

World Trade Center Developers Seek to Build Broadcast Antenna

David M. Levitt

The builders of 1 World Trade Center in New York plan to offer to transmit radio and television signals from the skyscraper's spire, potentially competing with the Empire State Building.

The Durst Organization is close to an agreement with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the 1,776-foot tower under construction in lower Manhattan, to build and operate an broadcast antenna atop the building, they said today in a joint statement. The Durst Organization oversees the development as an equity partner with the bi-state agency.

The agreement revives part of the original concept for the building, to rebuild the transmission center that was lost when the twin towers collapsed in the 2001 terrorist attacks.

"One World Trade will be New York's premium broadcasting facility," Jordan Barowitz, a Durst spokesman, said in telephone interview. "The business has changed in the last decade. Among other things, there's been a shift from analog to digital."

Broadcasters migrated to the Empire State Building after the attacks. The 102-story tower's antenna generated about \$16.1 million in 2010, according to a regulatory filing by Malkin Holdings LLC, which controls the property.

A voice mail left with Nicole Grzywacz, the Empire State Building's public relations manager, wasn't immediately returned.

The Durst firm agreed to spend about \$7.4 million to build the 1 World Trade Center antenna, according to the statement. It is prepared to pay another \$20 million more in

“tenanting costs” to enable broadcasters to use the spire, which is expected to generate about \$10 million a year in revenue, Barowitz said.

Broadcasters would be able to use the trade center spire as well as an antenna the Durst company operates at 4 Times Square in Midtown, according to the statement.