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## Geekdom Gets a Hip Makeover at its New Digs in the Historic Rand Building

December 12, 2013 by [lalorek](#) [1 Comment](#)



A mock-up of the new open community space at Geekdom, once it moves into the historic Rand building. Courtesy of Alamo Architects

Converting a historic building into a modern-day tech coworking space to incubate hot new startups in downtown San Antonio isn't an easy task. But Irby Hightower of Alamo Architects and his team have managed to do just that. They took a former bank building and are transforming the seventh floor into a modern day workplace for geeks.

It's a work in progress right now. In fact, it's a hard-hat construction zone. But once

finished, the new [Geekdom](#) at the Rand will have bike racks, showers, lockers, changing rooms, a nap room and transparent glass sliding doors on the offices to give the entire floor a wide-open feel.



Irby Hightower with Alamo Architects shows off the new design for [Geekdom](#) at the Rand building.

"The center offices open up from a smaller office to a larger office as a startup grows," said Hightower. He presented drawings of the new space at a town hall meeting for members at Geekdom on Wednesday night. The 1,200 square foot space will have 20 offices available for tech startups. Desks will rent for \$200 a month. Community membership will remain at \$50 a month. At the new site, the community space is larger and snakes throughout the floor. An open kitchen also encourages interaction among the members. The entire place is built to encourage community collaboration.

The space also includes a large conference room and smaller conference rooms.


"The whole place really is meant to be one big community work environment," Hightower said. The new Geekdom is a little grungier than the 11th floor of the Weston Centre, current home of the site and a former law office.

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A packed house turned out for the town hall meeting at Geekdom to unveil the new design for the site at the Rand building.

“We think that’s the right approach,” Hightower said. “The ceilings will have more character...It’s the kind of space you can experiment in and have more fun in.”

The space will also contain a lot of writeable surfaces and reliable high-speed Internet with lots of outlets for wired service as well as Wi-Fi.

The main floor of the building will also contain an events center with two Tricasters, portable live broadcasting studios, from

NewTek for live streaming programming. The events center will also house a Ping-Pong table and other games.

The new Geekdom is expected to open on March 31st. It will feature the events center, the sixth floor for established tech companies and the seventh floor for new startups and community members.

In another 18 months, the entire Rand building will be vacated and will belong to Geekdom, said Lorenzo Gomez with Geekdom and the 80/20 Foundation. They’ve talked about putting an electric sign on the roof of the building then with one letter that continues to flicker on and off, harkening back to the 1930s, when the building served as a department store.

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