



2020 Ones to Watch: Jonathan Wasserstrum, SquareFoot

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Name: Jonathan Wasserstrum

Company: SquareFoot

Title: Co-founder / CEO

Education: An MBA from Columbia Business School, and before that a BA in Economics from Emory University.

Which project, deal, or transaction was the “game-changer” in the advancement of your career?

Knot Standard was the first leasing deal I did in NYC. It showed that we at SquareFoot had a viable business to build and that we were able to do brokerage transactions in addition to offering online listings and a tech platform. Since that first deal, we’ve completed 1,200 more deals in the past eight years, and we’ve also completed three subsequent deals with Knot Standard. That kind of retention echoed the value of our model and our mission — to identify and bring aboard growing companies early on in their evolution and to retain their business throughout their growth.

Who or what inspires you?

I love working on challenging problems with talented and passionate people both inside my company and outside of it. In real estate, you spend much of your day in meetings with prospective clients or having phone calls with existing contacts. I am inspired by the wide range of people I speak with. Having an open mind to who will walk in the door, and what they’ll have to say, is key to my success both professionally and personally.

How do you contribute to your community or your profession?

For community advocacy, I work to help reduce homelessness, volunteering with both Covenant House and Knock Knock, Give a Sock. There are far too many needy people seeking a helping hand, and I strive to engage in efforts that improve the lives of those in impoverished communities. Professionally, my contribution has come through my vision for the future of PropTech. For a dozen years, I’ve worked in real estate, and I saw early on the need for technology in an antiquated industry. I’ve been helping to advance these conversations about how real estate can be a happier place if we embrace innovation and to demonstrate the value of PropTech.

What led you to your current profession?

During business school, I got a call one day from an old friend who said he was struggling to get office space for his company. From that brief call, we identified a need for growing companies to find, transact, and occupy real estate. So we started SquareFoot to fix that. I've been working every day since then to make my company better than it was the day before.

What do you like most about your job?

It completely changes every six months, and I have to learn about much more than just real estate. For example, when I first got started, I had to educate myself about the basics of digital marketing. Even if I had a company I knew people needed, how was I going to find those people? Our focus changes every few months as we continue to solve puzzles, and I'm excited when we get to embark on the next stage(s).

What can our political leaders do to increase equality in the workplace?

We must improve childhood education so that a diverse talent pool has the skills they need to succeed in today's and tomorrow's workplace. It starts early on, and opportunity should be available to all.

If your life were made into a movie, what actor would you want to portray you?

Our office manager, Evan, is a rising star of the New York acting world. If a movie were made about me, I'd love to see Evan in the spotlight.

What social media platform do you use the most professionally?

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jonathan-wasserstrum-8a77533/>

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