



Brand You!

Course Handout

by the Houston Association of Realtors®



3 Hours MCE Credit
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Overview



The objective of the Brand You course is to provide REALTOR® members of the Houston Association of REALTORS® a class and opportunity to explore what their brand is and brainstorm what their brand may be if they are not yet sure or are in need of updating or some fresh ideas. Once this is determined, they may be able to define a target market that might help them determine a type of buyer or seller, geographic market area and/or what benefit(s) they bring to the consumer.

This course will also help them identify other branding and marketing items such as head shots, business cards, website names and ideas, slogans and brand image and even brand loyalty. Once the member brainstorms or has help on determining what their brand is, the course then further helps them understand how to take their unique brand and market it to the consumer through HAR tools, the internet and some social media marketing.

Ice Breaker/Business Card Exercise



Divide class into groups of 3-4 and pass out a hand full of business cards and let the class have 3-5 minutes to choose their most favorite and least favorite and why. For this exercise, business cards don't have to be real estate related...but more to give a general idea of good and business cards. One member of each group will then speak for the group and instructor will list "likes" and "dislikes."

LIKES	DISLIKES

Ideas for Your Business Card:



Head Shot??? YES___ NO___ (More on head shots later in the program)

Orientation??? Landscape_____ Portrait_____

Message???

Slogan???

Card Information???

Have a logo or considering one???

Free source: www.logomaker.com

OTHER NOTES/IDEAS?

Samples of Best Voted Real Estate Business Cards: <http://blog.edesigngroupus.com>

Hunting Pro Properties



Business cards designed for a real estate team specializing in farms and hunting land.



Classy Real Estate Business Card



A set of classy business cards for a real estate business.



A set of business cards created for a mother, daughter and son who were starting a real estate business together.



Business cards designed for a real estate agent named Laura Moline.

What is the e-mail address on your business card?

Is it...

- A Personal E-mail Address? (such as gmail, yahoo, AOL, comcast, etc.?)
- Is it your broker? (such as Re/Max, Keller Williams, a boutique broker, etc.?)
- Is it YOUR e-mail address so that you can Brand You!???

Consider your business strategy? Consider your audience? What does a personal e-mail address on your business card look like? Will you ever change brokers? Or, perhaps become a broker?

So...how can you get your own e-mail address, then?

There are many domain name providers and brokers, but GoDaddy may be the best. Go to www.godaddy.com and select a “domain.” THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU HAVE TO CREATE A WEBSITE...OR, design a website or even be a webmaster. All you are purchasing is the web address. This will run an average of \$12.99/yr. And...DO NOT select all of the other bells and whistles. DO include the e-mail address option. You don’t need a huge inbox...

RULES OF THUMB WHEN SELECTING A DOMAIN NAME:

- The shorter, the better... WHY? Well, it is easier for the consumer to remember.
- Generally, choose either your name, your market area (such as “livinginkaty”) or your target market (such as “katyinvestmenthomes”)...but it of course, must be available.

What website comes up when someone types in your new web address?

THIS IS CALLED DOMAIN FORWARDING. Instructions are in the “TOOLS” of your member login at www.har.com OR call GoDaddy OR go to “Domain Forwarding” when you are logged into your GoDaddy account.



Have you ever Googled yourself?

GO FOR IT!

THEN...

Make sure you complete your profile. It's FREE and easy.

www.google.com/profiles

Then, if you would like to know if anyone else googles you and/or any other phrase, keywords, etc. set up Google Alerts. It is also FREE and easy.

www.google.com/alerts





YOUR ACCOUNTS with TREC, HAR, TAR, NAR and other social accounts such as your social media accounts...so that you have a fluid presence online and so that when any consumer may be going to look for you online, they can reach you.

<http://www.trec.state.tx.us/>

<http://www.har.com>

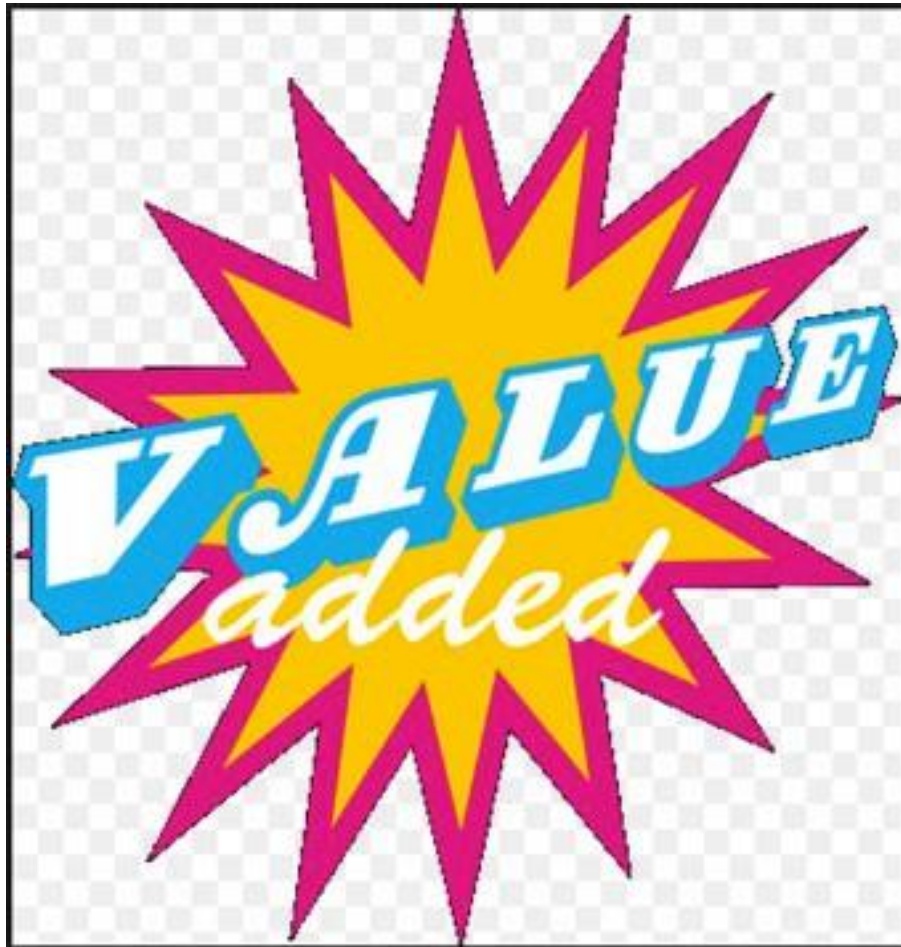
<http://www.texasrealestate.com>

<http://www.realtor.org>

Consider creating your account profiles on other real estate sites such as www.realtor.com, www.zillow.com, www.trulia.com, www.homes.com, etc.

When you are creating your profile...make sure to showcase your market area...even including subdivisions, and/or target market...such as baby boomers, empty nesters, investors, or international clients, etc. This will also help with your being found on Google and other search engines.

What value do YOU bring to buyers and sellers?
(This will help you also build your profile(s))



What value do you bring to buyers?

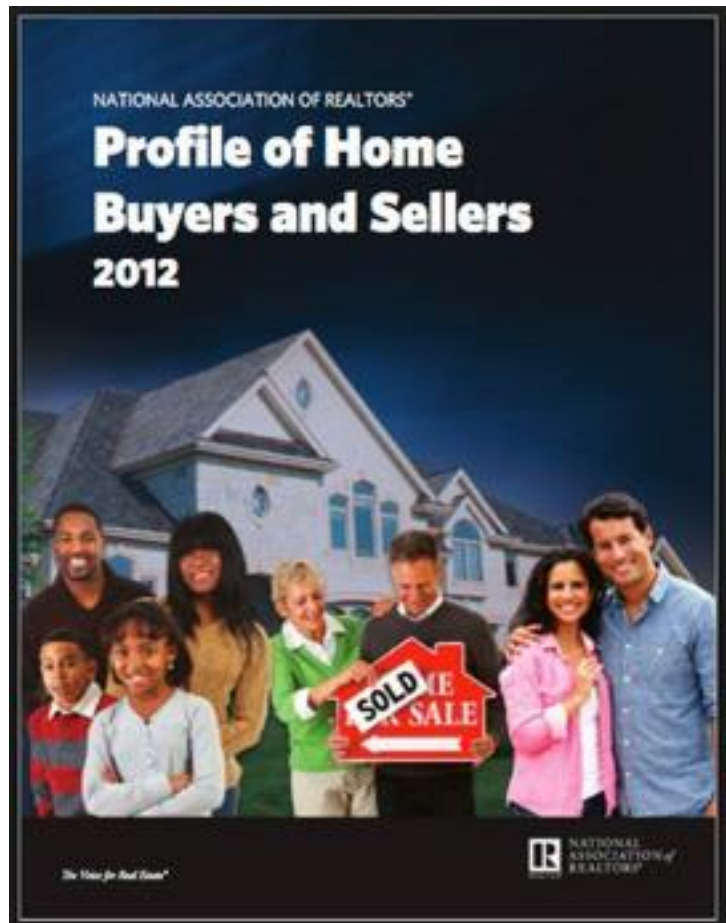
What value do you bring to sellers?

HAR has been studying consumer behavior to help you with this. AND, NAR surveys buyers and sellers every year to gain insight on this type of information. To gain the survey results from HAR, go to:

<http://www.har.com/consumerresearch>

To review the 2012 findings for NAR's Profile of Buyers and Sellers, go to:

<http://www.realtor.org/sites/default/files/Highlights-NAR-2012-HBS-2012-11-12.pdf>



FREE HAR Tools that you can use to BRAND YOU!

Use the HAR Agent Self-Assessment Checklist as a Guide and To-Do List. You can find it by going to: <http://www.har.com/agentselfassessment>

When you access this list online while logged in as a member, each blue item below will link you to the appropriate section. THIS in itself is a VERY resourceful HAR tool.



Agent Self-Assessment Checklist

The objective of the Agent Tools Checklist is to help agents learn about the HAR tools that have been developed to help them in their day-to-day real estate activities.

For each question that you can answer with a yes, give yourself 3 points. Add up all of your points to see your grade below.

Marketing Yourself on HAR.com

- [Have you set up your free HAR Member Web site?](#)
- [Does your Member Web site have your photo and profile?](#)
- [Did you know you can load a video on HAR.com promoting your services as a REALTOR®?](#)
- [Do you have a blog?](#)
- [Are you displaying your rating on HAR.com?](#)
- [Have you added the language you speak or culture you specialize in on your profile?](#)
- [Are you chatting online with your clients?](#)

Promoting Your Listings

- [Have you shot videos for your listings?](#)
- [Have you set up the Social Networking Plug-in to promote your listings on social networking sites?](#)
- [Do you include the listing distribution chart in your listing presentation?](#)
- [Do you know what IDX is and how you can benefit from it?](#)

Client Communications

- [Are you inviting your clients to participate in the Client Experience Rating program?](#)
- [Are you sending the agent eNewsletter to your clients?](#)
- [Are you sending a traffic report to your sellers?](#)
- [Have you used the Consumer Service Checklist?](#)
- [Do you use the Consumer Survey for Buyers and Sellers?](#)

Lead Checklist

Have you verified the e-mail where HAR is sending your leads?

Do you join to the Members Only portal to check your leads daily?

Have you enabled the Lead Connect feature?

Have you verified the number where HAR is sending your leads?

Are you using the 713-REALTOR Property Hotline?

Do you know what the HAR Lead Generation System is and how consumers send leads to you?

Do you know what schedule showing leads are and how they are generated?

Do you know what time of day leads are and OOW these leads are generated?

Tools You Must Know

Do you know what My HomeFinder is?

Do you know what My Neighborhoods is?

Do you know what the Home Value tool is?

Do you know what HAR blogs are?

Have you visited the HAR Blogosphere recently?

Do you know how to use social media to make money?



Blogging

What is a blog? A blog is a combination of web and log, hence the term “blog”... To an average consumer, it is your new website. Think of it as a hybrid site, which allows for static content and posts. A blog (also called a weblog or web log) is a website consisting of entries (also called [posts](#)) appearing in reverse chronological order with the most recent entry appearing first (similar in format to a daily journal). Blogs typically include features such as [comments](#) and [links](#) to increase user interactivity. Blogs are created using specific [publishing software](#).

Get ideas from other real estate professionals:

www.miamism.com

www.phoenixrealestateguy.com

www.clarkcountyrealestateguide.com

Why should you blog? It is simple because Google loves fresh content and it easier time management for you!

Rules of Blogging:

#1 Anyone can Blog

- Stop being paralyzed
- It does not have to be perfect
- Decide on name of blog
- Decide on blog name
- Decide on what software you will blog on, ie: wordpress.com
- Decide on who will host blog

#2 Content is King

- What do I post?
- Where to get Content?
- How often to post?

#3 Start Blogging

- Just do it

Bloggng Resources

- Realestatetomatoes.com
- Diversolutions.com
- Boomtownroi.com
- Socialcrossroads.com
- Hoopjumper.com
- <http://websitesetupguide.com>
- Mashable.com
- [Wordpress for Dummies](http://WordpressforDummies.com)

All HAR members have a FREE blog. If you aren't yet sure about blogging at other sites, start with the HAR Blogosphere.

Go to: <http://members.har.com/blogs/dispPromotion.cfm>

Blog Notes:

Review the cases below to learn how those REALTORS® used their local HAR Member Blog to their advantage.

Case 1: Create a post about local community



Rachel Rosson

Rachel Rosson of Greenwood King Properties created a post on her HAR Member Blog announcing that the West U Little League Senior won the 2011 World Series. She shared the exciting news on her blog, which ranked number four.

West U Little League Senior won the 2011 World Series. She shared the exciting news on her blog, which ranked number four.



Case 2: Create a post about local issues



Carolyn Hufstetler

Carolyn Hufstetler of Seth Wolf Group Real Estate created a post on her HAR Member Blog about an article she read from Forbes magazine regarding the Houston housing market. She shared her thoughts on the article and ranked number three.

Best places to live in Houston. She shared her thoughts on the article and ranked number three.



Case 3: Create a post about a neighborhood



Jack Perry

Jack Perry of Greenwood King Properties created a post on his HAR Member Blog about his favorite neighborhood in Houston: East End. When conducting a search in Google, his blog ranked number five.

East End. When conducting a search in Google, his blog ranked number five.

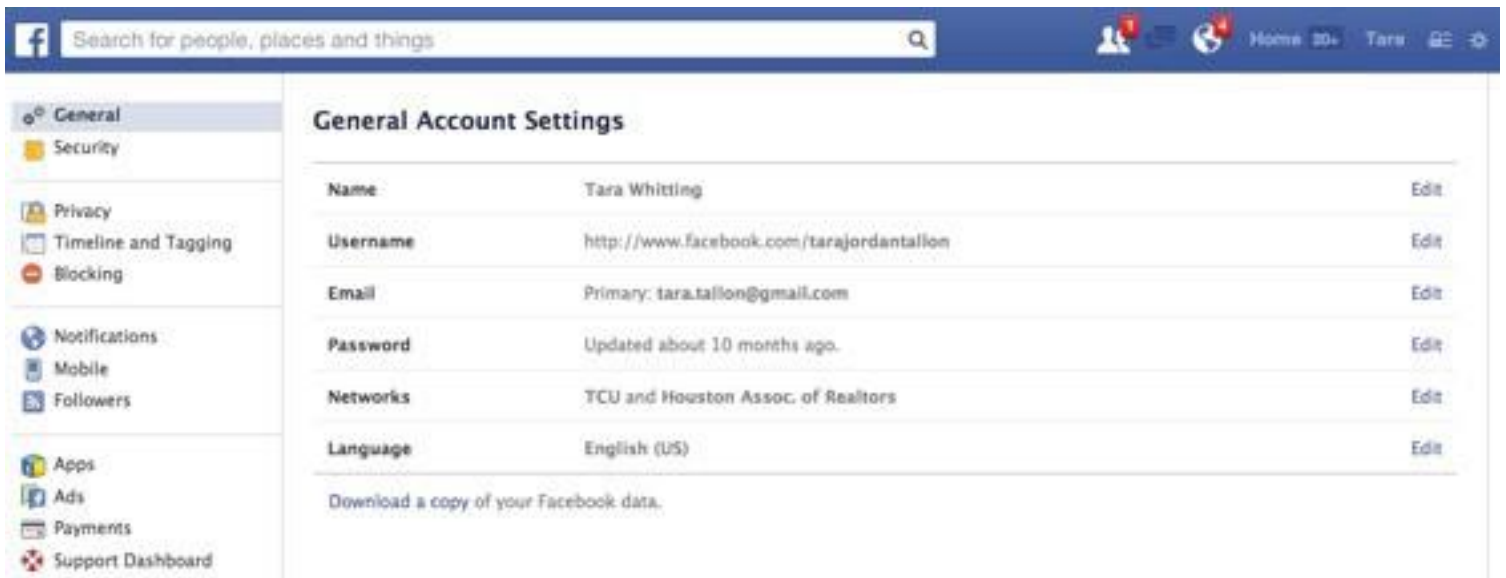




REALTORS® still largely generate the majority of their business by referral...so then, wouldn't Facebook be considered a great referral network and database???

CONSIDER USING IT THIS WAY. Reach out to perhaps 3-4 "Friends" per week. Would this help you in your business? _____

Most REALTORS® have concerns about Facebook privacy...so, go into Facebook and take the time to set your privacy settings. This will make you feel much better to participate in social media outlets such as Facebook. Here are some of the main Facebook privacy settings:
Do you think you need or want a Facebook Fan Page?



Should I separate my personal profile from my business presence on Facebook?

Yes. I know when it come to real estate agents, your personal network is your business network and it may sound logical to use your personal profile to market your business, however we suggest you keep your personal profile personal, using it to converse amongst your family, friends and colleagues. Prospective clients may be turned off

by a personal post or comment, not to mention what friends of yours may be posting. So keep it separate, and use a Facebook (FB) Fan page for your business brand.

You should also understand that your Facebook friends don't care about your home listings for sale. They're on your friend list because they like

you and want to stay in touch. If you constantly spam your friends with listings and open houses, your friends will soon strike the “Hide” button to disable your future posts. Use your personal profile to build relationships, but not to market. Continue to grow your base of friends and engage with people on a personal level. If you stick with keeping your personal profile about you and your fan page about your business, you will successfully expand your friends and fan base.

To create a Facebook fan page, first log in to your account, then click this link <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php> to create a fan page. There is no limit on the number of Fan pages you can create. (Just **do not** create more than one personal profile, as it is against the Facebook rules and they will delete your accounts if someone reports you.)

What is the Secret to marketing your FB Fan page that will engage prospects and build fans?

Emphasize your Towns !

Make the Fan page about your communities, not about you the realtor. On Facebook, people fan things they love and are passionate about. Lets be honest, most people in the towns you market will not care about your recent awards and achievements, or your open houses or featured listings, but what they do care about is where they live. Become the trusted online resource for the towns you represent, and you will benefit from social media marketing. People will do business with those they know and trust.

To view an example of this working successful strategy check out Vancouver, WA realtor Dale Chumbley's Facebook fan page <http://www.facebook.com/WhyVancouverWA> nearing 1 year old with over 14,000 fans.

Wondering how a Fan page will generate new prospects (aka fans)?

It's rather simple, if your wall posts on your fan page are intriguing, they will generate user engagement through comments and likes. Every time someone Likes or Comments on your post, your post is displayed to friends of friends. The more comments you have the more visible your page becomes. As more people see your page and find it interesting they will become fans and your fan base will grow viral.

In order to make this strategy work, follow the posting guidelines and customization suggestions listed below.

Recommended Posting Guidelines For Your Fan Page:

- Review local businesses: especially restaurants, schools, entertainment facilities, etc.
- Inform your fans about new businesses
- Start discussions on community events
- Cover community news
- Upload photos and videos of your towns
- Keep your Fan Page active - Post frequently and rhythmically consistent
- Make your posts personable and inviting
- Share quality, relevant content
- Reply to fan comments
- From time to time, discuss local real estate news, marketing tips and other information that will benefit buyers and sellers, but do not overdo it. Conservatively mix in your marketing message.

Customize Your Facebook Fan page:

- Import your Blog posts into a Facebook tab

- Import Twitter posts into a Facebook tab
- Create a Testimonials tab and encourage clients to post
- Share your listings, local schools and market stats in a Facebook Real Estate tab with Roost Social Real Estate application
- [Secure a vanity url](#)
- Create custom tabs with Static FBML application
- Use Facebook ads

Make social media work by putting a little time and effort in connecting with the people in the towns you specialize, and you will soon build trust and creditability as well a community with your followers. This approach will increase your fan page base, allowing fans to engage with each other without feeling like they are being spammed by your direct marketing.

We hope these tips help you to effectively promote your real estate business using Facebook Fan pages.

Lastly, don't forget to market your Facebook fan page and invite all your FB friends to become a fan of your page through the "Suggest to Friends" link underneath your page picture.

Facebook Notes:

TWITTER

As a real estate agent, you should focus on increasing the number of quality followers on your Twitter account. Having more followers is correlated with having more social authority, influence, and leads.

However, using techniques such as following numerous people in hopes that they follow you back is not very effective.

This leads to low-quality followers and weakens the Twitter system. You want your followers to be engaged and interested in your business or content. To attract higher quality followers, you must establish a credible account.



To create an account that represents your company, you should begin by uploading an aesthetically pleasing logo. This picture needs to represent your company well because it is seen every time you tweet. Twitter also allows you to customize your page background. You should use this opportunity to match the theme of the Twitter page to that of your website in order to show consistency and build your brand. Finally, you should write a Twitter bio that tells your business story in a short sentence. The sentence, like the rest of your Twitter account, should be informative and personal. Also, be sure to include a link to your website in this section.

Now that you have successfully set up your Twitter account, you should use it to share valuable content. It is a great place to link back to your website and share new blog posts, listings, or information regarding your community. Be professional, but also have a sense of humor when on Twitter. If you post frequently and spread them out throughout the day, you will be able to attract more followers. However, if your tweets are too clustered and spam-like, you may lose credibility. By occasionally tweeting pictures, you will be able to better engage your crowd. People are more likely to click on your link or view your page if there is an image associated with it.



At a very minimum, make sure you have a complete LinkedIn profile. Consider this...how do you look if a client or potential client were to go look you up on LinkedIn? If LinkedIn is the largest digital online professional network...shouldn't you be visible there?

If there are 3 levels you could participate on LinkedIn, here they are:

Level 1:

Make sure you have a complete and polished profile

Level 2:

Recommend and be recommended

Endorse and be endorsed

Reach out to 3-4 contacts per week...to increase your referral network and to stay in touch and engaged with your contacts

Level 3:

Participate in group discussions and/or create groups to engage other LinkedIn professionals

THE 3 PILLARS for Participating in Social Media Marketing to be Successful!



BE:

RELEVANT

CONSISTENT

&

ENGAGING