



2021 Women in Professional Services: Liz Pollack, Marx Realty

March 23, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: Liz Pollack

Title: Senior Manager, Marketing

Company Name: Marx Realty

Real estate associations or organizations that you are currently a member of:

International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)

NY/NJ Council of Shopping Centers

What steps have you taken to ensure the continued success of your firm?

While my responsibilities in overseeing marketing for a super-regional shopping, dining and entertainment destination have always been to drive traffic, engagement, and leasing, in 2020, I was faced with a new challenge—bringing people together, while staying physically apart. To ensure the continued success of our destination I created and implemented a new health and safety awareness campaign that highlighted amenities such as curbside pick-up, and I enhanced the communication of these efforts to multiple audiences—retailers, customers, visitors, and media. Recognizing that the outdoor setting of Cross County Center would provide additional confidence for customers, I created a multi-media public awareness campaign around this feature. I also reorganized traditionally large-scale events to more intimate, ticketed programming to allow for social distancing, while still driving traffic.

In the past year, what project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

In one of the most challenging years ever for retail development, I was part of the team that executed one of the largest leases in New York during the pandemic. In August 2020, Marx Realty signed a 40-year lease with Target (first-to-market) to occupy 132,000 s/f of the former Sears at Cross County Center, in Yonkers, NY. In my role overseeing marketing and business development since 2008, I was responsible for providing market research, consumer data and renderings of the future build out, in order to secure the lease, as well as City of Yonkers planning board approvals. I also managed public relations, generating half a million coverage views in such publications as Real Estate in Depth, The New York Post, and more.

Why should women consider a career in commercial real estate and related services?

What I enjoy most about retail real estate and why I would recommend it to women, is the diversity of the industry and how it provides me with opportunities to collaborate across multiple channels. I am able to be both creative and strategic. To stand out and find success, it is essential to me that women in particular find ways to contribute tangible value and to be confident enough to consistently convey that value. I believe women are natural multi-taskers and are able to help manage anything from daily operations to future growth and development.

How have you adapted and changed in the last 12 months?

Some of the biggest changes I've seen over the last 12 months are centered around customer relationships. I feel as though we've all had to become more personal with each other. Safety, health, mental well-being, and self-care are now terms geared towards the masses and not just select groups. "Essential Workers" have become a new audience to both attract and celebrate as a way to showcase community engagement. I've introduced and marketed new amenities and embraced new social media platforms and streaming channels to optimize communication efforts. With a shift from promoting experiences to promoting essentials, I increased our social media following by nearly 30% compared to 2019 and utilized influencers to help communicate our strongest amenities, retailer offerings and operating procedures.

How do you keep your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles?

Communication and consistency are what I believe bring my team stability. In these uncertain times when we cannot necessarily be in the same office together, and are unsure of what the future holds, I believe that keeping in touch as frequently as possibly really helps us all stay focused. Tensions are high when it comes to operational matters such as collecting rent and working with new health and safety standards. Creating processes and setting procedural standards helps manage expectations for both internal and external teams.

Women have made significant progress in the last year towards equality in the workplace. How do you advocate for your fellow women in real estate?

I believe that sometimes the biggest challenge a professional woman can face is managing her own fear. There is the fear of being thought of as emotional or confrontational, of being incapable of managing a healthy work/life balance and managing the fear of failure. I like to remind my colleagues and friends as often as possible that it is important to not just acknowledge but also celebrate their wins, big and small. I think it's also important to help women recognize when there has been unfair treatment or inappropriate behavior and stand up for one another. Overall, creating a system of support for one another and ensuring my colleagues are aware of that support is essential across all industries.

What books or social media influencers would you recommend to other women?

Elaine Welteroth, author of "More Than Enough: Claiming Space for Who You Are (No Matter What They Say)" and talk show host, The Talk; Natalie MacNeil, influencer, author and mentor; and Nicaila Matthews Okome, entrepreneur and host of the Side Hustle Pro podcast