

Associations as Social Media Powerhouses

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Don't be afraid of social media.

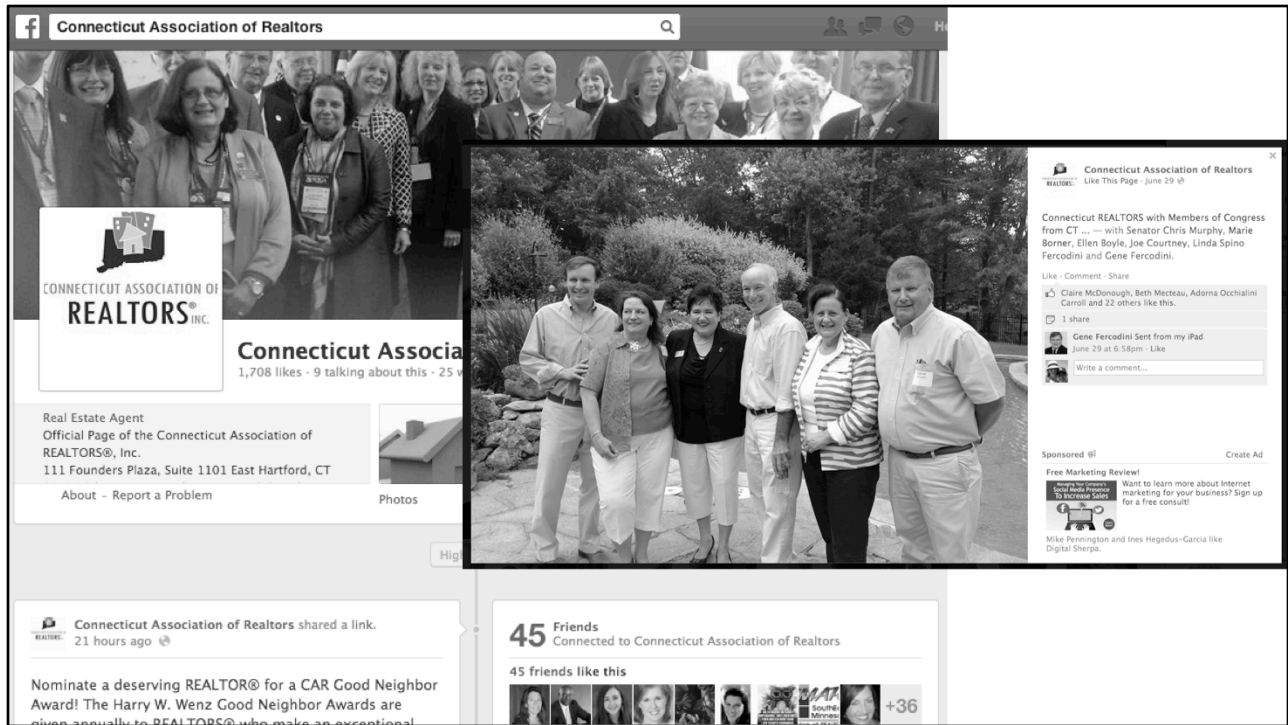
- Do monitor and be a strong administrator. Have a comments policy and enforce it.
- Do allow your members access to tag and interact. Some associations block permissions, meaning that no one can be tagged and posts can't go viral for a day.

DON'T be afraid of social media.

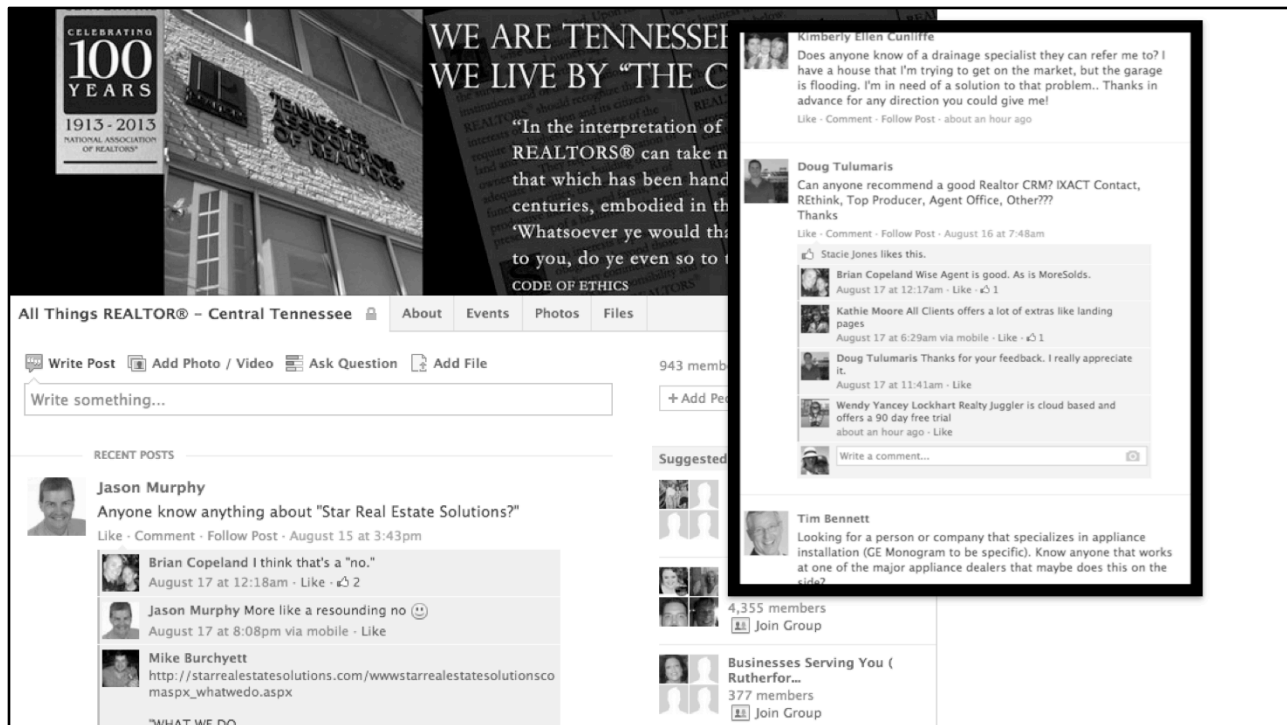
DO: Allow,
encourage &
monitor use.

Don't be afraid of social media.

- Do monitor and be a strong administrator. Have a comments policy and enforce it.
- Do allow your members access to tag and interact. Some associations block permissions, meaning that no one can be tagged and posts can't go viral for a day.



- Do encourage great photos. Use Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr to get the word out.
- Social media is often times the first line of connection to you and leadership – their first platform of involvement. Take advantage of it!



- Do encourage great photos. Use Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Flickr to get the word out.
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- Don't forget about groups! They're private and easily accessible via email, etc.

DON'T feed or enflame the trolls.

DO: Have an
ambassador.

- Don't be afraid of internet trolls. Don't enflame/feedthem.
- Do have an SM ambassador core to weigh in for trolls.



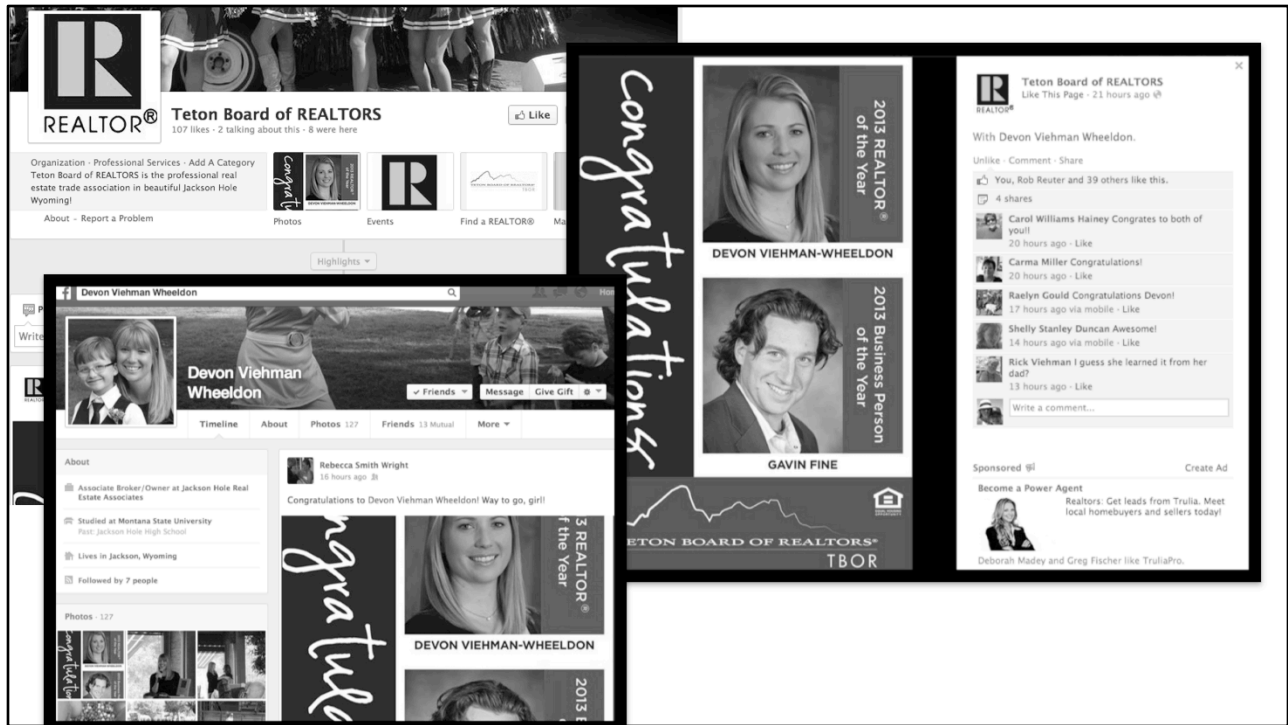
Leadership, or groups of leadership can help you attain exposure and awareness of issues, calls to action and special events. They're leaders, let them lead. Talk to them about their sphere of REALTOR influence. Make media part of their media training. Do consider your audience. You're the president and ambassador. Stop it with the REALTOR-speak. Prove value with every post – and don't be afraid to repeat them.

Don't run afoul of fundraising laws ...you can't post anything asking for RPAC donations on a public facing page, needs to be in member only closed communication channels (a vetted facebook group should be okay)

DON'T forget to enhance your marketing.

DO: Plan ahead.
Opportunity
abounds!

- Do post at proper times to get ultimate exposure on your items. Something about posting too much and using a strategy like don't post the call to action, a fundraiser, a membership meeting announcement all many important items at the same time. You'll want to budget the really "don't miss" items for prime time and save the "Oh look at this photo" for another off-time. (Utilize scheduling function of FB/Hootsuite to space your postings and conserve time spent in social) Facebook's new insights tells you what time of day your audience is engaging the most with you



- Encourage your members to share, like and comment...explaining how facebook works in the viral function.



Think, what will my members think when I post this? Think twice and ask permission before posting and tagging photos taken in a non-professional setting.

DON'T discount social media as connector.

DO: Interact &
connect with
members.

Do foster interaction...for example, posting a video with no customized title may just sit there. However, when you edit the name to "Nashville REALTORS sweating for a good cause," pick the best thumbnail and then share it with the comment "Our members built our 15th Habitat for Humanity house this week. What's the best way for us to thank them?" you'll get more interaction. It's all about content online and on social... the "What's in it for me?" question applies here

National Association of REALTORS®
 Do you utilize video for your listings? Here's some examples from agents that are having success while doing it their own way:

Dare to be Different With Video
 Video is becoming commonplace in real estate marketing, but the content is what makes you stand out.

BY GRAHAM WOOD | REALTOR

about a week ago · Washington, DC

Like Comment Share

Dana Plunkett, Cheryl Leighton Knowlton and 198 others

Write a comment...

Kendyl Young Wow!!! Very honored. As a side note, this listing received several offers and many of the potential buyers were quite emotionally connected to the home. The sellers are very happy with the results.
 August 13 at 8:52am · Like · 6 · Reply

2 Replies

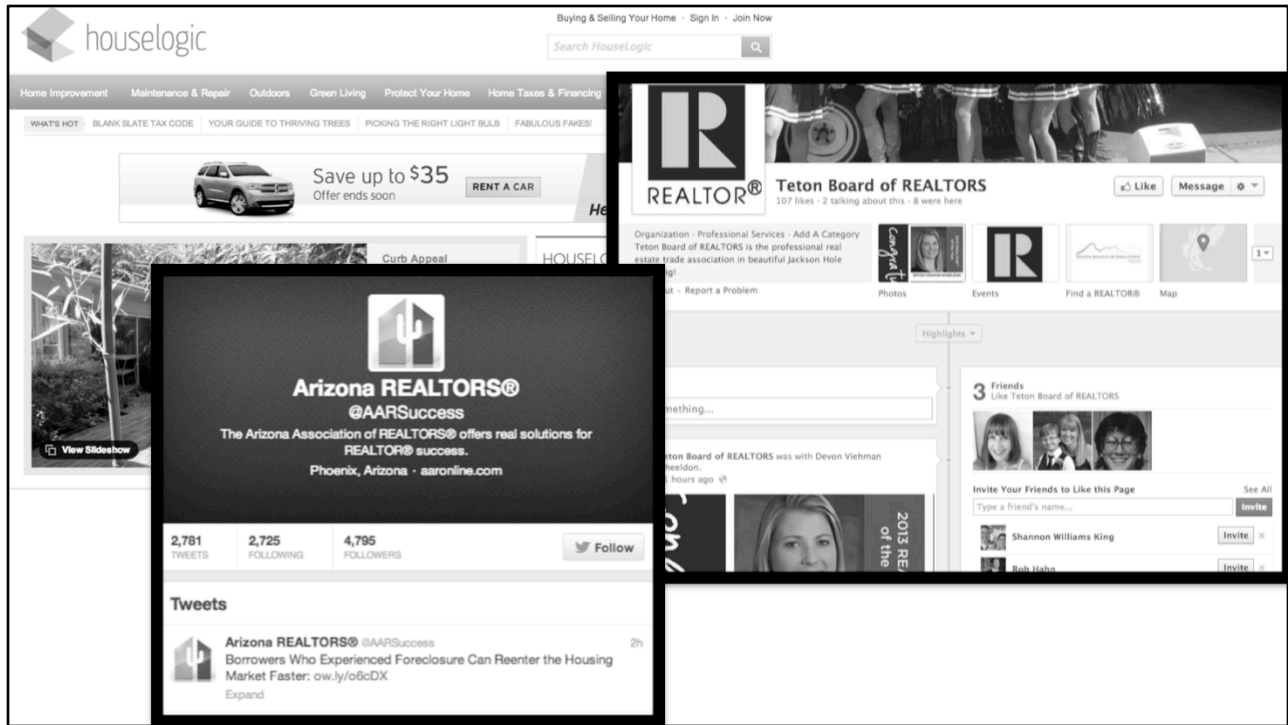
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 August 13 at 8:49am · Like · 1 · Reply

Heather Elias cc: Kendyl Young
 August 13 at 8:31am · Like · 1 · Reply

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Where human connections and usable/actionable content meet is usually on social media. Make it valuable, human and fun!



Don't discount what you're already doing that is value to your members. Stop keeping it all a secret.



Social Media Policy and Guidelines for National Association of REALTORS® Staff

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Introduction

Social networks are accessible by anyone from anywhere. Your posts and comments are easy for people to find – and use in ways detrimental to you and NAR – if they want to. The Social Media Team has put together these guidelines to assist NAR staff in engaging in social media. If these best practices are followed, then you will be able to meaningfully and effectively communicate with others using social media in a way that benefits you and NAR. If you have any questions regarding these guidelines or how to apply them when participating in social media channels in a personal or professional capacity, please contact a member of the Social Media Team.

Any association staff member engaging in online, electronic dialogue as a delegate of the organization is required to comply with the guidelines in this document. These guidelines will also help you follow the established social media policy in the NAR Employee Handbook, included here for your reference:

1 NAR's HR Social Media Policy

The Association respects your right to interact and communicate about non-work related matters using the Internet. In order to protect the Association from the posting of comments and information that may have a harmful effect on its reputation and/or its employees, we have developed the following policy. For the purpose of this policy, “engaging in social media” means posting or uploading content to all types of interactive electronic communications including but not limited to websites, blogs, social networks, discussion boards, and listservs.

Limited and occasional use of Association's systems to engage in non-work related internet use is acceptable during your personal time at work (for example, during lunch, during a break) if it does not otherwise violate the Association's policies, is not detrimental to the Association, and does not interfere with your regular work duties. You may not use your Association-issued email address to engage in non-work related social media communication.

The Association respects your right under applicable federal, state and local laws to communicate with others about the terms and conditions of your employment. In communicating via electronic or other means, you must make it clear to the readers that the views expressed are yours alone and that statements, opinions, and beliefs do not reflect the views of the Association.

Do not involve yourself in any legal, public, or political dispute between members, or between associations and members. Remain neutral and avoid making any statement that can be viewed as preference to one member/association over another.

Furthermore, when engaging in social media, be vigilant to ensure that you do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the Association or to any third party that has disclosed information to us. This includes the use of Association trademarks or material.

The Association reserves the right to monitor social media channels and platforms. Employees, who engage in social media, whether for personal or work related reasons, and whether or not they are using Association systems, should not expect their comments to be private. The Association will take appropriate disciplinary action if it discovers that an employee is using social media to communicate confidential, proprietary, untruthful, derogatory or other information that is harmful to the Association, its employees or its clients, unless the communication in questions is protected by the federal, state or local law.

2 NAR's Social Business Strategy

Over the last few years, NAR has encouraged social media experimentation from many internal stakeholders. We adopted a long-tail philosophy in our social media work and let a thousand flowers bloom. Now, it's time to focus our efforts on greater collaboration across our social media channels to make our social media more coordinated, purposeful and beneficial to members and to the organization.

The journey to becoming a social business is complex and takes time. It will require rethinking of how we interact with our members across all our departments and how we define member involvement. Up to now, we've been satisfied with our membership playing a relatively passive role in our social media efforts. Starting now, we will focus on making members active, engaged participants.

In 2012 we're moving from a social media strategy to a social business strategy, with the following strategic objectives:

- Turn monologue into dialogue with our members and build deeper relationships.
- Reach more members with our information – when and where it's relevant to them.
- Join and influence existing conversations about NAR and about issues REALTORS® care about.
- Empower members to connect with each other around common interests.
- Empower members to effectively and efficiently use NAR resources to connect with consumers.

- Enable frictionless sharing of NAR content so that members can keep their followers informed with very little effort.
- Leverage social media channels as another way to gather member input on NAR initiatives, policy positions, products and services and make better-informed decisions within the organization.
- Coordinate with industry thought leaders and association executives from local and state associations to expand our reach and effectiveness.

Staff will be trained so that all departments can collaborate effectively across all NAR social media channels. The social media team will help staff develop social media strategies specific to their department to complement their existing communications strategies.

3 Global Guidelines

These general best practices apply to association staff members' participation in most social media platforms. ***Please refer to NAR's HR Social Media Policy for more details – included on Page 3***

3.1 Perception is reality: Online you are always an NAR employee.

- Personal expression: When you participate in social media, you are likely to find your personal and professional lives becoming more integrated online. While it's perfectly fine to express your personal beliefs, be aware that your participation in social media is visible to the association's membership.
- Be clear: When speaking about issues relating to the association (real estate, property rights, interest rate tax deductions, etc.) ***it's important to specifically state that any personal opinions you express may not be the same as those of your employer.***
- Be transparent: Even when stating your own personal opinion, reveal that you work for a REALTOR® association before commenting on real estate issues.
- Write a personal opinion disclaimer in the bio of your social network profiles. An example: "I'm the xxxx for the National Association of REALTORS, and these are my personal opinions."
- Don't say or do anything online you wouldn't do face to face. Every social media channel has privacy settings; please take the time to adjust them to your preferred level of "transparency."

3.2 Participating in social media on the association's behalf

- Know the association's positions: When speaking for the association on industry-related topics, it is your responsibility to be familiar with the association's position. ***If you are unfamiliar with that topic, it is up to you to find a more qualified person to speak, or to state that this is not within your area of expertise.***
- Do not involve yourself in disputes: In a legal, public or political dispute between members, or between associations and members, your job is to remain neutral. Avoid making any statement that can be viewed as preference to one member/association over another.
- If you comment on the association's behalf in social media channels, please notify your manager and Director of Social Business Practice, Heather Elias, in a timely fashion, and include a link to the comment thread.
- Before publishing a picture, tagging, photo/geotagging, tweeting, "checking in" via location of a member, association employee, or anyone with a professional relationship with the association in a non-professional setting, ask for their permission. Don't post photos showing people drinking or in exotic locales because it may send an unintended and unwanted message to viewers.
- Behave as a member of the REALTOR® Party: In order to serve members' interests, the association works with elected officials from both major political parties who support issues important to REALTORS. Please remember that the REALTOR Party comes first.

4 Blog/Website Guidelines

4.1 Creating a new blog/website for NAR

Before a new blog or website can launch at NAR, it must be approved by the NAR Social Media Team. Before approval, the team will want to know the answers to the following questions, so it will be helpful if you consider them in advance of your request:

- Is a new blog the best place to share these messages?
- What is the theme of the blog?
- Who is the audience?
- What are the topics?
- Is there enough material for the long term? A blog requires 3-5 posts per week, or 150-250 unique posts per year.

4.2 Managing your NAR blog/website

- **Respect copyright:** Use caution when publishing text, pictures, video, or other content that was not created by the Association. Almost all written content is protected by copyright laws and requires third parties to obtain a permission or license from the content's author prior to using it in any manner.
- **Creative Commons:** In most cases, content created under a Creative Commons license is still protected from commercial use. Association staff members shouldn't republish Creative Commons content unless that content is specifically licensed for commercial use.
- **Linking vs. republishing:** Whenever possible, link to content elsewhere on the Web instead of republishing it. Excerpt or quote whenever possible with a link back to the original materials.

The association encourages meaningful exchange on its blogs/websites on issues involving REALTORS® and real estate. All comments are published unless they violate the NAR Comments Policy. You will be responsible for ensuring that all comments adhere to the following NAR Blog Comment Policy:

NAR Comments Policy: *add to all NAR approved websites and blogs*

This blog/website is provided by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. NAR disclaims responsibility for any of the content or opinions expressed on this blog, including, but not limited to content or opinions regarding any products or service mentioned on the blog.

NAR disclaims liability for any damages or losses - direct or indirect - that may result from use of or reliance on information contained in the blog.

This blog may contain links to other Web sites operated by third parties. These links are provided as a convenience to access the information contained therein. NAR has not reviewed all of the information on other sites and disclaims any responsibility for the content of any other sites or the products or services that may be offered on or through those sites. Inclusion of a link to another site does not indicate any endorsement or approval of the site or its content.

NAR reserves the right to edit, remove or deny access to individuals or content that it determines to be unacceptable, including, but not limited to, any abusive, profane, rude, defamatory, or anonymous comments. NAR reserves the right to reproduce blog posts and comments in other of its online and print communication mediums, including, without limitation, REALTOR® Magazine. Comments or blog posts that are published elsewhere may be edited for space and clarity to fit stylistically with the other medium.

Moderators reserve the right to delete comments that:

- *contain language that we consider offensive or inappropriate*
- *are not relevant to the post they are responding to*
- *are purely commercial endorsements, including spam*
- *infringe the trademarks or copyrights of NAR or any third parties*

By submitting your comment to any blog/website published by NAR, you are granting NAR a perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free license and right to use and/or display your comment at its discretion and in any medium now existing or hereafter created. Comments to NAR blogs/websites must be approved by the site's owner before being posted, to ensure that they comply with the above guidelines. We post approved comments within two business days. If you include links in your comment, please include the full URL. And please limit your comment to 1,000 characters. We regret that we cannot respond personally to each comment.

4.3. How to blog effectively

Know your audience.

Be sure your content is relevant to the audience you're trying to reach. Write clear headlines. The headline should pull readers in; write so the headline makes sense out of context; many will see only the headline in a reader through syndication and will need to click through to read the full post.

Be interesting.

Write blog posts in a conversational voice. Don't sound unprofessional, but there is no need to adopt the sometimes formal tone of a news release or article. Blog posts express observations, share experiences, and point readers to interesting information. One goal of a blog post is to start a conversation with readers, so feel free to invite comments or ask questions.

Be wise.

Whether you're posting personally or professionally, don't write anything in a blog post or comment that you wouldn't want published with your name or the Association's in the *New York Times*.

Link intelligently.

Credit the original author(s) of the material. Provide a description of where the link will take the reader, and link to the exact page that you are referring to in your post.

- Tip: Don't link to content that readers can't access without paying a subscription fee, or that the user must register to access. If you do link to password-protected content, explain what to expect if they click on the link.

Add depth with multimedia.

Consider including videos, images, or other non-text content. Keep in mind that more readers will click on links with thumbnail images than links without them.

Follow the NAR code of conduct.

Be sure your blog posts and comments conform to the code of conduct stated in NAR's employee handbook.

4.4 How to comment on other blogs/websites

Identify yourself and who you speak for.

When posting on a real estate industry blog, identify yourself and your relationship with the association. If you post a personal opinion on a real estate industry blog, please state that the opinions expressed in the post are your own and may not necessarily reflect NAR's views – *whether or not your opinion is consistent with the association's position on that issue.*

Be present.

Joining a conversation isn't something to pop in and out of. If you're making the commitment to participate, be ready to stay in there.

Make sure social media participation does not interfere with your other job responsibilities.

If participating in social media is not related to or part of your work as an association employee, be sure to get approval from your manager to spend time reading and participating in social media during normal business hours.

5 Facebook Guidelines

5.1 Why do our members use Facebook?

It's estimated that more than half of all Facebook users visit the site at least twice a day. It's important to understand, though, that our members aren't visiting Facebook with the intention of seeing what's new with the association. Members are on Facebook to:

- Engage with and grow their sphere of influence on a personal and professional level.
- Interact with family members and friends.
- Demonstrate expertise and promote their business to stay top of mind by sharing relevant content.

5.2 How members use Facebook

The most common method for sharing information is to post content to a group, business page, or profile wall. Wall posts are syndicated into every following

member's timeline. When a member logs into Facebook, the most recent wall posts from the groups, fan pages, and friends they follow are displayed in reverse chronological order. Because of this, content that is even a few hours old will be pushed off the front page of this timeline by more current content.

5.3 Profiles, Pages, and Groups

Because so many members are active on the site, it's an excellent tool for NAR to listen, engage in conversation and exchange or share information. Facebook offers three types of presences. Each is best for meeting specific goals.

Profiles

Profiles are intended for individual people. As explained by Facebook:

It's important to understand the difference between your personal account and your Facebook Page. Your personal account is the regular user account that you log into when you sign in to Facebook, and this is the account you use to manage your Facebook Page. Your personal account profile is separate from your Facebook Page. When you edit your personal account profile or add content to it, these changes will not be reflected on your Facebook Page. Likewise, when you edit your Facebook Page, these changes will not be reflected in your personal account or your personal account profile.

Any member of the association who will administrate or contribute to a Facebook group or page needs to set up their own personal account, or use the one they already have. You can adjust your privacy settings if you do not want to share your personal page with members.

Business Pages

Facebook created Business Pages, or "Facebook Pages" so that businesses, organizations and associations could have a recognizable presence on Facebook. A page must be administered by at least one personal profile. Associations are encouraged to create a Facebook page to share information and interact with their members.

Only an official representative of an organization is permitted to create a Facebook page. Anyone can "Like" these public-facing pages. This means that both members and nonmembers will have access to the content on the page.

Groups

Facebook groups are designed to give users a designated space for interaction, discussion and information sharing. Unlike pages, groups can be open (all Facebook interactions are public), closed (only group members can see content/interactions) or secret (only group members know the group even exists). An administrator can

choose to offer access to the group by invitation only. The administrator can also send all-member messages to the group, but so can every other member, if allowed.

How to choose whether to set up a Facebook group or page

Pages are generally better for the association to publicly broadcast information to its members. Basically, anything that might reside on the association's website is best suited to be delivered in a page. Groups are better for creating smaller discussions among members organized around a business specialty or niche. For instance any sort of committee, designation, certification or work group where sensitive information could be shared, would best benefit by communicating through a group. Consult with the NAR Social Media Team for guidance.

5.4 Managing your NAR Facebook Page

NAR Standard Description and Information For all Facebook Pages:

General Description:

The National Association of REALTORS® Facebook page is a place for NAR staff to interact with members, consumers, the media, and other key constituencies, and share information about real estate and the association. Content from some of our other, topic-specific Facebook pages is sometimes shared here, as well, and we hope you find that helpful.

NAR respects the rights of individuals using social media to voice their views and opinions. However, within our social media channels, we reserve the right to remove comments that are considered inappropriate, off-topic, abusive, or are being used to promote and solicit for third-party sites, initiatives or products.

We encourage your feedback! Please keep comments related to the topics presented and always show respect for other members of this community. We monitor this space actively to facilitate dialogue and to enforce our social media policies.

General Information:

The information provided on this page is for educational and informational purposes only. The information should not be construed as a recommendation by NAR for any course of action regarding financial, legal or accounting matters. It is not meant as a substitute for professional advice from a qualified legal, accounting or financial professional.

NAR does not represent, warrant or endorse the accuracy or reliability of any information displayed, uploaded, downloaded or distributed through this page by any user, or any other person or entity. NAR disclaims liability for any damages or losses, direct or indirect, that may result from use of or reliance on information contained on the page.

Think communication first, marketing second.

Always remember that Facebook is opt-in, meaning that any member who “Likes” your page or joins your group subscribes to these presences voluntarily. Because of this, content published on Facebook must be useful to your audience.

Content ideas for publication on Facebook

- Events: Any conference, training, luncheon, or related event hosted by the association can take advantage of the events feature in Facebook.
- News: News from the association or links to news that affects members can easily be posted to a page wall.
- Pictures: Pictures of members attending past events are a great way to leverage Facebook’s photo tools.
- Conversations: Done responsibly, it’s ok to engage your audience with questions or observations.
- Rich media: Video, pictures of members and association functions.
- Events: Upcoming events including social events, education, and online events like webinars.
- News: Or links to news that members may find value in.
- Updates: About the association itself.

Think “marketing” here. Write compelling headlines and content to draw members into your conversations. Don’t share items without some text explaining context.

6 Twitter Guidelines

Twitter’s forced brevity is the key to its success. Its 140-character limit on each communication forces users to keep announcements and conversations short and simple. @’s, DM’s (Direct Messages), hashtags and RT’s (retweets) are the primary engagement methods. Twitter takes significant dedication and commitment from a manager; consult the NAR Social Media team for guidance

6.1 Follow and be followed. Twitter is opt-in.

- Communication on Twitter is not necessarily reciprocal. When one member of Twitter finds value in another member’s posts, they choose to subscribe to that member by following them. That member may choose to follow them back, or may not. Each member’s Twitter page links to a list of the members they follow, and of those that follow that member.
- If your intention is to use a Twitter account as a channel purely to broadcast information, then don’t follow back. If you plan to use the channel for two-way communication, then make it a point to follow those you hope to communicate with.

6.2 Twitter is a river of information

- Most Twitter users only look at the conversations happening in the last few minutes.
- Most followers will only see posts made by the association if they happen to tune into Twitter at about the same time as the association posts.
- Be prepared to post several times a day in order to reach a significant portion of your followers.
- Accounts require an ongoing commitment to both post and listen to the conversations happening in the accounts network of followers.

6.3 Using Twitter for NAR purposes.

Be transparent.

- As stated in the Global Guidelines write a personal opinion disclaimer, an example: “I’m the xxxxx for the National Association of REALTORS, and these are my personal opinions.”

Set expectations.

- Members will find your personal accounts, but don’t let that discourage you from keeping that account personal. Be consistent in how you use your personal account to set expectations for the members who choose to follow you.
- If you only speak about business on the account and use an avatar that is very professional, then members will have an expectation that you will always be professional. If they discover your account populated with casual and personal information, their expectation will be that this is your personal account where you sometimes talk about business.

6.4 Managing an NAR Twitter account

Assigning a manager

- At least one person and their immediate supervisor need to take responsibility administering the account. This includes storage of the password and account information, determining a content strategy, and monitoring incoming communications from followers.
- An ascension and contingency plan needs to be created for times when the primary administrator is out of the office, or leaves the association.

Building a team of contributors

- Determine who will contribute tweets to the account and how.
- Will they email them to the administrator?
- Will they have full access to the account?
- Determine a posting schedule if necessary, or a schedule for monitoring communications to the Twitter account.

7 LinkedIn, YouTube, and any other social media platform.

- YouTube: NAR video content is currently being migrated from BrightCove to YouTube. Global Guideline changes will be provided upon completion.
- LinkedIn: As of this writing, NAR has a substantial LinkedIn presence, but the platform is undergoing major infrastructure change. Global Guidelines changes will be provided after they are complete. Please consult with the NAR Social Media Team with any ideas for subgroups for review.
- All other social media platforms: Please consult with the NAR Social Media Team with actionable items and ideas for review.

8 Sharing information through NAR's primary social media channels

Utilize the JIRA system to submit items for posting to the main REALTOR Facebook page and @Realtors twitter account. With the Social Media Team, the REALTOR.org staff is responsible for content posted to those channels and may edit or revise wording, length of posting, and links. While the REALTOR.org team oversees the posting of items on Facebook, each requester is responsible for monitoring comments for the content they submit (or assigning it to a subject matter expert in their department). The monitoring commitment may include:

- clarifying factual inaccuracies with correct information
- answering questions generated by members
- pointing to online resources that provide additional details about a particular topic
- encouraging fans to stay on topic if a conversation veers off course

NAR's Social Media Team will provide training assistance to departments, as needed, in how to handle these situations as a representative of NAR.