

TOP AGENT

MAGAZINE



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Husband and wife team Nicole and Mike Wilhelm are making a distinct mark in San Francisco Bay Area real estate with specialized marketing skills and in-depth local knowledge. As Bay Area natives who recently moved from San Francisco to the East Bay, they bring highly-personalized service to buyers and sellers. “We get a lot of referral business from agents in other areas who working with people who might be moving to the Bay Area.” As a top producing Bay Sotheby’s team, Nicole and Mike share their market knowledge with buyers and sellers through their expanding presence in select neighborhoods of Oakland as well as Berkeley, El Cerrito, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek.



Depending on whom you ask, Nicole got her start in real estate either as a little girl or in 2010 when she and Mike purchased their first investment properties. “Warren Buffet always says to invest when everyone is scared, and that’s exactly what we did,” says Nicole. “Mike and I bought some real estate and loved it, but we were worried about becoming full-time real estate agents.” The two stayed with their 9-5 jobs; Nicole’s was with a startup. “And then it reached the point where we said, ‘Let’s just do what we’re passionate about and what we love.’”

Before real estate, Mike earned his bachelor’s in business marketing and started an insurance business where he fine-tuned his marketing and relationship management skills. For Nicole, however, real estate’s intrigue began at a young age. “My parents liked to take me to open houses as a kid; it was something we did as a family,” she says. “I’d preview homes as if I was their agent and then come home inspired and rearrange my room about 25 times!” But she hadn’t considered a real estate career; instead she wanted to become a diplomat or ambassador. After earning her bachelor’s in PR and master’s in science in integrated marketing communication, however, she and Mike realized the market downturn provided more opportunity to take Warren Buffet’s advice to a new level.

“We formed a husband and wife team,” Nicole says, describing one of their greatest assets as a business. “We divide and conquer based on the client’s personality and who they would work best with,” she says. “And couples like working with another couple. It’s like Date Night meets House Hunters.” The team approach means clients know that someone is always working on their file. “If one of us can’t do something at a moment’s notice, the other can. We provide hands-on attention, 24/7.”

Whether marketing homes or representing buyers in the desirable communities they cover, Nicole and Mike go to every extent to make sure clients are happy. Among the ways they do this is through integrated marketing, combining both traditional and non-traditional methods. Their cutting-edge practices include building websites for each property and producing videos to market through social media, as well as heavy online presence. Their visibility as a couple even attracted the attention TLC’s wedding show, *Extreme I Do’s*. In an interview with *BRIDES Magazine*, Nicole said that after learning their wedding was selected for the program, they only had 54 days to plan. But thanks to having the right team and a clear vision, things went seamlessly.

The Wilhelms’ visibility extends far beyond real estate and show business, however. “We’re part of the East Bay College fund, which helps inner city youth with college,” says Nicole. Because of the organization’s Oakland focus, Nicole and Mike felt particularly drawn to helping. “Clients would say they love Oakland but not the schools,” she says. “So we decided to do something about it and came across the East Bay College fund.” The organization provides professional mentors for high school seniors, motivating them to continue their education. Mentors like the Wilhelms spend up to five years with a student, encouraging them to finish college degrees. In addition, the Wilhelms donate \$250 after each sale to A Home for A Home, which builds homes in Guatemala. “It’s motivating for us,” she says, adding that, unless a client asks, they don’t know about this aspect of the Wilhelms’ giving.



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