square feet at its old digs. The company calculates that it is saving a half-million dollars (or \$11 per square foot) just in this one location. And the employees seem to love it. In an internal survey 83% felt more productive, and 90% wouldn't return to their previous office format.

“What we're saying [to our clients],” says Lewis C. Horne, president of CBRE's Los Angeles-Orange County region, “is ‘Come and see how we live.’”



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