

TOP AGENT MAGAZINE

by Leah Wheeler

Mike Gratland and Jan Bigotti: 1 + 1 = 3



Veteran real estate agents recall the days when REALTORS® could simply list a property and wait for the phone to ring. In today's market, agents must be proactive and persistent. They must possess marketing savvy, interpersonal skills, negotiating finesse and financial expertise.

It's a lot to ask – and often a team approach brings together the necessary skills and strengths.

The Troop Real Estate team of Mike Gratland and Jan Bigotti proves the point. These two top producers began working together three years ago and found that they complemented each other's skill sets and personalities, enabling them to help more clients together than they could individually.

Mike and Jan have different strengths, but they share a commitment to putting clients' interests first. "We offer genuine advice, and present all the options," says Jan. "Sometimes we advise clients not to sell, if we honestly believe it's not right for them. Our role is to help clients achieve their goals."

Mike and Jan are supported in this commitment by their affiliation with Troop Real Estate. Troop Real Estate was founded in 1987 as a boutique agency dedicated to setting the standard for superior customer service. Initially Brian Troop sought out a few top agents to help execute his vision of providing service, support and client satisfaction based on professionalism, integrity and accountability. The agency has now grown to more than 500 agents working out of 12 offices from San Diego to Santa Clarita. Troop Real Estate boasts the largest market share in Ventura County, yet Brian Troop's vision of service and support still underpins the company.

"Troop gives us both flexibility and support," says Mike. "If we need guidance from a manager on a complex negotiation or advice from an attorney about a legal issue, it's available. We can go to Brian for anything. It's a very positive, supportive environment."

Jan Bigotti, a REALTOR® since 1986, joined Troop in 2005. She brings the high-touch component and deft interpersonal skills to the team, working with clients to identify their needs and show properties. "Jan is very sweet, but she can also be tough when necessary," notes Mike. "She has a knack for getting people to understand the realities of the market and assess their options realistically."

Mike Gratland, who has been with Troop since he obtained his REALTORS® license in 1999, is adept at structuring deals and handling difficult transactions. "Mike is patient, meticulous and persistent," says Jan. "In this market where up to 40% of sales are pre-foreclosures and short sales, it can sometimes take up to 200 to 300 working hours to close a deal. Some transactions are complex and convoluted with many parties involved and infinite details to work out. It takes a lot of patience, procedural knowledge and persistence, and Mike excels at this."

In addition to relying on each other, Mike and Jan are supported by a strong team of professionals including Buyers' Agent Linda Samuels; Marketing Agent Eric Rector; Loan Officer John Gardella; and Transaction Coordinator Kelly Webb, as well as Brian Troop, Laura Lee Anthony and the staff of Troop Real Estate. "Working together as a team has enabled us to excel at what we do best and serve every client in the best possible way."

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