

St. Louis Commercial Real Estate Gets Social



Selequity, an online platform for crowd investing in commercial real estate (CRE) projects, has formed a strategic alliance with Virtual Realty Enterprises, LLC, (VRE) a St. Louis-based CRE lender and operating company that has managed more than \$500 million in assets. Now, Selequity's clients and project sponsors will have access to interim financing and the opportunity to fund larger and more varied deals.

Bill Snyders, chief operating officer of Virtual Realty, will lead the VRE effort to manage the strategic alliance with Selequity.

Selequity was the first real estate crowdfunding platform chosen to compete at this year's TechCrunch Disrupt conference Battlefield competition in New York City. More than 1,000 companies applied to compete at TechCrunch, but only 24 were chosen for the competition. The company launched for the first-time onstage in front of top venture capitalists (VCs), entrepreneurs as well as business and tech media.

Selequity provides accredited investors and non-bank lenders online exposure to professionally-operated, private real estate investment deals. Likewise, commercial real estate owners (sponsors) have the ability to use the Selequity network to access a broader range of accredited investors. The company recently completed its first funding during its closed beta phase, raising approximately \$2.6 million of equity for a premier neighborhood shopping center in St. Louis, MO, to provide liquidity to some of the legacy owners who had been invested in the center for more than 25 years.

VRE, which has been in business for more than 20 years, has the experience and capacity to participate as a senior, junior or mezzanine lender. At the same time, Selequity has the ability to identify projects across the country for VRE's review and potential interest in funding. VRE specializes in office, retail, multifamily and hospitality and VRE's principals have significant experience working with real estate

entrepreneurs across the United States. The company is headquartered in St. Louis and maintains offices in Ocala, Fla. and Tempe, Ariz.

"We are delighted to form this alliance with Virtual Realty Enterprises coming off the heels of our launch at TechCrunch Disrupt," said Selequity's CEO, AJ Chivetta. "Selequity's alliance with VRE provides significant benefits to project sponsors, particularly interim financing. We believe sponsors will see this move as a huge advantage to working with Selequity and helping fund projects through our platform."

"VRE's alliance with Selequity creates a mutually beneficial relationship," said Henry Warshaw, President of Virtual Realty Enterprises. "We are excited to tap into Selequity's wide-reaching network of real estate professionals and investment and lending opportunities."

Selequity's technology streamlines the once timely and cumbersome evaluation and investment process for both property owners and funders. The online platform helps owners provide the necessary documentation and information to accredited investors to make smart, educated investment choices. Additionally, sponsors, investors and lenders using the Selequity site have access to an individualized communications platform, making it easier to track and manage ongoing investments.