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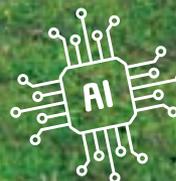
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## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES?

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**TX** TEXAS REALTORS



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### Texas Homesellers: Who They Are and What They Want

Discover what sellers say are their top reasons for selling, what they were looking for in an agent, and how they connected with their real estate professional.





## Chairman's message

Summer is my favorite time of year. The weather is nice and clients have less stress with kids being on summer break. We get so focused on the busy real estate season, though, that it's easy to overlook an important task that literally can change the way we all do business in the future.

### **SIMPLY PUT, TEXAS REALTORS® NEEDS YOU. YES, YOU!**

Each year, REALTORS® just like you step up to serve on committees the following year. We need your input to help ensure our association's future success.

When reviewing applications, the Leadership Team works to create committees made up of diverse voices and experiences. We have a goal to get representation from every corner of Texas. So we need you to step up from Dalhart to Galveston and El Paso to Lufkin and everywhere in between. What happens in your local area helps shape our association's initiatives.

We also look at your specialties and expertise. When you fill out your profile on [texasrealestate.com](https://texasrealestate.com) (yes, we look at that info), be sure to add what you specialize in and any valuable experience you have. Do you know a lot about property management? What about commercial or ranch real estate? Do you own an insurance company, too? Knowing these things helps us put the right people on the right committees. This ensures those committees have meaningful dialogue and can fulfill the association's strategic plan.

Bonus tip: When you complete or update your profile on [texasrealestate.com](https://texasrealestate.com), upload a current picture. We receive nearly 1,000 applications each year, so a current photo helps us remember if we've met you at a Texas REALTORS® meeting or recognize you at a future event.

You can apply for up to three committees, so put what you want most as your first option! We do our best to match everyone's first choice, but it's not always

possible, so make sure you pick a second and third option, too.

Final tip: Tell your local association what you're applying for. Local associations help by sending us a list of their members who want to get involved. (Local staff: please send details about all the people on your list, including how each member was involved at your local association. It helps us know about great local volunteers at your association who you think can

## Make a difference in your industry

Choose among 24 committees covering a variety of real estate specialties. Volunteers will find out their 2025 committee positions in September and start serving in December.

While helping your fellow Texas REALTORS®, you also gain new insights, improve your business skills, and enjoy networking opportunities through volunteering.

Committee applications are open through June 28. Visit [texasrealestate.com/countmein](https://texasrealestate.com/countmein) and apply today!



make important contributions on state committees.)

Your Texas REALTORS® Leadership Team can guarantee two things about the committee application process: 1) If you apply for a committee, you will be placed on a committee for next year; 2) If you do not apply, we will not place you on a committee. It's that simple!

Applications for 2025 Texas REALTORS® Committees are open through June 28. Go to [texasrealestate.com/countmein](https://texasrealestate.com/countmein) and apply today!

## Members Elected to Fill Regional Vice President Vacancies

Congratulations to the following members elected to serve as regional vice presidents for Texas REALTORS®:

**2024 Regional Vice President** (Effective immediately through November 30, 2024)

- Region 14: Susan Annoura, Houston (1)

**2025 Regional Vice Presidents** (December 1, 2024 through November 30, 2026)

- Region 4: Shana Acquistio, Collin County (2)
- Region 11: Adrian Arriaga, Greater McAllen (3)
- Region 14: Susan Annoura, Houston
- Region 14: Indra Mouton, Houston (4)

Installation for incoming 2025-2026 regional vice presidents will take place at the 2024 Shaping Texas Conference in Grapevine.



Leigh York, of Fort Worth, has been named to serve as NAR's Liaison to MLS & Data Management in 2025. Liaisons are appointed by the NAR president and serve as a conduit for communication between the Leadership Team and assigned committees, help committees operate effectively, and help identify future committee leaders.



## New login process comes to [texasrealestate.com](https://texasrealestate.com)

Now when you log in to the Texas REALTORS® member website, you will be required to enter the same username and password you use for [nar.realtor](https://nar.realtor). This system allows information syncing to improve data reliability and for Texas REALTORS® to provide better service to its members online.

## THE LATEST ON THE COMMISSION-LAWSUIT SETTLEMENT

NAR has adopted several MLS policy changes to comply with the settlement agreement related to the broker-commissions lawsuits. The new MLS policies are effective on August 17. Although MLSs have an additional 30 days to implement the changes under the terms of the settlement, NAR recommends that MLSs also make the required changes by the August 17 deadline.

Key changes:

- MLS participants, subscribers, and sellers are prohibited from making offers of compensation in the MLS to buyer brokers or other buyer representatives. Offers of compensation are permitted off the MLS.
- All broker compensation fields and compensation information must be eliminated from the MLS.
- MLSs cannot create, facilitate, or support any non-MLS mechanism for making offers of compensation to buyer brokers or buyer representatives.
- MLS data or data feeds cannot be used to directly or indirectly establish or maintain a platform of offers of compensation from multiple brokers or other buyer representatives.
- Certain disclosures regarding compensation must be made to sellers and buyers.
- MLS participants working with a buyer must enter into a written agreement with the buyer prior to touring a home.

Texas REALTORS® has created a forms task force to review the association's current forms and propose new and revised forms based on the policy changes. This will include client representation agreements and other agreements that allow brokers to secure their compensation. The new and updated forms will be available by the August 17 deadline.

Texas REALTORS® is also working closely with TREC, providing input to the Broker-Lawyer Committee regarding any TREC forms that may be impacted.

Visit [texasrealestate.com/lawsuit](https://texasrealestate.com/lawsuit) for additional information.





## SMALL TALK BRINGS BIG BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Think of all the people you encounter during an average week. Potential clients could be anywhere. You could have walked past a homebuyer this morning. A prospective seller could be standing next to you right now! You'll never know unless you strike up conversations with the people around you.

Small talk doesn't have to be difficult. Here are a few ways to start and develop a conversation with a stranger.

### Know your purpose

Small talk isn't an elevator pitch. You are chatting to increase your number of contacts, which should increase your odds of finding a new client. Your primary goal is to communicate. If you find an immediate business opportunity, that's a bonus.

### Read the cues

Before you start chatting, take a moment to determine if an interruption would be unwelcome. Is this person concentrating on something? Wearing headphones? Speaking with someone else? If so, don't bother.

### Look for clues

A person dressed in gear from a college or pro team may be interested in talking sports. Someone using the latest technology might enjoy discussing that product's features.

### Comment on what's happening

An easy way to start chatting is to weigh in on a shared experience. There's a reason everyone talks about the weather. Other openers to consider: "Do you know what kind of tree this is?" or "Wow, this line is moving slowly!"

### Ask an opinion question

Many people love sharing their thoughts. "What are your favorite places to eat around here?" or "What are the best things to do in this area?" can jumpstart a conversation. People may also enjoy weighing in on a low-stakes difference of opinion: "What's your take on this situation?"

### Compliment or ask about something visible

Most people will happily tell you about the meaning of their tattoos or where they bought their glasses. Pet owners enjoy discussing their four-legged companions.

### Keep other people's small talk going

There are a lot of extroverts out there. You may not need to work too hard to start a conversation. Whether you asked the first question or someone starts a conversation with you, keep it going by asking open-ended questions and finding connected topics or anecdotes.

### Don't mention real estate too quickly

Your new acquaintance may be put off if it seems like you're only chatting to get business. Many conversations eventually get to "What do you do for a living?" Wait until then or a comment directly related to real estate to talk about your business.

### Be ready if the conversation *does* get to real estate

Though you don't want to force it, know how you will respond if the other person brings up real estate. Have a casual response ready that clearly states how you might be able to help and a way for that person to contact you if interested.

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## BROKERS: DO YOU HAVE AN ONBOARDING CHECKLIST?

Congratulations on welcoming a new agent to the team! You want to make sure this person has the tools to succeed in your brokerage. If you don't have an onboarding checklist for your firm, consider creating one. Having a checklist standardizes the onboarding process and lowers the risk of missing a step. Having one can also help you delegate tasks; your firm isn't relying on you every time someone signs up. Here are some items to consider:

### Confirm licensing and training

Make sure your new agent is up to date on licensing and relevant training. Keep a database or file to note when each agent's credentials expire. If you require the agent to complete any courses, have a system in place to keep track of when the agent has completed them.

### Discuss rules and paperwork

Do you have your agent's emergency contact information? Have you requested proof of car insurance or asked your agents to name you as an additional insured on their car insurance? Does the new agent understand and agree to your technology policies? Records retention policy? Code of conduct? General office rules? Independent contractor agreements? Safety and security policies?

Be sure to discuss all relevant policies and procedures with your agents and to have them sign all relevant paperwork. It may also be helpful to have the agents sign a document outlining the policies and procedures they have been given and documents they've been asked to sign to acknowledge their understanding of these documents and receipt of the same.

If using the Texas REALTORS® *Independent Contractor Agreement* (TXR 2301), require agents and associate brokers to sign a *Statement of Understanding* (TXR 2302) each year to confirm that they are adhering to rules outlined in such agreement.

### Get connected

Ensure your agent can connect to all relevant software and services needed to adequately perform tasks for your clients and customers. This may include making sure that the agent can connect to the customer relationship management software, the applicable multiple listing services, and even the brokerage's in-house Wi-Fi.

### Assign a buddy

An existing agent or office manager with your brokerage can show the new agent around and be available to answer questions. While every brokerage is different, a point of contact will help the new agent learn the culture to onboard smoothly. Be mindful, though, that TREC rules require that when an agent performs any type of real estate brokerage activity for the first three times, the broker must require that agent to receive coaching and assistance from an experienced license holder competent for the particular activity.

### Document bonus skills

Every agent brings different abilities and experiences to your team. If you ask your new agent to document any additional qualifications, you'll know just who to ask if a unique situation arises. It could be helpful to your firm to be aware of foreign languages spoken, expertise in different fields, or specialized certifications.

## Two Texans honored in NAR's 30 Under 30

The National Association of REALTORS® has named Rylie Schroeder of Houston and Lindsey Pearlstein Smith of Austin to its 30 Under 30 Class of 2024.



### RYLIE SCHROEDER

Real estate has captured Schroeder's imagination since high school; she remembers seeing open house signs around her small town. "I knew I wanted the personal and financial autonomy the profession would provide me," she says.

"I have an entrepreneurial spirit at heart

and absolutely thrive in an autonomous environment."

Prior to starting her now-12-member team, Schroeder closed over 200 transactions in just three years in the industry. The Compass team leader uses creative marketing strategies and a personalized client experience to build her team's business. "Our love language is gift-giving," says Schroeder. She stays in touch with clients by strategically setting up a "36-touch" system, ensuring that clients feel their value long after closing. "Our biggest priority is being a real estate resource for anyone and everyone, and we want them to know we are always here to answer their questions," she says.



### LINDSEY PEARLSTEIN SMITH

Pearlstein Smith was looking for a field where she could use her teaching skills. "Real estate attracted me because it allowed me to work with people, experience something different every day, and better the

lives of others," says the Bramlett Residential Real Estate sales agent.

Pearlstein Smith modeled her business after her father's Boston-area brokerage, emphasizing integrity, market knowledge, and a relentless work ethic, she says. Starting out, she relied heavily on open houses. The experience taught her about neighborhoods and buyer preferences.

These days, Pearlstein Smith hosts two events for her sphere of influence each year: a cookie exchange and a crawfish boil. "I love nothing more than bringing people together and making connections, so it's been wonderful to be able to do what I love and have it organically bring in business," she says.

### BROKERS: ARE YOUR AGENTS STILL INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS?

New rule provides factors to help make a determination.

The U.S. Department of Labor issued a final rule in January to update the criteria used to assess whether workers should be classified as employees or independent contractors under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employers who wrongly classify workers as independent contractors may be liable for failing to pay overtime or minimum wage, plus liquidated damages and attorneys' fees. The new rule lists the following factors for consideration:

- Opportunity for profit or loss depending on managerial skill
- Investments by the worker and the employer
- Degree of permanence of the work relationship
- Nature and degree of control
- Extent to which the work performed is an integral part of the employer's business
- Skill and initiative.

Each case is considered individually based on these and other pertinent details of the work relationship. No single factor or combination of several provides an absolute determination of work classification.

While the rule is unlikely to change the work classification of the many real estate agents who are independent contractors, it's important for brokers to understand the rule and ensure that workers are operating in the manner for which they are classified.

The National Association of REALTORS® has worked with Congress to introduce H.R. 5419, the Direct Seller and Real Estate Harmonization Act, which is legislation that, among other actions, amends the FLSA to clarify that the definition of *employee* does not include qualified real estate agents.



#### Put Your Agents' Status in Writing

Texas REALTORS® has the following two forms for brokers to document details about their business relationship with associated agents:

*Independent Contractor Agreement for Sales Associate* (TXR 2301) allows a broker and agent to spell out the details of the agreement when an agent affiliates with a broker as an independent contractor.

*Statement of Understanding* (TXR 2302) is a one-page form that reconfirms the conditions spelled out in the *Independent Contractor Agreement for Sales Associate*. Executing this form each year helps brokers and agents ensure that the details spelled out in the *Independent Contractor Agreement for Sales Associate* have not changed.

### Texas REALTORS® Legal Action Leads to More than 2,100 Property-Tax Refunds Totaling Nearly \$1 million

Win May Deter Similar Money Grabs Across Texas.

In 2015, Texas voters overwhelmingly passed a constitutional amendment to increase the homestead exemption from \$15,000 to \$25,000 for public-school tax valuations. Texas REALTORS® was instrumental in passing this measure, which would provide a significant benefit to homeowners. When three school districts tried to take advantage of this amendment to the detriment of property owners, Texas REALTORS® stepped in.

With backing from the association's Issues Mobilization/Political Advocacy Fund, Texas REALTORS® legal and governmental affairs staff worked with outside counsel to file lawsuits in 2016 against school districts in Kilgore, Dumas, and White Deer to protect the local option homestead exemption. These lawsuits sought refunds of taxes wrongfully collected as a result of the school districts' illegal reduction or repeal of previously adopted local option homestead exemptions.

The school districts challenged the Texas REALTORS® legal efforts, leading to multiple court hearings, discovery disputes, and proceedings at three courts of appeals, where Texas REALTORS® secured favorable rulings.

After six years in the court system, the school districts compromised and agreed to settle the Texas REALTORS® claims. The lawsuits were settled in the context of a class-action claim.

The efforts by Texas REALTORS® resulted in over 2,100 refunds across these three school districts totaling nearly \$1 million:

- Kilgore ISD: 1,447 refunds totaling \$753,256
- Dumas ISD: 735 refunds totaling \$233,295
- White Deer ISD: The number of affected homeowners was so low that it did not warrant moving forward with the class action process. Instead, the school district agreed to pay the named plaintiff a refund of \$452.

This outcome is a huge win not only for the individual property owners who received refunds of improperly collected property taxes but also for property owners across the state. The litigation resulted in multiple appellate decisions in favor of property owners over taxing jurisdictions and disincentivizes similar egregious action in the future.



### Your Forms

Commercial practitioners can use the *Commercial Letter of Intent to Purchase* (TXR 1803) to state their clients' proposed terms for a future commercial real estate transaction. The letter lists the parties' contact information, a property description, a proposed sales price, closing date, and other details related to the sale. The letter makes clear that it is not a legally binding agreement and does not obligate the parties to the terms it describes. If the other parties approve of the letter's terms and want to move forward with the sale, they must sign and return the letter before the stated expiration date. *Commercial Letter of Intent to Purchase* can be used for commercial transactions and is one of more than 40 commercial forms exclusively available to members of Texas REALTORS®.



### WHAT'S THAT FORM FOR?

With 140 forms exclusively for members of Texas REALTORS® and dozens of TREC-promulgated forms, how do you know what each document is for—or even what forms are available?

Check out the *Texas REALTORS® Form Description and Reference* for short explanations of the intended use for each form. The reference also includes information about whether each form is intended for use in residential, farm & ranch, or commercial transactions. Scan the code to access the reference.





## DOCUMENT THAT FLIP!

Some people buy homes not to live in but to renovate and resell. It's important to know the liabilities associated with these properties in case you help a client buy or sell one.

Failure to disclose is the most common type of errors-and-omissions claim associated with flipped properties, says Laura Prouse, Director of REAP/REALAX Data Analytics at CRES, a Gallagher Company. CRES is a Texas REALTORS® risk management partner.

A buyer may allege that renovations were not properly constructed, permitted, or covered up existing property damage. The buyer may sue the seller and name you in the lawsuit too.

### Transparency is the best defense

If you are representing the seller, Prouse recommends that your seller clients disclose in writing that they specifically bought the home to flip it. "They should let buyers know it is completely refurbished," she says. "Consider including before and after photos. Ask sellers to provide all the permits and renovation receipts. Sellers can try to put themselves in the buyers' shoes—what would the buyers want to know? Buyers should know what the sellers know."

Seller clients should consider putting in writing a recommendation to get inspections and to check all permits. They can also share with buyers their own purchasing documents. "Your clients could attest that they never lived in the home," Prouse adds. "That gives the buyer a different perspective and encourages them to do a little more investigating and inspecting."

### Disclose as soon as possible

Your seller clients should disclose all relevant information related to a flipped property as well as providing the standard disclosure forms so buyers and their broker can make informed decisions.

By providing this information before going into the option period, buyers can determine if any additional inspections need to be made. "It's about being up-front with buyers," she says.

### If your client wants to buy a flipped home

If you represent a buyer who wants to purchase a flipped home, Prouse suggests that your client ask for documentation of all renovations and request a copy of the seller's transaction file from their purchase. Also, recommend in writing that your buyer retain third party experts to inspect the property and check permits. "A bedroom that looks like it used to be part of a garage is a big red flag," she advises.

It is also advisable to have buyers get an appraisal if they are paying cash. This can protect the buyer from overpaying.

### Complaints often come later

While there are fewer recent claims involving flipped properties, CRES is still seeing claims from transactions that took place a few years ago, she says. There is often a lag between the sale and the claims.

Some claims may arise after unusual weather events such as heavy rains, she explains. A buyer may remove renovations after a hundred-year flood to discover preexisting structural damage.

Flipping can be a success for everyone involved. With transparency and documentation, the parties can feel confident in the transaction, and you can reduce your liability.

## What if Your Seller is Behind Bars?



You will face unique challenges if your seller client is incarcerated, but that doesn't mean you can't work with that person to complete a successful transaction. Keep these tips in mind as you work toward closing day.

Texas had 200,961 inmates at the end of 2021, according to the National Institute of Corrections.

### Build in extra time

Anticipate possible delays when communicating with your client, negotiating a contract, or coordinating repairs. To minimize potential delays, you and your client can discuss specific contract terms in advance to be on the same page when negotiating with potential buyers. If your client has certain minimum requirements, such as a specific sales price, the seller can instruct you in writing not to present offers that don't meet those specific criteria. Also, you could create a schedule to regularly update your client on the status of the sale so that your client knows when to be available to discuss the transaction. Additionally, coordinate scheduling with the title company to ensure everyone is on the same page.

### A power of attorney can be, well, powerful

Recommend that your client consult with an attorney to possibly create a power of attorney and obtain additional guidance on the sale. A power of attorney is a document that grants a trusted person the right to make decisions and sign documents on the seller's behalf. Granting power of attorney isn't mandatory but could speed up and smooth out the process. An attorney can also advise your client on specific issues such as asset protection and privacy concerns that might arise due to your client's current situation.

### Don't expect privacy in prison

Assume any conversation you have with your client can and will be monitored in prison. Keep all discussions narrowly focused on the real estate transaction.

### Discuss with the seller whether to disclose the situation

It's possible the buyer may find out from other sources that the seller is incarcerated and may be concerned about possible delays in the process.

### Disclose if something happened onsite

A seller being incarcerated is not an exception to the seller's disclosure notice requirements. This means that the seller is still required to provide the written notice and disclose known material facts or defects related to the property. For example, a murder or the manufacturing of methamphetamine that occurred on the property must be disclosed to potential buyers.

Can a seller terminate the contract and receive the earnest money if the buyer has not secured buyer approval within the number of days specified in Paragraph 2A of the Third Party Financing Addendum (TXR 1901, TREC 40-10)?

**ANSWER:** No, the seller cannot terminate the contract for this reason. Paragraph 2A of the *Third Party Financing Addendum* allows the buyer, not the seller, to terminate if the buyer has not received buyer approval of financing within the specified time period. If the buyer has not secured buyer approval within the time period specified in Paragraph 2A, the buyer is unable to terminate for failure to obtain buyer approval, but the buyer should still be afforded the opportunity to close.

If the buyer is unable to close because of a failure to secure financing and is unable to meet the requirements to terminate under another provision of the *Third Party Financing Addendum*, the buyer will be in default for failure to close by the closing date. Pursuant to Paragraph 15 of the *One to Four Family Contract (Resale)* (TXR 1601, TREC 20-17) or the *Farm and Ranch Contract* (TXR 1701, TREC 25-15), the seller will then have the remedy of terminating the contract and receiving the earnest money.



## What constitutes buyer approval?

A buyer obtains buyer approval when both of the following conditions are met:

1. The terms of the loan(s) described in Paragraph 1 of the *Third Party Financing Addendum* are available
2. The lender determines that the buyer has satisfied all of the lender's requirements related to the buyer's assets, income, and credit history.

# How REALTORS® Are Using AI

by Joe Olivieri

Command Prompt:

Read real-world examples of how your colleagues are leveraging artificial intelligence to save time, generate leads, and boost their businesses.

**Y**ou've heard all about how artificial intelligence is a game changer. But how are your fellow REALTORS® actually using it? How could you use it today in your real estate firm? *Texas REALTOR®* magazine asked members how they use AI at work. Here's what they said.

## Creating New Content

One of the best-known uses of AI is also one of the most widely adopted by real estate agents and brokers. REALTORS® report using artificial intelligence platforms like ChatGPT for help drafting all types of communications.

Adrian Dukes, Broker Associate at Realty Austin, uses ChatGPT to generate emails and craft listing descriptions. "The integration of AI has improved my efficiency and empowered me to expand my business, reach more clients, and adapt to the dynamic real estate landscape effectively," he says.

Nate Rhyne, Agent with Realty ONE Group Rose, says ChatGPT has been an amazing tool during his first year in real estate. When Rhyne needed to write a short bio online, ChatGPT came to the rescue. "It truly helps out, especially when you are having writing blocks," he says. "I always edit it to sound more like myself."

## Improving Existing Content

Brandy Johnson, a REALTOR® at Lynch Legacy Realty Group, eXp Realty, recently started using AI and now wonders why she didn't start sooner.

"It truly helps out, especially when you are having writing blocks. I always edit it to sound more like myself." —Nate Rhyne

## Is AI Safe? Know the Risks.



As you venture into the world of AI, remember that AI generates usable content because of the data collected. This means when you use an AI tool for your marketing or even administration duties like transcribing notes from a web call, your information is now part of the database and can be reused—possibly for nefarious reasons. Since AI-generated content is not currently subject to copyright laws, a document or an image you add to an AI tool can be manipulated and reused in a different context. And by including too many personal details, you make yourself or your business vulnerable to a cyber-attack.

Here are some best practices before getting started:

- Use well-known AI tools that have been developed with security protocols in place.
- Read the privacy policy to review how much and how long your data is stored.
- Check the tool's settings. Some tools give you the option to turn off storing your information, or you can choose to have it automatically erased after a set period of time.

Educate your clients and team on the types of sensitive, personal, confidential, or private information that shouldn't be used with AI. Ensure that everyone understands how crucial privacy compliance is in this situation and that it is everyone's responsibility.

“When it comes to listing descriptions, we all tend to get stuck on using the same adjectives and wording,” she notes. “But by using AI, I am able to easily find synonyms and write more attractive and creative descriptions to set my listings apart.”

She was able to create a longer, detailed biography for a listing presentation by providing ChatGPT with a shorter summary and new details. “I only needed to make minor tweaks,” she says. “AI has been a time saver and also allowed me to stand out among the competition.”

### Improving Posts and Scripts

Social media has tremendous potential for generating leads and building your brand, but crafting the perfect post can be challenging and time-consuming. Some REALTORS® use AI to generate content for various platforms.

Realtors Property Resource Senior Director Andrea Goodhart says RPR hit a home run with the introduction of its Market Trends ScriptWriter feature. She called the feature a practical, easy-to-use implementation of AI. “These tools will help you create informative content that effectively showcases the latest market trends and insights while saving you time and effort,” she says.

Michica “Mish” Guillory, Broker at The Guillory Group, teaches how to use RPR’s ChatGPT abilities for social media as part of her Graduate, REALTOR® Institute: Business Skills Technology course. “It

provides scripts in an agent’s choice of professional, conversational, or engaging tones,” she says. “They can be focused toward buyers, sellers, or both in the same message.” The RPR feature is a complete revelation and a total hit with her students, she adds.

Being able to ask AI to write in a specific tone is particularly useful on social media. Dayna Hennigan, eXp Sales Agent, uses an app called Mysocial to write her posts. “I can choose to have a professional, humorous, bold, etc. tone to get my message across,” she says. “It provides hashtags correlated to my post. The app will create a post based on the platform I am posting to. This has definitely saved me time and allows me to have captivating posts.”

Rhynne adds that ChatGPT can give social media suggestions that you can edit to fit your niche or market.

Johnson asks AI to add blog content to accompany infographics and photos. She’s also used it to promote open houses and improve listings. Johnson can ask ChatGPT to generate social media posts and the AI’s response can include catchy phrases and related emojis, such as a map pin.

Another time, Johnson needed a script for her assistant to use when making lead calls. “We used ChatGPT together to create something professional that flowed comfortably for her,” she says.

### Responding to New Clients

Dukes uses AI to promptly respond to client ques-

tions. Dukes has connected ChatGPT to his Facebook page and created a chatbot that prompts visitors with generic questions, such as “What are you looking for?” “Visitors answer a series of questions and at certain points, ChatGPT will send a push alert to my phone,” he says. “If I want to jump into the conversation, I’m able to do that. If I don’t have time, I can ask ChatGPT to set up an appointment.”

**Remember that The Real Estate License Act and TREC rules require a completed *Information About Brokerage Services* form to be delivered at the first substantive communication regarding a property.**

Dukes can ask the chatbot to send the visitor a Google Forms sheet to get more information or a link to browse the MLS. When he meets with the visitor, he already has answers to some of his introductory questions. “Chatbots have played a pivotal role in improving customer service by providing 24/7 client support and ensuring immediate responses to inquiries and property information access,” he says.

### Summaries and Analysis

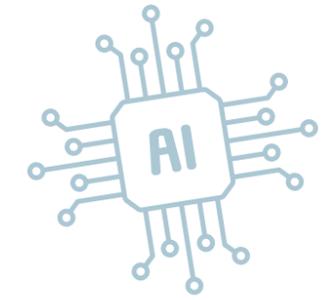
Dukes also asks AI to analyze data for him. “It helps me make data-driven decisions, offering me accurate price recommendations and personalized interactions based on client preferences,” he says.

Matthew Stigliano, Broker at Kimberly Howell Properties, started using AI platform Jasper and became fascinated with the technology. He has found all sorts of uses for AI in his business, including blog posts, rewriting texts, social media posts, and generating ideas.

“I have even started to experiment with some of the summary aspects of AI: summarizing large documents or articles I want to get the gist of before digging in deeper later when I have some more time,” he says.

He says he was tempted to ask AI to respond to the *Texas REALTOR®* question about how members use AI but ultimately decided to answer himself. ★

**JOE OLIVIERI** is a business writer who frequently writes for *Texas REALTOR®*.



## AI Can Help Local Associations of REALTORS®, Too

Joshua Guenter, MLS and Communications Director for the Highland Lakes Association of REALTORS®, credits AI with helping to meet deadlines in member communications.

“From ChatGPT to help with inspiration or polishing a draft, to the image generators in our graphics platform, we have begun using AI consistently to take on much of the workload and that time can now be utilized on more crucial tasks,” he says. “I believe AI has enhanced our association by assisting in better quality communications and allowing staff time to focus on additional member benefits.”

“Visitors answer a series of questions and ChatGPT will send a push alert to my phone. If I want to jump into the conversation, I’m able to do that.” –Adrian Dukes



Adrian Dukes



Andrea Goodhart



Brandy Johnson



Danya Hennigan



Joshua Guenter



Matt Stigliano



Michica Guillory



Nate Rhynne



Photos & Images © iStock.adobe.com

# TEXAS HOMESSELLERS

## Who They Are and What They Want

The previous issue of *Texas REALTOR*® featured survey results about Texas homebuyers. This issue highlights homesellers in Texas. Responses are from NAR's nationwide homebuyer and seller survey and include homesellers who also purchased a primary residence between July 2022 and June 2023. \*Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or other responses not listed.

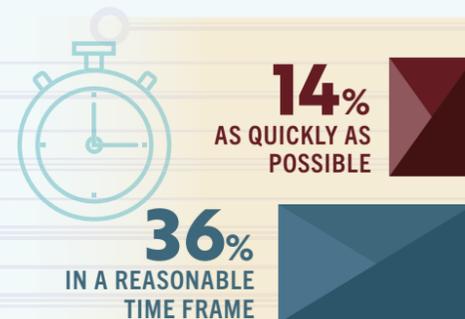
### Top reasons for selling



### MOST FREQUENT INCENTIVES:



### How quickly sellers need to sell

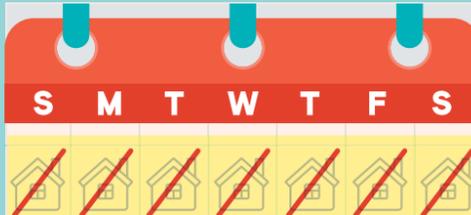


**\$217,000**



MEDIAN PRICE WHEN RECENTLY SOLD HOME WAS ORIGINALLY PURCHASED

{Median year of purchase: 2014}



42%

11% had home on market for 13 weeks or more

11%



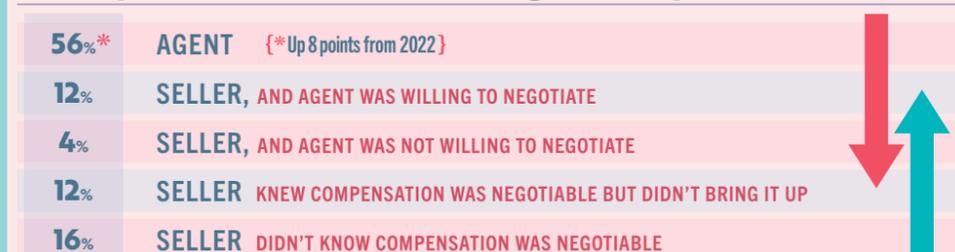
### Most important factor when choosing agent



### How seller found agent



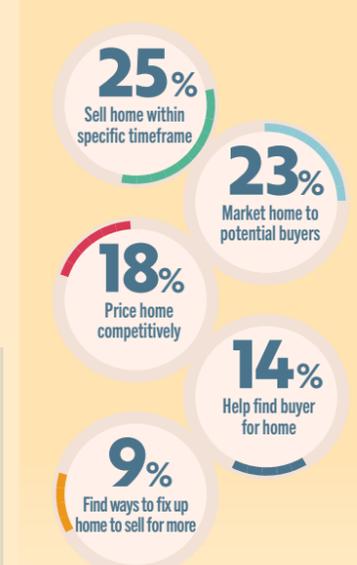
### Compensation: Who brought it up?



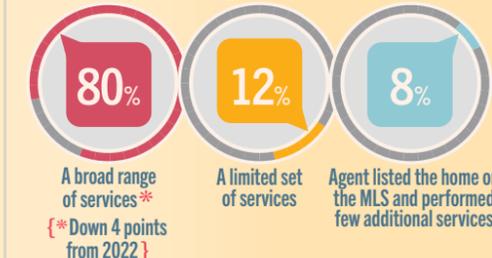
### Was seller's agent a member of NAR?



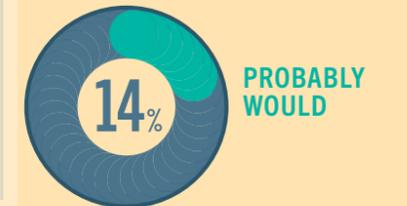
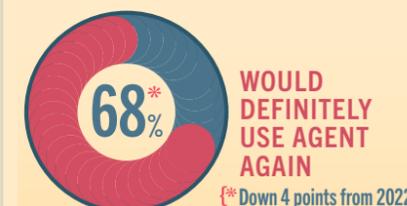
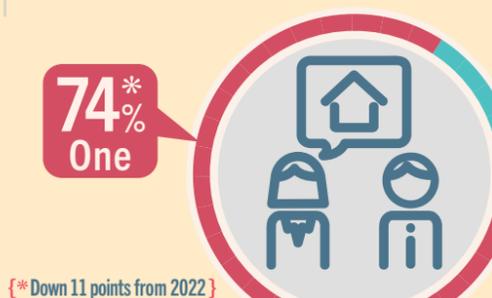
### What sellers want most from real estate agents



### Level of service provided by agent



### Number of agents contacted before selecting one



Download the full *Profile of Texas Homebuyers and Sellers*—as well as prior versions of this report and other surveys—from:

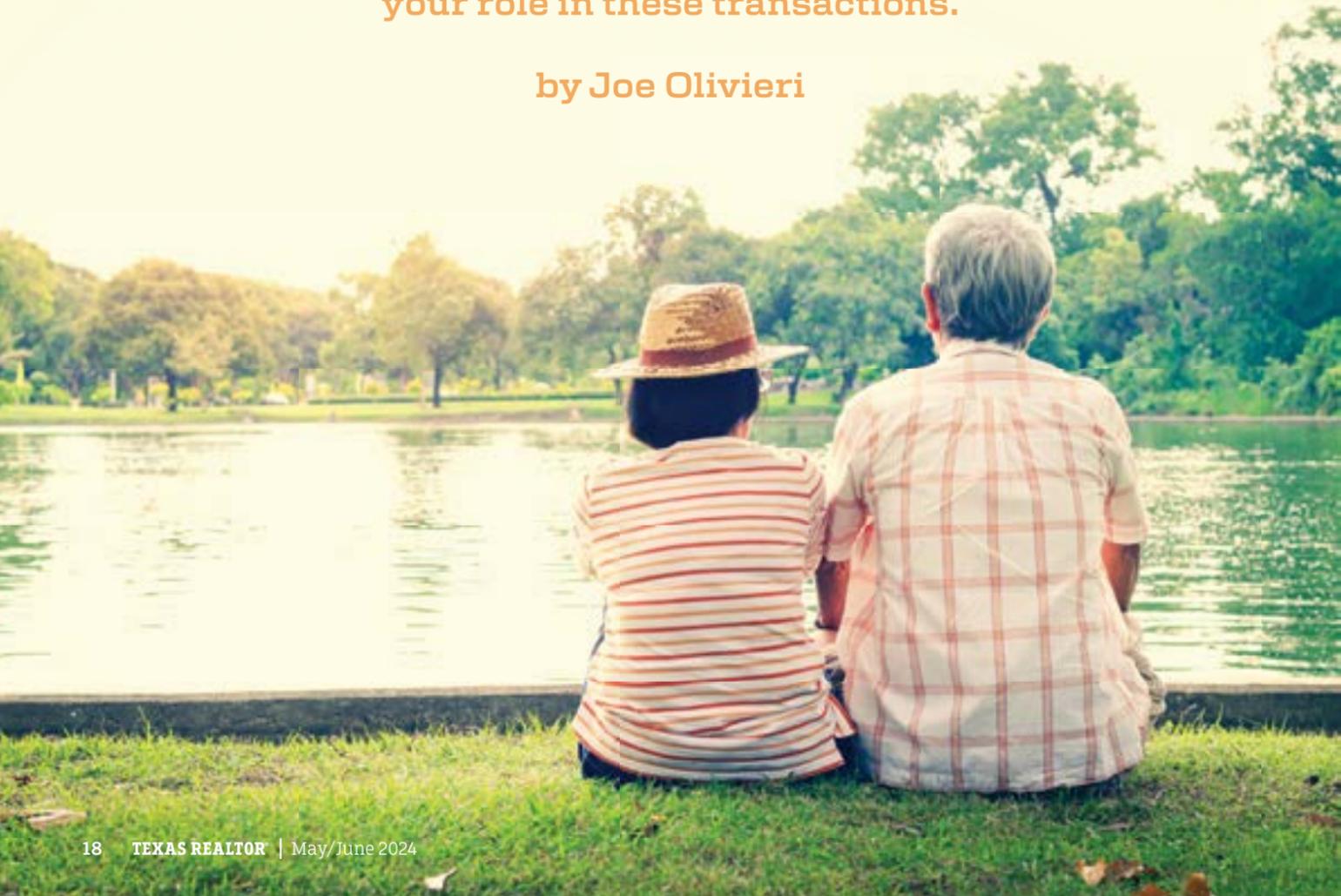


texasrealestate.com/research

# WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES?

Learn more about this market and your role in these transactions.

by Joe Olivieri



If clients ages 55 and older aren't a significant portion of your residential real estate business, they might be soon. Texas has the nation's third-largest older adult population and is projected to be home to more than 11 million residents ages 50 or older by 2030, according to Texas Health and Human Services. One way to best serve this population is to learn more about housing options that cater specifically to them.

Age-restricted communities, also called active adult or retirement communities, are becoming more common in Texas, says Zelda Cain, A2Z Real Estate Consultants Broker and Texas REALTORS® Instructor. There are more than 120 communities statewide with more being built each year.

These communities may operate a little differently than other developments. Knowing their restrictions and what they offer is important when helping your clients who may find this an attractive option. "These are communities dedicated to meeting residents' needs later in life," says Alan Burks with REALTORS® for Seniors at Ebby Halliday, REALTORS®.

## Sharing Amenities with Peers

One of the most important traits about age-restricted communities is who can live there. To meet the qualifications for HUD's older-person housing exemptions, a 55-or-older community must have at least 80% of housing units occupied by at least one person age 55 or older.

The remaining 20% can be occupied by people younger than 55. In order to retain their exemptions, communities must keep track of the ages of the people living there.

Sixty-two or older communities must require everyone in the household to be 62 or older to meet HUD requirements.

Age-restricted communities can take several forms, from a gated community of freestanding homes to condominium or apartment-style buildings.

Trudy Scott of Coldwell Banker D'Ann Harper, REALTORS® says your clients may be excited to live in a community with their peers. These properties also offer a wide variety of amenities beyond what's typically found in planned developments.

"They may have communal dining areas, libraries, a business center, door-to-door pickups for laundry and trash, and grocery delivery," Zelda says. "They may also offer activities such as game nights and scheduled trips for out-of-town shopping."

Access to golf courses is a popular amenity. Some communities have private or semi-private courses onsite. Communities often advertise that residents can travel around by golf cart, even if there aren't any golf courses nearby, Burks says.

A major advantage for many age-restricted communities is the lack of home maintenance required, Scott says. Many communities are governed by a management organization that handles upkeep. If your clients are considering a community that doesn't offer that, they may be interested in how large of a lot they will need to maintain themselves or pay someone else to maintain.

Security is a big concern for clients considering age-restricted communities. Many properties have gates and patrols to protect residents. Burks says there may also be informal systems, such as volunteers or neighbors making sure a garage door wasn't left open.



**"The important thing is to know the restrictions and be able to explain them to your clients." Zelda Cain**



## A Fair Housing Exemption

How can communities restrict sales when familial status is one of the seven protected classes in the Fair Housing Act? The Housing for Older Persons Act (HOPA) amended the Fair Housing Act and its exemptions from familial status discrimination liability. HUD says facilities can lawfully refuse to sell or rent to families with minor children if the facility provides housing under a state or federal program HUD determines to be specifically designed and operated to assist elderly people, is intended for and solely occupied by people age 62 or older, or is intended and operated for occupancy for people age 55 or older.



**“Views about homeownership are changing. This trend of age-restricted communities is only going to grow.”** Alan Burks

Some age-restricted communities offer a continuum of housing options: residences for independent and active seniors, assisted living options, and long-term care and hospice.

### Limitations to Property Use

Potential drawbacks for age-restricted communities are the limitations for how long younger visitors can stay there. There are no set guidelines, so the rules vary by community, Zelda says. Make sure your clients know if the property has limits for temporary stays. Zelda knew of a grandmother who had to sell her home in a 62-or-older community after her daughter died. She was given custody of her granddaughter, but her granddaughter wasn't allowed to live on the property.

Just like with a homeowners association, it's important to know all the restrictions the community places on your property, Scott says. For example, you may not be allowed to park on the street overnight. Homeowners may not be able to host adult guests long-term or lease their homes as short-term rentals.

Your clients may not be able to try out the community before committing to living there. Some communities do not offer trial periods where prospective residents could stay for a week or two. There could also be a joining fee to enter the community.

### Clearing Up Misconceptions About Retirement Communities

There are many misconceptions about age-restricted communities that buyers will benefit from knowing. The first is that these communities restrict the age of residents, not buyers. Anyone can buy a home in an age-restricted community, Zelda says. In the context of buying the property, your client's age doesn't matter. But you can point out that there are restrictions they may want to explore from the community's materials.

Another misconception is that these communities are overly social and boisterous, Scott says. Each community is different; your clients can likely find a property that suits their interests and lifestyle.

Don't assume every client will stay at the property full-time. Some clients are looking at age-restricted communities as a second home. They only want to live in Texas in the winter or will spend much of the year traveling, Scott adds. “I get calls inquiring from out of state about the weather, the safety of these communities, and taxes,” she says.



**“I get calls inquiring from out of state about the weather, the safety of these communities, and taxes.”** Trudy Scott

Communities know this and market home maintenance and community security measures as being lock-and-leave, Scott says.

### How You Can Help Clients Considering a Move

The first thing you as an agent should do is to educate yourself. Visit the age-restricted communities in your market and talk with the sales agents and representatives there. Learn how these communities operate: some properties will require your clients to work directly with them. “The important thing is to know the restrictions and be able to explain them to your clients,” Zelda says.

Just like with any other clients, be sure to ask what their goals are. “Ask where they see themselves living for the next 20 years,” Burks says.

Your clients may be thinking about what will happen to the property after they die. It's important to discuss any restrictions if the property passes to a younger family member, Zelda says. Be sure to check for guidance on how to sell properties in age-restricted communities. It is also best to advise clients to speak to an attorney regarding any questions or advice they may need concerning the restrictions and the transfer of ownership at death.

Decisions about age-restricted communities—or any real estate transaction—are a conversation, and clients and their families may not have thought through everything yet, Burks says. You can help your clients by asking questions about the lifestyle they would like to have.

“Views about homeownership are changing,” Burks says. “This trend of age-restricted communities is only going to grow.”

## Get the Senior Real Estate Specialist Designation

The Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES) designation is useful for any residential real estate agent, says Zelda Cain. It covers important topics that come up when helping clients over 50 and develops relevant skills for these transactions.

The curriculum also talks about how to discuss adjusting to the next stage of life. “We talk about downsizing and going to a much smaller property,” she says. “We talk about how to make decisions about discarding items and leaving items to relatives. These are emotional decisions. Your clients could be moving from the property in which they made a life with their spouse or raised their children. They have all those memories. SRES helps you be an advocate for your client.”

SRES courses discuss working with different generations of stakeholders; sometimes the client's child or grandchild is also a decision maker, Zelda says.

SRES teaches you to be aware of legal issues to avoid getting into trouble while

serving older clients. For example, don't fill out documents for them, she continues.

You will learn about related topics such as probating wills and estate sales. Of course, you don't want to offer advice for any topic that's outside your expertise. While this information is helpful to know, experts such as lawyers or CPAs can provide appropriate advice.

The designation covers topics that will help you assist these clients with the information they may require to make the best decision for themselves. “It just makes you hyper aware of the different needs your clients may have,” adds Alan Burks.

Get more information at [sres.realtor.com](https://sres.realtor.com). To find the next available course, visit [texasrealestate.com/findacourse](https://texasrealestate.com/findacourse) and choose *Seniors Real Estate Specialist Designation Course* from the *Course* dropdown menu.

**JOE OLIVIERI** is a business writer who frequently writes for *Texas REALTOR*.



# MEET THE 2023 TEXAS REALTORS® TO WATCH

Six members under 40 who have displayed outstanding leadership, community involvement, and other successful traits have been named 2023 Texas REALTORS® to Watch.

“I am so impressed with this year’s Texas REALTORS® to Watch,” says Texas REALTORS® 2024 Chairman—and former honoree—Jef Conn. “Their dedication, innovation, and professionalism inspire me. They’re going above and beyond for their clients and communities every day. I congratulate them and look forward to all the things they’ll do in this business.”

## Justus Carlile Greater Lewisville

Give Justus Carlile a challenge—the more complicated the better—and the Broker/Owner of Makin’ Moves Realty will dive right in. He loves land deals, site selection, and probate and divorce clients. “I thrive when there are hard deadlines, ultra-specific property needs, and other uncommon circumstances,” he says.

Carlile got into real estate after a confusing homebuying experience in 2015. “I had zero understanding of what was happening and what I signed,” he says. Learning more led to him getting licensed.

Carlile took to heart one instructor’s advice: When business is slow, find a CE class. He’s built training into his calendar since the very beginning. “It’s led to meeting some wonderful people, obtaining a few designations and certifications, and growing my subject matter knowledge exponentially,” he says.

The Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program graduate is the 2024 Chairman of the Greater Lewisville Association of REALTORS®. He also serves on the 2024 Texas REALTORS® Political Involvement Committee and is this year’s YPN Liaison. Carlile has also volunteered with the Lewisville Chamber of Commerce, Keep Corinth Beautiful, and the Denton County Master Gardener Association.

One of Carlile’s greatest challenges has been to speak up in the moment rather than overthink things. “Mistakes will happen,” he says. “You will misspeak, and you will never have all the answers. It’s OK—that’s all part of growth.”

“Slow down, enjoy the process, and set boundaries,” he continues. “This career choice can be stressful, and it’s okay to take a step back throughout the day. Leave your phone in the truck or car. Go on a walk, work out, or whatever floats your boat.”



Justus Carlile

## Joel Cooke Permian Basin

“I believe a lot of leadership has to do with just showing up,” says Joel Cooke. “It’s about being involved and genuinely caring about everyone succeeding around you. I try to lead by example and don’t do anything for selfish ambition but for the good of all.”

The agent with The Sales Team, REALTORS® was inspired to pursue real estate after seeing his friend’s success and the job’s potential flexibility. “Once I got into real estate and realized how much real estate professionals do in the community, I knew even more that I made the right decision for my career,” he says.

Cooke works with many first-time homebuyers. “I come from a family that doesn’t have many homeowners,” he says. “I was the first one in my immediate family to purchase a home. I think it gives me an advantage of helping people to see that they are doing more than just buying a house.”

Cooke is the 2024 President-Elect of the Permian Basin Board of REALTORS® and serves on the NAR Public Policy Coordinating Committee. The Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program graduate earned the Spirit of TREPAC Award in 2022.

He is working toward his broker license. Cooke also volunteers with the Association of Families and Teachers at Bynum School, Keep Midland Beautiful, Mid-Cities Worship Team, The Field’s Edge, and as a deputy voter registrar.

“I tend to be a perfectionist and hesitate to even start something until it’s just right,” he says. “A mentor told me a statement that I have started to live by: ‘Do it now, do it better, do it best.’”



Joel Cooke



Thalina Garcia

## Thalina Garcia Houston

Thalina Garcia’s connection to Houston real estate started early. “At 15, I used the money I saved from a summer internship to purchase a vacant lot, a decision that has since transformed into an income-producing investment,” she says.

Working with a local property-tax-protesting company was particularly impactful. “I was captivated by the idea of helping people optimize their real estate investments, recognizing that buying a home is a crucial step in building generational wealth,” she says.

Garcia comes from a long line of entrepreneurs. Her parents, who are business owners and real estate investors, were major influences. “We’ve teamed up to grow our real estate portfolio, which has been an incredibly rewarding and educational experience.”

Client relationships are the heart of Garcia’s work. Making a personal connection is just as important as understanding market complexities, she says. The Garcia Group Team Leader and REALTOR® Associate specializes in international real estate and has helped foreign nationals navigate the American market. She enjoys working with homebuyers to relocate to Houston and helping Spanish-speaking clients achieve their real estate goals.

Garcia serves on the Texas REALTORS® Grassroots Political Network and has served on advisory groups with the Houston Association of REALTORS®. She has also worked with the Baylor University Houston Women’s Council, the Houston Humane Society, and networking group Mindful Business Women.

“Being a Houstonian at heart, my connection to the city runs deep,” she says. “I’m genuinely passionate about Houston’s growth and the role I play in helping individuals and families achieve their real estate goals here. It’s not just a career for me; it’s a way of giving back to the community I love.”

## Will Curtis San Antonio

There’s a misconception among some commercial real estate professionals that the REALTOR® association is for folks who sell houses. Not so, says Will Curtis. The Commercial Managing Director with Phyllis Browning Company sees tremendous value in membership for himself and his commercial clients.

“REALTORS® are the ones actually fighting for property rights, better business climates, successful business owners, and careers where anyone, despite their background and education, can change the legacy of their family,” he says.

Curtis recommends finding a mentor, building your market knowledge, and starting your days early. “Real estate is one of those businesses where you can outwork the competition and become very successful,” he says. “The question is how successful do you want to become?”



Will Curtis

Curtis draws from his military career and his Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program training in his journey as a leader. He says great leaders can be flexible depending on the situation and balance directing and listening.

He also has experience in economic development and corporate real estate. He's worked to bring international companies to San Antonio. Curtis is passionate about the governmental affairs side of real estate; he appreciates how policy affects the market and consumers.

The 2024 Chairman of the San Antonio Board of REALTORS® has served on several committees at the local, state, and national level. He's also been involved in the FBI Citizens Academy Alumni Association, Vets in Real Estate, and the San Antonio Food Bank.

"I often find myself as an ambassador for the REALTOR® brand to the rest of the commercial community," he says. "Being on the faculty for CCIM and IREM, I'm often asked how the local, state, or national association is doing. I serve as a conduit."



**Shelly Scanlin**

## Shelly Scanlin Houston

Shelly Scanlin enjoyed owning rental properties while she was working in the hotel industry. But she really got the spark for real estate when she earned her license to work on her own investments.

The last two years have been busy for the Broker/Owner of Styled Real Estate. She completed her master's degree in business administration and is currently working on marketing and selling a real estate development in Turks and Caicos, taking on her first international opportunity. In 2023, she started a property management firm, had a baby, and finished the year with millions in residential sales. In 2022, she and her team had one of their best sales years ever.

"Being underestimated is probably the biggest challenge," she says. "Being a young woman, I think it's easy to get looked past. I use that fuel to stay engaged and be the

hardest working person in the room. Starting my own boutique firm without a brand was challenging but extremely rewarding."

Scanlin's firm offers design and renovation services. She also owns a custom pool company. Her approach is to lead by example, working side by side with her agents as a producing broker. She still owns rental properties. "I'm not just selling a dream to my investors or my agents," she says. "I'm living proof that I believe what I invest in."

The Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program graduate serves on committees at the local, state, and national level, and is a 2024 Texas REALTORS® Director. "While being involved in the community is extremely important to me, finding someone who I can make a large impact on is my priority," she says. "I enjoy helping others in their time of need and helping someone find their true potential. Sometimes it only takes one opportunity to change someone's life."

## Chris Tye Collin County

Chris Tye says he is always looking for his replacement. Mentoring has made all the difference for the Broker/Owner of The Tye Team.

"It's not just about personal growth; it's about uplifting others, too," he says. "I firmly believe that the company you keep directly influences your capabilities and achievements. That's why I'm passionate about educating and empowering the people I choose to surround myself with. It's a cycle of learning, teaching, and growing together that ultimately elevates the entire real estate community."

Tye's real estate journey has included work on teams, REO asset management, earning his broker's license, and establishing his own team before becoming an independent broker.

Tye focuses on home sales and rental properties. "Becoming an agent was an obvious choice for me, driven by a strong desire to problem solve in assisting people in finding their dream homes," he says. Tye prides himself on his ability to quickly adapt to clients' needs.

The Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program graduate has served on or led several committees for the Collin County Area REALTORS®, including its Board of Directors, Government Affairs, and TREPAC Committees. "My involvement on the candidate interview committee at our local association allowed me to contribute directly to my community," he says.

He also serves on the Texas REALTORS® Professional Development Committee. His volunteer work included helping to raise money for Minnie's Food Pantry. He serves as a team leader at his church.

"For me, real estate isn't just about transactions; it's about crafting unique experiences for clients," he says. "My values—like inclusivity, support, and always improving—mirror what I bring to the broader community." ★



**Chris Tye**

# WHEN YOUR COMMERCIAL DEAL ISN'T A COMMERCIAL DEAL AT ALL

The lines can blur between a real estate transaction and a transaction to sell a business. Know what to look for and why you should stick to your area of expertise.

by Will Curtis

Venturing into the realm of commercial real estate can feel like navigating a labyrinth, with its own set of hurdles and secrets to uncover. Grasping the intricacies of how this sector ticks—from conducting searches on comparables to pinpointing the most lucrative use of a property—isn't something one masters overnight.

Occasionally, the journey takes an intriguing detour beyond mere real estate transactions. Owners of retail establishments, gas stations, hotels, car washes, and other businesses may contact you about selling property, but those deals often intertwine with business brokerage, a field off the beaten path for those holding a Texas real estate license.

Here's a twist: business brokerage—distinct from commercial real estate—deals primarily with the sale of operational businesses, sometimes including their real estate. Imagine a bustling restaurant up for sale; it's the *business* that's changing hands, not necessarily the building it occupies.

### Don't confuse the two disciplines

For agents accustomed to the commercial real estate landscape, stumbling into business brokerage could happen by sheer accident. It's a fascinating crossroads but comes with a caveat: There is no specific licensing requirement in Texas to conduct business brokerage. While this might sound like a green light to dive in, it raises questions about competence and ethical standards.

Valuing a business is a discipline that is *not* the same as valuing a property. It requires access to specialized databases for accurate comparables. This process is starkly different from evaluating a property simply based on cash-flow statements. It demands a deep dive into a business's profit and loss accounts, sifting through numerous factors to identify what holds real value for a potential buyer.

### Business brokerage has additional risks and demands

Don't assume your errors and omissions insurance has got your back here. Many policies don't extend to cover business brokerage, a gap that could lead to costly lessons. You won't find Texas REALTORS® contracts that cater to business sales, necessitating a different contractual approach. You probably will need to hire legal professionals to craft the necessary agreements.

Marketing a business for sale is unlike marketing real property. It targets a distinct set of buyers. The goal is often to keep the sale under wraps to maintain business as usual and protect the company's value—a stark contrast to typical commercial real estate transactions.

### Still interested? Start here

So, your eyes are wide open and you're still considering getting into business brokerage? Start with education. Immerse yourself in training programs offered by trade associations or delve into academic courses focused on business valuation. Finding a mentor in the field can provide invaluable on-the-job insights. And, crucially, ensure your brokerage's policies and insurance coverage align with your business-brokerage ambitions, keeping surprises to a minimum.

Though business brokerage is not for the faint-hearted, with the right preparation and mindset, it can be an enriching addition to your real estate endeavors. ★

**WILL CURTIS**, CCIM, CPM, is the Commercial Managing Director of Phyllis Browning Commercial based out of San Antonio and is a Texas REALTORS® instructor. His experience is in the office and industrial markets.

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## 5 WAYS A REALTOR® CAN HELP YOU WITH YOUR RENTAL PROPERTY

Many REALTORS® help people buy and sell houses, but some also specialize in property management. Whether you already own investment property or are thinking of buying a rental, a REALTOR® experienced in property management can handle all aspects of managing your asset—and reduce your stress. A REALTOR® can...



### HELP YOU FIND GOOD TENANTS.

A property manager knows how to legally screen applicants to lessen the chances you'll have tenants who don't pay rent or cause other headaches.



### HANDLE TENANT HASSLES.

If problems like nonpaying tenants and evictions do occur, a property manager will deal with them in a professional manner.



### REDUCE YOUR RISK.

A property manager knows when you're required to change locks, what you can deduct from a security deposit, how to navigate fair housing laws, the rules about assistance animals, and much more.



### KEEP YOUR NIGHTS AND WEEKENDS INTERRUPTION-FREE.

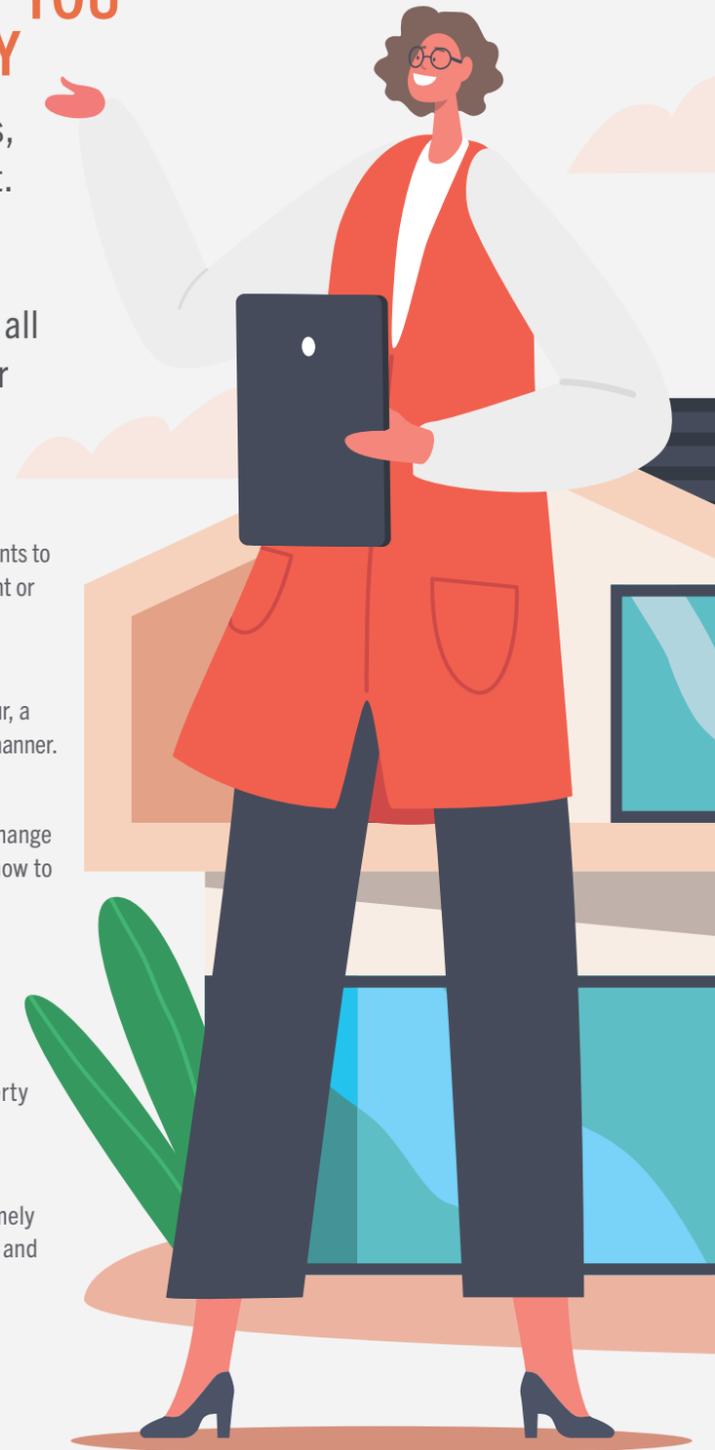
Whether it's a plumbing emergency or a last-minute request to see a unit by a prospective tenant, a property manager will take care of these inconvenient tasks.



### SAVE YOU MONEY AND TIME.

Hiring a REALTOR® puts a professional in charge of timely rent payments, competitive rents, low vacancy rates, and other details that boost your investment's return.

Enjoy all the benefits of professional property management:  
Hire a REALTOR®.



# TAKE 5

## Get Engaged!

Your social media accounts are a great way to connect with people and grow your business. You don't need to be an expert in social media to generate engagement online. Consider these types of posts to fire up your existing followers and gain new ones.



### SHARE A STORY

People are drawn to stories. You can say a lot about how you do business in a few sentences or a photo. Describe how you were able to help your buyer, seller, or landlord navigate a great deal. Explain why that closing day selfie is so meaningful to your clients. Tell the world how going the extra mile paid off for the people you represented.

### ASK FOR FEEDBACK

Questions get people interacting with you. Set up a poll or request responses to a question you ask. For example, if several recent home sales featured outdoor fireplaces or screened-in patios, ask if these amenities appeal to your followers. What do they look for in homes?

### EDUCATE WITH DATA

As a member of Texas REALTORS®, you have exclusive access to MarketViewer, a powerful database of the most accurate market information. Share an interesting statistic about your area. This shows your followers that you're knowledgeable and informed.

### ASK FOR REFERRALS

Perhaps the only thing stopping your friends from recommending you to their friends is that you've never asked them. Let your contacts know that you really appreciate referrals. (Remember that the law allows you to give an unlicensed person a non-cash gift worth \$50 or less in exchange for a referral. You cannot give a discount, rent bonus, or bank gift card that can be converted to cash.)

### ENTERTAIN

You don't need to be serious all the time, but you should always be professional. Light-hearted, appropriate content can increase your engagement if used sparingly. Get a second opinion if you have any doubt. You want to get people's attention for positive reasons.

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