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Ehrhart launches woman-owned retail advisory firm EVERSTREET

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Ann Eherhart

Boston, MA Retail industry veteran Ann Ehrhart is launching EVERSTREET, a woman-owned retail real estate advisory group. EVERSTREET helps clients navigate and thrive in a retail environment undergoing a massive sea change by trading conventional brokerage for a strategic planning & activation services model.

Ehrhart brings nearly two decades of experience to the new firm, having gained recognition for her leadership skills and her ability to handle complex, multi-million dollar retail leasing assignments. The inspiration for EVERSTREET was fueled by the recognition that landlords and tenants alike are hungry for a new approach when it comes to increasing revenue in mixed-use retail.

Ehrhart has served as a trusted advisor to numerous Fortune 500 landlords and tenants to represent their interests in high-profile, flagship transactions, as well as working with local brands to grow their businesses. Prior to founding EVERSTREET, Ehrhart spent 10 years as a founding member at a Boston-based retail real estate firm where she was involved in all aspects of growing the business unit, including strategic planning, business development, dealmaking, marketing/branding, and operations.

“Developers and owners of mixed-use properties are recognizing that retail is changing and that the people choosing to live in their apartments and occupy space in their labs and office buildings want a unique, local mix of retail and restaurant operators that are truly diverse – i.e., minority and women-owned businesses,” said Ehrhart. “A strategy for a street-level merchandising mix that incorporates diverse businesses is no longer just the socially responsible thing to do, it is the financially savvy thing to do. EVERSTREET is creating places for everyone.”

The pandemic and sweeping social change have irrevocably changed what consumers want from their retail and restaurant experiences. A recent study reported that roughly 51% of Gen Z’ers – who now make up 40% of global consumers – make a point of supporting small, local businesses, and more than 75% of Gen Z’ers and millennials surveyed indicated that they would end a relationship with a company because of lack of diversity. Despite comprising just over 50% of the population, women account for 70-80% of all consumer purchases. As the target demographic shifts and consumer behaviors change, the model for curating and facilitating a retail experience for buildings and communities must adapt, and EVERSTREET has developed a fresh approach to that process.

The EVERSTREET strategy combines the time-tested fundamentals of retail planning, leasing, and activation with a forward-thinking approach designed to meet the evolving retail environment. EVERSTREET accomplishes this by partnering with developers of ground-up and repositioning projects during the planning phase to attract and build community support, then creating a retail business plan that positions clients for success by syncing the design, merchandising, and pro-forma with the location. In the activation phase, the firm executes the business plan through tenant selection, deal structuring that focuses on long-term viability, and post-leasing services to minimize build-out headaches and facilitate a smooth path to opening and stabilization.

“Delivering a product that creates value before, during, and after the lease transaction enables EVERSTREET to tackle a wider array of challenges and serve a wider audience,” said Ehrhart. “This includes engagements with groups who are looking for a retail advisor, but who may not ultimately need a transaction, like a brokerage arrangement. For example, master planning and downtown revitalization projects at the municipal level, or even assessing ways to boost, in place, underperforming retail concepts.”

EVERSTREET is striving to open the door for greater diversity, sustainability, and creativity for retail and restaurants in greater Boston. Parlaying their extensive experience with national and boutique retailers into helping small businesses – particularly women and/or minority-owned businesses – EVERSTREET helps them to gain a better understanding of how to succeed in today's retail environment.

“One of the first things we learn in traditional brokerage is that you earn a commission for procuring a ‘ready willing and able buyer or tenant,’” said Ehrhart. “But what if the ideal tenant for the project needs resources to fine-tune their business plan or to get connected to appropriate funding sources? A major component of the EVERSTREET mission is to invest in the next generation of the region's diverse retail and restaurant talent.”

EVERSTREET assists with everything from developing and honing retail concepts to branding to putting together growth strategies for established businesses. With the shift in consumer behavior away from cookie-cutter national chains to one-of-a-kind retail experiences, there has never been a better time to help homegrown talent get the mainstream exposure they deserve. EVERSTREET can help pilot small businesses that don't have an experienced in-house real estate person or can't hire a chief growth officer by working as an advisor in a contractor capacity.

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