



Q&A with David Altman and Keith Brown on their company and accomplishments

December 15, 2008 - Long Island

How and when did you get your start in real estate?

KB: My family had always been involved in real estate and I managed the properties for the family business. Within 3 months of graduating law school, I negotiated my first ground lease with Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers for a new franchise on one of the properties and still own it today. I was also a Union Carpenter having joined the union when I was 16 years old as an apprentice and worked every summer up through my first summer of law school building office buildings, along the Route 110 corridor.

What charities are you personally involved with (not just financially)?

KB: I have been involved with many charities over the years, and have just been appointed as a board member to the Huntington Town-wide fund and will serve as co-chairman of their annual golf outing next year.

What professional organizations are you involved with?

DA: CoreNet Global, Commercial Industrial Brokers Society (CIBS), U.S. Green Building Council, International Council of Shopping Centers, Long Island Builder's Institute, Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Garden City and Melville Chambers of Commerce, as well as the American, New York and Nassau and Suffolk County Bar Associations.

What would you consider the most overlooked opportunity in real estate right now?

DA: One sector that is, somewhat, overlooked and, perhaps, undercapitalized is investment in renewable energy at the public and private level. While there is a developing ground-swell to bring clean, renewable, alternative energy sources to the market, government at both the state and local level needs to act quickly to encourage and provide incentives to local industry and capital markets to invest in and deploy renewable energy. New York State recently adopted a "Net Metering" Law that gives private industry the ability to deploy alternative energy generating sources and sell surplus power back to the local power provider. With capital markets looking for a new, risk adverse markets, renewable energy presents a good opportunity.

How do you stay competitive as an individual and as a firm?

KB: We have always been extremely responsive to our clients' needs; we have a "whatever it takes" approach to achieving success for our clients in the most expeditious way possible. Most important to us are our personal relationships; we firmly believe that a personal, "hands-on" approach is always greatly appreciated by the client and proves most successful. We also do not overlook accepted and successful marketing practices and we look to make use of the latest in technology and I.T. services.

Is there a recent case that your firm handled that exemplifies your capabilities as a firm?

DA: We recently obtained approvals for M&T Bank to relocate its corporate headquarters to Melville

in record time and well ahead of schedule.

What was your most complex case in your career and why?

KB: That's easy. I represented Verizon Wireless in a corporate landlord/tenant matter, where it was being threatened by its landlord to literally throw their communication equipment off the roof of a building and redevelop the roof space with luxury condominiums. We were successful, not only in thwarting the attempts of the landlord by obtaining a temporary restraining order and later a preliminary injunction, but prevailed in sustaining a notice of pendency on the property, as well. The notice of pendency was key because it deprived the landlord of the ability to finance the multi-million dollar condominium conversion project and brought the project to a screeching halt. This complex procedural matter unfolded exactly according to the strategy sessions with the client and resulted in a huge win, particularly as the client could not afford to have its communication facility taken "off-air." It was an extremely proud moment.

What is one thing that you will do differently as an individual or a firm in 2009?

DA: We are going to continue to do what we do best, service our clients with the speed, professionalism and thoroughness they have come to expect from us and continue to establish ourselves as the "go-to-guys" in the commercial real estate industry in the New York Metropolitan area. We are going to continue to build our firm up in an economic down, and position ourselves to be an industry leader when the economic climate improves.

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