

Journal

JUN 2015

VOL 66/06

**What to expect when
you're inspecting**
Inspection procedure
know-how

If in doubt, shout
Dealing with
potential claims

**What's a
picture worth?**
Instagram dos
and don'ts

CULTURE CLUB

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Taking back control of our profession

I was disappointed to see a recent Roy Morgan Survey that ranked real estate agents amongst the most lowly-regarded professions in terms of honesty and ethics. Of the 30 industries surveyed agents came in at number 28, only ranking higher than advertising people and car salesmen. This is obviously a major concern for the profession and is something that has been an ongoing issue when you take a deeper look at the statistics; our profession has been toward the bottom of the pile since the inception of the *Image of Professions Survey* back in 1987.

I believe the low ranking is partly attributable to 'quickie courses' that permit entry into the profession with as little as one day of training! These courses do not equip new entrants with the requisite skills and knowledge to deliver a competent service to consumers. The property transaction is where true property professionals add value to the transaction and are able to shine.

There is a direct correlation between training standards and consumer respect. The professions that have ranked highly since the survey commenced include nurses, pharmacists, doctors and teachers. The respect that they are given in regard to honesty and ethics is outstanding.

We know that you, our members, are suffering because of the poor profile that the profession has. Unfortunately this is of little surprise to us. As a result, we have stepped

up our lobbying efforts to change the public's perception of real estate agents. We have started with what is the most critical area: lack of education. Clearly, it is now time that we take back control of the profession.

The whole profession is suffering because of the lack of emphasis placed on education standards by successive governments. As the property market continues to heat up, we are well aware of the influx of interest in becoming a real estate agent. This is something that we have experienced before. However, the standard of education is also at a record low.

We believe we are making headway with the NSW Government and will continue to ensure that our voice is heard. It is time to boost the profession's respect to a new high, increase entry-level education requirements and stamp out practices that put the industry toward the bottom of the pile.



Tim McKibbin
REINSW CEO



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BEHIND THE SCENES



ROADSHOW

There's still time to catch the industry's key players together in one room at the 2015 REINSW Roadshow. Find out when we'll be in your area and book your place at reinsw.com.au/roadshow



AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Entries are now open! Don't be shy – your achievements deserve to be recognised. Go to reinsw.com.au/awards to view the categories and criteria.



STORE DISCOUNT

Did you know that as a member you receive a 50% discount on all purchases from the REINSW Store? This includes paper agreements and forms, books, stickers and more – everything you need to do your job. Check out what's available at reinsw.com.au/store



Underquote at your own peril

Allowing a vendor to dictate the marketed price of a property is fraught with danger and could land you in hot water.



REINSW President Malcolm Gunning urges agents to take control of their marketing campaigns.

Underquoting has been a topic that has captured a lot of attention over the course of my Presidency, and this has particularly been the case over the last six months after constant coverage by the media resulted in a laser focus by NSW Fair Trading.

It has been such a hot topic that the Premier himself took time out from the election campaign to pledge that he would enact additional legislation against, and ultimately stamp out, underquoting. If agents do not step up their game and stamp out the practice of underquoting, we may be left to suffer under the weight of new draconian legislation that will hamper our industry and further erode our profession. If new and prescriptive legislation is brought into play, as threatened by the Premier, it could even mean that as practitioners we may not be able to provide buyers with price advice.

When it comes to advertised price ranges vendors can, and sometimes do, try to dictate to their agents the price they want appearing in the marketing campaign. There is risk associated with allowing this to happen and the

agent may potentially be placing themselves in a position where underquoting occurs. Promoting a price range below the estimated selling price or range set out in the agency agreement is illegal. The bottom line is, if an agent quotes just \$1 below the estimated selling price as stated in the agency agreement, it is underquoting. It's that simple.

A professional agent will take control of the marketing campaign and will not be overly influenced by the vendor or the potential buyers. You must adhere to the law or risk being fined and/or lose your licence. The reality is that it isn't just the sales agent that is affected; it is the licensee too, and in turn the majority of property professionals who are doing the right thing. The NSW Government is determined to stamp out the practice of underquoting, as is REINSW, and we are working with the new Minister to ensure that this practice is addressed.

I encourage you to look at the *Underquoting Property Prices Guideline*, which is now available on the NSW Fair Trading website at fairtrading.nsw.gov.au. The guideline clearly explains your obligations and responsibilities.

If you have any questions regarding underquoting, please contact the REINSW Helpline by calling (02) 9264 2343 or emailing helpline@reinsw.com.au ♦



excellence

Entries are now open for the

2015 REINSW AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

It's that time of year when REINSW showcases our industry's top performers.

This is your opportunity to highlight your biggest successes and most outstanding achievements.

Finalists will be announced in August 2015 and winners will be revealed at the Gala Dinner on Thursday, 8 October 2015.

TO ENTER

Visit www.reinsw.com.au/awards to view the criteria and enter.

Entries close on **Friday, 12 June 2015**.

MORE INFORMATION

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Property Marketer
Residential Property Manager
Residential Salesperson
Rising Star
Rural Marketer
Young Agent

News in brief

\$1 MILLION MEDIAN IMMEDIATE FOR SYDNEY

On the back of a 3.6 per cent increase to \$914,056 in the March quarter, the Domain Group's *House Price Report* is predicting that the median house price in Sydney will reach \$1,000,000 by the end of 2015.

"Given that the average person in NSW earns \$77,500 a year, who can afford to buy a house in Sydney?" REINSW President Malcolm Gunning said. "Home ownership matters and it's time for the NSW Government to provide a solution by addressing property taxes and the planning system."

GEN Y STILL CHASING GREAT AUSTRALIAN DREAM

The *2015 Future Leaders Index* shows that 18-29 year olds remain doggedly committed to home ownership. Notwithstanding considerable discomfort over the prospect of future debt levels, most Sydney Gen Y's (79%) are still willing take on debt for a mortgage and the majority (78%) still believe buying a home as soon as possible is preferable to renting.

UNDERQUOTING GUIDELINES DON'T ADDRESS REAL PROBLEM

The *Underquoting Property Prices Guideline* released by NSW Fair Trading highlights problems with industry education standards. "It's little wonder that underquoting and other compliance issues exist within the profession, when government permits and encourages new entrants to enter the profession with as little as one day of training," REINSW CEO Tim McKibbin said. "The only remedy is improved entry-level education."



Save time with REST Professional

With the release of Version 12.5 of REST Professional by leading real estate software solutions provider Rockend, users can expect to save time, reduce duplication and do away with cumbersome manual processes.

"This release is all about saving time," Rockend Head of Product, Scott Shepherd, said. "We've taken processes that used to take a considerable amount of time, were manual or were not performed in REST Professional and have made them faster and easier to track. What previously took hours, now takes just minutes."

Featuring in Version 12.5 is the new Inspections Workflow. "Our clients' nominated inspections is one of the key areas where they spend a lot of time on manual processes," Mr Shepherd said.

"The new Inspections Workflow streamlines the time consuming elements related to the inspection process and allows users to schedule, notify, review and update all their inspections in a fraction of the time."

Upgrading to Version 12.5 gives users access to enhanced Letting Fee and Agency Charge capabilities. "Forgetting to charge a letting fee or other fees associated with letting has been an ongoing issue for some of our clients," Mr Shepherd said. "The enhancements in this release are squarely aimed at clearly showing what letting fees and charges are due, simplifying the process of charging them."

"Entering separate letting-associated charges individually is also a thing of the past, as clients can now create multiple chargers in one go," he said. "So it's a time saver, as well as a double check to make sure they are receiving the fees that they are due."

Other new features in Version 12.5 include the ability to replicate information on the Owner Details Screen into a New Owner Card, minimising data entry and reducing the possibility of mistakes, as well as a new look Vacancy Counter Report. The Owner and Tenant Portals have also been enhanced and now include the ability for owners and tenants to view the property's inspection history, finding the answer they need without having to contact their property manager.

If you would like to learn more about REST Professional, please call Rockend on 1300 657 700 or visit rockend.com.au



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TOP TIPS OF THE MONTH

**New to real estate?
Here's some advice
to make your first steps
a little less daunting.**

1.

Set goals

Make sure you set attainable goals. Plan what you want to achieve within a particular time frame and focus on getting it done. Setting goals keeps you productive and helps you to stay on track. Make sure the goals are achievable – you'll gain confidence once you complete them!

2.

Get a mentor

To get ahead, you need a mentor to give you advice and put you on the right track. You'll learn more easily from someone that you can connect with on a personal and professional level.

3.

Be realistic

It can be easy to lose your enthusiasm when faced with a major hurdle. A healthy dose of optimism and realism from the beginning will ensure you don't lose momentum when faced with a setback. A setback may, in fact, increase your passion and perseverance to deliver.

Checklist: Developing prospects

Building relationships with potential clients is an essential part of building your business. Smart agents work continuously to create strong relationships with potential clients in order to convert their prospects into clients. Here are some ideas to help you with developing prospects.

1. DETERMINE THE BEST PROSPECTS

Someone who doesn't have a need or want for your services is not a prospect. It's important to make sure you are not wasting your time and resources by contacting and following up leads who are not ready to sell or lease. Determining who is genuinely interested and in need of your services is the best way to develop and maintain strong prospects who you can then convert into clients. Spending your time finding the best prospects will save you more time down the track.

2. CALL YOUR PROSPECTS REGULARLY

There is nothing more effective than a good old-fashioned phone call. When it comes to prospecting it is about the number of connections you make, not the number of phone calls. When cold-calling prospects, make sure you are sending the right message; be confident and know what you are trying

to accomplish. This is important whether you talk to someone on the other end of the phone or leave a message on their voicemail. When calling, it is also essential to develop a thick skin; not everyone will want to talk to you, so don't let it get you down.

3. DEVELOP A PROSPECTING PLAN

It is no secret that pre-planning anything you do is the best way to start a new

process. By developing a prospecting plan, your approach and processes will be streamlined, creating better opportunities to convert prospects into clients. Using a plan can help outline the most useful information to distribute to potential leads. It is also a way to keep all your information up-to-date and relevant. Developing a prospecting plan will also make sure that you are not caught off-guard.



All or nothing

Arriving in Sydney with a young child, little money and unable to speak English, Catherine Li has gone on to become a founding partner of a successful agency and is one of the top performing sales agents in the Ray White network.

BY CATHERINE LI
Selling Principal at Ray White Epping



I was raised in Tianjin in China where I completed my Bachelor of Engineering. After graduating, I established a successful career in engineering before deciding to change career paths to an industry that was customer-service based. I became an Area Manager for Avon Cosmetics and quickly became drawn to dealing with clients whose purchasing decisions were influenced by intangibles such as dreams and lifestyle.

I made this rather dramatic change in profession because I preferred dealing with people rather than machinery. I have always felt confident when dealing with clients and discussing business, and I wanted a career in an industry that was more about people.

Working hard pays off

My position at Avon Cosmetics sparked something in me, and I found myself becoming attracted to the real estate industry after my sister moved to Sydney, where she had already established her career as an agent. Soon after giving birth to my daughter, I followed my sister to Sydney, completing my Real Estate Licence and learning English.

When I first arrived, I had very little money, no job and spoke very little English. My husband and I had my five-year-old daughter to take care of, and at the same time we needed to find jobs to survive while also looking to begin my dream

career. I knew it wasn't going to be easy. Fortunately, I was raised in a family of very hard workers, so discipline and a strong work ethic was instilled in me.

I gained my first real estate role in 1999. From there my passion for this industry and my drive to succeed only grew. I have always felt that if I wanted to do something, I needed to give it my all. For me, it was all or nothing.

Utilising my skills

I was primarily interested in residential sales, dealing with both owners and potential purchasers. However my engineering background provided me with a strong understanding of plans and design, which led to me to develop an interest in project marketing as well as residential and commercial property management.

The most important lesson I have learnt so far is to advise my clients of all the facts and to earn their respect through my performance. It is important to work hard and deliver through your actions, and with that you will deliver strong results every time. This industry is equally as much about giving advice as listening to what your clients want, so listen to their requirements if you want to deliver.

No two days are ever the same in this industry. Every day there are new challenges, new faces, new properties. That's what keeps things exciting! ♦

CATHERINE LI SHARES HER ADVICE ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF A CAREER IN REAL ESTATE.

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

Honesty takes you a long way with clients in this industry, and you need to build an honest reputation for yourself if you want to receive their trust.

WORK HARD

I came to this country with no money, no real estate skills, and unable to communicate. Today, I have transformed my career, am a founding partner of an agency and have been named the Top 1 Principal in the Sydney Metro area for Ray White. These achievements would not have come without hard work.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Honesty and hard work take you a long way, but if you are not an effective communicator, your efforts won't get you far. It is important to communicate all information to your clients, and follow up with them every day. You are providing a service to them.

Your questions answered

The *Journal* puts your questions to key industry experts. This month, we spoke to the Real Estate Employers' Federation (NSW) about commission-only employment arrangements.

Q. What is commission-only employment and what are the general requirements?

Commission-only employment is an employment arrangement permitted by the Real Estate Industry Award (the Award), rather than a contractual agreement like other commission arrangements. There are important restrictions however on who can be employed on a commission-only basis. In order to be employed under a commission-only agreement, a sales person must:

- be engaged as a Property Sales Representative or Property Sales Supervisor under the Award
- have a minimum of 12 months experience as a real estate sales person and not be a casual, junior, Property Sales Associate or trainee
- have a written agreement setting out the basis upon which commission is to be calculated
- be at least 21 years of age
- be able to demonstrate that they satisfy the Minimum Income Threshold Test (MITT) unless the person has operated their own real estate business during the last 5 years.

Q. What is the MITT?

The Minimum Income Threshold Test, or MITT, is the central focus of a commission-only arrangement. After commission-only employment was removed from the industry in 2006, in order to re-introduce it, the MITT was created to satisfy the statutory principle that a person of average capacity should be able to receive at least the same minimum amount of pay to which a salaried sales person is entitled.

The MITT limits the application of commission-only employment to employees who are able to demonstrate that had the agreed commission-only rate been applied against past sales during a selected 12-month period, the employee would have been paid an amount at least equal to the prescribed annual minimum award wage. It is important to note however that this does not mean that an employee properly classified as a commission-only sales person is entitled to receive a minimum salary. Rather, it is a test to determine if an agent can be employed on a commission-only basis.

If the employee satisfies the MITT, the Award requires that the sales person is paid at least 35% of the "Employer's Net Commission" (ENC). ENC is specifically defined in the Award.

Q. How is the MITT calculated?

There are three steps to calculate the MITT:

1. Consider the sales made by the employee in any 12-month period during the last five years. The year can be one in which the employee worked with a previous employer. Make sure to choose a good sales year.
2. Using the records provided, calculate the ENC received from the sales in the chosen 12 month period.
3. Multiply the ENC by the agreed lowest rate of commission (e.g. 35%) under the proposed commission-only agreement.

The MITT is satisfied if the amount calculated under step three is greater than the annualised salary for the employee's award classification multiplied by 110%; e.g. for a Property Sales Representative this rate is currently \$38,972. Note that this percentage assumes there are no allowances. If the employee will be paid allowances, you can multiply by 100%.

Q. What are the entitlements of a commission-only employee?

A commission-only employee is entitled to the following:

- performance based pay
- superannuation
- all National Employee Standard (NES) entitlements including annual leave, sick leave, notice of termination etc
- long service leave.

However, commission-only employees are not entitled to allowances (in most circumstances) or annual leave loading.

For more information about commission-only employment, contact the Real Estate Employers' Federation on (02) 9261 2666. ♦



ASK THE HELPLINE

Contact the REINSW Helpline for unlimited professional guidance and advice when you need it on (02) 9264 2343 (option 4) or email helpline@reinsw.com.au

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The evolution of loyalty

Relationships are the greatest determinant of your success as a real estate professional, so it is essential to understand the role loyalty plays in creating a devoted client base.

BY JAMES KANE

Tens of thousands of years living in social communities has taught humans what to look for when forming relationships that will keep them safe, supported and fulfilled. Our brains have evolved to seek out clues to determine which relationships should be pursued and maintained and which should be avoided. Two of these clues are a sense of trust and a sense of belonging. These are the same clues that every client looks for when evaluating their relationship with you and your business.

A sense of trust

It may seem obvious, but before someone will be loyal to you, they first need to trust you. They need to be able to trust your capabilities, your character, your consistency and your capacity, believing that you can actually do what you say you can, honestly, ethically and without waiver. That is trust.

Here's the catch. While it is essential for the people you do business with to trust you, they will never give you credit for being trustworthy. Why? Because they expect you to be. You don't get bonus points for delivering a product or service on time and on budget. You don't get credit for offering a fair price. You don't get credit for telling them the truth. And you don't get credit for having a high standard of performance.

When someone agrees to do business with you or work for you, they assume you will do all these things. You have satisfied them, but certainly haven't done anything that would cause them to feel indebted, dependent or loyal. You did something for them and they did something for you, so you're even. You don't owe them anything. They don't owe you anything. This is why trust alone does not make someone loyal.

A sense of belonging

The incredible development of humankind is a direct result of our ability to form close, cooperative relationships. Our ancient ancestors didn't spend all of their waking hours out looking for their next meal or worried about being attacked by a predator. They had others they could count on to help out, which meant they had the time and freedom to explore, think and learn – and that made all the difference to our evolution as a species.

Belonging to a group or community gives us a sense of identity. It helps us to understand who we are, what we want and how we fit in, while providing us with a powerful desire to be connected to people we can know and who want to know us. Cultivating

a sense of belonging is often difficult for most businesses. Their goals, products, services, the way they operate, and even the way they measure their progress and success, typically centers around the trust issues described above and ignores the very personal aspects of a relationship.

The real key to building and maintaining a loyal relationship is conveying a sense of belonging. It requires recognising everyone as unique individuals and understanding their needs as well as your own. If you don't, you are simply a commodity that they can replace in an instant.

Satisfaction vs loyalty

Satisfaction and loyalty are not the same thing. Satisfaction produces a temporary mood, because you were able to deliver everything you promised in exactly the way I expected you to. But make a mistake or allow my expectations to change and I will no longer be satisfied and more than likely will leave you.

Loyalty, on the other hand, produces a long-term behavior that is nearly unbreakable. Just remember, all loyal relationships will be satisfied, but not all satisfied relationships will be loyal.

Merging the worlds of business, neuroscience and behavioural psychology, James Kane is recognised as one of the leading researchers and consultants in the science of loyalty and the role it plays in human relationships and the communities we form. ♦

SEE JAMES KANE AT THE 100+ CONFERENCE ON 24–25 AUGUST 2015

Speaking exclusively at the 100+ Conference, James Kane will reveal why the relationships you have with your clients are so important and how you can make them absolutely loyal for life.

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FEATURE

A man and a woman are standing together, smiling and looking at a tablet held by the man. The man is wearing a blue and white checkered shirt, and the woman is wearing a black and white patterned top. The background is a bright, blurred indoor setting.

CULTURE CLUB

Tracy Billings credits Raine & Horne Bondi Junction's workplace culture to providing all team members with the opportunity to work collaboratively.

Whether you actively build one or not, your workplace has a culture and this culture is largely determined by leadership. The *Journal* asked three agency leaders how they create and maintain their workplace culture

BY TINA LIPTAI

Investing the time and effort to build a great office culture will not only make your agency a place where you and your employees enjoy working, but it will also increase the productivity and success of your business.

Martin Wells, Owner and Principal at Atkinsons Real Estate, has 11 staff with a range of experience that have remained with the agency since he bought the business three years ago. Martin won the REINSW Award for Excellence in the Real Estate Agency – Small category in 2014 and credits his success in large part to workplace culture.

“

We have an encouraging, supportive, productive atmosphere. We are not perfect, but we are always working to make things even better.”

“Good culture is vital for the success of the business, everyone is important and should feel valued and appreciated,” he said. “Your staff are the face of your company and if morale isn't good it can impact on service and can stop business growth.”

Craig Marshall, Principal at Century 21 Cordeau Marshall, has been working in the industry for 32 years and prides himself on providing a great place to work. Craig has 60 staff working across six locations; 14 of them have been with his agency for more than 10 years.

“There are two things people want when they come to work; job satisfaction and money,” Craig said. “There is no use being

paid well and having a bad culture, because people will still often leave. You must be able to provide a positive environment, so you have staff that are satisfied with their work.”

Tracy Billings has worked at Raine & Horne Bondi Junction for 15 years and is Manager of Residential Property Management. She oversees four business units, each with two senior property managers assisted by a property officer, and is setting up a fifth unit. She also oversees a new business executive, two property administration assistants and two part-time trust accountants. Tracy credits workplace culture at her agency to the ability to attract newcomers to the industry and providing them with the opportunity to work collaboratively alongside longer-serving staff.

“I think being a family business makes a difference. At the heart of the company, the Directors, who are brothers, really genuinely care about staff and it feels like a family,” Tracy said. “We have an encouraging, supportive, productive atmosphere. We are not perfect, but we are always working to make things even better.”

How do you build it?

There is no magic list of rules to building a positive workplace culture. Different agencies may all have a good culture, but go about building and maintaining it very differently. Good leadership is certainly a cornerstone, but everyone in the office is an important part of building a good workplace.

Martin, Craig and Tracy all agree that communication, compassion, respect and a genuine passion for the industry are at the heart of building a strong office culture.

Communication

From structured staff meetings to casual conversations, communication is key to building an open and honest workplace.



MARTIN WELLS
Owner and Principal at
Atkinsons Real Estate

“
There is some give
and take, but staff
work better when they
feel respected and
valued as people, not
just as workers.”

“Some owners just sit in a chair in their office and separate themselves from their staff, but that is not good for building culture. All staff know they can ring me at any time. It’s really important to be available and helpful,” Craig said.

Tracy agrees, saying being open to staff suggestions is also key. “I really love it when staff share their ideas with me,” Tracy said. “We are always open to suggestions if staff think there is a better way to do something.”

All three agents stressed the importance of regular meetings, as a team and a one-on-one with management, to keep the lines of communication open.

Clear expectations

Tracy believes that setting clear expectations empowers staff to take responsibility and allows for flexibility.

“I am very transparent. I share my vision for the team and we all work towards being the best at what we do,” she said. “Expectations are clear and everyone is accountable for their work. I don’t mind if staff have a longer lunch one day or go for a coffee. It’s a fine balance, and there is a lot of trust involved, but it’s important to have some flexibility.

“You don’t want to be looking over their shoulder every day, and when you have a good office culture you don’t need to because you have staff that really want to do a good job and be productive and successful.”

Martin also believes flexibility builds loyalty and is a good motivator. “Our staff take pride in their work and are accountable, so there is a strong sense that we are all working together for success,” he said. “It’s important to acknowledge people have a life outside of work. If someone has sick kids to look after or a special presentation at a school assembly, it’s important to me they are able to do those things.

“When you have that flexibility, I find people are more efficient when they are in the office. There is some give and take, but staff work better when they feel respected and valued as people, not just as workers.”

And when things do go wrong, staff are more likely to feel accountable and keen to fix the problem.

“Mistakes are part of a learning curve,” Craig said. “You need to be approachable, otherwise your staff will try and hide mistakes. I still expect results and I expect people to do the right thing, but you also want them to come to you when there is a problem.”

Compassion

From divorce to a death in the family, there are bound to be times when staff members need additional support and how you react to that can make all the difference.

“Remember, the people who work for you are people; they have emotions and lives outside of your office,” Martin said. “Genuinely caring and taking an interest in your staff will build trust and loyalty, and you will have a much better workplace. The worst thing you could ever do is not have time for your employees when they need support.”

Though, as with anything, there should be balance when it comes to ‘venting’ personal problems.

“I encourage minor baggage to be left at the door when people arrive for work, so everyone can get on with their day,” Tracy said. “If it’s a problem that requires a day off to sort out, then by all means take it and come in tomorrow ready to work.”

Celebrate

Taking time out to celebrate and recognise achievements is vital for maintaining motivation and good morale within a workplace.

Martin, Tracy and Craig believe in the importance of organised and impromptu events, which could include a team lunch and celebrating birthdays to fun monthly

activities like stand-up paddle boarding or a barbecue.

Craig has a number of strategies to celebrate staff achievements - from a bottle of bubbly up for grabs each week for meeting sales targets to big team dinners.

“Recognition of success is important, especially in front of your peers,” he said. “It’s also important to be consistent. Don’t reward someone one week if you aren’t going to keep it up. But you do need to come up with new incentives and ideas to challenge your staff.”

As well as rewarding high-performing staff who achieve ‘super star status’ each quarter, Craig also rewards staff who don’t reach that magic figure but achieve a record personal best. Every year Craig also hosts an overnight team building event, which includes entertainment and training.

Opportunities and training

Whether it is a weekly webinar, structured course or mentoring, providing opportunities for training and progression within the company is vital for keeping good employees.

“I always try to promote internally when possible, and junior members of staff are encouraged to learn as much as they can and develop their skills so they can step into more senior roles,” Tracy said.



CRAIG MARSHALL
Principal at
Century 21 Cordeau Marshall

“
Don’t reward someone
one week if you aren’t
going to keep it up.
But you do need to come
up with new incentives
and ideas to challenge
your staff.”

A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE



SHAUN KENNEY
Associate Director Asset Services at
CBRE

As an employee, how do you look past the job description to find out if this is the right workplace for you?

Shaun Kenney, Associate Director Asset Services at CBRE, has been working in property since 2006. Joining CBRE in 2012, he knows what it takes to spot good workplace culture.

Like most people, Shaun has experienced 'bad' workplace culture and knows the detrimental effect it can have. But he used this experience to help him

identify good career opportunities, which ultimately resulted in choosing a career in real estate.

"Culture is really important for me. I look for things like the opportunity for flexible working arrangements, women in leadership roles and employee diversity. I think all of these things are a great litmus test of the company's culture and the environment you'll be working in," he said.

"Company culture is likely to affect how long I stay in a role, how much I enjoy my work and how much I achieve. So if the company culture isn't right then it's probably not the job for me."

Shaun also looks at agency's brand and reputation to see if it aligns with his values and whether the company is open to growth and encourages promotion from within.

"It's important that a company provides opportunities for growth; that includes things like training. Recognition of achievement is important; you need

to know how you are going and it can be really motivating," he said.

For Shaun, social activities are also an important way to actively contribute to building a great place to work. Shaun said CBRE offered organised events from guest speakers through to mini golf. His team also often go out for lunch together, which is an easy and simple way to build stronger working relationships.

"I think it's important for people to connect with each other on a social level," he said. "There are always going to be people who don't stay for Friday afternoon drinks, and of course that's OK, but there needs to be opportunities to spend time together as a team and get to know each other on a personal level.

"Getting to know people better increases your investment in the workplace, you want to contribute to making it a better place and ultimately that makes the working environment more enjoyable."

"We invest in education and training, and we always try to provide the latest programs and technology too. I think it's really important to invest in that for your staff."

Tracy said many senior staff take on an informal mentoring role, which provides great experience for them and the junior staff.

Recruitment

When it comes to introducing someone new into the mix, attitude is everything so take your time when choosing a new employee.

"I don't think there is one 'right type' of person. We have men, women, young, old, who are all very different. I think variety and diversity is a strength when it comes to having a good office culture," Tracy said

"I can usually tell within two minutes of meeting a candidate whether they will be a good fit for our company. Having a good attitude is so important and it comes across immediately in how you speak and how you present yourself."

Martin agrees and will spend extra time trying to find people who will fit in with the

company culture. "I ask quite a few questions to get an indication of their personality, how they might deal with certain situations and I ask them what they perceive as great workplace values," he said.

Craig is honest with candidates about his expectations. "I always tell a new agent upfront that if they aren't the right fit, they will quickly be let go," he said.

"You really don't know what a person is like until they start work. Someone can give you all the right answers in an interview, but real estate is about people getting on with people and if you don't have that then you are not going to be successful."

Maintenance

Once you've established a good working environment, the real work begins.

"Some employers lose sight of the fact that it's a two-way street – a good culture is something that you always have to be working on with your staff," Martin said. "As an owner or principal, you need to be a positive influence by being an active and supportive part of the office or it's detrimental. There's not one person that makes or breaks a good workplace,

but good leadership needs to be part of the culture to generate motivation and ongoing success." ♦

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT ESSENTIALS

One of the most challenging aspects of any manager's job is people management. Why? Because the members of your team are the biggest asset you have, and their performance and attitude can dictate the success of your agency.

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What to expect when you're inspecting

As a property manager, inspections are part and parcel of your working day. Brush up on your inspection procedures with this advice from an expert.

BY SANDRA MCGEE

Rental Manager at Starr Partners Merrylands

Ingoing inspections

Legally it's a must

The ingoing inspection report is part of the tenancy agreement, so legally it's a must for property managers. If you fail to complete this inspection, then the agreement could potentially be classed as void. It is not the tenant's responsibility to fill out the condition report; it is the agent's or landlord's responsibility. Do not give the tenant a blank form and ask them to complete it.

Under the legislation, the document is prescribed and must be filled out in the correct way. You must write 'yes' or 'no' in the relevant columns and then continue to complete the condition report with comments, adding extra pages to the form if needed. This seems very straightforward, but you would be surprised how many property managers

get it wrong. They fail to take the time necessary to do a comprehensive report.

Agents may create their own documents, however it must comply with legislation and include all of the prescribed elements.

Photos are a great inclusion, however they are there to back up the information that is in the document. Even if you take 200 photos during the inspection, it means nothing if the condition report is not filled out correctly. Date stamp all photos for clarity.

A thorough check

It is essential to be thorough when completing an ingoing inspection. The condition report must outline what the property looks like at the beginning of the tenancy; it should be a true report setting out the condition of the property, not just a few ticked boxes.

Spending time on this procedure will save you time at the end of the tenancy when the tenant vacates. It not only stops disputes with tenants, but also with landlords who may have not seen their property for many years. Writing comments and taking the time to outline any possible issues will save you time, stress and worry in the event of a tribunal hearing with the tenant or the landlord. It may even assist in preventing the need to go to NCAT.

Things you should include in the condition report:

- when the property was last painted
- when the carpets were changed/cleaned
- when the blinds were installed
- any external items
- dates and times on installed items around the property.

Tenant responsibility

Once the condition report is completed, the property manager must give the tenant a copy of it when the lease is signed. You should never sign a lease document without the condition report attached. If the report is not attached, you may find that the tenant cannot be held liable for any damage that has occurred during the tenancy. The process to recoup any compensation from a tenant, without having a condition report, is extremely difficult.

When you are signing the lease, be sure to explain the condition report to the tenant. Outline their responsibility in relation to the report, and show them how to complete the report, the time frame in which the report should be returned and the general importance of the report.



If the tenant does not return the report at all, when they vacate the property they forfeit their right to have a say in the condition of the property.

Make sure the tenant understands that if they write 'no' against an item they should provide a comment explaining why they said 'no'. Encourage them to take photos for their own benefit.

It is the agent's responsibility to remind the tenant of the consequences if they fail to return the condition report within the required seven days. At Starr Partners, we send the tenant a welcome letter with a reminder to return the condition report. This letter is mailed to the property after the lease is signed for the tenants to receive a few days later. If the tenant fails to return the report, we then send them another reminder approximately 14 days after they move in. If the tenant does not return the report at all, when they vacate the property they forfeit their right to have a say in the condition of the property.

Remember, it is not up to the tenant to complete the initial condition report. The property manager must provide them with a copy of the condition report they have filled out prior to the lease being signed.

Periodic inspections

Before the inspection

Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, agents can schedule a periodic inspection up to four times in a 12-month period. The tenant must be given a minimum of seven days' notice, in writing, of the landlords/agents' intention to inspect the premises.

At Starr Partners, we complete a periodic inspection three to four months after a new tenant moves in and this inspection is incredibly important. Even though you obtain references for the tenant, how do you really know that they are going to live up to those references? Scheduling an early inspection allows you to ascertain the standard of the property straight away.

Before you conduct a property inspection (say 24 hours prior), contact the tenant and find out whether they will be present. Having a tenant there is preferable because they can point out any defects. If they won't be there, take the opportunity to confirm over the phone if any alarm codes or locks have been changed.

If the tenant won't be home for the inspection, ask that they leave a note with any issues on the kitchen table. When we send any periodic letter, we also send a tenant update form for the tenant to complete just in case they have changed

their phone numbers, email address and next of kin. Periodic inspections are a great time to pick up all of this information.

During the inspection

When conducting periodic inspections, you are mainly looking for things that are related to the tenant and how the property is being maintained, as well as general deterioration of the property and potential hazards.

Common problems include:

- a malfunctioning smoke detector (or one that needs a new battery)
- mould
- structural cracks
- loose or rusted balcony rails, or loose stair rails
- dry rot (the decay of timber in buildings and other wooden structures caused by certain fungi)
- swimming pools that do not comply with regulations.

To streamline the inspection process, at Starr Partners we use a program that allows us to complete our inspections on an iPad or smartphone. We can take photos during periodic inspections. These images should be used to show the landlord any defects and also to monitor potential

problems. Having a program like this allows us to complete more inspections, it saves a lot of time and we get the information out to the landlord much quicker.

Follow up procedures

Once a property manager has been to the property and has identified any issues, they are responsible for getting the tenant to fix them or bringing these matters to the owner's attention.

If we go to that first inspection and find the property in a mess, we will write the tenant a letter straight away, telling them what is wrong and that we will be reinspecting. We then go back two weeks later to make sure it is all fixed. This is standard process in our office. This letter is effective, because they know you are coming back.

We always email our periodic inspections out to the landlord, including photos. It is much cheaper to email all of this information.

Our policy is to complete the 3-4 months inspection and then return 9-10 months later, unless the landlord requests otherwise. That first inspection is vital because this sets the basis of all future inspections.

Outgoing inspections

Before the inspection

When the notice to vacate is received from a tenant, property managers should send a checklist outlining exactly what is expected from the tenant for the outgoing inspection.

In line with the legislation, the tenant and property manager should do the outgoing inspection together. For a number of reasons, this is not always possible but you should always explain to the tenant the importance of being present during the outgoing inspection.

Tenants should understand that if they are not present for the inspection and a claim is made against the bond, it may be difficult for them to dispute it. At Starr Partners, we give the vacating tenant a letter outlining information about vacating a property and tenants must complete a vacating notice form indicating whether they will or will not attend the outgoing inspection. This is an easy and effective way to establish in writing that the tenant understands their obligations and prove, if needed at NCAT, that the tenant chose not to attend.



Tenants should understand that if they are not present for the inspection and a claim is made against the bond, it may be difficult for them to dispute it.

The tenant must be completely moved out of the property before the final inspection can be conducted. To ensure this happens, and to save time, insist keys are returned to your office before the outgoing inspection. This will eliminate the possibility of you making a trip to the property only to find the tenant is still in the process of vacating.

The outgoing inspection should be done as soon as possible after the tenant returns the keys, ideally on the same day or the following day. Don't wait any longer or you

may find yourself in difficulty if you need to make a claim. A vacant property could be broken into, a water pipe might burst or any number of other unforeseen problems, and if it's been days since the tenant moved out it will be difficult to prove they are responsible for damage.

During the inspection

The outgoing inspection is as important as the ingoing inspection and should be done with the same care. Always take a copy of the ingoing inspection report with you, so you can accurately compare the condition of the property with what it was like at the start of the tenancy.

Take your time, go room by room, and tick each item off the outgoing inspection report checklist and note any damage as you go.

Always run a hand over all surfaces and don't forget the inside of the oven. There is a big difference between an oven or surface that has simply been wiped down and one that has been properly cleaned.

During the inspection, always take photos of areas of concern that you think may result in a claim against the tenant. Everyone knows a picture is worth a thousand words and in my experience, a photo can very quickly change a tenant's mind about disputing a claim. If you do find yourself at an NCAT hearing, your photos, along with the ingoing and outgoing inspection reports, mean you will be well prepared.

One benefit of having a tenant with you during the outgoing inspection, is you can give them the opportunity to fix minor cleaning issues or repairs immediately. Under the legislation, you are not required to give the tenant further access to the property after the keys are returned but you might find you end up with a faster and ultimately better outcome for you, the owner and the tenant if you do. Don't forget to tell the tenant they will need to continue paying rent while they carry out the cleaning or repairs.

If during the inspection you find items left behind – for example, papers, photos or whitegoods – it's important to contact the tenant immediately. Never throw items away of any value or remove anything from the property without following the legislation. The tenant may plan to come

back for the items and could report you for theft or seek compensation from NCAT if you have removed anything. Try to get the tenant to remove the items themselves, or if they no longer want the items make sure you have that in writing and always follow the process for dealing with abandoned goods, as outlined in the legislation.

If you have any questions about inspections please contact the REINSW Helpline by calling (02) 9264 2343 or emailing helpline@reinsw.com.au ♦

CHECKLIST ✓ OUTGOING INSPECTION

Don't forget to check:

- inside kitchen cupboards and drawers, and the top of cupboards
- filters in the air-conditioning and rangehood
- light fittings and blinds have been dusted
- the oven and grill to make sure it is clean
- inside built-in wardrobes for items left behind and damage to shelves
- the garden has been left neat and tidy
- under the house, in the garage or parking space for rubbish
- the tenant has returned all keys, including window locks, letterbox and garage keys, or remote controls for the garage and air-conditioners
- fences and garage door for damage
- the guttering to make sure the removal van has not hit it
- the water meter to do a vacating water reading.

If in doubt, shout!

When dealing with a potential professional indemnity insurance claim, it's a must to notify your insurer as soon as possible

BY RENEE ANESTIS

If a private investigator walked through your agency door and started asking questions about a property under your management, what would you do? Would you answer their questions? Or would you stop and take the time to think through the potential implications of providing facts and information that might eventually impact a professional indemnity insurance claim?

"Agents need to understand that any information they provide in such circumstances could potentially be used against them in later proceedings if a claim is made," explained Nancy Rainbird, Claims & Compliance Manager at Realcover. "That's why it is so important to notify your insurer as early as possible if you think there is any possibility of a claim being made."

"I always say, 'if in doubt, shout!' Your insurer is there to help. Things can easily go wrong if you don't seek the right advice early on."

When it comes to professional indemnity insurance, there are two ways to deal with a potential claim: the wrong way and the right way.

What can go wrong?

"A few years ago there was a case where the simple act of agreeing to be interviewed by an investigator ended up placing the property manager centre stage in a legal drama," Ms Rainbird recalled.

In the case in question, a fire had broken out in a rental property, causing significant damage. Unfortunately, the property manager agreed to be interviewed by a private investigator representing the owner's insurance company. Based on information given in the interview, the insurance company declined to pay a claim for damages caused by the fire. Instead, the property owner was armed with enough information to start proceedings against the agency for breach of professional duty.

"Because the property manager made a number of damaging admissions to the investigator, the agency's insurer was left in a much more difficult position when defending the claim," Ms Rainbird said.

"From an insurance point of view, the property manager had no obligation to give the statement to the investigator and the agency ultimately faced a damages claim of more than \$300,000.

"The lesson here? Don't give a statement when you are under no obligation to do so!"

The right way to handle a claim

In contrast, Ms Rainbird points to a case where the property manager responded in a different way after a flight of stairs collapsed in a rental property. The property manager made sure

“Contacting your insurer and seeking accurate advice as early as possible is the best way to manage a potential claim.”

that the tenants were safe, offered to call the SES to help a person who was trapped upstairs and immediately organised emergency accommodation. The following morning, the property manager photographed the damage, advised the property owner to speak to their insurance company, and organised for a builder to check the condition of the staircase while arranging a quote to be made for any repairs. Furthermore, at a subsequent meeting with the tenants, the property manager noticed that one of them was limping and quickly arranged for her to see a doctor.

"This is a great example of doing things the right way," Ms Rainbird said. "The property manager made detailed notes, attended the property to take photos and contacted the owner when an issue became apparent."

How did the property manager know to do all of these things? "They notified their professional indemnity insurer immediately, so they were assisted and given the right advice early on," Ms Rainbird said.

Contacting your insurer

"Contacting your insurer and seeking accurate advice as early as possible is the best way to manage a potential claim," Ms Rainbird said.

"It's all too easy to regard criticism of your services or the threat of a claim as being unjustified and without merit. But this does not remove the agent's obligation to notify their insurer. The fact that an agent is aware at all may trigger the notification provisions of their professional indemnity insurance policy.

"It's never too early to pick up the phone and talk to your insurer. You just never know how much one phone call could save you – in angst and dollars!" ♦

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What's a picture worth?

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, so it's little wonder that Instagram is fast becoming a go-to tool for agents to drive leads and build their brand.

BY RENEE ANESTIS

Real estate is an industry that thrives on personal connections, so it's little wonder that agents have enthusiastically taken to social media over recent years. Agents have realised the potential to connect and communicate with clients and potential clients via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, but to date Instagram has been largely underutilised.

Every day more than 70 million photos are uploaded to Instagram and users are clicking the 'like' button 2.5 billion times. That's right, every day! These are staggering statistics and underline why it's time for agents to take this social media platform seriously and incorporate it into their marketing mix.

As a visual platform, Instagram is perfect for real estate, as clients connect with the aesthetics of a property and the dream of a certain lifestyle.

Here are some dos and don'ts to build a winning Instagram following.

Do

- **Be active.** Your first step to Instagram success is to be consistent with your posting. Create a schedule that integrates with your current social media strategy. This will make it easier to feature your latest photos across social media platforms.
- **Share.** There's no use posting to Instagram if no one knows about it, so make sure you share your photos with people who may be more interested in certain images. You can also privately send images to potential buyers rather than releasing the images to all your followers.
- **Link accounts.** Automatically share posts with your wider social media network by linking your Instagram, Facebook

and Twitter accounts. This will not only drive traffic to your other social media pages, but is the most obvious way to grow your Instagram following. An added benefit is that Facebook's algorithm will ensure that your Instagram post floats to the top of the news feed for a longer period of time.

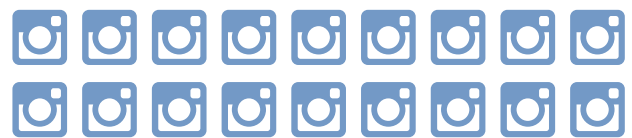
- **Comment.** Take the time to comment on other people's photos, rather than simply liking them, and be sure to respond to comments left on your posts. This will start conversations and build stronger relationships.
- **Photo Maps.** This is a great way to establish your expertise as the go-to agent in a certain area. Photo Map is a tool that allows you to geotag your image location onto a Google map so followers can see where it was taken. Photo Maps will take your followers beyond your latest photos and show the exact location of the photos you share. The map can display things such as listings, properties you have sold, or events you have been involved in within the community.
- **Videos.** You can post short videos to your Instagram page. These can be anywhere from 3-15 seconds long and can include anything from latest listings to a local event. Videos are just another way to share your stories.
- **Web profiles.** Even though Instagram is a mobile platform, you can create a web profile that displays your photos along with your profile photo and bio. This is another way to showcase your real estate expertise. Be sure to place a link to your main website in your web profile to funnel clients and potential clients to where you really want them. You can also post relevant links on certain posts where more information or images can be found on your website.



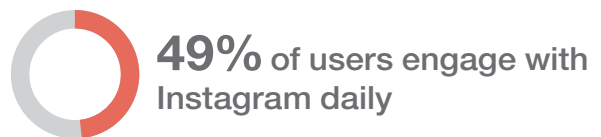
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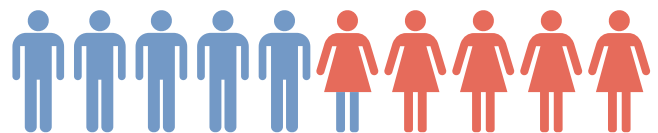
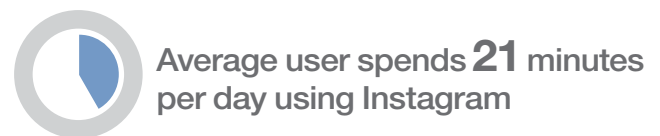
Users hit the 'like' button **2.5 billion** times per day



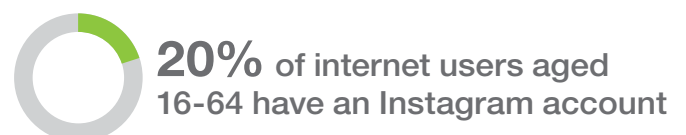
300 million active users per month



70 million photos posted per day



Instagram users: **51%** male, **49%** female



(Source: Instagram)

- **Be human.** Remember to have fun with Instagram and give people a behind-the-scenes look at your agency. Share photos of your team, the area you work in and local events. This is a great way to build relationships.
- **#Hashtag.** Don't forget to hashtag. You can find out what the most popular real estate hashtags are on sites such as top-hashtags.com. Using the right hashtags in your posts means that your photos become searchable.

Don't

- **Use stock photos.** You will not only bore your followers and potentially lose them, but it discredits your business and expertise. Be original to attract followers.
- **Publish images with lots of text.** Instagram is a visual platform, so don't bombard your followers with text when you can use your website, Facebook or Twitter pages for content.
- **Edit images.** Your product is based largely on visuals, so if someone is attracted to a listing based on an image that you have dramatically altered, you will have some unhappy clients.
- **Tag uninterested followers.** Constantly being in someone's face won't sell a property and is not the right way to go about attracting new business. The same goes for posting spam on the posts of your followers trying to direct people to your account. You may be blocked or reported to Instagram.
- **Give up.** Building a strong, interesting Instagram page takes time. You have to find a good balance of post frequency, develop a strong and responsive following, and create original and appealing images. It won't happen overnight, but it will definitely be worthwhile. ♦

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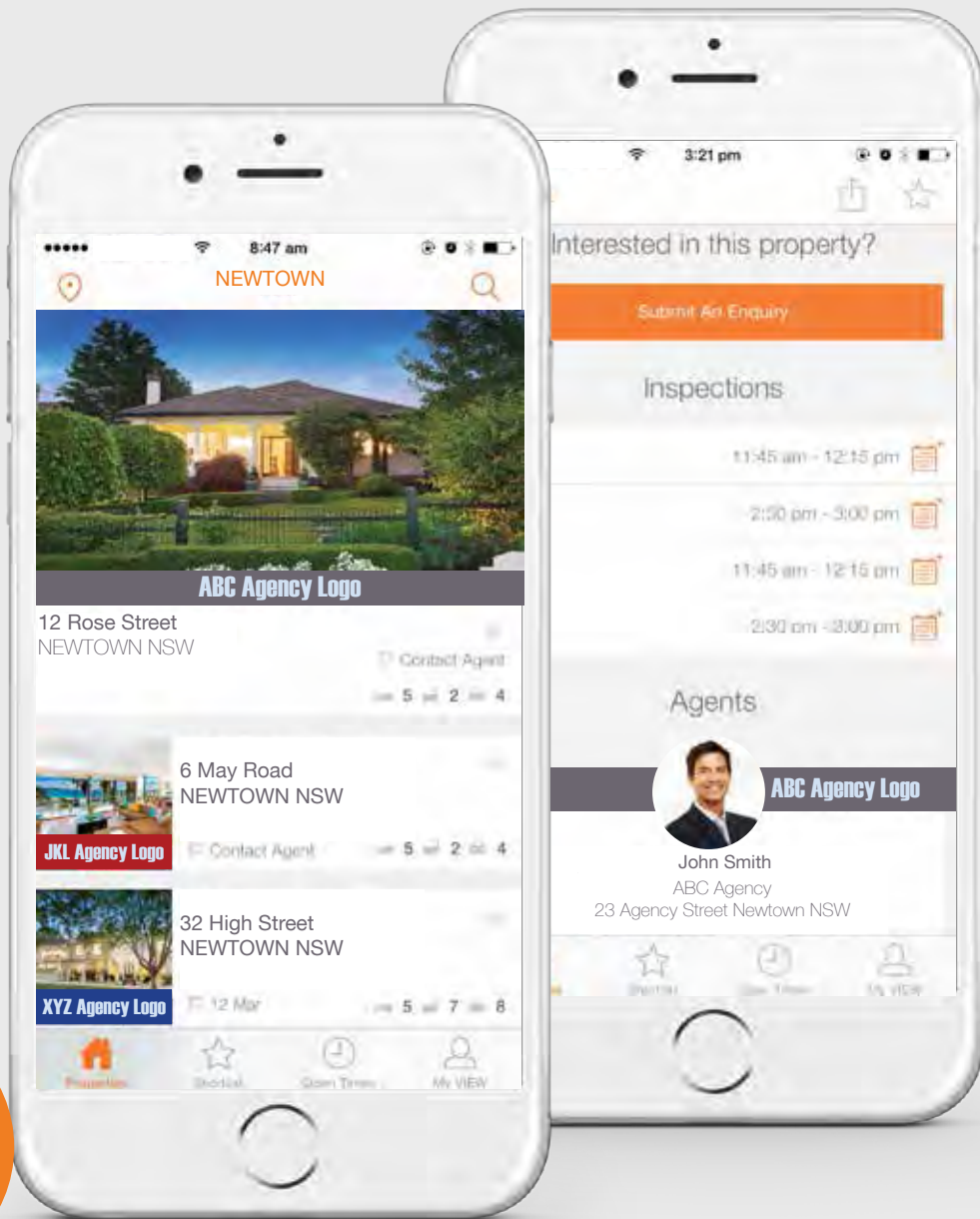
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Too much of a good thing

Is there an office space over-supply problem or do we just need to better understand what is needed in order to satisfy future workplace demand?

BY PHILIP GRAUS

Director at Cox Richardson Architects

KYMBAL DUNNE

Director – Office Leasing Major Projects at Knight Frank

Sydney's population is set to grow dramatically in the coming decades; by 2050, its population will be more than 7 million people.

With population growth comes the need for Sydney to remain globally competitive as a city. There will be a strong need to create and attract new jobs, but in order to do so there must be a supply of contemporary workspaces. If there isn't, the jobs will simply go elsewhere.

While it may appear that there is an over-supply of office space in Sydney, the reality is quite different. In fact, there is a need to do more to accommodate for future growth. This is a great news, as there is ample opportunity for agents and their clients to profit from the city's ever-growing need for both commercial and residential properties.

What does the future hold?

Sydney is increasingly a global market and, as far as office space goes, higher standards and more modern spaces are not only being sought, but are being demanded, by clients – particularly international clients.

While it may appear that there is plenty of supply, the supply does not meet demand. Most of the vacant space that is currently available is older C and D grade space. By contrast, the vast majority of demand is for A grade, and to a lesser extent, B grade space.

Notwithstanding that there are a significant number of new buildings currently under development, the quantum of unsuitable existing space in Sydney is much higher. Where redevelopment is not a viable option, the challenge is to find a way to 'rebirth' these buildings in a way that meets the needs of the population.

When you combine this with the strong demand for residential space in the city, there is a wealth of opportunity for not just commercial agents, but also residential agents and property managers who all have a stake in the expansion of Sydney's CBD.

Many owners do not know enough about the buildings around them and their competition or how a potential tenant may view their space, but this information is vital to establishing value and determining a property's attractiveness. A good agent will provide advice on what to do in order to improve space and make it more appealing. If that solution is beyond the client's financial capabilities, the agent should then be able to give advice about what the alternatives may be. In some cases, agents lack multi-dimensional thinking. If an agent properly considers their client's problem and offers a range of solutions, they will develop a much stronger relationship with their client.

An aging supply

Supply in the Sydney CBD office market is not only segmented, but is aging. Much of the space is obsolete and will need large investment or an alternative use in order to return value.

International businesses demand nothing but the best. In order to attract and maintain the high-level of international business, and to remain a global city, Sydney needs to supply buildings and spaces that better serve their occupants, building a community of mixed developments including residential, short stay, office and retail spaces.

The practical outcome for agents here is the fact that there is ample opportunity. There is no oversupply of office space, and there is a high need for new space in the expanded CBD to come, as well as a market for refurbishment of existing space. Agents have contact with the market, and also have the experience and market knowledge to communicate to clients. A good agent knows where the demand lies, the key is to identify the alternative uses for property and expose their clients to fresh thinking. Agents and their clients simply need to think outside the box. ♦

Young Agents networking event

Learn from the best, take responsibility and think big. That was the message from John McGrath at a recent event that saw more than 100 agents and lawyers come together to discuss the future of the property industry.

“There’s no reason why everyone can’t aspire to be the best on the planet at what they do,” the CEO of McGrath Estate Agents said. “You might as well have a crack at it. Whether or not you make it or not is far less relevant.

“If I had just thought about starting a single office, I would probably have had a far different outcome than I did aspiring to be the world’s best. Having a go is what’s important. Thinking big is important.”

The event, co-hosted by REINSW’s Young Agents and The Law Society’s Young Lawyers, is part of series of initiatives coming up. Stay tuned for more news soon! ♦



ROADSHOW 2015 REAL ESTATE'S BIG DAY OUT 2 sessions

It's all about **your** industry!

Only at the Real Estate Institute of New South Wales Roadshow will you find out what's really happening in your industry from the people who are in the know.

▶ PRINCIPALS-ONLY SESSION

Industrial D-Day – A new era for the real estate industry

Hear from the Real Estate Employers' Federation about what lies ahead in the industrial relations space.

7.45am to 9.00am

▶ INDUSTRY UPDATE

Don't miss a program packed with the industry information you've asked for!

- The digital revolution
How to benefit from the digital world with realestate.com.au's Derek Taylor
- Your local housing market
Current state and future prospects from Domain's Dr Andrew Wilson
- The issues that matter
An update from REINSW
- Inside NSW Fair Trading
Practical advice direct from Fair Trading

9.30am to 1.30pm



It's not too late catch the Roadshow. We're visiting regional locations throughout June.

Training calendar

JULY 2015

6 – 10 Jul • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)

7 Jul • SYDNEY
Your Digital Twin ●
 (9.30am–1.30pm)

9 Jul • SYDNEY
Setting Up A New Business ●
 (9.30am–1.30pm)

13 Jul • SYDNEY
Property Management Essentials ●
 (9.30am–4.30pm)

20 – 24 Jul • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)

22 Jul • SYDNEY
The NEW Contract for Sale ●
 (9.30am–1.30pm)

27 – 30 Jul • SYDNEY
Property Sales Essentials ●
 (9.30am–4.30pm)

27 – 31 Jul • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)



100+ Conference – 24-25 AUGUST

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AUGUST 2015

3 – 5 Aug • SYDNEY
Keeping the Books Essentials ●
 (9.30am–4.30pm)

3 – 7 Aug • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)

10 – 14 Aug • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)

11 Aug • SYDNEY
Maximising the Power of Facebook in Real Estate ●
 (9.30am–1.30pm)

18 – 20 Aug • SYDNEY
You and the Law Essentials ●
 (9.30am–4.30pm)

19 Aug • SYDNEY
An Agent's Guide to Tax and Property Investment ●
 (9.30am–1.30pm)

24 – 25 Aug • SYDNEY
100+ Conference ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm)

24 – 28 Aug • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)

31 Aug – 4 Sep • SYDNEY
Certificate of Registration Course ●
 (9.00am–5.00pm) (full time)

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

You can find out more about all of our courses and register online by visiting www.reinsw.com.au

Click on Course Calendar in the Training menu.

COURSE KEY

- Certificate of Registration Course
- Toolbox Series
- Real Estate Essentials Series



These boots were made for walking

There were lots of blisters and sore toes, but the Harcourts NSW team were a standout as they 'walked a mile' in high heels to raise awareness about violence against women.

"I've always sympathised with women who walk for hours on end in high-heels, but after today I can empathise," Harcourts NSW CEO Mark Morrison said after leading his team in walking a mile in high heels as part of The Harcourts Foundation's Walk A Mile In Their Shoes event.

Much to the delight of onlookers, both female and male members of Harcourts NSW, along with their families and friends, strutted their stuff down Church Street in Parramatta on 8 May 2015 to raise awareness for the cause.

The walk began in 2013 when Harcourts Victoria made the decision to take a stand against violence, specifically violence against women. "We constantly hear of violence in our streets, in homes, in nightclubs. Parents having to turn off life support machines, young men dying from a single punch, women murdered by partners or someone they don't know. This is an issue that impacts our families, friends and communities we work in," Harcourts Victoria CEO Sadhana Smiles said.

"So far in 2015, the average of one woman a week being killed as a result of domestic violence has risen to two per week. This is an issue that is at crisis

“**Walk A Mile In Their Shoes is our way of uniting men and women, walking a mile in high heels, to raise awareness and give voice to those who no longer have one.**”

point. Walk A Mile In Their Shoes is our way of uniting men and women, walking a mile in high heels, to raise awareness and giving a voice to those who no longer have one," she said.

The initiative now involves the greater Harcourts team, with staff members nationwide joining forces with White Ribbon Australia. REINSW was fortunate enough to join Harcourts NSW in their first ever walk, which raised the target amount of \$100,000 nationally.

The money raised nationwide will go towards White Ribbon's Breaking the Silence program, a mentoring program in primary schools. The program is focused on teaching kids about domestic violence, how to build respectful relationships with members of the opposite sex, how to deal with domestic violence if it is happening to someone they may know or because of someone they may know, in order to stop violence before it goes any further into adulthood.

"Walking a mile in heels wasn't the easiest thing for a lot the guys to do, and we were definitely off to a shaky start, but it was a great way for us to highlight an issue that isn't always easy for the public to talk about," Mr Morrison said. ♦

YOUR STORY

We want to hear your stories!

If you, or a member you know, supports a charity or works generously in the local community, please help us share the story. Email the *Real Estate Journal* Editor at journal@reinsw.com.au



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