

STRATEGY

Company CEOs on working from the world's shortest commute

April 28, 2020



James Henderson, CEO of Exclusive Resorts, is into back-to-back video conferencing as he leads his teams from his Marin County, Northern California home

By MICKEY ALAM KHAN

Much has been written about working from home. But how do CEOs across key sectors handle decision-making from a couch, study or dining table?

Here is a sampling of what some CEOs and company leaders had to say about their leadership style from the world's shortest commute. Please read on:

CEO: Paul J. Massey, Jr.

Company/industry: **B6 Real Estate Advisors**/investments sales and capital advisory services

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: As a tech-driven firm from its founding with a strong focus on collaboration, Mr. Massey and the B6 team were able to take the business completely virtual in less than 24 hours.

The firm stays connected with teams and clients via video conferencing, all documents are signed and transmitted digitally and the company is seeking out a virtual tour service for building showings.

Mr. Massey has the following key tips for CEOs to successfully run the business virtually:

- Talk to all your team members twice per day. Set aside at least an hour to check in one-on-one with people always start with "How are you?" "How is your family?" "Are you healthy?"
- Call up clients regularly even if you have nothing to talk about. Let them know you're there for them.
- Talk to your competitors to see what they are doing to get ideas on how to navigate the business. Despite being competitors, the bonds you create during a difficult time like this are long lasting people remember that you talked to them, that you cared about them.
- Be sure to preserve and enjoy your family time and do not let work overtake family dinners
- Take time to be grateful times like this offer a good opportunity to be helpful to others even if it is just calling up your mom or a friend to check on them.

CEO: Bill Thompson

Company/industry: **Keeneland Racecourse**

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: While his corporate team works remote, Mr. Thomason, the president/CEO of Keeneland the world's largest Thoroughbred auction house and a world-class racetrack has rolled out a number of initiatives to keep employees connected and engaged, including virtual learning and development webinars and using the "Red e App" to distribute leadership videos and inspirational content to boost company morale.

Mr. Thomason is also encouraging his team to virtually show appreciation for colleagues throughout their work from home days using Keeneland's mobile-friendly PROMISE card an employee appreciation recognition card that employees can nominate colleagues for when they display the pillars of Keeneland's promise.

CEO: Kevin Kelly

Company/industry: **Sensei**, a new wellbeing brand co-founded by Oracle tech giant Larry Ellison and leading physician Dr. David Agus

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: Sensei seeks to guide the world towards greater wellbeing, and that is something that starts at home.

During this period of stress and social distancing, the company is challenged to stay connected and support its employees in three locations and different operations: hospitality, CEA farming and corporate headquarters.

First, its staff needs to believe their safety is of utmost importance to Sensei by meeting and surpassing government health requirements and practices, and sharing information as soon as it is available.

Second, while reducing the daily workload at home, hold daily stand-ups, departments meetings and socials via Zoom to keep its people connected and feeling productive, as well as one-on-one check-ins as needed.

Finally, adhering to Sensei's wellness principles to encourage movement, nourishment and rest, its practitioners on Lana'i are offering many employees 30-minute Zoom classes in yoga, fitness and meditation to support their wellbeing and distributing fresh food from our farm to employees and at-need residents in its community.



Eric Benaim, CEO of Modern Spaces, juggles two energetic kids, an ultra-clean wife and nonstop phone calls to run his real estate brokerage

CEO: Eric Benaim

Company/industry: Queens, New York-based real estate brokerage **Modern Spaces**

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: Family man Eric Benaim is getting plenty of quality time with his ultra-clean wife and two highly energetic children under the age of 3 as he works remotely from his three-bedroom rental in Long Island City.

Mr. Benaim has prepared his team to operate "business as usual" while working at home, with agents using immersive virtual technology platforms such as Matterport and Listing 3D to offer interactive tours of new residential developments and sales centers to potential buyers and renters.

To stay connected with colleagues and clients, Mr. Benaim is a non-stop, phone-calling machine as he makes deals, strategizes and plans for now and the future.

CEO: James Henderson

Company/industry: **Exclusive Resorts**

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: James Henderson, CEO of elite private vacation club **Exclusive Resorts**, is running the company remotely from his home office in Marin County, Northern California.

After a 6 a.m. walk with his dog, Milo, Mr. Henderson's workday officially begins with catching up on emails from the night before, followed by back-to-back video conference meetings for most of the day.

Now more than ever, Mr. Henderson is reaching out to employees for casual, one-on-one FaceTime check-ins to thank his team members for their impressive work and gather suggestions and ideas.

The executive is also making time to personally connect with Exclusive Resorts members, most of whom consider the Exclusive Resorts team family.

Indeed, he has prepared his employees to continue going above-and-beyond while working from home and has found that doing so is even more efficient than being in the office in some respects, as there are no delays between commuting, meetings and discussions.

Founding partner: L. Stephen Hill

Company/industry: **Hill West Architects**/architecture

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: Here is what Mr. Hill had to say: "Architects, who have traditionally dismissed the idea of working remotely due to the profession's collaborative nature, are being pushed beyond our comfort zone to find creative ways to communicate effectively while working from home.

"Our teams have integrated the use of Slack and Zoom for day-to-day contact and we've actually seen these methods work well as a necessary alternate to physically working side-by-side.

"Additionally, we have been using GoToMeetings for client, team and management meetings.

"I think this is one of those moments in time that will alter how many people work together in the future and we look forward to continue using these successful modes of communication once normalcy returns."





Larry Korman, president/Co-CEO of AKA Hotel Residences, works out of his Louis Kahn-designed home in Philadelphia, sending snaps of his dog to team members to boost positivity

President: Larry Korman

Company/industry: **AKA**

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: With a global footprint and specific locations in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Los Angeles and London, AKA's leader has been able to take the company virtual by staying connected via video conference, email and more.

Mr. Korman is based in Philadelphia, and is working out of his **Louis Kahn**-designed home with his wife and three adult children.

Tips from Mr. Korman:

- Continue to stay connected with your team call them and email them frequently. Set aside time to show gratitude outside of just the work conversation. Mr. Korman enjoys sending videos and photos with his dog to boost positivity. His team also continues to send internal staff check-ins and resident emailers. All 10 of AKA's properties remain open with respective teams on-site. Up until recently, Mr. Korman also made in-person appearances to all domestic locations.
- Plan for a bright future. Mr. Korman has already begun discussing plans to do team building exercises once this is over.
- Keep your team in a positive head space. Host feel-good virtual activities to keep everyone connected. The AKA team is taking its happy hours virtual via Zoom.
- Promote social distancing while maintaining the connection. AKA recently rebranded its logo with messaging stating "Apart Together."

CEO: Mark Durliat

Company/industry: **Grace Bay Resorts**/real estate and hospitality

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: Mr. Durliat's overall goal with leading and managing his employees during these uncertain times is to ensure ample face-time and communication even if he cannot be physically in the same office. He has taken the usual methods, including face-to-face meetings through Zoom and constant check-ins via instant message.

Chairman/CEO: Francis Greenburger

Company/industry: **Time Equities**/real estate

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: Here is what Mr. Greenburger had to say: "At Time Equities, we've initiated a weekly town hall meeting every Monday morning on Zoom with the entire company.

"We crowd field questions from all employees the week prior. I give an overview of current challenges in light of the pandemic and our strategies to work through them before reading and answering various employee questions.

"I have also been checking up on various team members, asking how they are doing personally and professionally. I find that personal check-in goes a long way, and keeps the team feeling connected.

"I am maintaining my usual weekly meetings with key staff and department heads and reviewing the status of various issues, including, of course, those related to COVID-19.

"As we evolve different strategies, I share them with other senior staff members so they can adopt these strategies to their own situations."

CEO: Andrew Barrocas

Company/industry: **MNS**/real estate

Methods deployed/tips for effectively running the business remote: Per Mr. Barrocas: "MNS has always had a close team, we've been utilizing Zoom for weekly company-wide happy hours to still be able to connect and be together.

"I've personally been reaching out to all clients to make sure we can get our agents paid as fast as possible and as

CEO, a lot of time has been spent looking at the benefits of the new stimulus plan and understanding how it can positively affect every member of the MNS team.

"We're still meeting regularly, but we're shifting the conversation from being negative to focusing on what's next and brainstorming how we can be proactive and prepared to come out stronger on the other side of this."

MOST POPULAR

1. [How luxury transformed from opulence to populace, and what it means for brands](#)
2. [12-step pre-recovery checklist for CEOs](#)
3. [Coronavirus impact on marketing budgets](#)
4. [Simone Gibertoni on Clinique La Prairie: "We want to be part of a customer's life journey"](#)
5. [Beauty marketer Leonard A. Lauder to spill it all in upcoming autobiography](#)
6. [US advertiser lobby ANA drafts media buyer's guide for picking data providers](#)
7. [What to look for when buying your first luxury watch](#)
8. [Three reasons why Google's Android is succeeding](#)
9. [Book excerpt: Rethinking Prestige Branding: Secrets of the Ueber-Brands](#)
10. [Using celebrities as luxury brand ambassadors – for better or worse](#)

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

American Marketer is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.