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Lash Group of Companies Celebrating 60 Years

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It has been a busy year so far for the [Lash Group of Companies](#), who just last month celebrated the grand opening of their project at St. Clair and Bathurst, [The Barrington Condos](#). It's a fitting time then that the company celebrates its 60th year in business. To talk about the significance of that milestone and what the future holds, UrbanToronto sat down with Larry Blankenstein, President of the Lash Group, who shared his excitement for the company's upcoming projects.



Larry Blankenstein stands outside the Lash Decor Centre just north of Downsview Airport, image by Marcus Mitanis

UT: The Lash Group has been in business since 1955. Could you talk about the significance of 60 years and what it means to the company?

LB: I think 60 years is a big accomplishment for any company. We're very proud that we've been around for that long and we hope to be around for another 60 years. We feel that we've left our footprint in the GTA and the family is very proud of the accomplishment that was started by my father Abe Blankenstein.

How did the company evolve into what it is today?

It started as an electrical contracting company which developed into a construction and development business. We evolved into building high-rise rental buildings as well as commercial, industrial buildings and low-rise subdivision housing. It evolved in the early 2000s into high-rise condominiums.

Why did you make the transition as a business from the industrial, commercial and low-rise housing to high-rise residential?

Market trends. It was getting more difficult to find land for subdivision housing, so we had to be creative and create our own land in the GTA. By doing so you had to buy property, demolish it and redevelop in certain areas. That's one thing that Lash is proud of: we've gone into areas that were underdeveloped or needed revitalization.

What is your mandate as a company? What values do you hold?

We like to build dreams for people. We feel that a home purchase is probably the largest purchase they'll make in their life. We like to be trendsetters, we like to be ahead of the curve in new designs, new products as well as new neighbourhoods. We just try to be different from everyone else and try and be a leader in the industry.



The Barrington Condos at St. Clair and Bathurst, image courtesy of Lash Group

You've said before about how you like to bring new technology to your projects, like The Barrington's automated parking elevator. That's a pretty rare feature in a Toronto condo.

We try to look at what's the most productive, the most beneficial and in the long run what's best for the purchaser. We try to build within the green standards of the City of Toronto. We are conscious of the environment and we try to find new products. The parking elevator is something new that I think you'll see more of in the City of Toronto. We're always looking at ways to advance ourselves.

You wouldn't think by looking at the project, which at 18 storeys isn't a huge building, has a parking elevator hiding within it.

It helps with the design of the building. You don't have that wasted space with a ramp that goes three floors underground. So we felt it was something unique, something a bit different, something trendy that's more common in Europe and New York. But I think it's something that's coming to Toronto and again, we can help set the trend.

Are there any successes that stand out to you? What will the legacy of your company be?

We were one of the largest industrial commercial developers and landlords—under the name Falco Properties. We always look for good locations and we're just very proud of everything we've always done. We have to stay ahead of the market curve. See what people want, what people desire. Condominiums today are a lot different than what they were 20 years ago where it was mostly an empty nester market. Now it's a market for all ages. We try to cater to those different aspects.

Do you enjoy working on the commercial, industrial or residential side of things the most?

I've always had a passion for residential. I think that's where people's hearts are. A house is always a more emotional attachment. Every project you start, you start from nothing. It evolves, from finding a location to designing a building and working with the City. To be able to see it through to completion is always an exciting aspect of it.



ME Living Condos at Markham and Ellesmere, image courtesy of Lash Group

What's next for the Lash Group of Companies?

We have [ME Living Condos](#), which is over 1,000 units. The first phase is 327 units and we're almost sold out. We'll start construction this fall. Our first two rental buildings that we built in the late 1950's are going to be coming down and replaced with a new rental building. To be able to revitalize that part of Scarborough is very exciting for us.

There's also a project at Yonge and Eglinton.

Yes, [Distinction](#) will be coming out this fall, we are now finalizing the design. With the LRT and the subway, it will be another great location for Lash.

How would you sum up your company's vision?

We're a family oriented company, we understand what families want and we're looking to build people's dreams. Without our team, which I think is the best out there, it couldn't be done.

For more information and images of the numerous Lash Group projects, check out the dataBase files below. Want to get involved in the discussion? Visit the associated Forum thread or leave a comment at the bottom of this page.

To request more info directly from Barrington Condos, The click [here](#)

To request more info directly from ME Living Condos click [here](#)