



Real Estate Leader Amy Duong Kim Treats Every Deal Like It'S Her Own

Catching up with the founder of Duong Kim Group, one of Chicago's top real estate firms.

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When it comes to the Chicago real estate game, Amy Duong Kim is an all-star player. She has been named a Top 1 Percent Producer by the Chicago Association of REALTORS® and has closed over \$400 million with her team at [Duong Kim Global](#), who speak five different languages. ESTATENVY caught up with Amy to find out what made her fall in love with the industry—and how technology continues to change the experience of buying a home. EE: How did you first get involved with the real estate industry?

ADK: After studying actuarial science at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, I worked two or three years as an actuarial consultant. But I didn't love it. In retrospect, I think that because it was such a male-dominated industry, I didn't feel comfortable. My parents were in real estate, and my brother Trung owned his own company. One day, he said, "Why don't

you get your real estate license, just to have it?" I passed within a week. I stopped by Trung's office to drop off my license while he was out. A buyer came in saying that he was looking for a local realtor. Since my brother wasn't there, I said, "Well, I guess I can do it!" Afterward, I thought, "Hey, that wasn't so hard. I could actually do this!" Of course, I very quickly found out real estate wasn't easy at all. You really have to work hard and do an excellent job. So that's what I've tried to do ever since. I created a motto that I still go by: "Treat every deal like it's my own." EE: What do you love about the industry?

ADK: I love that the industry is what you make of it. What you put in is what you get out.

This is my fourteenth year in real estate. With more experience, I can provide more to my clients. That's really rewarding. I fell in love with the start to finish process of helping someone who doesn't know what they want and getting them into their home or condo. Or, on the other side, having a seller who doesn't know how to sell their home, and being at the table for them.

A home is the most expensive purchase anyone will make in their life. You wouldn't go to a mechanic to get your teeth cleaned. You're going to go to an expert. If people choose to not use an agent and represent themselves, of course that's fine, but why not get an expert to work for you? I take that part really seriously. I try to provide extra value to the client, whether they know it or not. EE: What do you wish you could change in real estate?

ADK: That's a timely question, because we're actually at a turning point in the industry. Real estate professionals are attempting to bring the market back to ourselves. Right now, some people are using online database tools like Zillow, which make listing information and agent contact information hard to find. Then they sell the leads to the highest bidder or another agent—whoever is paying for the advertising. It wasn't like that when I started. When it was my listing, I had the opportunity to attract that buyer. But we're working on changing that. EE: What's the biggest change you've seen in the industry since you started out?

ADK: It's been interesting to see how Facebook and Instagram have come into play. Buyers love to see stories about new listings. It's been fun to watch and use social media because it's ever-changing. EE: What excites you about the future of the industry?

ADK: Duong Kim Global is a founding member of Compass, a seven-year-old brokerage firm that entered the Chicago market a year ago. The platform is fantastic for both agents and consumers. In a way, it is kind of like browsing Pinterest—it makes searching for and looking at homes seamless, plus we have a great in-house marketing and design team. We actually ran our first national ad during the last Chicago Bears game. It was exciting to be a part of. I think that Compass is being really forward-thinking about what the consumer wants before they even know it. We have a long way to go, but say you're looking for pillows on Amazon. You will then get all these other suggestions for relevant items. It would be great to have a similar one-stop shop that has everything for a buyer's new home. Hopefully, this is something we'll be able to offer a few years down the road. We also have so much amazing technology that we can use to sell a home. Around 20 percent of our clients buying in Chicago don't even live here. These tools are so fantastic for them. We have awesome drones that can let you see the whole property. We can show what the view looks like from the home's windows. You can do 3D

tours, and wear VR glasses so you know what it feels like to actually be in the home. These are really fun things to see that we didn't have before. It will be interesting to see what happens in the future. I don't even know what else technology can do, but I'm sure we will figure out yet another way to do it, which is what's exciting about this real estate industry.