

Randall Kaplan

CEO

Listingbook  *Biography*

Randall Kaplan is real estate’s graceful entrepreneur, quietly having established a daunting track record of innovatively creating, rapidly growing and skillfully selling a number of businesses that stretch across multiple industries. While many of his corporate peers have clamored for the spotlight, Kaplan has been content as a true corporate leader, letting the success of his firms do the talking for him.

Today, as CEO of Listingbook LLC, Kaplan leads the real estate industry’s most proven lead nurturing and client servicing platform, serving markets with more than 500,000 real estate agents in the U.S. – 180,000 of whom have a Listingbook account. Kaplan’s Listingbook allows consumers to “search like an agent,” and provides real estate professionals a platform that is “better than Zillow.”

Kaplan took an unconventional path to the helm of Listingbook, where he has been its leader for the last nine years. An honors graduate from Brown University, Kaplan went to the University of Michigan Law School, again graduating with honors, and for a year clerked for the U.S. Court of Appeals for Eleventh Circuit.

He joined the law firm of Caplin & Drysdale in Washington, DC, then the top tax firm in the country. As fate would dictate, Kaplan ended up working for the head of Corporate and Securities Group, focusing on the troubled banks and S&L’s during height of the crisis in the early 1980s.

In 1986, he returned to his hometown Greensboro, North Carolina, to eventually run the family business, Kay Chemical Company. He became its President in 1990. It was there Kaplan proved his business acumen, establishing Kay as the worldwide leading provider of cleaning and sanitation products to the fast food industry, including the exclusive supplier to McDonalds and 15 of the top 20 chains. Kaplan led several acquisitions and the firm’s global expansion into 70 markets, and in 1995, merged Kay into Ecolab, a Fortune 500 company and the largest institutional cleaning chemical company in the world.

Until 2000, Kaplan remained President of Kay Chemical and stayed on the leadership team at Ecolab, leaving to spend more time with his family and community, while quietly becoming a serial entrepreneur. He started a number of businesses, including an upscale car wash chain, a bank (SterlingSouth Bank, now Bank of North Carolina), and several other ventures.

It was during that time that Kaplan was approached by real estate software developer Bob Milman, who had founded Listingbook. Kaplan was intrigued by the concept – which Milman patented – of an invitation-only search engine that agents could give to clients, and it allowed the agent to see the clients home search interests and behavior in real time.

Eventually, Kaplan would end up buying most of Listingbook, as well as funding its national expansion, when he became CEO in 2006.

In the business world, Kaplan is known for having a broad understanding of how businesses work and able to nimbly navigate from idea to execution. This skillset has served him well at Listingbook, as during the last four years and an investment of six million dollars, Kaplan has successfully transported Listingbook into the mobile and social age of real estate.

Kaplan is also a highly committed civic and business leader in his home state of North Carolina, having served on more than a dozen boards, which tapped his expertise in a wide range of areas, including economic development, civil rights, charitable giving, and education.

Today, Kaplan remains active on four boards, including the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Chairman 2009-2012); Greensboro Partnership (Chamber of Commerce and Local Economic Development); Opportunity Greensboro (Business and University Economic Partnerships); and Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, serving as its current Chairman, International Board of Governors.

On any given weekend, you’re likely to find Kaplan on a golf course, spending time with family, reading a good book, or enjoying great food and wine.

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