



MAINE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Before You Sign:

What Every Small Business Owner Needs to Know About Leasing

Presented By:

Jon Janson & Tyler Stewart of Keller Williams



Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration:



Meet the Advisor

Jon Janson



Certified Business Advisor since 2024

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Housekeeping

- This is being recorded, and the webinar will be available on YouTube.
- Slides will be emailed to you after the presentation.
- Please keep yourself on mute.
- Submit any questions in the chat.



What does the Maine SBDC do?

Provides no-cost and confidential business advising to current and aspiring Maine business owners!

- Business Planning and Startups
- Business Transitions and Exits
- Assistance with Credit and Financing
- Financial Analysis
- Marketing and Sales
- Operations Management
- Much More!



What does the Maine SBDC *not* do?

- We are not lawyers, accountants, or tax preparers.
- This information is for educational purposes only and is not a replacement for professional legal, tax, or accounting advice.
- Please seek appropriate guidance before making any tax, legal, or accounting decisions that could impact your business.



Meet Tyler Stewart!

Associate Broker and Director of Sales at The Fletcher Group.

Tyler Stewart takes a client-first approach to every real estate transaction, combining strategic insight with a genuine passion for building long-term relationships. Known for his dedication, integrity, and creative problem-solving, Tyler delivers personalized solutions that align with each client's unique goals.

As a leader and coach at The Fletcher Group, Tyler plays a key role in mentoring agents and driving results. He takes a hands-on, strategic approach that prioritizes lasting success over quick wins, offering clear guidance and expert advice at every stage of the process.

In addition to his residential work, Tyler is a skilled commercial real estate agent, leading complex transactions across the state of Maine with confidence and precision. Whether working with first-time buyers/tenants or seasoned investors, Tyler is committed to providing a high-level experience rooted in trust, strategy, and results.

Areas of Expertise:


Multi-Unit and Portfolio Underwriting
Strategic Planning for Expired and Unsold Listings
Tailored Solutions for Buyers, Sellers & Tenants
Negotiation and Deal Structuring
Extensive Experience in Commercial Transactions

Affiliations:

National Association of Realtors
Mountains to Shore Board of Realtors
Maine Commercial Association of Realtors
MREA Commercial Business Coach



ABOUT
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SCAN ME



Start with a Poll:

Where are you in the commercial leasing process?

1. I want to start a business but don't know how.
2. I have an idea but don't know where to open shop.
3. I found a suitable location but not sure how to lease it or buy it.
4. I am currently in a lease or own a building but am open to learn more.
5. Other



The 5 Essential Keys

Checklist to buying or leasing property:

- 1) Location
- 2) Lease Terms
- 3) Hidden Costs
- 4) Negotiation
- 5) Before you sign!



Why Are These 5 Keys Important?

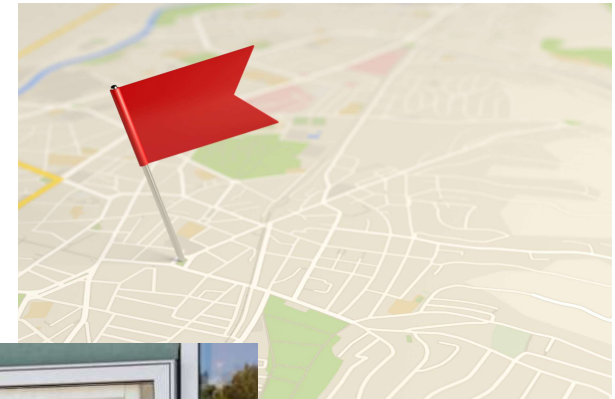
- Fixed Costs
- Bad Lease = Bad for Business
- How they help:
 - Control
 - Protection
 - Strategy





1. Location is More Than a Zip Code

- Visibility & foot traffic
- Parking
- Competitors & complementary businesses
- Zoning laws & usage restrictions





2. Understand Your Lease Terms

- Types of Leases
 - Gross, Modified Gross, Triple Net
- Key Terms
 - Base rent, CAM, escalation clauses
- Lease length → flexibility





2. Understand Your Lease Terms

- Rent Structure
- Termination Clauses
- Maintenance Responsibilities

When do you ask for help?





2. Understand Your Lease Terms

Legalities

- A commercial agent has limitations
- Can only enter “fillables” within a contract
- Need a lawyer to fully review or update a contract with an owner





3. Hidden Costs

- Property Taxes
- HVAC & other repairs

Tips

- Rent abatement or Tenant Improvement (TI)
- Budget a buffer!





4. Negotiation

- What can you negotiate?
 - Discounted 1st year
 - Help w/ buildout
 - Longer lease (5+ yrs) = more power
 - Rent & other utilities





4. Negotiation

- Startups vs. existing business
- When should you?
 - Prior to LOI
- Examples/ anecdotes





5. Don't Go It Alone

- Commercial broker
 - Who pays?
 - Advocate for you
- BAIL Team Expanded





The 5 Essential Keys - Review

Checklist to buying or leasing property:

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- 5) Before you sign!



Questions?

Type your questions in the chat below or "Raise Your Hand" and unmute yourself!



Need Help – Contact Us:

Maine Small Business Development Centers (Maine SBDC)

Phone: 780-4420

Email: mainesbdc@maine.edu

Website: www.mainesbdc.org

Finding your SBDC: <https://americassbdc.org/small-business-consulting-and-training/find-your-sbdc/>



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