



"ALTHOUGH EVERYONE IS WORKING THEIR OWN BUSINESS, THERE IS A UNITY AT KELLER WILLIAMS. EVERYONE IS PULLING FOR EACH OTHER, WHICH IS UNIQUE IN THE COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY."

- DARON CAMPBELL

"THAT'S HOW WE DO IT AT KW COMMERCIAL"

Culture at work in L.A. By Jennifer LeClaire

■ Daron Campbell and Jeff Peldon were friendly competitors with parallel career paths in Los Angeles' ultra-competitive multifamily sector for decades. Now, they're on the same team.

Both top producers, Campbell and Peldon joined Marcus & Millichap early in their careers – at the same time. Then they launched separate RE/MAX Commercial offices – at the same time. In April 2010, they both joined forces with KW Commercial.

None of it was planned, but after years of competing for the same multimillion-dollar apartment deals, the commercial real estate veterans are glad to be on the same team. Given the duo's parallel career track, it's not surprising that they both offer the same reason for switching allegiances to KW Commercial. It's all about the culture.

"KW Commercial is the opposite of other firms," says Campbell, director of KW Commercial at the Studio City market center, who also spearheads the Distressed Assets Group. "There is a corporate dedication to the cause. The culture fosters teamwork and that's vital in order to hit on all cylinders in a commercial environment."

Under Campbell's leadership, the *Los Angeles Business Journal* named his RE/MAX Commercial office the fastest-growing commercial real estate company in Los Angeles for four consecutive years, with 2007 sales volume exceeding \$1.2 billion. He has personally sold more than \$2.3 billion in his career. He earned the RE/MAX Lifetime Achievement Award and was inducted into the RE/MAX Hall of Fame, among

other honors.

But when KW Commercial came along, it was clear to him that's where he belonged.

"Although everyone is working their own business, there is a unity at Keller Williams. Everyone is pulling for each other, which is unique in the commercial real estate industry," says Campbell. "At KW Commercial, it's not dog-eat-dog. My team actively works with the residential agents in our market center to show them how they can make money partnering with the commercial group. With residential and commercial under one roof, we have the most powerful model in North America."

Even in a down market, the team-oriented Campbell is still on top of his game. His motto: stick with the basics. As he sees it, it's too easy for a top producer to become complacent and neglect lead generation – or neglect their clients. Campbell stays in touch with clients whether or not they are buying or selling, because he knows even the strongest relationships don't maintain themselves.

"During difficult times, clients are looking more than ever for an absolute expert at whatever it is they are trying to buy or sell. So generalists will absolutely starve and go broke in this market. It's a mistake to try to deal in every type of commercial product type."

Along with Peldon, who serves as COO for KW Commercial at the L.A. Westside market center, Campbell is working to make KW Commercial a premier commercial



Daron Campbell



Jeff Peldon

Photos by Ron Murray

brokerage in Los Angeles. Both men expect to collaborate on multifamily deals as teammates rather than competitors.

Like Campbell, Peldon earned the RE/MAX Lifetime Achievement Award and was inducted into the RE/MAX Hall of Fame, among other honors. He was also named one of the *San Fernando Valley Business Journal's* 2008 Outstanding Commercial Real Estate Brokers. His commercial real estate career spans 30 years.

As Peldon puts it, he “flirted” with Keller Williams Realty for a few years before deciding to “marry” the company.

“I wanted to see if KW Commercial would grow legs. After watching the growth for the last couple of years, I decided KW Commercial is the right company with the right elements in place, and this is the right time to get on board,” Peldon says. “Beyond the profit sharing, which doesn’t exist anywhere else in the commercial world the way it does at KW Commercial, the culture is what attracted me to the company.”

A key success factor for Peldon in the current economy has proven to be his flexibility. He works with clients to help them resolve property issues by focusing on alternative ways of buying, selling and financing, and he believes in being brutally realistic with clients about the value of properties.

“At KW Commercial, it’s a level playing field. No one has to be nervous about working with another agent,” Peldon says. “We have a written pledge. We have a belief system of integrity. We have standards. We are looking for the win-win for all sides of the transaction. Some clients and agents I speak to look at me as if they’ve never heard of that approach in a commercial transaction. But that’s how we do it at KW Commercial.” **kw**

CONGRATULATIONS!

Marvin J. Greenberg, director of KW Commercial at the Fargo-Moorhead (N.D.) market center, has been named the regional real estate representative to Wal-Mart for all of Minnesota and North Dakota. He will market and sell lots owned by Wal-Mart in these states. He will also be performing site selection for new markets in the region.