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People to Know: Andy Dutcher

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Andy Dutcher

Vice president, NAI Ohio Equities

How did you get into this profession? I actually didn't start out in commercial real estate. After graduating from Ohio University in 2005 with a degree in political science, I worked in Washington, D.C., for the U.S. House of Representatives under the current Press Secretary for President Donald Trump, which is pretty comical looking back at it. After a few years, my wife and I decided to leave Washington to start our family back in Ohio where we are from. I honestly had no idea what I wanted to do, besides something involving sales. My best friend who just started at CBRE in Denver suggested I should get my license and try real estate, so I took a crash course, got licensed, and here we are today.



Andy Dutcher

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Are any sectors getting overbuilt? I don't necessarily see any sectors getting drastically overbuilt right now. I think Columbus for the most part is well-balanced and the developers have been very disciplined since coming out of the recession in 2010. There's obviously a big push for downtown living. You could say there's too many apartments getting built, but for now the demand is there and in my opinion will continue; however the pace will likely slow down within the next three to five years. The majority of new office construction downtown and in the suburbs revolves around mixed-use developments which can help to limit overbuilding retail or office space. Having said that, the new product under construction or being planned will ultimately have an effect on some of the older, tired Class B space. Quite frankly, the biggest problem we have is downtown parking. A mass transit system needs to be put into place or else it will hinder the city's growth and capabilities in the long run.

What's an area that's up and coming that people might not know about? There's a guy in my office named John Mally who preaches to me about Parsons Avenue on a weekly basis. I have to say, I'm starting to become a believer. The area really started taking off when Nationwide Children's expanded their hospital. The city is behind the revitalization of the corridor, and so are the local investors and businesses. It's got a great location next to German Village and is a nice alternative to submarkets like Franklinton and Italian Village. Right now, it's still a little rough around the edges, but keep your eye on it.

What's the one thing you wish people knew going into a real estate search? It takes time to do it right, so don't procrastinate and wait until your lease is about to expire. Young companies especially, who haven't been through the office search process don't realize all the steps involved in relocating an entire business. We get calls from people all the time who want us to represent them in finding new office space but they need it in the next 30-60 days. While doable, it limits what we usually achieve from a deal negotiation standpoint and narrows the type of space you can go into. Whenever we meet with companies and learn about their office requirements, our first line of business is translating that need into a time line, explaining the steps in detail and setting expectations. They may not like what they hear at first, but at least in my experience, the more educated a client is, the smoother the deal process goes.

What advice do you have for young people considering a career in real estate? For starters, be prepared to grind, work hard, and take on tough assignments passed onto you by senior brokers to get valuable deal experience. I think teaming up is also very important because you can learn a lot from other agents and eventually you'll want to have a permanent team whose

skill sets complement each other. Also remember, at the end of the day it's a people business, and you want to have as many friends in the city as possible. Don't burn bridges with anyone, especially other brokers because about 90 percent of the deals you work on will be with a cooperating broker who you will see again in a future deal. I think Columbus is unique from this perspective. Many of us are friends, rely heavily on each other for market intelligence and work together to get deals done for our respective clients. And last, but not least, you need to have a lot of patience, a good sense of humor, and not take yourself too seriously just because you made a few sizable deals.

People to Know is coordinated by freelance writer Susan Deutsche.

Katy Smith
Print editor
Columbus Business First

