

# The Networking Lifestyle

**A top Keller Williams agent credits the company's tools for his success.**

**By Kristen Ordonez**



When it comes to success stories, luxury agent Dean Otto has had the atypical experience. From growing up in South Africa, graduating from college on a football scholarship in Eugene, Oregon, to marrying and settling down on the beautiful island of Maui in Hawaii, Otto's life has certainly led him all across the world. His career is no different, as he received Keller Williams' award for No. 1 Individual Agent in Hawaii and Northern California in 2017, after only being an agent with the company for two years.

While he keeps many of his secrets to success close to the chest, much of what Otto has found to be the best assets are based on the same principles on which Keller Williams is built.

Two years ago Otto was an independent agent with 20 listings to his title when he first came over to Keller Williams as a luxury agent. For an individual agent, joining a large company like Keller Williams can be intimidating at first, but Otto could only see the immense amount of opportunities when he started. "I think we tend to overthink it sometimes" says Otto about marketing within the luxury spectrum. "There are a lot of great tools and great opportunities, and the potential to market within the brand." One of the tools he uses is the company itself and its strength both in the national and international markets.

Adjusting from the path and tactics of an individual agent, Otto saw the network of Keller Williams to be one of his greatest advantages, including the company's technological tools, especially the ability for his luxury listings to get worldwide exposure and translated into different languages and currency giving him cutting-edge international reach.

This emphasis on technology has not only enhanced the company's basic branding but has brought it one step ahead of everyone else, given that between 75 and 90 percent of buyers start their search online, according to the NAR. According to Otto, being a Keller Williams real

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The Montage Kapalua Bay in West Maui



Award-winning \$19.9 million property in Kapalua, Maui

estate agent means that “we’re in the technology business.”

Since the market crash of 2007, Otto notes, the economy and real estate overall has shifted into a different world with a new economy and mentality, one that required him to have a presence outside of just Maui. After joining with Keller Williams, his mission then became to not only be a strong Maui agent but to be a state-wide and even national luxury agent, and “the only way you can do that is by working with a company like Keller Williams that provides the platform to be able to interact and network with all these luxury agents.”

Being able to promote himself and his

connections to other luxury agents around the world through Keller Williams’ international network of 180,000 agents, including 2,100 KW luxury specialists is an important aspect that gives Otto such confidence, especially within a second-home market like Maui. However, the lifestyle and overall worthwhile experiences you get from such an extraordinary location like Maui is the pinnacle of the market, according to Otto.

“[Maui is] a great opportunity for high-end buyers in those markets who are pulling profits out of their sales and investments in order to get great value in Maui,” he says. The network is also ideal for an agent like Otto because of his target demographic of buyers who don’t live in Maui.

“None of our buyers come from Maui, they’re coming from somewhere else in the world, and it’s very important to be able to connect with that other world to be able to get access to those buyers,” he confirms.

Otto notes that the company’s network and technology tools have led him to having great success, but the best reflection of this success are the listings he’s sold and the ones he still has that encompass the personality of Maui itself. The lifestyle of Maui, he’s found, is most attractive and consistent with buyers from the West Coast and Canada, ranging from those who are active or adventurous to notable celebrities who crave privacy like Carlos Santana, Kelsey Grammer and

Mick Fleetwood, all clients of Otto’s.

“When you look around and see everyone in boardshorts and a tank top,” Otto notes jokingly, “it’s hard to tell who’s a celebrity or not.” He further affirms that Maui in general has come to be a popular place for celebrities or others to live under the radar and get out of the busy world.

Pertaining to that “busy world,” another drive that pushes buyers toward Hawaiian living is the fact that “people can now work anywhere in the world with the internet and the fact that you don’t have to be in a specific place all the time,” Otto says. For the busy socialite or business person who is constantly working but doesn’t want to sacrifice their job, Hawaii continues to grow

more and more attractive.

For those attracted to both the exclusivity and relaxing atmosphere Maui has to offer, there are several projects throughout the island that offer the ideal Hawaiian lifestyle, what Otto refers to as “Polynesian paralysis.” His award-winning \$19.9 million property, 3 Kapalua Way, is listed within one of the most exclusive residential communities with great exposure and situated in a unique location. Highlights of this listing include dramatic architecture and 18.5-foot electric pocket doors that open up to the great room and offer terrific indoor/outdoor living.

Otto is also selling several lots and homes at Mahana Estates, a new 51-home subdivision

within the Kapalua Resort community, an amazing property on one of the best golf properties. The authentic, fresh style is unique to everything in the surrounding area, while also keeping to the Hawaiian aesthetic, featuring black and brown finishes to reflect the colors of wood and lava.

No matter the cost of the property, Otto makes it clear that when it comes to real estate, he sells lifestyle, and Hawaii offers a great lifestyle that is perfect for unwinding. “It feels like another world when you’re here,” Otto states. “The fact that it’s still part of the U.S. but it still feels like another part of the world is unique and one of a kind.” **KW**

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