

Interview with Samantha Sax, Chief Marketing and Design Officer, Elad Group

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Since graduating from Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration, Samantha Sax has been a trailblazer in the traditionally male-dominated real estate industry. Her commitment to strategic collaborations and keen attention to detail has made Sax one of the most sought after marketing directors.

After a successful stint at the Douglas Elliman firm, Sax joined Elad Group to oversee all aspects of marketing, sales and interior design for the firm's portfolio of commercial and residential real estate projects throughout the US.

Through successful collaborations with high-end companies like Bergdorf Goodman, Sax and Elad Group are creating some of the most unique living experiences seen anywhere for their clients.

Livabl recently sat down with Sax to find out more about her successful partnerships and the future of women in the industry.

Livabl: You are known for your belief in the power of strategic collaborations. Can you tell us about one of your favorites?

Samantha Sax: Strategic brand alliances are an essential part of any marketing program. This fundamental belief has led to many incredible collaborations.

My favorite to date is 22 Central Park South, an exquisite boutique condominium located next to the famed Plaza Hotel. Here we established the first ever partnership with Bergdorf Goodman, creating an exclusive offering for residents that allowed red-carpet access to coveted shopping and design services.

Bergdorf Goodman, conveniently located one block from the building, is known throughout the world for its elegance, pristine taste and unparalleled customer service. We recognized this and that our clientele is one and the same, which resulted in a natural collaboration and major marketing success.

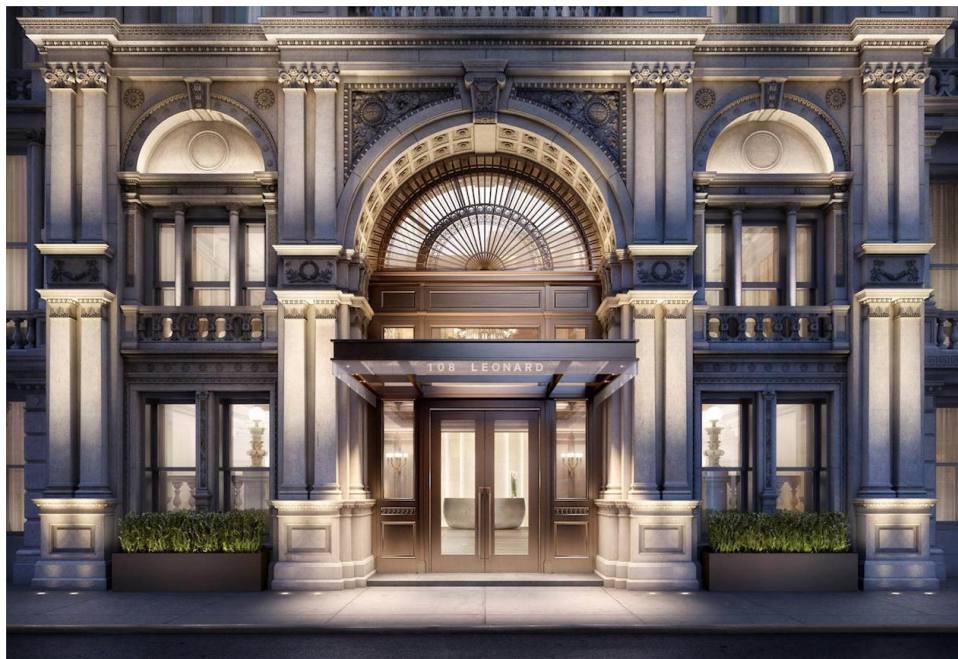


Photo: 108 Leonard Street

L: Earlier this year, 108 Leonard Street launched sales. What were some of the challenges in the massive conversion of Tribeca's famed clock tower building?



SS: 108 Leonard is an extraordinary property. Given the many landmarked elements both inside and out, we were tasked with an incredible opportunity to create new interiors suitable for living today that would complement and fit within the property's iconic exterior.

Originally constructed in 1894, the façade of this McKim, Mead and White-designed landmark was created with great variation and meticulous attention to detail. Original details include varying window shapes and sizes throughout the building, which occupies an entire city block, as well as ceiling heights which range greatly and many of which are the highest on the lower floors.

This is a unique trait that is highly desirable, yet very uncommon in new development today. Also, as a result of this unique exterior there are different window conditions in each room of nearly every apartment.

There are also many different layouts for units throughout the building, which can be a lot for the sales team to remember, but allows buyers the opportunity to own something that is far from cookie cutter.

L: How have you brought your own vision to the Elad brand?

SS: Time and time again, we've seen great success through strategic collaborations with iconic luxury brands from the worlds of fashion and design, including Oliver M. Furth, Fendi Casa, Minotti, Cantoni, Lalique, Christofle and Meredith Baer Home.

It's incredibly important to take a creative, non-traditional approach to sales and marketing. At our Upper West Side project, One West End, our award-winning marketing campaign included a unique take on a neighborhood piece which we titled, The Westender.

It was a glossy magazine we developed from scratch designed to highlight the exceptional lifestyle of this Upper West Side neighborhood. Tony Award winning actress Kelly O'Hara graced the cover of the magazine, which also served as an engaging neighborhood guide with a true editorial feel.

Partnering with the right brand or interior designer is always of great importance. Across our portfolio, model residences have sold "fully furnished" numerous times and attracted celebrity buyers including the likes of Bruce Willis, who recently purchased a home at One West End.

L: What new ground are you hoping to break at Elad?

SS: In today's luxury real estate market, buyers are extremely discerning. The most challenging aspect is delivering a unique offering and establishing distinctive positioning for a project in what is often an oversaturated marketplace.

It's a balancing act of finding something fresh and appealing that really stands apart from the crowd, while creating an identity that will last and really resonate with its buyers.



Photo: One West End

L: What advice do you have for other women trying to break into or simply advance the heavily male-dominated industry?

SS: The most important thing of all is to find strength and confidence in yourself. In a competitive industry such as this, it is crucial to draw inspiration from those around you, be confident in your skills and continue to charge forward in your career without letting obstacles wear you down.

It's often assumed that real estate is a male-dominated industry, particularly at the top, when in fact many of my greatest mentors have been strong women in significant leadership roles. Specifically, at Elad Group, our President, head legal counsel and CFO are all women. Also, many of our consultants' companies are led by women, such as Douglas Elliman Development Marketing, Corcoran Sunshine and Hundred Stories.

The real estate industry has really progressed over the last ten years. In another fifteen years, the real question is not if women will break through, but rather will men still dominate the field.

L: Looking back at your career, what words of wisdom would you impart to someone contemplating a career in real estate?

SS: Don't settle for status quo. Push boundaries. Take risks. This is how new milestones are met and goals achieved. Be a trendsetter and strive to come up with the next great idea.

L: What career achievement are you most proud of, and why?

SS: In real estate, nothing shows success like numbers.

Since joining Elad, I've been fortunate enough to work with an incredible team on amazing properties. This, coupled with unique creativity, has led to record breaking sales on multiple occasions. Not only on the West Coast with The Carlyle Residences, but also in New York most recently with One West End, which was not only the top selling new development the year the project launched, but is also now the top selling building so far in 2018.

With our latest award-winning project 108 Leonard already seeing great success, I am thrilled to roll out some new and exciting partnerships and begin designing model residences. This is an incredible jewel that has allowed us to return to our roots and do what we are known for – restoring landmarked properties.

I look forward to seeing the continued success of this project's unique offerings, where I hope to match or exceed the level of success that we have enjoyed at One West End.

L: What new projects does Elad have in the pipeline that you're most excited to launch? And, why?

SS: We have a new project launching in South Florida, where we hope to bring the quality of our projects to that market.

L: What new career milestones do you have your sights set on?

SS: I am always looking to push myself further and try new things. Heading up the marketing for a startup company and growing it from the ground up, running the marketing and design for a hotel brand and serving as a creative director for a luxury brand outside of real estate are all of interest to me. I'm just getting started!

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