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**Your 'Go-To'
Professional for
Restaurant and
Pub Sales**

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Your 'Go-To' Professional for Restaurant and Pub Sales

By Heather Navarra, The Write Type



Real estate agent Gord Hyland's impeccable reputation is well known in Calgary where he specializes in hospitality brokerage. As part of his commitment to keep abreast of this ever-changing industry, Gord continually enhances his first-hand knowledge of Calgary's hospitality businesses. Restaurant and pub owners across the city often first meet Gord when he drops in – ostensibly to test the coffee! His warm and friendly style, coupled with his expertise, ensure that restaurateurs benefit from his visits as he willingly shares his knowledge of what's happening in the industry.

Obtaining his license 30 years ago, Gord has now been with MaxWell South Star

Realty (previously Sutton Group) for over 15 years. With 22 locations in total, MaxWell has 725 agents and continues to grow. Currently ranking second for sales in Calgary, in Gord's opinion the honesty and integrity of the brokers at MaxWell is a huge factor in their success. "I have worked hard to build a favourable reputation in this industry," shares Gord, "and I wanted to work with people who emulated my personal philosophies. I believe in saying and doing 'the right thing', leaving a positive trail. I have tremendous respect for the two gentlemen who started MaxWell, Ron Stanners and Dick Oakes."

A member of the Calgary Real Estate

Board, Alberta Real Estate Association, Canadian Real Estate Association, Canadian Food & Restaurant Association and the Alberta Restaurant & Food Association, Gord balances his time equally between acting on behalf of buyers and sellers. Focusing primarily on Calgary, Gord serves clients across Alberta, handling restaurants, pubs, coffee shops, hotels and motels in prices ranging from \$50,000 to \$3,000,000. Gord has sold close to 300 hospitality businesses since he started specializing in this market niche and he usually has up to three dozen opportunities listed for sale. He also represents franchises, and has specialized experience in working through the levels of approvals that

are often required from franchise head offices.

While owners form the broadest base of clients, Gord also aids chefs and other restaurant employees who want to start out on their own. The industry hosts every ethnicity and Gord considers the opportunity to expand his knowledge of other cultures one of the most exciting aspects of his role. Hardworking and dedicated immigrants often rely on his in-depth knowledge about financials and profit ratios to assist them in the transition to owner/operator. He also receives referrals from other REALTORS® who recognize that the industry requires a specialist with the unique expertise Gord has developed.



“Commercial real estate is an industry that requires flare, an ability to ‘think outside the squares’,” says Gord, “particularly during the negotiating stage. It’s very valuable to be able to see a situation from another person’s point-of-view.” Gord’s creative solutions often not only help finalize the deal, but represent the exceptional value that he brings to the table on behalf of his clients.

Larry Davis of The Mill Group writes, “I would like to compliment you on your professionalism. You kept me continually informed of your progress with various buyers, you were prompt in returning all calls and attending meetings, and I was most impressed with your honesty and candor. I felt that you always had our best interests at heart and that ‘the commission was never the mission’...In summary, you did a professional job and, as a company, we would not hesitate to recommend you unconditionally.”

A key component of Gord’s success is

his unquestionable integrity. Because of the nature of the business, clients share a great deal of sensitive information, and confidentiality is paramount. As a respected advisor, Gord has built his reputation on being trustworthy. He has

also been called upon several times as a court or arbitration witness for restaurant and pub valuations for divorces, landlord/tenant disputes, partnership problems and franchisee/franchisor issues.

Gord continually strives to broaden his industry knowledge in this very popular and growing industry. He believes in ongoing education, and regularly attends food and beverage trade shows. Because his knowledge base is wide, he is able to aid clients in a variety of ways, perhaps noting new packaging or marketing options, or direct mail ideas. “Clients may not have the time, money or inclination to go to these shows and they really appreciate this type of information.”

Technology is another area where Gord is leading the industry. His recently re-launched, state-of-the art website at www.restaurants4sale.ca includes full descriptions of listings with colour photographs and virtual tours. Highly

popular, the website receives hundreds of thousands of page viewings annually from all around the world. The blog feature also allows Gord to share the latest industry news. Keeping up with the times is important to Gord and participating in social networking sites is paramount.

“People are very connected and are increasingly using the Internet to educate themselves and to support their buying decisions,” says Gord. “I get many positive comments about my website and the quality of the information that I provide.” Gord also utilizes the latest tools to support his personal productivity, allowing him to connect quickly with clients when they need him.

Gord is assisted on the administrative side of his business by his wife, Brenda, who works from their home office keeping the website current and the paperwork flowing. They enjoy the opportunity to work together and their skills offset each other’s to make an ideal partnership!

A comprehensive marketing plan supports Gord’s success. He has an ad running in the ‘Business to Business’ section of the Calgary Herald every day. For many years while Chorus Television Network (Channel 4 in Calgary) was on the air, Gord was a regular advertiser. For listings that may be of interest to buyers from other cities, he advertises in their local papers: the Edmonton Journal, Toronto Star, Vancouver Sun & Province and periodically in the Financial Post or Globe & Mail.

Reliable and conscientious, the many awards this REALTOR® has earned over his career are a testament to his achievements. Gord consistently ranks in

the top few percent of agents at MaxWell for commissions earned. In 2004, he ranked first for all MaxWell companies (approximately 700 REALTORS® at the time) and received the Pinnacle Award. He has often won the President's Award and the Chairman's Award recognizing REALTORS® at the top.

Giving back to the industry is another of Gord's goals. For five years, Gord wrote a monthly column called, 'Restaurant Ramblings', published in the Calgary Real Estate News. He recently completed a two-year term as a Director on the Calgary Real Estate Board. As well, ten years ago, he established the 'Gord Hyland Endowment Award'. Given to a first-year REALTOR® at MaxWell chosen at random in a draw, the award pays for three months' desk fees.

"I have given this award for the past ten years at our annual awards luncheon in the spring. I feel that it's important to help new REALTORS® by taking time to talk with them in the office and being

available to provide advice or counsel. I've had previous winners tell me how much the award has assisted them when they were struggling to get established, and it gives me great satisfaction." Gord also donates a portion of his commission from every sale to the Kids Help Phone.

It's clear that Gord enjoys what he does and values opportunities to help: he shares his time, his advice, his resources, his knowledge. "Good advice benefits both buyers and sellers," notes Gord. "Industry participants often ask me about the secret to success in this business. One word: control. There should be 15 percent profit. If the cost of product is too high, profit goes down. If there is pilferage (food, money, alcohol) or wastage, that too comes out of the profit."

Both clients and peers respect his opinion. Appraisers, lawyers and accountants often call for information from his 1200-plus archived files accumulated over 20 years in the hospitality sector, which is

willingly shared. "I offer free hospitality consulting and new start-up advice to people considering a food and beverage business. I'm brutally honest and offer a straightforward approach; I don't tell clients what they want to hear. I've been told on many occasions how much that is appreciated."

With so few specialists in the hospitality niche, Gord's solid advice and exceptional service to clients have made him the 'go-to' REALTOR® for restaurant and pub properties in Calgary and area. With his caring and helpful approach, there's no doubt he will continue to build success through assisting his clients to achieve their goals.

Gord Hyland

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