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FAVORITE THINGS

Brokers' closing gifts that keep on giving

By MAGGIE HAWRYLUK

The closing gift — though it may seem like a simple gesture, these tokens of appreciation, which can range from the thoughtful to practical to flat-out impressive, are the best way to leave a good impression once a deal is done. This week *Brokers Weekly* asked readers what their signature gifts were, and the answers were sure to make a statement.

Brokers **Fredrik Eklund** and **John Gomes**, of **CORE Group Marketing** wanted to give their clients a break from the stress involved in closing costs and negotiations and a chance to celebrate, so they purchased a penthouse in Playa Del Carmen, Mexico.

"All our buyers/seller will get the key one week at closing. It's a nice time to go away right after you close," Eklund said.

The \$648,000 penthouse features three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a private jacuzzi on top of the private roof garden and two parking spaces.

"The property is in construction now, but we have already given 'weeks' out to our buyers in NYC buying pre-construction," Eklund said. "People love it, because it's a home-related gift in a way. Closings are stressful and moving is awful so this is something they can really look forward to."

The apartment would normally rent for approximately \$3,500 per week. And, of course, it's ocean-front.

Many brokers chose to give something that buyers would, hopefully, keep with them at all times — a key chain.

"I love to give people a key chain. It represents the apartment, and that I was the key to them finding their home," **Stefani Pace**, associate broker at **Prudential Douglas Elliman**, said. "Also, they can remember me every time they open their door."

Daniel Kim, of **Platinum Properties**, loves hand-

ing over that Tiffany blue box with a shiny trinket inside.

"This is something that's timeless and that my clients can put to use immediately," he noted. "Besides its practical use, a Tiffany's keychain serves as a daily reminder of the great relationship we established while working together, and is the perfect token to remember me by."

Mark Lynch, of **CORE Group Marketing**, had a similar strategy when giving out the round tag key chains.

"I give it to buyers at closing — what could be better?" Lynch said. "Hey, you've just purchased a new home, you've just been handed, or will shortly have, new keys which may be immediately attached to your NEW KEY CHAIN!"

"It's my favorite because it's useful, and the tag can be engraved, preferably with a 'From me to you and the closing date' message, which reminds the buyer of me every time they take it out," he added. "At about \$90 I think it's more than worth it."

Jeff Silverstein, of **Century 21 NY Metro** also leans toward Tiffany's as the no-fail go-to for a sophisticated closing gift.

"Usually, I give a Tiffany vase or candlesticks. I give it because it's classic and everyone loves getting that blue box," he said. "They have a variety of styles, both modern and traditional so it always works."

Sonya Spitznas of **The Developers Group** likes to let her buyers choose the décor; she just gives them a little nudge.

"I like to give gift certificates to Home Depot to my buyers because I think it's practical since, no doubt, they will need to buy stuff for their new home," she said. "I also include a new condo owner 10% discount to WEST ELM, a popular home and furniture store. Sometimes, I'll buy aromatherapy oil diffusers so when they move into their new home its smells fragrant."

Sherry Matays, senior vice president at **Corcoran**, said she likes to give engraved stationery with the new address.

I try choosing something that reflects both the style of the home and my sense of the individual," she said.

Ronnie Diamonde, a senior associate broker with **Corcoran**, said that he also likes to cater his gifts to the individual clients, showing that he's truly gotten to know them during the process.

"The perfect closing gift starts with thumbing through *Zagat* and meshing the proper hot spot with the client," he said. "Then back it up with a Williams-Sonoma gift card."

Tom Doyle, vice president at **Bond New York**, is known for his thoughtful offerings. He always sends a bottle of good Champagne, like Veuve-Perrier Joutet, accompanied by orchids or some exotic flowers.

Doyle has been known to send spa/massage packages for couples from Great Jones spa. Recently, one client loved the Chrysler building so much and bought a \$3.5 million apartment with a view of the building; Doyle found and purchased an original painting from a SoHo artist of the Chrysler building for the buyer.



Adina

Azarian, president of **Adina Equities**, said she favors to give out sweet gifts.

She loves to gift buyers with "Truffles or specialty gift boxes from La Maison du Chocolat."

"I love how there is a reference to a 'maison,' meaning 'house,' in the name and I always enclose a card from me wishing them a sweet year in their new home," she added.

Jorden Tepper, executive director of sales at **Century 21 NY Metro**, said he couldn't pick just one favorite, but there are a few classics.

"Appropriate gifts can range from the common — flowers, food or fruit baskets and wine — to the more taste specific," he said.

Tepper recommends tickets to the "Three B's" — Broadway, baseball and ballet.



CORE Group's Fredrik Eklund, along with John Gomes, hand clients the keys to a penthouse in Mexico at closing.



Douglas Elliman's Stefani Pace reminds clients she was the key to their purchase.