



Los Angeles Celebrity Real Estate Broker To Launch Merchandise, Photography Store

Newmark's Jay Luchs Has Worked With Louis Vuitton, Kim Kardashian, Tom Ford and Alo Yoga



Luxury powerhouse retail broker Jay Luchs is a vice chairman of Newmark in Los Angeles. Luchs is well known in real estate circles and beyond in L.A. through his real estate work with celebrities and fashion brands. (Getty)

By **Jack Witthaus**

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A Los Angeles real estate broker synonymous with luxury retail from Malibu to Beverly Hills, and everywhere in between, now wants to open a business of his own.

Jay Luchs, vice chairman at Newmark, said he's in the early stages of forming a business to sell merchandise and photography, the latter being a longtime hobby of his, Luchs told CoStar News in a phone interview. Over the years, the broker has worked with some of the biggest names in celebrity and fashion and has brokered leases on some of the priciest retail real estate across greater Los Angeles. Luchs is well known both in real estate circles and beyond in L.A., even appearing on an episode of "Keeping Up With the Kardashians" in 2014.

Luchs (pronounced "lux") said the business is expected to hawk hoodies, T-shirts and hats along with photography from him and his business partner, Kelsey Chapman. Luchs declined to name the business, saying he's obtaining a trademark for the moniker.

Luchs said the products are geared at promoting California vibes to both locals and to tourists. Some merchandise also will feature Luchs' brokerage "For Lease" sign that is ubiquitous in L.A.'s most desirable retail corridors.



A Jay Luchs sign hangs in a window at 8590 W. Sunset Blvd. in West Hollywood, California, along the world famous Sunset Strip. (CoStar)

Luchs insists the store isn't aimed at competing with clients. He said the products are meant to promote Los Angeles, a city that he said is an amazing place despite the bad rap it sometimes gets. All of the products will be made in Los Angeles, Luchs said.

The business is expected to have an online presence and operate inside a 600-square-foot store in Malibu at the [Cross Creek Ranch mixed-use center](#). Luchs is marketing the Malibu property for lease, according to marketing materials.

Luchs said he's long wanted to launch a store like this. Over the years, people have been asking Luchs why the recognizable broker hasn't started his own merchandise line, he said.

"The influential people asking me have said, 'If you do it, I'll wear it,'" Luchs said. "The people who will wear it might surprise you."

Luchs said he'll start selling products soon but didn't reveal a date.

Brokers React

Los Angeles real estate brokers reacted to the business idea with a mix of humor, support and intrigue, according to at least five people CoStar News spoke with. Marc Bretter — founder of real estate firm Maywood Property Group and who represents numerous fashion brands and celebrities in L.A. — said he has never seen a broker sell their own merchandise. That said, it's not unusual for real estate professionals to launch side businesses related to their work.

"Jay is great at marketing, so while this won't move the needle on the property exposure front or likely make money in the very challenging business of fashion, he has obviously had tremendous success elevating his name and this could boost that further," Bretter said.

Gabe Kadosh, vice president of Colliers in Los Angeles who specializes in retail, said retail real estate brokers know how to craft successful businesses after doing numerous deals with clients. That's because brokers scrutinize hundreds of business plans, giving them insight into how various industries make money. Occasionally, brokers may lend their expertise to clients who are creating business plans in order to help these businesses find success, Kadosh said.

That said, retail real estate brokers rarely attract a limelight like the businesses they represent. Unless, of course, they're like Luchs whose brokerage business has long been associated with high-profile clients and real estate.

"The clothing line shows the broker is in the know and has a following," Kadosh said.

Luchs said it doesn't matter to him if his business finds success. He said he simply wants his venture to promote the good vibes in California that he's experienced.

"If it doesn't work, it's just a fun project," Luchs said. "If it works, that would be gravy."

Nicole Shih contributed to this story.

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