

BIG CITY BRAD:

The Don of Dwellings

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE D'ANGELO

You've heard his name, you recognize his voice, and you've seen his face on ads all over the downtown core. Now, get up-close-and-personal with the successful owner of Brad J. Lamb Realty Inc., and star of HGTV's wildly popular Big City Broker. A true success story and inspiration to entrepreneurs everywhere, Brad J. Lamb has left his mark on Toronto, and will soon do the same around the globe.



Real estate virtuoso Brad J. Lamb sits back in his Toronto Tip Top loft.

It's 5 a.m. in Brad J. Lamb's Tip Top Lofts penthouse in Toronto when his alarm goes off. Except, he has already awoken three times throughout the night to jot down notes and reminders. "When I wake up, I spring out of bed like a cat because I have so many things to do and I'm so energized to do it," he says.

Born to sell, Lamb says that his desire to be his own boss is rooted deep in his childhood. As a middle child wedged between two brothers, Lamb was always in charge. "I was the kind of kid that if you threw me in with the others, I'd usually take control. It's just my inherent need to run the show," he says.

So, it was only natural that after earning an engineering degree from the University of Queens, and starting his first job in the field, Lamb felt that he needed something more exciting. "As a kid, I was always selling things to other kids. I was a little con man," he says with a laugh. "I realized while I was in school that real estate was something you could really make money at."

Today, Lamb has made quite a name for himself. As the No. 1 real estate broker in the city, his realty company has sold over 14,500 condominiums for over \$3.5 billion since 1988. And, the company's listings usually sell in less than 14 days.

The King East – yet another successful project by LDC, just steps away from the St. Lawrence Market and the Distillery District.



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Penthouse living at Glis condominiums – an architectural masterpiece set in King West.



That’s not all. Recently, Lamb has spent more time on development, with Lamb Development Corporation (LDC), and plans to expand his market to other countries in the future. With a booming business and his very own reality television show, *Big City Broker* on HGTV, Lamb proves that it pays to follow your instincts.

His success is a product of an intricate combination of knowledge, experience, and a whole lot of confidence. Lamb knows his city inside and out, and it shows. When Lamb worked as an agent, he made sure to educate himself on a building before presenting it to his clients. He memorized floor plans and suite numbers, so he never had to ask the concierge where anything was. “What makes a good real estate agent is knowing where to park for free,” he says. “When you can park your car and come back 20 minutes later and it hasn’t been towed, that blows the minds of the 905.”

A strong personality that leaves no room for failure, Lamb believes in his brand. “There are no losses, we always win,” he states matter-of-factly.

Not surprisingly, coffee and cigarettes have no place in Lamb’s daily routine. “They are crutches,” he says. “I prefer people to be able to succeed on their own without taking their jolt of caffeine or nicotine every morning.”

Lamb admits that his career is all encompassing. With limited time for hobbies such as golf or fishing, Lamb spends much of his spare time travelling. But whether he’s on vacation or out for dinner, his mind is always at work. “You have to realize that if you want to be successful and wealthy, it’s not a part time deal,” he advises. “It’s got to be 100 per cent, and if you have a little gas left over, give it 105.”

His fierce drive and determination aside, the “Condo King” does have some mentors that have indirectly guided him to where he is today.

Drawing inspiration from living business leaders such as Bill Gates, Warren

Buffett and Jack Welch, a young Lamb would read hundreds of success stories and biographies and apply their wisdom to his own life. “Understanding that other successful people have the same problems and questions that you have is important to know,” he says. “It doesn’t hurt to listen to these people and share with them the struggles they had.”

And how does Lamb feel about being compared to Donald Trump, the famous real estate tycoon? “A guy like Donald Trump is impressive because you know he created a worldwide brand based on himself. The guy has been through a lot. Based on his persona, he could have become a joke, but he’s actually a very serious real estate player in the world ... he’s a very knowledgeable guy.”

As the face of his company, Lamb has involuntarily followed in Trump’s footsteps. In fact, he made the brave decision to appear on all of his own advertisements, making his name synonymous with Toronto realty.

“Brad’s known for being demanding and wanting things done a certain way,” says Lamb’s colleague, Gary Freedman, owner of Hyde Park Homes. “He is a very talented real estate developer and marketing person ... He has a lot of vision.”

With anecdotal slogans like “this lamb sells condos,” and images of his head on the body of a lamb displayed in his advertising campaigns, Lamb is an accomplished broker that doesn’t mind poking fun at himself.

Standing at a towering 6’5”, wearing a crisp Prada suit and a no-nonsense disposition, Lamb runs a tight ship. In fact, he has been known to refer to his own enterprise as an autocracy. “It truly is my way or the highway,” he says. “But I think dictators that have the longest shelf life listen to their advisors. The best companies have a tough leader that people respect, and I think you can be respected and liked at the same time.”

Lamb has created a friendly and productive environment for his close-knit team of 19 agents. Motivating them with bonuses and treating them to the occasional dinner, Lamb has also been known to lend his employees money or help them with their personal problems. “I always let them know that I care about their success and am grateful for what they’ve done in the office,” he says.

And this dedication has not gone unnoticed. “Working with one of Toronto’s most prominent real estate developers and brokers has been a tremendous experience,” says Ryan Spencer, an employee at Brad J. Lamb Realty Inc. “Brad’s dedication to reach his goals is truly inspiring and continually encourages those who surround him.”

Although there’s no question that he always means business, what most people don’t know is that the not-so fuzzy Lamb does have a soft side. “I am intense, but I’m basically a shy person.”

And when it comes to explaining why he loves what he does, Lamb is heartfelt. “I care about what I do, I care about my customers on every level, and I really care about Toronto,” he says. “I want to feel [that] at the end of the day, I’ve made the city better.”

www.torontocondos.com

Flatiron Lofts and Work Lofts, two LDC developments, are revitalizing Queen East Village at Carlaw Avenue and Dundas Street.



Parc Lofts – the latest addition to LDC’s portfolio, is an intimate loft building backing onto a park in the heart of King West.