



Andy Atrens, president of Atrens Management Group Inc. receiving ACMO 2000 certification from Chris Antipas, president of ACMO and Denise Lash, chair of the Condominium Management Standards Council.

Making the Most of ACMO 2000

■ Two Principals Blend Condo Experience with ACMO 2000

Andrew Atrens has a 35-year-long condominium management background. This includes working at Cadillac Fairview for 16 years managing both condominiums and rental units. Subsequently he was owner of Andrejs Management with a portfolio of long-standing clients, some that had been with Andrejs for 21 years. At its peak the company managed 7,000 condominium units. He also worked as a consultant for Ray Wilson to help open the Wilson Blanchard Toronto office. Retirement had crossed his mind and when an offer to purchase Andrejs came his way in 1998, he sold the company.

Instead of retiring full time, however, Andy chose to remain in condominium management and co-founded Atrens Management Group Inc. in 2005 with Marco Cianfarani, RCM, who is a principal and vice-president and treasurer.

As a start-up company, Andy and Marco recognized that competition for clients would be a challenge. Any advantage would be beneficial.

“ACMO 2000 is important for the industry to ensure that record-keeping is uniform as a whole,” explains Andy. “Having a standard that all management companies adhere to is a benefit for condominium corporations.”

“The ACMO 2000 process was straightforward for us with Marco managing the in-house effort. Most of our records complied already. The exercise was good for us to make sure that our records complied with a recognized industry standard such as ACMO 2000.”

He also supports the ACMO 2000 compliance audit every three years that helps to validate that in-house processes are maintained to the ACMO 2000 standards.

During his 35-years’ experience, he’s seen the growth of the condo industry from a handful of properties to its current explosion of growth. Andy’s secret to success:

ongoing client communication. With eight employees, Andy and Marco will make certain the focus of the company is on condominium management first and slow, steady growth and client retention.

■ Tapping into ACMO's Tools

"Being an ACMO member provides a way for property management companies to build and keep abreast of current industry knowledge/information." And for Corporate member G.S. Atkin Property Management Specialist Inc. it means tapping into the tools that ACMO provides to help member companies operate in a professional and industry-leading manner.

That includes the ACMO 2000 certification program.

G.S. Atkin Property Management Specialist Inc. first began in 1987. Steady growth has increased the company's portfolio from two condominium corporations to over 30, most of which are in the Mississauga area. Gary Atkin, RCM oversees the daily operations. His two sons, Matthew and Nathan, have joined the firm and help manage the company's condominium operations.

"Property management is our only business, therefore we can provide the necessary one-on-one attention required to manage and operate a condominium in today's environment," says Matthew Atkin, RCM. "We have invested heavily in automating our systems to assist in providing effective and efficient service."

Matthew acknowledged that becoming a Corporate member displays a company's commitment to excellence, employee education and knowledge, and the ability to give back to the industry. ACMO 2000 certification reinforces these same responsibilities.

"As we undergo the ACMO 2000 process, it allows us to pinpoint areas that require 'tightening;' it has also allowed us to view our company from an 'outside' third-party perspective," he adds. "In this way we can ensure that every level of our firm is operating as efficiently as possible. The ACMO 2000 process is also helpful in documenting all important tasks be they daily, weekly or monthly."

All management companies have a differentiator. For G.S. Atkin, the family-run company maintains an open line of communication with boards of directors and encourages feedback from property owners. "All managers are always aware that we not only manage a highly valuable asset, we also manage a very personal one – your home."

Matthew stated that being a small to mid-sized firm, finding the time to allocate to this project is often challenging but the commitment to achieving certification in 2010 is paramount.

"ACMO certification is a cost-effective way for property management firms to assess their internal processes so they can best meet the needs of their clients," says Matthew. He adds it's much more cost efficient for an industry group to build the certification process that all members can use, instead of each firm having to spend considerable funds to assess the effectiveness of the operations individually.

"Certification of this nature is important in a self-regulated industry. It gives current and potential clients of property management companies an important piece of information in understanding how their condo corporation is/will be managed." ■



The Atkins dynasty: Matthew, dad Gary and Nathan on the right at 1271 Walden Circle, Mississauga, Ontario – PCC#353 main entrance.