

REBNY, I Love You

When I occasionally write about the qualities and habits of the most successful brokers in our industry, networking is always mentioned as one of those imperative traits. Interacting with people on a face-to-face basis is so much more effective in the relationship building process than all the phone calls and mailings could ever hope to be.

From this perspective, there are many things that can be done to achieve the objectives of networking. These can include anything from sitting down to a meal, a drink or coffee with a potential client, to attending one of the various seminars or conferences that are held every month in our industry. Over the years, one of the best avenues for networking has been involvement with the Real Estate Board of New York.

Each year in mid-January—dovetailing with REBNY's annual banquet—I normally write a column discussing the strengths of an affiliation with the organization and the many things that it has done to help me in my career. This year, given all of the dynamic

things going on in the investment sales market, I didn't have an opportunity to write that column. But before this year's banquet becomes a distant memory, I want to take the opportunity to talk about my beloved REBNY.

As most readers would know, REBNY is the trade organization that advocates

for participants in both our residential and commercial real estate markets. There are so many issues that have a profound impact on the workings of our marketplace and the board is at the forefront of advocating for the health of our industry and, consequently, the health of New York City. The board provides a great opportunity to meet people and promotes the educational

advancement of people who are active in New York real estate.

My involvement with REBNY dates back 33 years when I started in the business. When doing my research at the time about various organizations to become involved with, it quickly became apparent that REBNY was the go-to organization at which to build relationships with the largest cross-section

of market participants. For me, the most important of those potential relationships were with property owners and other sales brokers.

Unbeknownst to me at the time, the sales brokerage industry is extremely tight knit. Because of the amount of cooperation, friendships are formed between brokers at competing firms. Maybe I was too raw to fully appreciate it, but I still sensed that being a member of REBNY's sales brokers committee would be a fantastic career building move.

When Paul Massey and I started our careers at what was then Coldwell Banker Commercial (now CBRE), we both wanted to be members of that committee more than anything. We submitted our applications, probably were annoying with the amount of follow up that we did, but ultimately became members of the committee which started friendships for us with iconic sales brokers of the day as well as young up-and-coming brokers, many of whom we are lucky enough to consider our friends to this day.

I remain a member of the sales brokers committee, and I've been fortunate enough

to serve on several of REBNY's committees over the years. Today, I am honored to serve on both the board of governors and the executive committee of REBNY.

My REBNY membership has been invaluable as many of the relationships that I have are because of my attendance at various events sponsored by the board and my involvement in various board initiatives. I can't imagine what my career would be like without the relationships that have been fostered and the knowledge that I have obtained throughout my REBNY affiliation.

Under the leadership of the new president, John Banks, and the chairman, Rob Speyer, REBNY's impact on our industry continues to flourish and grow. If you are not a member of REBNY, I encourage you to consider membership. I think it would be a fantastic career move to become involved with an organization that provides such a wide array of benefits to its members. Here's to hoping that REBNY continues to thrive for decades to come.

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