

# NEW YORK POST

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## A hot property

For city 'superbroker,' it's always closing time

By MICHAEL KANE

**L**IVING large. That's what Fredrik Eklund is doing and that's what he's selling. The New York City real-estate superbroker is atop his profession, showing leafy Village brownstones and glassy penthouse palaces to billionaire moguls and celebs like Jude Law, Cameron Diaz and Daniel Craig.

Currently managing director at Prudential Douglas Elliman, the 35-year-old smooth-talker has rung up \$1.3 billion in sales in his nine-year career. He's already put \$150 million into contract so far this year. And with his standard 5 or 6 percent commission, you know

the Swedish native is living comfortably himself in his Meatpacking District spread.

Driven since a teenager, Eklund had early success in Stockholm with a customer-relations Web site he sold; he also invested in a nightclub and acted in a few gay-porn movies under the pseudonym Tag Eriksson.

Last year he was back in front of the camera, as a featured broker in Bravo's reality show "Million Dollar Listing New York."

@work caught up with the quick-thinking dealmaker—who also remotely oversees a spinoff real-estate agency in Sweden—as he drove down the West Side Highway en route to showing a \$16 million property in TriBeCa.

**Did you have any inkling as a young man in Sweden that you'd end up in New York City real estate?**

The only thing that might have suggested this line of work was that I've always worked for myself. I never wanted a regular job. I don't want to know what my paycheck is going to be every Friday. I've always created my own jobs, starting with an Internet company when I was 22.

**What's your attitude toward your past in porn?**

I've always been very open about it. I view life as a smorgasbord, and I've tried a lot of different things. I am who I am because of these experiences, and I don't regret anything.

**A-LISTER:** After starting at the bottom, Fredrik Eklund now sells the city's dreamiest—and priciest—domiciles.



ASTRID STEWART

**What led to your move to New York and a career in real estate?**

It was something to try. I came to America in 2003, got my license at NYU, went on Craigslist and found an ad that they were taking on an agent at a small office.

I didn't even know the neighborhoods. I had no clients or Rolodex, but I was very hungry and aggressive. I

was in the office from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. and finally had one client I worked with for six months. I closed on a place in Chelsea and got a check for \$16,000, and I was hooked.

All of a sudden I started getting listings. Over the next six months I sold around \$50 million in real estate and was nominated by the Real Estate Board of New York as the rookie of the year.

**What talents does selling real estate require?**

There are two components of the job: 1. Win the seller over and acquire the listing over other agents; 2. Figure out a price and try and close with a buyer.

That requires two skills. You need an analytical mind, to be number-driven, read reports and be able to speak about the economy and

what's happening with interest rates and so forth. Number two is people skills.

**Why are you so successful?**

It suits me, my mind and my energy. I can't sit still, and I'm always on the run.

I also feel like I make a difference in people's lives. The "new guard" of brokers, like I say I am, we put ourselves even before the property. The old guard always put the property first, with their name at the bottom. They might be difficult to reach.

Those days are over, when you don't answer in real time. Now you need to connect with the buyer and be a friend. Why? Because anyone can look up a property online today. So it's no longer about turning a key and showing apartments. It's about connecting to that person.

**Do luxurious NYC apartments practically sell themselves?**

Remember that with new-development sales, that's before the units are completed. So it's often walking through with a hard hat and imagin-

ing what a unit will look like.

Or, for example, right now I'm headed to a showing at a commercial building. The people I'm showing it to envision it as a single-family mansion. I have to convince them as we walk through that it's feasible to convert it.

**What has the response been to "Million Dollar Listing"?**

Most importantly, it's been good for my business. It was nerve-racking signing on because Bravo has one goal: to make entertaining TV. And that's my goal too. But the cameras don't compromise. It wasn't an easy decision, and I had friends advise against it. But my business has exploded.

**What's an average day?**

I wake up about 5:30 and have sometimes hundreds of e-mails from Sweden because of the time difference. Usually I lay in bed and send e-mails. Then I go to the gym, and I get weird looks because I'm still on my BlackBerry while lifting weights, timing messages between the sets. It's almost choreographed.

Then the rest of the day I'm in and out of the office, showing properties.

**You've shown homes to many celebrities. What are they looking for?**

Privacy is always number one. In New York it's especially difficult to find outdoor space that is private because you're typically surrounded by big buildings. So you need to find a terrace at the highest point for a given area, otherwise it's unusable for them.

**What's your advice for someone aspiring to become a "superbroker"?**

Real estate has changed incredibly since I started. Now it's digital, transparent and in real time. So you must be up to speed on digital media.

But for newcomers, the number one problem is being nervous. Nobody wants to work with a boring agent. You need to bring your personality. That's what I mean about the new guard. Old guard was all about the property. Now there are so many brokers, how are you going to stick out in the beginning? Use your personality.