

Your Summer Intern Housing Solution: A Large Employer Case Study



The Summer Intern Challenge

Retail employers compete with leading banks, financial services and accounting firms, technology innovators, and consulting practices to attract top talent to their intern programs. To be competitive, employers must present both compelling learning experiences and appealing benefits, such as market-rate compensation, access to local amenities, and fun, attractive, and convenient furnished housing.

In 2022, Dwellworks Living was asked by the world's largest combined brick-and-mortar and online retailer to provide housing for hundreds of interns in 6 competitive rental markets: San Francisco, Silicon Valley, Dallas, Denver, Greater Washington DC, and Northern New Jersey as well as hotel options in the client's nationally distributed field office locations. The largest concentration of interns and biggest challenge for housing was in the always cost-competitive San Francisco Bay Area.

Typically, employers start their intern recruiting as soon as students return to school in late summer/early fall. Pandemic uncertainty made this timing difficult, and our client was not able to commit to full in-person intern programs until January and confirm their corporate housing solutions until February. The relocation management company managing this program for their corporate client came to us knowing the previous primary corporate housing supplier for this program had exited the business during the COVID-19 era, as many suppliers had. So not only was the client's intern program rebooting post-pandemic, but also they were looking for housing in a market where many properties were already committed. The search and sourcing for housing would be complicated by a newly competitive and over-heated rental market, where prices had spiked 20% versus previous year rents.

Putting Our Solutions Mindset to Work

Dwellworks is the world's largest provider of destination services for companies moving their talent to new locations. We service over 20,000 globally mobile employees each year, representing over 80% of the Fortune 1000. Our global footprint and decades of award-winning service have earned us a large share of the corporate mobility destination services market in the US and globally.

The relocation management company managing the intern program for this retailer, a Fortune 10 global employer, knew our reputation for service and project management and reached out to Dwellworks Living, our company's global corporate housing solutions brand, with this urgent request.

How We Responded

The client's specific requirements for housing and amenities included:



260 housing units needed



Close proximity to the local campus with easy access to transportation services



Clustered housing so the interns could build community off-site



Within the housing, as much private sleeping space as possible, i.e., every intern to have their own bedroom, in respect of the ongoing COVID-19 health and safety concerns



Secure mail room for package delivery and pick up



All units available on move-in dates beginning 1 June – no ‘bridging’ hotel stays

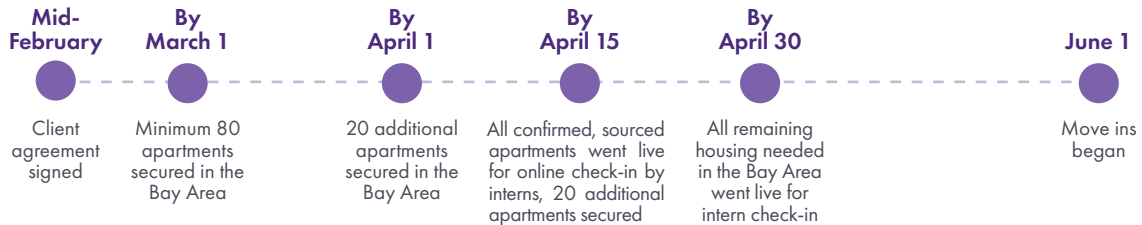


Contactless check-in procedures; assured access, and on-call assistance for late-night arrivals



One point of service contact – a core, dedicated team to support the complete intern guest experience

Our Project Plan and Key Dates



The critical client requirements were finding housing and ensuring duty of care. They expected reasonable pricing based on the size of their business and the opportunity for suppliers to earn ongoing reservations, independent of the intern program, but they also recognized that in an environment of limited options and limited time, pricing could not always be optimized or prioritized.

Options that met specifications were provided at a variety of price points and all options that met client core requirements were accepted without additional delays.

Aligning Our Shared Values

Dwellworks Living’s job was to support the full promise the client made to their interns: **“dream big, take ownership, and make things happen.”** The interns were assigned projects to own and drive forward during the summer. They were given exposure to executives and leaders and invited to the annual Shareholders’ Meeting. They joined fun events such as ball games, happy hours, and movie nights. Most importantly, as in the case of 74% of intern experiences, a majority of interns were offered full-time positions or return internships at the end of the summer.

The company was offering more than just a summer job; they were building a critical talent pipeline in a very tight hiring market.

Our contribution to the employer's mission was to enact the company's core values through our corporate housing program:

- Service to the customer
- Respect for the individual
- Strive for excellence
- Act with integrity

Our responsiveness to the client demonstrated service in action.

The properties were all specifically sourced with respect for health, safety, community, and ease of commute, at a level of quality that demonstrated our combined striving for excellence within real-time deadlines.

In sourcing these properties, we acknowledged that the search process, though well-managed and well-executed, would not be without some setbacks and local market challenges.

True to our own core value of integrity, Dwellworks Living was candid in setting expectations and in our detailed communications with the relocation management company, employer, and interns.

Our solution alignment with client values included not only sourcing properties that met price and amenity expectations but also staffing our team with dedicated guest managers. We knew the experience of staying in corporate housing would be new for the interns and wanted to be certain they had support for their housing and location questions in advance, on arrival, and during their stay.

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Supply Chain Gets it Done

Dwellworks Living has thousands of housing partners in the US and globally, and dozens of tested, experienced, and financially resilient partners in the Bay Area. These providers know and trust our brand and especially our supplier management organization and they went the extra mile to deliver.

The most effective way to get after this large project was to focus our efforts with a limited number of reliable, high-performance partner options (we worked with eight providers ultimately after speaking with more than 25), drawing on the expertise of our supply chain team to evaluate the most highly qualified suppliers.

Our client-facing account executives managed client expectations with frequent, transparent updates and our accounting and finance teams were consulted in order to assure wary suppliers that the intern programs were real and they would be paid on time.

- Our project infrastructure included **weekly client calls**, specific updates, and discussions of roadblocks and alternatives.
- We shared the client needs candidly with our suppliers and we **listened to our partners' concerns** before sharing options and solutions.
- As a result, we met the client's needs: **all rooms available on move-in date** and no interim hotel stays, and further secured the confidence of our partners.
- **That 'total system transparency' was key to success, especially in the environment of shortage and speed that we all operated in through the spring and summer of 2022.**
- Housing **information was provided in intern-preferred text format** and included detailed, image-rich pre-arrival information.
- **We pre-tested the check-in process**, a point of customer engagement that typically sets expectations and reactions for the entire extended stay.
- We required an **electronic check-in process** at all properties, so that no intern had to worry about accessing their housing if they arrived at night or on a weekend.
- We established a **dedicated 24/7 Dwellworks Living service team** for every intern's need and provided a 100% single point of communication so that any need was addressed by a Dwellworks Living service owner who was authorized to implement the appropriate solution.
- **Ultimately, the successful delivery of solutions under pressure was a proof point of our team's capability for delivering on challenging requirements by optimizing a high-performance supplier network and leveraging our expertise in Bay Area housing.**



See what our Corporate Housing partner had to say:

I want to highlight the robust processes that Dwellworks Living has in place. We worked on an important group project this past summer in the context of a very challenging season for inventory. They clearly communicated and executed a well-designed workflow for employee/unit assignment and support. Everyone knew what other team members were working on. Ingrained in their process is reciprocal trust. We appreciate the huge trust that they continue to give us which inevitably provides us with the valuable opportunity to shine and grow with confidence as a company. And lastly, Dwellworks Living shows tremendous gratitude to their partners. They clearly value us as their boots on the ground as we all execute on a day-to-day basis and present a cohesive and impeccable corporate housing unit and experience to our guests.



Outcome: Total Client Satisfaction and Ongoing Opportunity

The contract for intern corporate housing services was renewed for 2023.

The client was able to initiate the 2023 program earlier, giving us more time to source well-matched properties. As a recommendation for process improvement, we requested to be included in the interns' orientation meeting at the client's headquarters in early February. Our intention was to not only introduce properties and build excitement and engagement for the internships but to demonstrate the breadth and depth of our local knowledge and our pledge of support to the interns on their assignment.



Every intern was provided with access to our proprietary Xplore app, to get acquainted with their temporary home and how to get around and enjoy the Bay Area. The app is offered free of charge and interns (and all guests of Dwellworks Living) are invited to download as soon as their reservations are confirmed.

The relocation management company and corporate client feedback has set us up for ongoing success as a trusted partner.

“ We were blown away by the Dwellworks Living team’s willingness to fly to our client’s headquarters and the support they provided for their interns. It was above and beyond what we would normally see from a partner, and I am so glad that the client got to experience that level of partnership with our service partner teams. For that, again, thank you. I do hope this strengthens the partnership and we can continue to partner on this program. Your team is phenomenal. ”



CONTACT DWELLWORKS LIVING

For more information on solutions for intern housing and global corporate housing program management, contact our sales team [here](#).