



Moving Out: Bentley furniture at Markus Persson's Beverly Hills mansion.

Game Maker's House Home To Big Score

Creator of 'Minecraft' to donate \$400,000 in furniture to charities.

When you're a billionaire video-game developer looking to redecorate, what do you do with all the uber expensive furniture you're ditching?

Donate it.

At least that's what the creator of "Minecraft," **Markus Persson**, has chosen to do with top-notch furnishings that came with his new \$70 million home, according to interior designer **Joseph Ferrugio**, who worked with the developer of the Trousdale Estates mansion in Beverly Hills when it was being built on spec.

"When Markus purchased the house he decided he wanted to go a different direction and didn't know what to do with the furni-

ture," said Ferrugio, chief executive of **Ferrugio Design & Associates** in Marina del Rey.

Ferrugio suggested that the L.A. charity he founded, **Design by Donation**, would be a good option. The non-profit places in-kind furniture donations with charities in need and also auctions off higher-end pieces to buy furnishings for nonprofits.

"He loved it," Ferrugio recalled. "He said, 'Why don't you take all the Bentley furniture you put into the house?'"

An 11-piece living-room set made by the same company that makes the Bentley luxury car, as well as a chandelier and other unique items, will be auctioned off between Jan. 25 and on estate sale website EBTH.com, which stands for Everything But the House.

The furniture set alone is worth \$400,000, according to Ferrugio.

"I wanted to donate to a charity which focused on helping kids who are growing

up in difficult conditions," Persson said in a statement.

The Swedish video-game designer made his fortune selling the firm he co-founded, **Mojang**, to **Microsoft Corp.** for \$2.5 billion in September 2014.

A few months later, Persson again grabbed headlines by snapping up the megamansion for a cool \$70 million, outbidding **Shawn Carter** (Jay Z) and **Beyoncé Knowles-Carter** in the process.

While designing the tony pad's interiors, Ferrugio explained he was trying to make them look more stimulating than the home's sweeping views.

"We wanted the house to exude the utmost finest quality and that was why we needed the luxurious design of Bentley," he said. "The whole concept of the house was to make it feel like a luxury car, yacht or airplane. Everything had to be an event."

— Marni Usheroff

Hack of Sony Big Break For Security Firm

DZ Solutions locks up new showbiz clients with low-cost service.

In light of the 2014 data breach at **Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.**, many entertainment companies are under pressure to store and protect their digital information.

As a result, West L.A. tech firm **DZ Solutions Enterprises Inc.**, a creator of security network services, said it has experienced growing demand from A-list entertainment companies. Some of DZ's clients include **Walt Disney Co.**'s ABC Entertainment and **Anschutz Entertainment Group**.

"If you look to what happened to Sony, there is an importance of securing network and data from hackers and people who want to steal that information," said **Jack McAlpin**, DZ business development manager. "We



Patched In: Dustin Cabrera at West L.A. office of DZ Solutions.

find ourselves in a really great spot right now."

More than 80 percent of the company's new clients came from cold calling, he said. The firm's long-term strategy is to build relationships with clients, select the right technology and getting its engineers, such as **Dustin Cabrera**, to integrate with a client's existing network.

"Everything we sell is astronomically expensive," McAlpin said. "The average

transaction here is \$50,000 and we do a few multimillion-dollar deals a year as well."

Last year, the firm secured a place on the Business Journal's list of the 100 Fastest Growing Private Companies in Los Angeles, coming in at No. 64. Its revenue grew by 100 percent to \$39.3 million between 2012 to 2014, fueling an expansion that added 10 employees to its L.A. office.

The company has secured partnerships with tech giants such as **ABM Industries Inc.**, **Microsoft Corp.** and **Cisco Systems Inc.**, which McAlpin said allows DZ to offer what he described as competitive pricing.

"We're kind of like Costco," he said. "Because we buy such a large quantity of equipment from those suppliers, we get a better deal."

— Olga Grigoryants

Mall's Events Shooting For Moon, Asians

Beverly Center plans offerings to help ring in Lunar New Year.

The Beverly Center might deck the halls for Christmas, but it unfurls its biggest promotions for Lunar New Year next month.

"Lunar New Year has become a major holiday within the United States," said Marketing Director **Susan Vance**, who introduced the holiday to the mall in 2013. Celebrated in China, South Korea, Vietnam and other Asian countries as the year's most significant milestone, the event is a time of gift-giving and festivities that

many L.A. shopping centers have embraced.

For the Beverly Center, it's a chance to show solidarity with Asian and Asian American communities — locals and tourists alike — while boosting sales after the holidays, said Vance. Last year, tourist visitor numbers to Los Angeles County from China jumped 13 percent over the previous year, bringing in 779,000 people.

To encourage heavy shopping throughout February, the Beverly Center will offer \$25 gift cards to customers who buy more than \$500 on a single day, and \$50 gift cards to those who spend more than \$1,000. In addition, visitors will be able to leave notes at a "wishing tree" decorated with coins, lanterns and ribbons — sym-

bols of luck, joy and prosperity. They will be encouraged to share photos on Facebook, Instagram and Chinese social media platforms Weibo and WeChat. Actors **Harry Shum Jr.** and **Janel Parris**, both of Asian descent, will share their New Year wishes at an event there Feb. 4.

Citadel Outlets in Commerce will bring in more than 40 dancers and artists from the Los Angeles Chinese Cultural Center on Feb. 6 to perform in a plaza festooned with red and gold lanterns surrounding a Chinese pagoda. Shoppers who proclaim "Happy New Year" in Chinese — "xin nian kuai le" or "gong xi fa cai" — at the customer service center will receive red envelopes stuffed with gift cards and store discounts.

— Daina Beth Solomon

Side Gig Offers Bass-Line Satisfaction

Andrew Thomas, 44, says he enjoys nothing more than the sight of a dance floor filled with women and men grooving to the beat.

His 11-person band, **That Vibe**, in which Thomas plays bass, plays songs by **Frank Sinatra**, **Black Eyed Peas** and **Lady Gaga** at weddings and birthday parties. "Performing for me is a part of who I am, my identity,"



In Tune: Thomas at That Vibe show.

said Thomas, who is executive director of the **Westwood Village Improvement Association**. "I would never stop no matter what."

Thomas joined the band 13

PAGE 3

CHARLES CRUMPLEY

years ago and since then has never gone more than a few weeks without performing.

He's seen some interesting incidents over the years. There was the time a drunk insurance CEO got kicked off stage by a band singer and another time a drunk bridesmaid started a fight with the musicians after they refused to play a **Miley Cyrus** song.

Those tales inspired the book Thomas is working on: "Confessions of the Garage Band Hero." His other book, "Garage to Gigs: A Musician's Guide," was published by **Billboard Books** in 2008.

Meanwhile, Thomas has another hobby tied to his music passion: He collects bass guitars.

"They're different," he said, adding that 12 instruments might seem like a few too many. "But they all

have a purpose and I love them all."

Borderline Exasperating

Juan Dominguez usually makes the trip down to Tijuana at least once a year to visit an orphanage he supports there.

But when he was driving to the Mexican city last month to present a donation to **Los Angelitos Orphanage**, he was met with an unexpected hassle — long lines at the border.



Dominguez

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