

Retail Bus Tour expands into major national markets

Boca Raton-based event to operate in 20 cities by 2014

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By [Eric Kalis](#)



Broward County Retail Bus Tour and post-tour reception in Plantation

In three years, retail specialist Gary Broidis has taken the Retail Bus Tour from an unconventional networking event for South Florida industry professionals to a national operation with tours in many major markets.

Broidis and about 140 retail brokers, landlords and developers packed three buses last week and toured 37 properties in Broward County, where the Retail Bus Tour launched in October 2010. The latest tour departed from the site of the former Plantation Fashion Mall and closed with a reception there. Property owner US Capital Holdings and brokerage Katz & Associates told guests about plans to redevelop the mall into a mixed-use complex called 321 North.

"We had more properties featured on this tour than any past Retail Bus Tour and the second-highest number of attendees of all tours completed in the past three years," Broidis told *The Real Deal*.

Boca Raton-based Broidis and numerous regional directors currently host annual tours in seven cities, including Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. Inaugural tours in Boston and San Diego are scheduled during the first quarter of 2014. By the end of next year, Broidis expects the Retail Bus Tour to have a presence in as many as 20 cities, including Dallas, New York and Philadelphia.

The proliferation of social media and online networking has undoubtedly changed the retail industry, Broidis said. But the professionals who attend the tours value the opportunity to put down the laptops and spend a day visiting prominent sites with their peers.

"That's the biggest struggle in our business; combining old world ways with new world" methods, he said.

The next scheduled Retail Bus Tour is Dec. 5 in the Tampa area.

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