



IREM® From the Front Lines Podcast

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Final Mile Properties

Todd:

Welcome to another edition of From the Front Lines, where we discuss both the day-to-day, and one-of-a-kind issues facing real estate managers. Amanda Boyd with Link Logistics joins us in this episode to talk about managing final mile industrial properties. Welcome to the podcast, Amanda.

Amanda:

Thank you so much, Todd, for having me today. I'm excited for our chat.

Todd:

Can you first introduce yourself and Link Logistics?

Amanda:

Yeah. I'm Amanda Boyd, Head of Property Management for Link Logistics. We operate the largest US-only portfolio of logistics real estate covering over a half a billion square feet. We've been really focused on expanding our footprint in key infill last mile locations and continue to develop a network of facilities that complement our customers' business needs. I developed a keen interest in industrial and logistics real estate early on in my career. The customers are so dynamic and in property management, we get to engage with that firsthand every day.

Todd:

What are final mile properties and what's driving demand for this property type?

Amanda:

Final mile facilities and really the focus of the Link Logistics portfolio are strategically located in more urban areas, residential areas. They are close to that end user. We see a strong demand for these properties driven by e-commerce. Our customers that service e-commerce quickly realized that the closer they are to consumers, the better off they will be. We've seen this expand in the last few years and we don't see it slowing down. We also see demand driven by nearshoring and onshoring trends and an increased need for robust inventories.

Todd:

What types of tenants lease final mile properties and how are leases typically structured?

Amanda:

The customer base, it really varies anywhere from large online retailers to smaller local businesses. But what they share is the need to be as close as possible to consumers. And as consumers expect to receive their items faster and faster, businesses will continue to find ways to get closer to meet those expectations. As far as lease structure, similar to other industrial triple net leases.

Todd:

What's it like to manage final mile properties? What are some of those special considerations?

Amanda:

So I love this question. I could talk all day about property management and share stories of our amazing Link team. No two days are the same in this business. The dynamic nature of logistics real estate is really pronounced in last mile facilities because of that sense of urgency driven by consumer demand for faster delivery times. We are so committed to helping our customers to delivering value for our stakeholders from Link Plus which is our digital platform for customers to our colleagues in the field. We are in the right locations with teams focused on addressing that pronounced need for efficiency in last mile locations. Link has an in-house property management and construction team that brings incredible expertise and understanding around what it takes to manage a final mile facility. We are connected to our customers having an in-house team and it means that we can be in lock step with our customers when needs or opportunities for partnership arise, we can proact, we can resolve and mitigate issues quickly. As far as special consideration, we are really focused on getting to know our customers and what is unique to their businesses. It's not one-size-fits-all, far from it. Needs vary from facility to facility and even unit to unit. And it's really an exciting balance knowing and partnering with the individual customer while delivering on consistent, reliable customer experience.

Todd:

Now how do you stay on top of accommodating ongoing changes in your customers' businesses? They must always be seeking innovations and using new technologies.

Amanda:

Yes. So Link Logistics saw an opportunity to create a better, a more transparent way to partner with customers. The creation and roll out of Link Plus offers a one-stop digital platform for customers to manage their partnership with us. Link Plus provides customers with unparalleled accessibility to their property management team. It offers transparent access to lease documents, to billing, the ability to submit service requests and it allows us to be a responsible, responsive, and a transparent partner. The reception of Link Plus has far exceeded expectations from both a customer adoption and engagement perspective and it really demonstrates the extent to which our customers are seeking ways to be innovative and seeking ways to use new technology. Above all, we believe it's so important to stay close to Link's customers. We prioritize regular in-person interactions and we employ a robust listening strategy facilitated by our customer experience team that gives us objective and honest feedback from our customers about how we are doing and where the opportunities for partnership are. And I think this is all something that really differentiates us. It's the combination of innovative ease of use technology and that face-to-face customer interaction.

Todd:

What else is Link Logistics doing to drive value for customers in final mile properties?

Amanda:

So we're really able to leverage proprietary data insights that help us see around the corner and drive industry leading outcomes for the long term. This allows us to tailor our portfolio to where customers want to be, making it easier for them to connect with their distribution networks. We also have customer-centric programs that are really focused on growth specifically run by Link's customer solutions team and fundamentally, Todd, at our core we care.

Todd:

Thanks for joining us, Amanda.

Amanda:

Absolutely. Thanks again for having me.

Todd:

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