

## Work continues on new Bitwise location in downtown Fresno

March 23, 2015



Work continues on the historic Phelan building in downtown Fresno where Bitwise Industries is planning a second location. A worker appears at a second-story window opening positioning an iron support beam in the Phelan building at 700 Van Ness Ave.; a pair of the many decorative terra cotta shields bearing the initials of James Phelan help frame the window. The Phelan building was built in 1914. Its architectural style is of the Commercial, Period Revival influence. It was one of the city's first automobile dealerships. For car storage, a ramp was incorporated, still in existence, to move cars to the second floor. Maxwells, Pierce Arrows and Hudsons were among the early car makes sold by Phelan. It was remodeled for offices in the mid-1970s. It is being renovated for the Bitwise tech company's second location. The building was gutted and the roof removed to upgrade the foundation. A truss system will be going in next month. Plans are to keep the 1915 exterior brick work, but remove the mid-century modern elements including the front-window system, on top of the entrance, that sticks out from the building.

JOHN WALKER — THE FRESNO BEE | [Buy Photo](#)

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“We’re taking one of the most historic buildings in downtown Fresno that was built for an entirely different purpose, and we’re doing with it something that we think all of Fresno will be very excited about,” [Bitwise CEO Jake Soberal said last summer in announcing plans for the Phelan building.](#)

The Phelan building was built in 1914 and was one of the city's first automobile dealerships. It was remodeled for offices in the mid-1970s.



To accommodate Bitwise, the self-described “mother ship” for a growing community of small technology companies in downtown Fresno, the building was gutted and the roof removed to upgrade the foundation. A truss system will be going in next month. Plans are to keep the 1915 exterior brick work, but remove the mid-century modern elements including the front-window system, on top of the entrance, that sticks out from the building.

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