

**National Association of REALTORS®
2014 NAR Commercial Innovation Grant
Executive Summary**

Innovation Name: Commercial Resource Tool

Association Name: The Texas Association of REALTORS® (TAR)

Contact Person: Kinski Moss

1. Project Summary (purpose and concept)

a. Statement of purpose

The Texas Association of REALTORS® Commercial Resource Tool (the “Resource Tool”) is a combination of a mobile application and a mobile website, compatible with Android and iOS platforms. The Resource Tool has enhanced the membership value and experience for our commercial members by allowing them to access all of TAR’s commercially-related resources in one place.

b. Original Goals

Previously, our commercial members did not utilize all of the many resources available to them because they were required to navigate around a large amount of non-commercial resources found on our state website. This Resource Tool acts as a one-stop shop with several categories specific to Commercial members. These categories include the following: (1) the Commercial Home Page; (2) the Legal Hotline; (3) the Commercial Forum; (4) Commercial Benefits; (5) Commercial Webinars; (6) the Commercial Update (our monthly newsletter); (7) Commercial Forms; (8) the TAR Commercial Committee Page; (9) Policies and Manuals; (10) NAR: Commercial Search™; (11) Commercial Connections; (12) the Source blog; and (13) RPR® Commercial.

c. Objectives

The Resource Tool will continue to increase engagement in programs and services because our commercial members will be able to locate commercial-related resources effortlessly and quickly. It will allow our commercial members to connect more

often because they can now access these resources on any mobile device, such as a phone or tablet.

The Resource Tool will elevate the exposure and expertise of our commercial members and the association in the real estate market and community because the TAR Commercial resources will be available to them anywhere, anytime. Commercial members will be able to access tools “on the fly,” whether during an initial property walk-through, a networking session, or a negotiation.

d. Success criteria

The measure of success for the Resource Tool will continue to be based upon the amount of traffic it generates and the increased engagement of our commercial members. The Resource Tool will allow commercial members to be more informed about commercial-specific resources, benefits, and events, and the app software will generate reports creating an easy way to track how much it is used. As a result, we will be able to measure an increased participation level from the commercial resources being more readily available.

2. Project Financials

a. Project Budget Overview

Budget:

The costs were based on a bid from our IT Department. We expected to spend \$7,500.00 to develop a fully responsive app/website to allow for optimal design and functionality.

b. Income (fees, grant, etc)

The Texas Association of REALTORS® covered \$2,500.00 of the cost of the Resource Tool, with the remainder provided by the grant.

c. Expenses (how was money spent?)

Expenses were divided between costs for purchasing the software necessary to create/launch app and internal and outsourced programming time.

3. Performance Measures & Benchmarks (i.e. how many attended your event, how many used your product or outcomes from your meeting)

a. To what level of success was achieved?

The project created a tool that reduces confusion and saves time for our members. Real estate is a highly time-dependent business, and commercial practitioners are likely to be working away from their offices in places where a computer set-up may not be available. By creating one “go-to” icon for their mobile devices, the Resource Tool gives faster and easier access to all benefits available to Texas Commercial REALTORS and makes it more likely they will use them.

4. Project Timeline (how long did it take)

The initial meetings with the TAR IT Department to discuss the possibilities of the Resource Tool began in January of 2014. Over a series of three meetings, staff and commercial committee leadership honed their ideas of what the Tool would consist of and IT researched platforms and other technical specifications. In May, a beta site was launched for a select number of commercial members to explore and give feedback on. The full app launched in August.

5. Project Management

a. Marketing Strategy

The app was advertised in a series of posts in the TAR commercial newsletter and a full demonstration was provided during the annual meeting in September.

b. Planning Meetings

Planning meetings took place mostly early in development, as the parameters of the project were sketched out.

c. Day-to-Day Project Management

Once the build and development of the project was fully in the hands of the IT Department, little day-to-day oversight was necessary. Staff were apprised of progress semi-regularly, with updates on approximate beta and launch dates.

6. Lessons Learned/Outcomes

a. Who Benefitted From Your Project?

Any member of TAR can use the Commercial Resource Tool. It is available in both Apple and Google stores, and is now a standard membership benefit. However, it remains most useful for our commercial members.

b. Project Highlights

The “brainstorming” sessions with the TAR Commercial Committee members were a great opportunity for Association staff to hear about their day-to-day challenges and needs.

c. Project Best Practices

Beta testing with a select group of users provided invaluable information before the launch.

d. What processes worked well

Delegation to strengths: conceptual and value areas tasked to staff; technical research and development to IT.

e. What could have been improved, and how?

Future improvements to the Resource Tool could include calculator/conversion functions for interest rates, property measurements, etc.

f. Advice/Comments for Implementing in Another Association

Be sure to bring IT staff in relatively early on the project to avoid creating a wish list of features that are impossible or conflict with already-existing Association technology.

7. Supporting Documents

Please see attached screenshots.



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August 15, 2014



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