



AVANT PROPERTIES, LLC KEITHA AVANT

"Learning about a wide-ranging variety of businesses and the people who run them fascinates me," said Keitha Avant, CCIM, SIOR, owner and president of Avant Properties, LLC, a full-service provider of commercial real estate services. Her energy and enthusiasm for her work are evident as she offered, "In what other industry can you work with banks, law firms, restaurants and beauty salons all in one day?"

This July, Avant Properties will mark its sixth year. If she could offer guidance to anyone who is considering starting a business, it would be to "begin with the end in mind," a phrase she learned from Sharon Buzzanca, CPA and Avant Properties' chief operating officer. "It doesn't matter if the company is only one or two people initially. Plan the infrastructure of your business as if you are 10 times that size because, with God's help, you will be - and sooner than you are likely to imagine," Avant said.

Keitha chose to focus on expanding the property management and leasing division of the company due primarily to their early success at Chase and American Towers. "Chase was the first property we managed and we added American Tower the next year. We were very eager to make a good impression with our owners and tenants," said Avant. "From day one we took every detail of leasing and operating those buildings personally and seriously and that is how our team was and still is trained. We didn't even order something as simple as light bulbs without a comparison matrix of suppliers, products and costs and we thought that was normal," she added with a laugh.

This uniquely detailed management approach has also been a hit with other investors and tenants. "Avant Properties now has 29 team members operating and leasing almost one million square feet of commercial space," she continued. "Our managed properties include Shreve City Office Park and three downtown high-rises, namely Chase Tower, American Tower and The Beck Building, as well as the epicenter of Line Avenue's exclusive retail corridor, Pierremont Mall."

"In addition to our property management services, we will continue to be active in property sales, especially income producing properties. We recently added Anne Dixon to our leasing and brokerage division." Dixon was previously a Nextel executive and Avant predicts her managerial and sales experience will help her quickly rise to the highest ranks of commercial agents in this market.

Keitha Avant's goal for 2007 is to branch out into other regions of the south. "Hiring Sharon as our in-house CPA and adding Anne to our brokerage and leasing team, will give us the freedom to look at other markets in order to add properties that fit our profile. We look forward to that new challenge and anticipate great success."

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