

TRUE CONFESSIONS OF BROKERAGE MERGER CHALLENGES

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ATLANTA — A year ago, June 1, Cushman & Wakefield's Atlanta office acquired local multifamily investment sales firm Multi Housing Advisors. The merger created a mega multifamily brokerage platform in the Southeast US.

GlobeSt.com caught up with Josh Goldfarb, founder of MHA, to check in on the fruits and challenges of the merger over the past year in part one of this exclusive interview. Stay tuned for part two, in which he will discuss his predictions on the Southeast's multifamily market.

GlobeSt.com: When you look back on your first year as part of Cushman & Wakefield, what has been the biggest change becoming part of a major international firm?



Goldfarb: Having overseen the platform at Multi Housing Advisors, I understand the need to have structure and rules in place to support brokers and keep a level playing field. However, adhering to a “one size fits all” rule book is challenging when you run a business within a business.

That was last year's biggest challenge. Cushman & Wakefield's platform supports both a single broker practitioner as well as a large operation enveloping over 70 people, like our Southeast Multifamily Advisory Group. At times, I have had to be creative with the rule book to adhere to the policies of Cushman & Wakefield while optimizing the production in our platform. However, it is this creativity that fuels the entrepreneurial spirit we hold dearly at Cushman & Wakefield and our practice.

GlobeSt.com: What challenges did you expect and how did you overcome them?

Goldfarb: Inside the practice, no doubt, fusing two very different cultures was an expected challenge - people and procedures. Starting with an understanding of the differences, then working to amend the differences into best practices with ground up “buy-in” was the methodology to overcome any incongruity.

Outside to the marketplace, communicating a clear message of what the vast resources our practice could bring to clients and investors, was paramount. The greatest method of communication to the market has been listing activity and broker-to-product association. With so much market share, ranging from workforce housing to institutional product, the market sees the continued client endorsement of our brokers, by product type, spanning with fluidity of our vast eight-state geography.

GlobeSt.com: How did joining a major national firm impact your business?

Goldfarb: Cushman & Wakefield is iconic. I put the national firm impact into two categories: Front door - calling owners comes easier since the Cushman & Wakefield name has immediate recognition, and back door - both referral business and platform relationships from within the entire firm bring plentiful opportunities.

ONE YEAR LATER: HOW CUSHWAKE-MHA MERGER IS PANNING OUT

PUBLISHED JUNE 22, 2017 | BY JENNIFER LECLAIRE

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GlobeSt.com caught up with Josh Goldfarb, founder of MHA, to discuss how that merger has impacted sales and what's next for the merged firm in part two of this exclusive interview.

GlobeSt.com: Do you intend to keep the bulk of your business in the Southeast?

Goldfarb: We have the most market share - listings and closings - in the Southeast eight-state region and have no intention of giving up the ownership or momentum it brings. As a national coleader along with Marc Robinson, vice chair and former business partner in Multi Housing Advisors, the initiative is to bring the Cushman & Wakefield Southeast Multifamily Advisory Group culture and presence to other regions of the United States.

GlobeSt.com: What has sales velocity been like this year, and what do you predict for the remainder of the year?

Goldfarb: Since the beginning of the year, the Southeast Multifamily Advisory Group has closed \$1.3 billion, representing 81 transactions across eight states. Based on our pipeline and historical trends, we're projected to close around \$4 billion, representing a total of 225 to 250 transactions.

GlobeSt.com: What differentiates your team from other companies?

Goldfarb: Our platform has been self-coined "the smooth continuum." All of our brokers share in a predetermined eight-state region combined top-line revenue amount with limited rank and file deviation, meaning, we are not master-and-servant model, like traditional brokerage shops. As such, our clients do not suffer from a broker's self-serving internal motivations nor the reliance on any single member of our team.

