RETAIL R·I INSIDER

Odyssey Retail Advisors Expands into Canada with Veteran Team

By Craig Patterson | Date: September 30, 2025

Luxury brands at the Yorkdale Shopping Centre in Toronto. Photo: Craig Patterson

Odyssey Retail Advisors, the New York-based real estate advisory firm specializing in luxury and contemporary retail, is making its first official move into Canada with the addition of a high-profile team of industry veterans. The expansion, which includes three Executive Vice Presidents and a Director, signals the company's recognition of Canada as an important luxury and lifestyle retail market.

The new Canadian leadership team features Casdin Parr, David Bishop, and Ryan McCarthy as Executive Vice Presidents, alongside Lesia Czech as Director. Collectively, the four bring decades of experience representing some of the world's most recognized luxury and fashion brands, as well as advising Canadian landlords and developers on key leasing initiatives.

"This is a pivotal step in Odyssey's continued evolution as a global advisory platform," said Rich Johnson, Principal at Odyssey Retail Advisors. "Casdin, David, and Ryan are widely respected for their deep client relationships, market expertise, and strategic thinking. Their presence enhances our ability to support clients in one of the most important luxury markets in North America."

Building on Established Relationships

According to Johnson, the expansion into Canada was driven by long-standing relationships with trusted professionals. "Our expansion concept has always been driven by the people," he said. "It's about bringing together individuals who share our values and our culture. I've known Casdin for years, dating back to his Oxford Properties days, and we've relied on him as our go-to sounding board for anything Canadian."

The move also comes with credibility in the form of Bishop's unmatched transactional history and McCarthy's cross-country advisory experience. "David's reputation and experience is unparalleled, not only in Canada but also by many standards in the United States," Johnson noted.

The Canadian Team

Casdin Parr: Parr joins Odyssey with more than 17 years of experience advising luxury and lifestyle retailers. He most recently served as Executive Vice President of Retail Advisory Services at JLL, where he represented brands such as Canada Goose, Nike, Sandro, Vuori, Kering, Richemont, and Ralph Lauren. Earlier in his career, Parr spearheaded leasing for a leading North American retail destination, introducing nearly two dozen international brands into Canada.

"The opportunity to join Odyssey felt like a natural next step," said Parr. "The team has built a reputation for excellence and integrity that's aligned with how we've always done business. We're excited to bring that same level of insight and execution to clients navigating the Canadian retail market."

David Bishop: With more than three decades of experience and over 3,000 transactions completed, Bishop is widely respected in the industry. He has held senior roles at JLL, Meridian Retail Group, and Northwest Atlantic, and is known for long-term client relationships and deep market expertise.

Ryan McCarthy: McCarthy specializes in tenant representation for national and international retailers. Formerly Senior Vice President and Broker of Record at JLL, he advised brands across Canada's major markets and previously worked at Northwest Atlantic before its acquisition by JLL.

Lesia Czech: Czech brings a landlord-side perspective, having spent 15 years with Oxford Properties Group in property management and leasing. Most recently, she worked on Oxford's National Mixed-Use and Urban portfolio. Her transition to Odyssey adds depth to the firm's ability to balance landlord and tenant needs.

Canada as a Luxury Retail Market

For Odyssey, the Canadian retail landscape is particularly appealing because of its strength in luxury. Johnson emphasized that Canada's entry barriers are relatively low compared to other countries, which makes it a natural next step for global brands.

"Toronto can support at least two luxury doors for most brands, and Vancouver remains a very strong one- to two-door market," Johnson explained. "Montreal is more complex due to language requirements unless you are a French brand, but the overall opportunity remains significant."

He also pointed to the excitement surrounding Vancouver's Oakridge Park redevelopment and the recently completed Royalmount project in Montreal, both of which are drawing international attention.

Appetite for International Brands

Despite global market fluctuations, Parr observed that demand for retail space in Canada remains robust, particularly from international brands looking to enter the market.

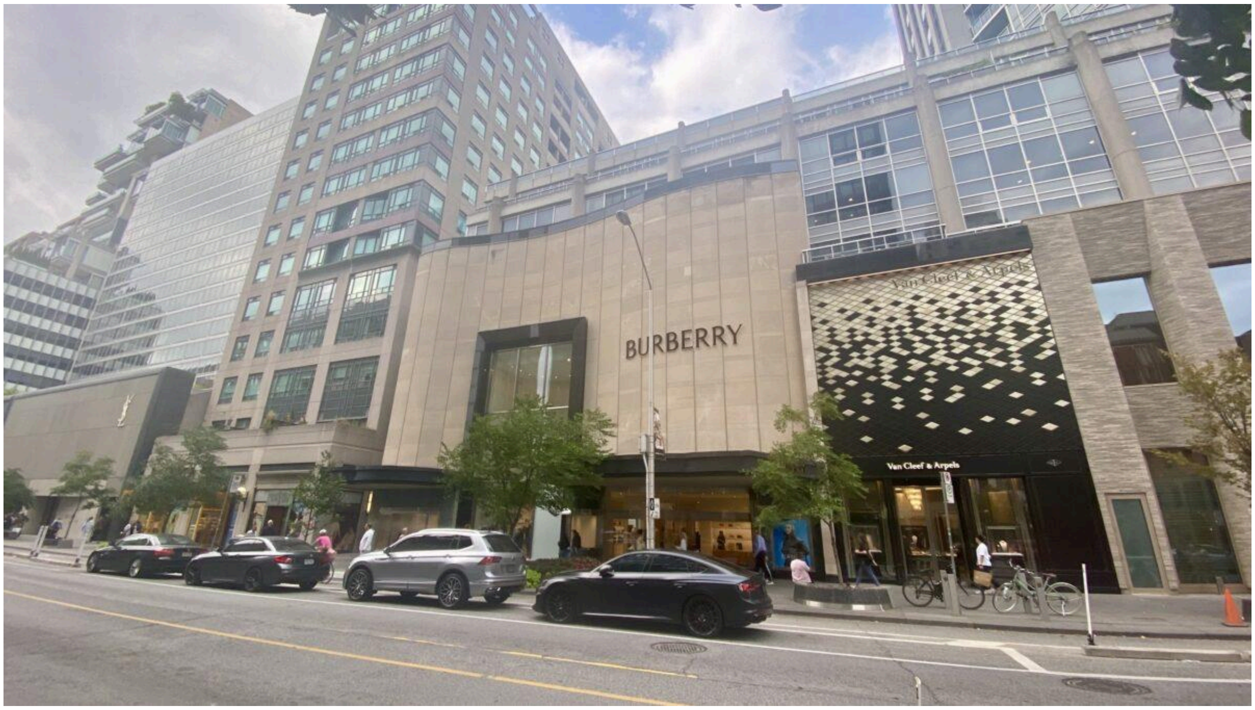
"There is still a strong appetite for new entrants into the Canadian marketplace," he said. "Inventory remains tight in the top retail corridors and shopping centres, much like in the United States. But every year, we typically see 15 to 20 international brands establishing themselves here, and I expect that to continue into 2026 and beyond."

Odyssey's presence in Canada will allow it to play a more direct role in facilitating these brand entries, providing both strategic advisement and transactional expertise.

A North American Network

Odyssey Retail Advisors has grown rapidly since its founding in 2019 by Johnson and Charlie Koniver, both former Kering executives, alongside Rick Strauss. In addition to its New York headquarters, the firm now has offices in Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and, with this latest move, Toronto. Each office is staffed with senior advisors who bring decades of local expertise.

The firm advises on a range of services including site identification, portfolio strategy, lease negotiations, and construction facilitation. In New York, Odyssey is actively involved in leasing Hudson Yards, while in Washington, D.C., it represents Heinz's City Center development. Its New York team has focused on high streets such as Madison Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and SoHo, where the company works with leading luxury and lifestyle landlords.



Represented by Odyssey Retail Advisors: 100 Bloor St W in Toronto. Photo: Craig Patterson

Balancing Advisory and Brokerage

While Odyssey provides brokerage services, Johnson stressed that the firm sees itself foremost as an advisor. “When we started the company, we built it around the kind of advisement we wished we had when we were on the client side,” he said. “It’s about delivering fully informed strategies so retailers can make the right decisions about where to open stores and how to grow.”

Parr echoed that sentiment: “It’s less about the size of the team and more about maintaining a bespoke level of service. Odyssey is structured to be nimble while providing the depth that clients expect.”

Industry Outlook

Both Parr and Johnson believe Canada’s retail market will continue to attract international attention. “Luxury brands are looking at Toronto and Vancouver very strongly, sometimes even before they consider U.S. cities like Washington, D.C.,” Johnson said. “Canada offers both a growing local luxury consumer base and relative ease of operations compared to other countries."

As Parr prepares to speak at the upcoming ICSC conference in Toronto, he underscored the optimism. "There's excitement across the board. For us, it's about joining like-minded, quality people and keeping clients at the centre of everything we do," he said.