

# Journal

JUN 2014  
VOL 65/06

## AXE THE



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# AXE THE

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# Expanding REI Forms Live

One of the most time-consuming parts of being a real estate professional is ensuring agency forms and agreements are completed correctly and the subsequent filing of these documents.

You may already be aware that we have been on a campaign of adding value to our REI Forms Live offering for some time and have put in place a number of strategies to build a better service.

I am pleased to report that REINSW has been investing in the technology associated with REI Forms Live, and we have left no stone unturned to get it right. We know how important this part of the real estate service you deliver is.

## Making your life easier

We are in discussions with a number of industry service providers, as well as franchisors, to integrate with their systems in order to make agents' lives easier and to eliminate the opportunity for typographical errors. Our ultimate aim is to give principals the security of knowing that their agents' forms are completed compliantly. This alone saves time and money for everyone, including the consumer.

Ultimately at REINSW we would like to provide the real estate professional with an additional revenue stream through integrations with goods and services providers relevant to the transaction they are associated with.

It is necessary for us to be constantly reinventing our services and utilising technology to the maximum extent to be as efficient and productive as possible.

We are looking to partner with members and service providers, as well as with the franchises, to make the system as efficient and effective as possible.

I am very pleased to say that we currently have the best product offering in the market from a compliance and technology perspective. Our growing integration campaign adds significantly to our offering.

## More to come

The task we have set ourselves with REI Forms Live is to make your life easier. There are some very exciting initiatives and opportunities, which are coming down the line, and we look forward to updating you on this in the future. It is our plan to make REI Forms Live a profit centre for you and not a cost going forward.

If you have any thoughts on how we can improve REI Forms Live or would like to provide feedback on what we are currently putting into action, please contact me. It is essential that we continue to develop these systems tailored to your needs.



**Tim McKibbin**  
REINSW CEO



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## BEHIND THE SCENES



### THE BLOCK

Congratulations to Damien Cooley for achieving a staggering \$2.44m for Kyal and Kara on *The Block: Fans vs Faves* in his fifth appearance on the show. The couple walked away with \$567,250 in prize money and placed third in the overall competition.



### SWITCH ON

### 100+ CONFERENCE

We're excited to reveal the program for our inaugural 100+ Conference. Full details can be found online at [100plus.com.au](https://100plus.com.au) or turn to page 22 to get a taster of what to expect at this exciting new event.



### AWARDS

The revamped REINSW Awards for Excellence have been officially launched, with property professionals across NSW set to compete for top honours across 21 categories. Find out more at [reinsw.com.au/2014Awards](https://reinsw.com.au/2014Awards)

### SUBMISSIONS

Our legal team has been working hard on a number of submissions this month. Watch out for more details of the extensive lobbying work carried out by REINSW in *The Hub* in the coming weeks.



**SEE YOUR NAME  
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## Entries are now open for the 2014 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 2014 and winners will be revealed at the Gala Dinner on Thursday, 2 October 2014.

### To enter

Visit [www.reinsw.com.au/2014Awards](http://www.reinsw.com.au/2014Awards) to view the criteria and to enter.

Entries close on Thursday, 12 June 2014.

### More information

Email [excellence@reinsw.com.au](mailto:excellence@reinsw.com.au)

### Why enter?

**The Awards for Excellence has had a facelift! We've listened to your feedback and made the changes you've asked for.**

#### Entering is easy

If you have time to answer 5 short questions, then you have time to enter.

The new criteria means it is easier and less time consuming to prepare your submission.

#### More agents can now enter

As long as you work for a member agency, then you're eligible to enter.

With entries now open to more agents than ever before, winning really means you are the best of the best.

#### New categories

A number of new categories have been added to the program, recognising the changing face of real estate.

#### Feedback from industry experts

Each category is judged by a panel of qualified industry experts and you'll have the opportunity to find out what they thought of your submission.

#### Draw attention to yourself

Winning an award is a major achievement and a good news story – and we'll help you shout it from the rooftops!

**So, don't be shy. Your achievements deserve the opportunity to be recognised.**

**Enter the Awards for Excellence today!**

Category sponsors



# TOP

## TIPS OF THE MONTH

### Top three tips for keeping safe when holding open homes

Property managers and sales agents alike are required to hold open houses. However, what should you do to ensure your safety during the viewing? The *Journal* speaks to the NSW Police to get its three top tips on staying safe during an open house event.

## 1.

#### Log your whereabouts

Ensure that a colleague/friend/relative knows where you are and how long you will be there.



## 2.

#### Keep your phone on hand

Keep your mobile phone handy and charged with emergency services contact numbers prominent.



## 3.

#### Note the attendees

Be aware of your surroundings and monitor who is coming and going.



# Membership changes to broaden REINSW's reach

Changes to the REINSW membership structure will be announced at the start of the financial year that will open membership to a whole new audience of agents.

Under the new membership structure, all employees of agency members are eligible to become individual REINSW members at no charge.

This means all agency employees can gain access to all REINSW member benefits, including the Helpline, REI Forms Live, entry into the Awards for Excellence, discounts to REINSW training, access to the *Journal*, research reports and more.

REINSW members will be contacted at the start of July with full details of the new membership structure, how to renew their membership and sign up their employees.

## Letter templates launched in REI Forms Live

REINSW is working with its Chapter Committee members to create a number of letter templates to be made available within REI Forms Live.

The aim is to provide members with standardised letters that can be pre-populated and downloaded via REI Forms Live.

The first batch of letters are now available, with further letters to be added in the coming months.

The web-based REI Forms Live product brings you instantly accessible agreements and forms. Whether in the office or on the road, all you need is an internet connection to log in. The web app optimises the site for a range of devices, including iPads and Android tablets.

REI Forms Live is integrated with REST Professional (version 10.5 and later), the popular property management and sales trust accounting software solution from Rockend.

This means that REI Forms Live users can now auto-populate their agreements and forms from REST Professional without having to re-enter data. You can also save completed agreements and forms directly back to REST document management or fileSMART. Further details of the latest Rockend upgrade can be found on page 24.

Integrations with several other systems are in final testing stage and will be announced once they become available.

## ACCC warns of utilities scam

Property managers are advised to tell tenants and staff about a fake energy bill scam that is targeting consumers.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has issued a warning to consumers to watch out for a phishing email asking them to pay bogus gas or electricity bills.

The emails claim to be from legitimate utilities companies and look authentic. They claim that the person has exceeded their consumption limit and is eligible to use a discounted tariff if the bill is paid straightaway.

Clicking on links within the email could cause the computer to become infected with malicious software that allows the scammers to access your computer remotely and potentially steal confidential information.

"The ACCC has received more than 300 contacts about this scam this year, but what is reported is often just the tip of the iceberg," ACCC Deputy Chair Delia Rickard said.

"Fortunately, no money has been reported lost due to this particular scam, but the fraudsters will cast a wide net until someone takes the bait."



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# Q. Are auctions the best method of sale?

The *Journal* asks REINSW members which side they fall on.

## “YES”



**LAURA MCKAY**  
Group Auctioneer & Sales Manager at Highland Property Agents

There are a number of key benefits for a vendor when selecting auction as the method of sale for their home. Setting an auction date essentially gives the seller a defined date to work towards to achieve the sale. Without a set date, buyers may be prevented from committing to the purchase and, from an agent's point of view, the auction date can be used as leverage to encourage buyers to make a decision to purchase (either at auction or prior).

### Love of auctions

When a person chooses to sell their home through the auction method, there is usually a four-week tailored marketing plan designed to expose the property to the widest pool of buyers in the marketplace. What I love most about auctions is the lead up to the actual auction itself and the information the seller should be provided with in terms of the feedback and price. This enables them to make an informed decision without all the pressure of deciding on a set asking price.

In my experience, I have found that in many cases, especially in a changing marketplace, it is a difficult challenge for any agent or seller to set an asking price that is both competitive and realistic. In a market like the one we are currently experiencing, the comparable sale data (which is only three months old) can sometimes be out of date and not reliable. In my view the beauty about the auction process is that essentially we are allowing the market to determine the eventual sale price, making it a fair process for both buyers and sellers to transact. It also reduces time on the market and the process is a win for everybody.

### Securing the dream

A well-executed auction campaign can also be a benefit to a buyer, as the process is a very open way to establish your competition, understand the market and compete fairly for a property. In some cases, your bid may only need to be \$500 stronger than your competition to put you in a position to secure your dream home.

## “NO”



**OLIVER STIER**  
Director at OH Property Group

In recent months, the media has reported many stories about properties that have smashed reserves at auctions. This leads many to think that auction is automatically the best way to secure the best result. However, there are many circumstances where sale by auction may not yield the best result.

Prestige properties may be exceptional and unique, but it may take a while to find the right buyer. It may well take several months to find such interest, but waiting could result in a final price, which may be hundreds of thousands, if not millions, more.

Properties with obvious flaws – on a very busy road, near power lines or substation etc – may take a long time to find even one buyer. Taking it to an auction likely to fail will just tarnish the property going forward.

### Buyers' market

In some instances, the vendor may have a reason for an urgent sale despite it not being the ideal period during which to sell (such as between Christmas and New Year). When the auction campaign fails to generate at least 2–3 very interested parties, the vendor may be best served by negotiating privately with the parties prior to the auction and cancelling the auction. This way the prospective purchasers remain uncertain about the actual level of competition.

### Preferred option

Elderly buyers tend to be more conservative and the stress of an auction can often put them off a property. Likewise, many clients initially come to us and tell us they refuse to even inspect properties that are for auction. They don't trust that the process is fair or simply don't like the competitive nature of auction and feel that they are likely to overpay.

As a buyers' agent, in some situations we do advise our client to wait for an auction because a better result may be achieved there than by private treaty negotiations beforehand. The flip-side of this is that the vendor might do better by selling private treaty.



**NEXT MONTH WE ASK:**  
**Q. DO TV PROPERTY SHOWS HELP THE INDUSTRY?**



# TARGETING THE SPRUIKERS

REINSW President Malcolm Gunning addresses the issue of property sold by operators outside of the real estate profession.



Financial advisers should complete comprehensive training before becoming involved in property transactions, believes Malcolm Gunning.

Education is an issue that is always high on our agenda at REINSW. Regulating the standards of education within our own profession is a challenge and one we are addressing. However, it becomes more difficult when you are dealing with operators who fall outside of our walls of practice.

In particular, REINSW has become concerned

about the number of financial advisers who have gained their Real Estate Licence. There has been a history with financial advisers promoting property and yields well above the market. Many of our members have had the experience where purchasers who have bought property from these property spruikers have sought advice about the current rent and price only to find out they've paid well over the market price.

REINSW is calling on NSW Fair Trading to closely monitor this part of the market as many purchasers may have been misled.

REINSW insists that anyone who operates in the real estate realm must complete proper training. Currently financial advisers can be issued exemptions from certain aspects of training because they have already completed their security agents licence. They are not equipped to practice real estate in our opinion. They don't have the sufficient knowledge.

The *Financial Services Reform Act 2001* doesn't cover advice in relation to property and therein lies the problem. Therefore, financial advisers are giving financial advice (about investing in property) and they are not captured by the Act. Further, because they are not acting

as real estate agents, they are not caught by the *Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002*. It is REINSW's view that if you are selling an investment (irrespective of what it is – shares, property etc) then you should be caught by the *Financial Services Reform Act*.

## Property packages

The problem stems from financial planners who are putting together property packages and then selling them via a seminar as an investment. It's not a standalone real estate package. They may provide you with finance to buy, a tenant and, in some cases, they may even manage the property as part of the package. The public goes along and buys this package and they get a six per cent return for a fixed term; however, when it is finished the tenant might be gone and the investor finds themselves having paid \$500,000, but the property might only be worth \$400,000. It's not reflective of the market at the time.

Over the past couple of years a lot of the financial advisers have taken advantage of the mining boom. They have promoted property packages in mining towns at rents well above what the average market could support and then sold on yields that translate into sales prices far exceeding what the current market price is. A good example of that is in Muswellbrook in NSW (see case study).

## Protecting the profession

REINSW is completely opposed to the issuing of licences to anyone who has not completed thorough real estate training by a qualified trainer. These property packages sold by financial advisers can have a detrimental effect on a local property market, which may prove difficult to recover from. NSW Fair Trading must monitor the situation and act where appropriate. ♦

## MUSWELLBROOK: WHEN AN INDUSTRY SLOWS



Muswellbrook is a mining town located in the upper Hunter. It is an area that has been targeted by investor and planning groups over the past 18 months, which has led to many cases of over supply of homes in the area.

"The collapse only happened in the past six months," Century 21 Newcastle Principal Wayne Stewart said. "The homes were sold and most of the land sold off the plan. The problem is it takes up to 18 months for the house to be built."

In the time it has taken to build the properties, the town's main employer, the mining industry, has undergone a downturn leaving a glut of properties up for rent at reduced rates. Investors have been left with properties that have decreased in value significantly in a matter of months and mortgages that are based on their pre-downturn value.

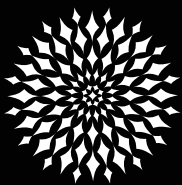
"Supply and demand governs real estate in any area," Mr Stewart said. "Mining is the main employer in Muswellbrook. Once mining goes, the workers tend to leave the area."



# Don't play Russian roulette with smoke alarm compliance

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**STEVEN CHAMOS**  
Legal Practice Director at  
Chamos Legal



If the agency engages in any marketing activities to individuals, then they also need to address this as part of their privacy compliance documentation.



# Your questions answered

The *Journal* puts your questions to key industry experts. This month, we talk to Steven Chamos, Legal Practice Director at Chamos Legal, about the recent changes to privacy laws.

## Q. How does the new privacy legislation affect real estate agents?

**Steven Chamos:** The privacy legislation impacts on real estate agents in a number of ways. If their activities are regulated by the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (the Act), and generally speaking they probably are, they will need take active steps to demonstrate compliance.

These steps will require the agency to develop tailored privacy compliance documentation. They also need to appoint a 'Privacy Officer' within their agency who is responsible for any privacy related enquiries or complaints and provide privacy compliance training to any staff members who handle personal information.

Also, if the agency engages in any marketing activities to individuals, then they also need to address this as part of their privacy compliance documentation; in essence, they must also ensure that individuals have consented to this (unless an exemption applies) and the individual has the right and the ability to opt out of the marketing activities.

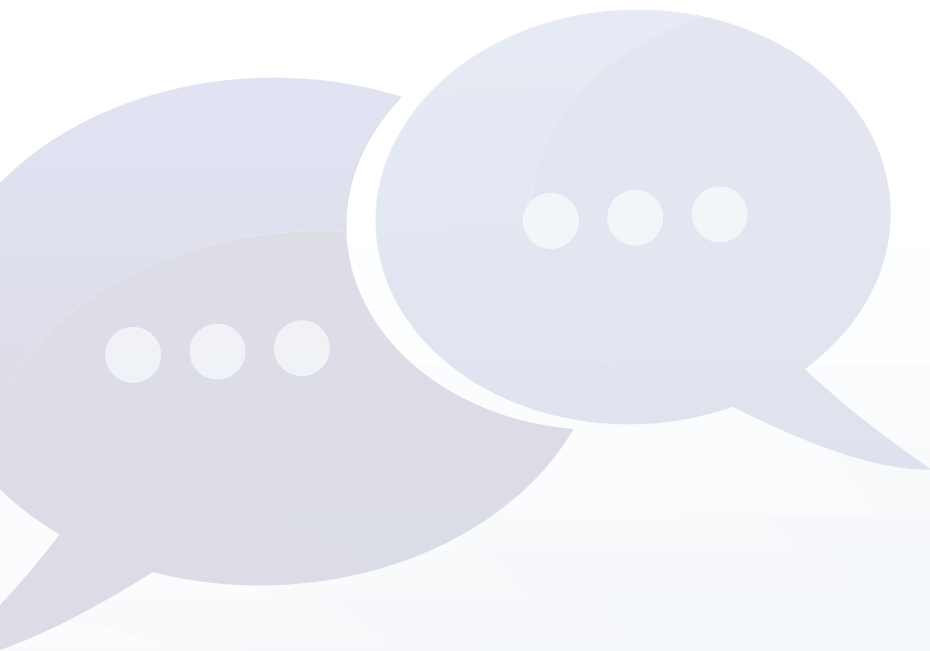
While the actual documentation required will depend on the specific nature of the agency, generally speaking the following documents will probably be required:

### 1. Privacy Policy and/or Privacy Collection Notice

These document(s) are provided to individuals from whom personal (including sensitive) information is collected, used and/or disclosed, and they provide specific detail about these activities. In some cases, these documents may also include specific consents, but whether or not an express consent is needed will depend on the intended activities.

### 2. Privacy Compliance Plan

This is your agency's internal compliance document, setting out in detail how the agency will comply with the privacy laws.



## REINSW RESOURCES



### PRIVACY PACK

Significant reforms to the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) took effect on 12 March 2014. The changes affect entities regulated by the Act and agencies need to update their existing privacy policies, practices and contractual arrangements to ensure compliance with the new legislation.

REINSW has put together a Privacy Pack that is exclusive to REINSW members, which includes some key templates to help agents ensure they are compliant. The Privacy Pack contains:

- a General Website Privacy Policy template
- a Privacy Policy and Collection Notice template
- a Compliance Plan template
- a Personal Information Request for Access/Request for Correction template.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Who would you like REINSW to put your questions to? Send us your suggestions and questions to [jill@mahlabmedia.com.au](mailto:jill@mahlabmedia.com.au)

## Q. What should an agency's privacy policy include?

**Steven Chamos:** An agency's privacy policy should include:

### Privacy Policy and/or Privacy Collection Notice

The Australian Privacy Principles (under the Act) numbered 1 and 5 detail what the Privacy Policy and/or Privacy Collection Notice need to include. When preparing these documents you need to have regard to these principles.

### Compliance Plan

Australian Privacy Principle (APP) numbered (under the Act) 1.2 requires regulated entities to implement practices, procedures and systems relating to its functions and activities that (summarised only):

- (a) will ensure that the entity complies with the APPs that bind the entity; and
- (b) will enable the entity to deal with enquiries or complaints from individuals about the entity's compliance with the APPs.

The resulting Compliance Plan is the agency's internal document intended to articulate and identify the ways that it will comply with the Act.

You can access the Act (including the Australian Privacy Principles) at [comlaw.gov.au/Home](http://comlaw.gov.au/Home)

## Q. What advice would you give to an agency when creating a privacy policy?

**Steven Chamos:** Be specific. Take your time to look closely at your agency as a whole and methodically work through and document the following:

1. who you collect personal (including sensitive) information from;
2. how you use that information; and
3. who you disclose the information to, including for what purpose.

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# Learning along the way

Ray White Director Dan White has worked in very different company cultures and learned from them all.

As a kid, the best way for me to spend time with my father was to join him at auctions on a Saturday. My brothers, cousins and I would always have a ball. I suppose I've always been part of the real estate industry – it grew on me as something I just loved being a part of.

My role with Macquarie Bank's Property Investment Management Division was my chance to get into the real estate sector. Macquarie was an environment where an individual was encouraged to back themselves, to develop ideas and opportunities, and be prepared to take some risk. It was much less structured than the international accounting firm Arthur Andersen, where I had previously worked. I was lucky to experience the Macquarie culture and work with incredibly talented people that really changed an entire industry.

Arthur Andersen, meanwhile, was heavily invested in its people in terms of training and skill development and had a great program for young people to develop in the industry. The mentoring offered by senior partners built tremendous confidence in us all. For me, it was a privilege to be able to work with an organisation that took such responsibility and pride in its staff.

I couldn't have had a better background before entering the family business where I have been responsible for the non-residential activities of our family's interests for more than 10 years. I always thought that joining the family business may happen someday, but there was no master plan.

From my experience, I would recommend new starters keep things simple when they start out. They need to determine if they love doing the basics of real estate. That is, are they capable of, and do they enjoy trying to build a relationship with owners and buyers of real estate? With the assistance of their leader, can they go out and start to build a simple database of say 30 owners and 30 buyers and communicate with them? Obviously a lot of skills need to be developed from there, but this is a big first test of whether it is the right industry for them. ♦



## DAN WHITE SHARES HIS KEY CAREER TAKEAWAYS

### Knowledge is power

The technical side of what you do is something Arthur Andersen drummed into us time and time again. Being focused on the detail is critical. I try to convince our young guys that you need to invest the time and energy to build the best technical knowledge. To build trust with your clients, everything you say and write must be accurate. There is no point waffling around.

### Free rein

Macquarie was a real place of opportunity where they backed individuals to have a go. I never had a job description at Macquarie. I was given a chair and formed part of a team of great people with few boundaries. Having such faith in its people helped Macquarie create so many fine leaders. If you don't allow people to take responsibility you can't create leaders.

### Make mistakes

You were never penalised at Macquarie for making mistakes. Sure there was strict accountability, but it was understood that often the biggest risk you can take is not taking a risk. We have a saying at Ray White that 'there is no such thing as bad curiosity – the only bad thing is no curiosity'. You're never going to get it right all the time.

### Choosing your sector

Some people say they want to get into commercial property because they don't want to work Saturdays. When I hear that it always makes me cringe. If that's the reason you are thinking of being part of the commercial property sector, it's probably not the right reason.

### Endurance test

The great thing about real estate is that it is a simple industry. The challenge is to be persistent at it over a very long period, and be prepared to continually seek to improve. It really is the ultimate endurance test!

### Be passionate

I never have any hesitation recommending the real estate industry to anyone. I feel very comfortable saying to people what a great industry it is. I remember as a young person at university I would go to the Ray White awards nights around the country and see people who may have only been in the industry three or four years winning top awards, earning a great income for themselves and their family, and being so proud of what they had achieved. Regardless of the sector, I've always thought I've been lucky to be a part of this wonderful industry.



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# Recipe for success

Managing Director of Cunninghams Property and REINSW Vice President John Cunningham outlines the critical ingredients to achieve optimum team performance.



We live in a dog-eat-dog world and real estate is one of the fiercest professions. But that does not mean that we cannot achieve optimum team and individual performance without watching our back all the time.

The following 10 ingredients should become the non-negotiables of your culture. They are the glue that binds everyone together and gets them to live and work in a collaborative environment. Without such things chaos rules.

## 1. Create a culture to belong to

You want your team to get up every morning with a clear understanding of why they do what they do. When this is aligned to your firm's 'why?' and the rest of the team's 'why?', then all your beliefs are in sync.

## 2. Have an understood set of values and standards of operation

If you can have a team that has a clear client-first focus and align its standards to what the company sets as its minimum standards of operation, then every link in your chain (your team) will understand the importance of each other's behaviour and its effect on the whole.

## 3. Formulate clear processes to follow

Does everyone know and understand what is expected from their role? Are the processes simple and easy to follow, and do they understand the effect on their clients of every step in the process?

Confusion leads to inefficiencies that create a bad working environment and ultimately poor work satisfaction, so spend some time on getting the processes right.

## 4. Be a learning environment

You never stop learning. In fact, after 36 years in the industry, I believe I am learning more now than ever before. Change is the only constant and the rapid rate of change we are facing is simply phenomenal. Create an environment that encourages learning, expects it, allocates non-negotiable time for it and rewards it.

## 5. Have a commitment to innovation

Be innovative, different and bold and take a leap of faith at times. As Nique Stewart explained to me once, "the only difference between successful people and unsuccessful people is that the successful people do the things the others couldn't be bothered doing".

## 6. Show clarity of vision

There is nothing worse than confusion, and if your team is unsure of the direction you are heading in, then you are in for a bumpy ride. You either have to share a created vision or have the team create a shared vision.

## 7. Have key performance indicators and ongoing accountability

Without goals and action points that are measurable there is no accountability.

The individual goals added up equate to the goals of the company and not the other way around.

## 8. Create a strong brand and marketing position

For your team to believe in the vision and be prepared to head in the same direction, your brand must represent your beliefs in the marketplace and community you work in.

## 9. Participate in your community

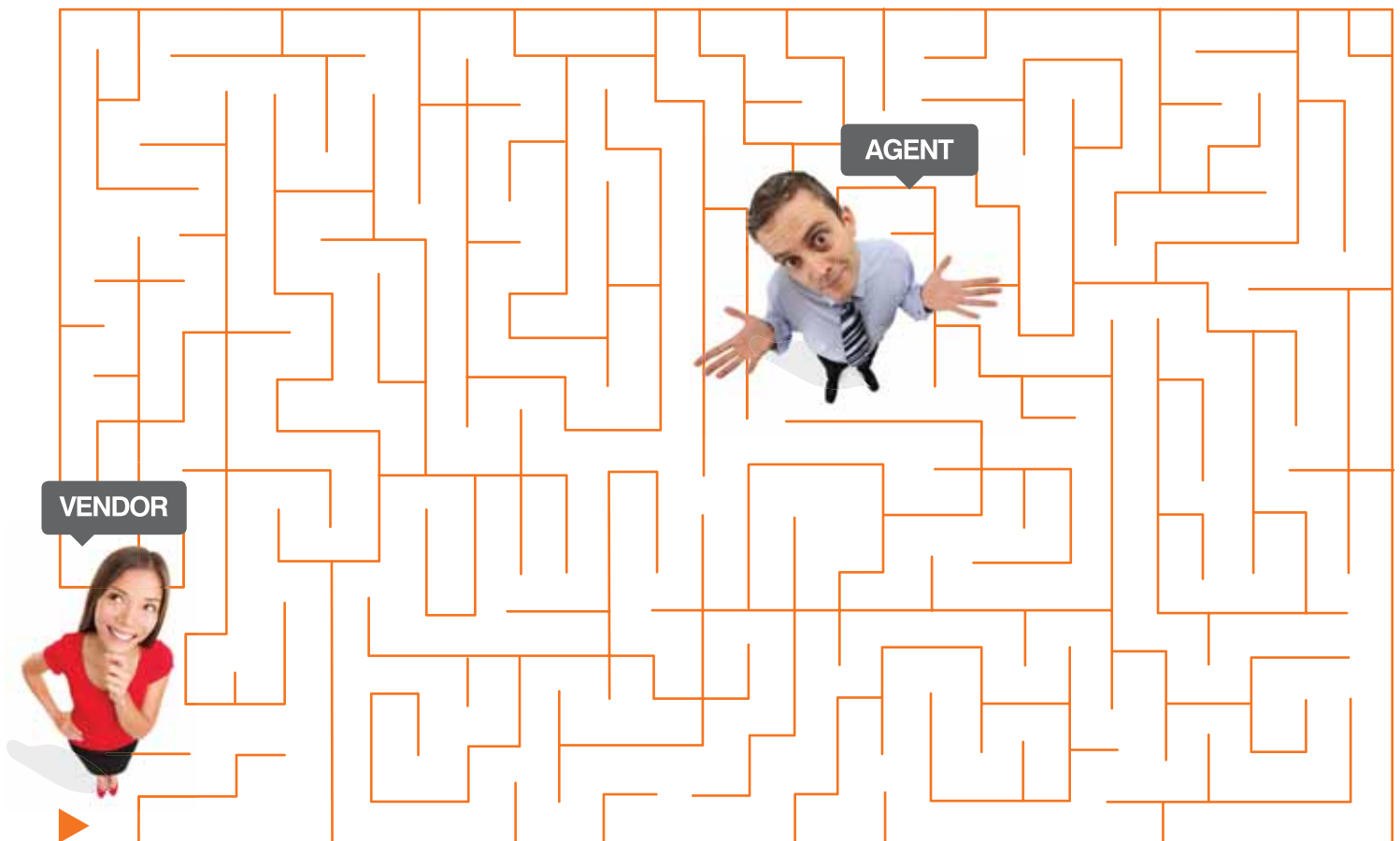
It's not just about support and sponsorship, it's about participation and involvement by the whole team. It involves getting out there and contributing to the betterment of those in need by utilising your skills.

“Create an environment that encourages learning, expects it, allocates non-negotiable time for it and rewards it.”

## 10. Lead by example

Being the 'Chief Energy Officer' of your team (thanks Tom Panos for that term) and bringing the best version of yourself to work everyday is critical for getting the best out of your team. ♦

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# AXE THE



**COULD DITCHING PROPERTY  
TAXES OPEN UP THE MARKET?**

Ripples Whale Beach is closed. Normally a restaurant closure wouldn't be worthy of coverage in the *Journal*, but the reason for its closure highlights an issue REINSW has long lobbied against – land tax.

According to reports in the *Manly Daily*, the landlord had been paying in excess of \$100,000 in land tax, an untenable sum, and so the intention is to turn the site into residential property.

REINSW CEO Tim McKibbin finds the restaurant's closure disgraceful and has written to NSW Premier Mike Baird about the issue.

"Tax should be a consequence of being in business, not a determining factor," Mr McKibbin told the *Journal*.

### Taking on taxation

Stamp duty and land tax are the two main property taxes in NSW collected by the state government. There are differing opinions as to how the taxes should be applied, but REINSW stands strong in its call for the abolition of both.

"We believe there needs to be a sensible debate in relation to the abolition of all state taxes that are narrow based and discriminatory, and the revenue shortfall should be replaced by a broad-based tax system," Mr McKibbin said.

So, what's wrong with the existing system? The main issue, as far as REINSW is concerned, is that tax has a bearing on whether people remain in their properties and renovate or move.

"Property taxes actually influence asset acquisitions," Mr McKibbin said.

Vacancy rates across Sydney are verging on crisis levels, according to recent figures. They dropped 0.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent in March 2014, their lowest point since November 2011. However, they have since climbed to 1.7 per cent again, according to the April 2014 *REINSW Vacancy Rate Survey*.

Removing stamp duty and land tax would encourage investors to buy, as well as people buying their first property, families upgrading into bigger properties or retirees looking to sell off the family home (see page 21).

Mr McKibbin also believes that rationalisation of the property taxation system could lead to financial savings for the state through the disestablishment of the Office of State Revenue (OSR), which administers state taxation and revenue programs for, and on behalf of, the people of NSW.

“

The main issue, as far as REINSW is concerned, is that tax has a bearing on whether people remain in their properties and renovate or move. ”

He also points to the many cases that fill the NSW courts and tribunals due to the complexities of these taxes. He argues that removal of both stamp duty and land tax would eliminate these cases clogging up the courts.

### Broad-based taxation

REINSW is a keen advocate of abolishing stamp duty and land tax and compensating for the loss of income through an increase in GST.

Some may ask, why not reduce these taxes, as opposed to abolishing them completely? Mr McKibbin says he believes reducing the taxes is not a good option.

"The reason stamp duty has to go is that, from a government's point of view, if they leave it in there at a nominal percentage the opportunity to increase it is pretty easy," he said. "To introduce stamp duty after it is gone would be political suicide. It has got to go."

However, replacing the income earned through stamp duty and land tax by increasing GST does not equate to a one-for-one swap. Economics come into play. People tend to become more conservative with their money when GST increases and so it might not be as simple as increasing the rate of GST in order to replace the amount lost through property taxes.

Mr McKibbin points to the financial savings that can be made elsewhere to help reclaim some of the lost revenue from property taxes.

"What I'm hearing is it's not a simple mathematical equation," he said. "What must be factored in are the savings from the disestablishment of the OSR, the disestablishment of the court system, the efficiencies of trading property. These must be factored into the savings."

"Also, you must consider the fact that people will buy property when these taxes are removed."

### GST exemptions

Currently GST stands at 10 per cent. Based on a review of 2012–2013 reported revenues, \$25,103m would be required to compensate the states and territories for the abolition of stamp duty and land tax. Therefore, on this premise, it would be necessary to increase GST to 15.3 per cent for the abolition of stamp duty and land tax. The figures would rise even higher if payroll tax was taken into account.

"The abolition of payroll tax has the additional benefit of creating employment," Mr McKibbin said.



“Do we want taxpayers funding welfare or do we want people in work?”

## Calling for a debate

REINSW is calling for a sensible debate on the subject of taxation in NSW. The ideal situation would be the abolition of stamp duty and land tax, but in the first instance REINSW is keen to discuss with the government its thoughts on the advantages of doing away with both.

The debate should encompass the experiences across other states.

The Northern Territory, for example, has no land tax. Further afield, New Zealand abolished stamp duty in 1999. However, it should be noted that most residential sales in New Zealand were not subject to stamp duty prior to its abolition.

Support for a debate on Australia’s taxation system has gathered pace following outspoken comments by Treasury Secretary Martin Parkinson. In a speech to the Sydney Institute in April, Mr Parkinson suggested the

Government consider lifting the GST.

Reserve Bank of Australia Governor Glenn Stevens later backed Mr Parkinson’s comments in his own speech to the American Chamber of Commerce (Qld) in Brisbane. The Housing Industry Association (HIA) Chief Executive Industry Policy and Media Graham Wolfe also welcomed the news.

REINSW will be holding its breath to see if stamp duty and GST continue to play such a defining role in the property market across the state. ♦

## REPORTED REVENUES 2012–2013

	NSW \$	VIC \$	QLD \$	WA \$	SA \$	TAS \$	ACT \$	NT \$	TOTAL \$
Stamp duty	6,139.00M	3,180M	3,061.00M	3,908.00M	1,736.00M	316.63M	301.80M	223.69M	18,866M
Land tax	2,365.00M	1,587.3M	994.00M	568.00M	565.00M	88.52M	69.55M	No land tax	6,237M
Payroll tax	7,842.00M	4,815.9M	3,792.00M	3,477.00M	1,098.50M	340.79M	325.32M	190.75M	21,882M
<b>TOTAL (stamp duty + land tax + payroll tax)</b>	<b>16,346.00M</b>	<b>9,583.2M</b>	<b>7,847.00M</b>	<b>7,953.00M</b>	<b>3,399.50M</b>	<b>745.94M</b>	<b>696.67M</b>	<b>414.43M</b>	<b>46,986M</b>
<b>TOTAL (stamp duty + land tax)</b>	<b>8,504.00M</b>	<b>4,767.3M</b>	<b>4,055.00M</b>	<b>4,476.00M</b>	<b>2,301.00M</b>	<b>405.15M</b>	<b>371.35M</b>	<b>223.69M</b>	<b>25,103M</b>





## RENEE MACPHERSON FAMILY

### Did stamp duty or land tax influence your property purchases?

We purchased our first home late in 2007 in Queensland. At the time there were various federal and state government first home grants available for a first homebuyer. We qualified for all available grants and as a direct result the stamp duty on our property was greatly reduced. Stamp duty concessions, with the help of the grants, made our purchase affordable and completely doable. These taxes did not affect our decision to purchase.

Fast forward to 2014. We are now living in Sydney. Stamp duty is a massive influence on our decision to purchase both here and in Brisbane. As we no longer qualify for a first time buyer grant, we would have to pay the full amount of stamp duty on any property purchase we make. On an \$800,000 home that is approximately \$32,000! This amount is over and above the deposit and other fees we would be required to come up with. The result, for us, is we simply cannot afford to purchase in Sydney. On the same value house in Brisbane the stamp duty is almost \$8000 less! Still expensive, yes, but remember we get a lot more bang for our buck up north.

If we had a place in Sydney, I highly doubt we would upgrade with stamp duty cost, as that money is dead money, and for us, it would be our choice to renovate and reinvest the money into the property.

### What would you like to see happen to these taxes?

We understand that governments need to generate revenue, however with housing prices in Sydney so elevated, it pushes many families out of the state – like us. It's a tricky situation. Take stamp duty and land tax away? It will most likely push housing prices up even further.

We would like to see stamp duty in NSW, at the very least, be more in line with Queensland, or perhaps you only pay full stamp duty on a home every 10 years (investors should pay the full amount). When buying property every cent counts. So, does it affect our decision when buying and selling? Absolutely, it's back to Brisbane for us, where we will most likely go back into our home and renovate!



## STELLA DO AND TOM MCPEAKE FIRST HOMEBUYERS

### Did stamp duty influence your property purchase?

Yes. As first-time buyers purchasing above a defined threshold we weren't exempt from paying stamp duty on our house. We paid this out of our deposit, and that affected our borrowing power with the bank. We were cautious not to exceed the lenders mortgage insurance ratio, which meant paying additional fees to the bank and increasing our mortgage.

### Would these taxes influence your decision to buy again?

Yes. Even with growth in the value of our house, we wouldn't want to pay another round of stamp duty on our next purchase. If buyers could upsize their residential property (i.e. for non-investment purposes) and only pay the difference between their original purchase price and the next house price, we would be more inclined to upsize.



## DARREL WASSELL RETIREE

### Did stamp duty or land tax influence your property purchases?

Both of these money grabs by government are out of touch with the real world. They are different yet share the common traits of stifling investment, depressing living standards and reducing employment, and give nothing in return.

Stamp duty is the unkindest blow as it mostly hurts those that can least afford it, either the young striving to improve their situation or the elderly in my generation of retirees wishing to downsize with a little cash left over. Land tax is an obvious negative to the provision of rental properties and can easily swallow a large part of any profit. It is not greatly publicised and can easily be overlooked when assessing an investment. I recall failing to register a property and copping a hefty bill for arrears and exorbitant interest a couple of years later.

It is heartening news to hear of others speaking out against these two villains freeloading on our society.



8-9 SEPTEMBER 2014  
SYDNEY

# Introducing the 100+ Conference

REINSW will bring together the entire real estate industry for a series of practical sessions from leading industry figures at the inaugural 100+ Conference.

Switch on to your future. That is the message behind REINSW's inaugural 100+ Conference, to be held on 8-9 September 2014 at the award-winning venue Royal Randwick.

The two-day conference builds on the success of REINSW's annual Chapter-based conferences, to bring the entire industry together to learn, network and celebrate the real estate profession in NSW. Whatever area of practice you specialise in, there are a multitude of sessions for you.

## Practical skills

Unlike other conferences in the sector, the 100+ Conference will focus on the nuts and bolts of real estate. Attendees will leave with the practical skills and knowledge they need to practice at the forefront of the profession.

REINSW has partnered with industry experts, all of whom actively operate within the profession, to build the comprehensive program. Thanks to the hard work of this committed group, the resulting sessions are designed to give practical advice and real-life examples that can be directly applied to your business.

## Network over coffee

In between the 25 technical sessions and keynote speakers, attendees can visit the interactive exhibitors hub. Here, attendees can mingle with the key suppliers to the industry and find out more about the latest services and products that could take your business to the next level. The hub will also be the perfect place to network with peers over a coffee or two.

We all know how difficult it can be to take time out of the office so the program has been created to include multiple streams that appeal across industry sectors.

"For more than 100 years, the Real Estate Institute of New South Wales has been at the centre of all things real estate," said REINSW CEO Tim McKibbin.

"With 100 years comes an unmatched level of knowledge, expertise and innovation, and this year we are bringing all of it together as we launch an exciting new initiative - the 100+ Conference."

“

The two-day conference builds on the success of REINSW's annual Chapter-based conferences, to bring the entire industry together to learn, network and celebrate the real estate profession in NSW.

”

## CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



**SIMON HAMMOND**  
**OWNER OF**  
**HAMMOND THINKING**

*“Innovation, growth  
and engagement”*

Independent creative agency Hammond Thinking was established by Simon Hammond and Robyn Nelson 26 years ago. The company has experience working with real estate clients in the retail, commercial, new build and land development sectors. Simon has written three books about branding and society.

**Q. What will you be talking about at the conference?**

Where real estate is going and how consumers connect with the idea of buying property. What does a business need to be for the market it is in? That's what I'll be talking about – what's changed and why is there a revolution in the way customers are connecting with these businesses.

**Q. What will be the key takeaways?**

A new way of thinking about how to present and position your business for maximum connection to this changing animal that we call the consumer.

**Q. What is your top tip for getting the most out of a conference?**

If you are sitting in on one of my presentations, the best thing you can do is to listen deeply and think with me as I'm going through it, rather than just trying to get down every point I make. At too many conferences, I see people just writing down every bit of information and they are not really getting the 'gems'.



**LEE STEPHENS**  
**CEO AND MANAGING**  
**DIRECTOR OF**  
**SWITCH DIGITAL**

*“Digital media –  
it's here to help us”*

Lee Stephens has worked for some of the major media agencies in Australia. Prior to taking on the role at Switch Digital, he was Digital CEO for Aegis Media Asia Pacific and CEO for Aegis Australia and New Zealand. In a previous life, he was Commercial Director for Fairfax Digital and responsible for Domain, and has since worked closely with Realestate.com.au.

**Q. What will you be talking about at the conference?**

Helping real estate agencies structure professional marketing strategies – not only for their vendors, but for themselves. I will look beyond portals and discuss how search, social media and content all work together to sell property and attract listings.

**Q. What will be the key takeaways?**

Vendors are happy to advertise on portals, but the agents themselves are spending a significant investment on their own sites. I will share a framework that allows agencies to value and profit from their investment in digital.

**Q. What is your top tip for getting the most out of a conference?**

Don't leave a conference without thinking “what was in this for me?”. There is always something that was worth your investment.

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# 100+

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# Maximising your workflow

Rockend's latest upgrade goes to the heart of the company's philosophy to automate the mundane.



Rockend's latest release is somewhat unique for the company. It is a dual upgrade of REST Professional and its electronic document management system, fileSMART. The company has further integrated the two to allow customers to scan in documents upon receipt and then move them through the business electronically.

## End of filing

"At present, typically a lot of our users are still handing paper around the business and at the last moment are scanning it. They are replicating how they used to do things in the old filing cabinet days, it is just that they are doing it electronically," Rockend Head of Product Scott Shepherd said.

"The REST Professional and fileSMART integration creates both the ability to move documents from one person to another, and pass on why you want the document actioned, but it also keeps a complete audit trail of that document from the time it arrives in the business right through to the time it gets archived in fileSMART.

"The efficiency experts will tell you it's the handover from one person to another that takes the time rather than the work processing. Effectively, the very second someone has approved an invoice in that system, it's available for the trust accountant to process," he said, adding that invoice data is entered once and shared across the two systems.

## Creating workflows

Flip over the business card of any Rockend employee and you'll see that automating mundane business tasks is a core tenet of the company. Workflow is one of the building blocks of achieving said automation.

A particular feature that has proved popular with the beta testers is the barcoded invoice workflow feature. The feature allows users to scan in an invoice with a barcode and extract all the invoicing and filing information from the document, populate fileSMART and automatically

share this information with REST Professional.

"We have tested the workflow with thousands of invoices and it is processing them in one hit without any human intervention."

## Efficiencies

Rockend previously rolled out the same workflow technology for strata managers. Customers who have beta tested the technology in Rockend's strata management software have reported efficiency improvements of up to 40 per cent.

"We are very happy with that 40 per cent and we are looking to create new workflows in the future that will reduce the time it takes to do other functions as well," Mr Shepherd said, who added that agencies can then allocate their time to customer service and winning new business as opposed to administration.

In addition to the workflow integration, Rockend has released many other features, including an update to its very popular REST Mobile app.

## Turning to training

The company recently reviewed its training offering and will be offering online training, as well as in-house training, to help customers get up to speed on how the upgrade could benefit their business.

"You can have all the best tools in the world, but if you don't know how to use them and you don't have the processes in place, then it's a waste," Rockend CEO Alister Maple-Brown said. "It's a huge focus for us to encourage our customers to take the time, learn the features that have been built and implemented, and to ensure that has been embedded into their businesses so it's a benefit in the short term and long term.

"Our job is only 50 per cent done," he said. "We've built it, the other 50 per cent is helping our customers understand the benefits." ♦



## INTEGRATION OF REST PROFESSIONAL AND FILESMART

1. Invoice reaches office
2. Invoice scanned into fileSMART
3. Workflow with invoice created and assigned to a property manager
4. Property manager actions/approves and archives in fileSMART
5. Invoice data is automatically sent to REST Professional
6. Validate and pay in REST Professional

## KEY BENEFITS OF LATEST UPGRADE

- Save hours in data entry/manual tasks
- Track flow of document around the office
- Create digital audit trail
- Free time to focus on winning new business

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**REINSW**

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# Moving into management

Travelling up the professional ladder can be a daunting process. What can you do to ease the transition of taking on a more senior role?



Promotions are to be celebrated. You have the new job title and the new pay packet, but you now also have responsibility for managing your own team and the challenges that come with it.

“It’s a catch 22 where people are looking for that promotion and increased wages, but what a lot of people don’t realise is that with that promotion comes increased responsibility,” REINSW Trainer Yorgo Kaporis said.

So what can you do to gain the skills you need for management and be confident in your new role?

## Profiling your team

“One of the things we focus on at REINSW is training people in the different personality traits that people exhibit and also the different learning styles,” Mr Kaporis said, adding that often people have a combination of traits.

“We go through quite a bit of DISC profiling, which identifies people who are dominant, influential, steady and conscientious. We look at the ways these people like to learn and also how they like to be managed.

“There’s quite an art to giving feedback and dealing with difficult people,” Mr Kaporis added.

In addition to people management skills, he identifies administration and record keeping as key areas that new managers

tend to fall short in. Both of which are areas that are covered in the new People Management Essentials short course from REINSW.

“Don’t be afraid of asking for help or seeking courses that are going to clarify what you need to be doing,” Mr Kaporis said.

## Taking on the challenge

Morton & Morton Head of Property Management Joshua Thomas sought out executive coaching upon being appointed to the role.

“I went through some executive coaching, which I found to be very beneficial for my own career,” Mr Thomas said. “We focused on change management and delved into emotional intelligence in the workplace. I would strongly recommend management training for anyone who has gone through property management and has stepped up to become a department head or manager.”

According to Mr Thomas, some agencies will sometimes find someone that has never done property management before, but has been a wonderful trainer and team leader.

“They are then going to face the challenge of learning about property management and gaining everyone’s respect, having not known anything about

property management,” he said. “That can be tough.”

## Setting out on your own

At the end of last year, John McManus left his position as a top salesman at McGrath to take on the role of Principal at LJ Hooker Artarmon. He has steadily been building his team and database and recently completed on his first sale.

“You’ve started your own office to generate an income, so why go and set up your own office if you don’t have the skills set from the outset,” he told the *Journal*. “It is a recipe for disaster. Really, when I look at it, I was running a business within a business. The only difference is I am now running a rent roll as well,” he added.

Property management is an essential component of the business, according to Mr McManus, who did his research on the subject prior to setting out on his own.

“Property management is a lot of work and if you don’t have a good team behind you, it certainly won’t survive because you get disgruntled landlords and tenants.

Don’t become too entrenched in doing your own thing, Mr McManus argues, as you become in danger of losing sight of the bigger picture.

“Make sure you are skilled up and are continually getting training, and don’t use the excuse ‘I’m too busy.’” ♦

## TOOLKIT



When moving into a management role, it can be easy to become overwhelmed by the responsibilities that come with it. It can mean leading a team for the first time and having to manage their workload as well as your own. The *Journal* outlines below the key issues to consider when moving up the ladder.

### TIME MANAGEMENT

Managing your time can be a handful, but managing the workload of an entire team of people can be a challenge. Use the resources available to ensure you maximise your time.

### PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Take the time to assess your staff. What personality type are they and how do they learn best? Dominant characters could potentially challenge your leadership, so identifying these traits and learning

what motivates them can help ensure they are on your team as opposed to against it.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Strong communications are an essential part of being a manager. Whether you are report writing or giving verbal feedback, it is important to be clear and concise. It can be confronting to give honest feedback to your team, but it is essential to ensure they understand how they have performed and what they need to do to improve.

### TRAINING

Don't be afraid to seek out training. REINSW has recently launched its Real Estate Essentials series, which includes the three-day People Management Essentials course that can help ease the shift into management. To find out more visit [reinsw.com.au](http://reinsw.com.au)

## FOUR LEARNING STYLES

REINSW Trainer Yorgo Kaporis reviews the four learning types in a number of his training sessions. We outline the characteristics of each below:

### Kinaesthetic

People who fall into this model learn best when they are involved or active and prefer to do rather than sit and listen.

*Learning tip:* Use role-play to practice scenarios.

### Auditory

People who fall into this model learn best by listening and look for verbal instruction from management. They work problems out by talking them through.

*Learning tip:* Tell employees to choose their own 'power song' to get them in the mood to sell.

### Visual

People who fall into this model learn best through visual demonstrations. Descriptions can be used to help this group learn and they appreciate lists.

*Learning tip:* Use mind maps to help employees plan strategies.

### Tactile

People who fall into this category are very hands on and learn best through taking notes on new topics.

*Learning tip:* Use demonstration techniques and get employees to show you what you have demonstrated.



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### WHY JOIN TRA

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Gill Wilkins, Managing Director

- TRA creates a more professional image.
- TRA provides facilities to view drivers licences, passports, picture id of tenants and pictures of damaged property and has an alert system for tracking absconded tenants.
- TRA assure you that we can help build your property management portfolio financially almost instantly.
- TRA supplies documents to give prospective owners to assist in the acquisition of new managements.
- TRA assists in the legal protection of the property managers and principals against litigation from Owners and tenants.
- TRA supplies Certificates of proof in the event of insurance or legal claims.
- TRA has a debt collection service for all areas within real estate.
- TRA provides a legally safe environment for clients.
- TRA is used by all industries i.e. Banks, Utility, Insurance, Finance Companies, Institutions and large accounting firms etc.
- TRA can audit trail all searches in the event of misuse and trace back to the computer used, therefore protecting both principals and property managers.
- TRA has a 60 page document on every aspect of our business showing compliance to the new privacy principles, completed by our barrister and solicitors.
- TRA abides by "Property, Stock and Business Agents Amendments (Tenant Databases) Regulation 2004".



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[sfrancis@bdhsolutions.com.au](mailto:sfrancis@bdhsolutions.com.au)

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**STEPHEN FRANCIS**

**ROSS HEDDITCH**

# Training calendar

## JULY 2014

**2 – 4 July • PARRAMATTA**  
**Keeping the Books**  
**Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**7 July • SYDNEY**  
**The Nuts and Bolts of the**  
**Residential Tenancies Act ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**7 – 11 July • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**8 – 11 July • SYDNEY**  
**Property Sales Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**14 – 16 July • SYDNEY**  
**List and Market Property**  
**Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**14 – 18 July • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**17 July • SYDNEY**  
**Getting it Right: Forms and**  
**New Legislation ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**18 July • SYDNEY**  
**Prepare for Selling Like**  
**Never Before ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**21 – 23 July • SYDNEY**  
**Trust Accounting Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**21 – 25 July • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**23 – 25 July • SYDNEY**  
**People Management**  
**Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**28 July • SYDNEY**  
**An Agent's Guide to Tax and**  
**Property Investment ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**28 July – 1 August • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**28 July – 1 August •**  
**PARRAMATTA**  
**Property Management**  
**Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**30 July – 1 August • SYDNEY**  
**You and the Law**  
**Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)



## Trust Accounting Essentials – 25-27 August

**Sydney** In the three-day course, you'll learn the essential legislative requirements to successfully conduct a clean and safe audit of your trust account. You'll also find out what the fines are for not complying with trust accounting legislation and the requisite procedures, and who is responsible for the accurate recording of all trust accounting transactions.

## AUGUST 2014

**4 – 8 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**5 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Introduction to Commercial**  
**Real Estate ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**11 – 14 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Property Sales Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**11 – 15 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**15 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**The A-B-C of Compliance ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**18 – 22 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**21 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**The D-E-F of Compliance ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**22 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Creating Impact and**  
**Influence ●**  
 (9.30am-1.30pm)

**25 – 27 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Trust Accounting Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

**25 – 29 Aug • SYDNEY**  
**Certificate of Registration**  
**Course ●**  
 (9.00am-5.00pm)

**27 – 29 Aug • PARRAMATTA**  
**You and the Law**  
**Essentials ●**  
 (9.30am-4.30pm)

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

You can find out more about all of our courses and register online by visiting [www.reinsw.com.au](http://www.reinsw.com.au)

Click on Course Schedule in the Training menu.

### COURSE KEY

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





# Live live cinema

Newcastle property management agency Leah Jay teamed up with the Civic Theatre to bring a bit of cult gothic cinema back to life.

Francis Ford Coppola's first big feature *Dementia 13* is a gem of a horror film. Take away the sound and add actors to perform the sound effects and words alongside the screening, and you have a show. In fact, you have *Live Live Cinema: Dementia 13*.

The show, produced by New Zealand theatre company Jumpboard Productions, was the first of three performances to be supported by Newcastle property management agency Leah Jay as part of its sponsorship of the Civic Theatre.

"During our initial meetings with the Civic Theatre, we found out just how underfunded the arts, and live theatre particularly, are in our local region," said agency founder and namesake Leah Jay. "We realised that unless we came on board, these talented performers wouldn't be able to come to our city."

## Celebrating in style

The sponsorship formed part of the agency's 20-year anniversary celebrations. A group of 100, including staff, clients and members of the community, were invited to attend the screening in February by the agency.

"We also wanted to show our support for such a well-loved and prestigious Newcastle institution, the Civic Theatre," Ms Jay added. "The agency's sponsorship also includes Circus Oz in September, as well as involvement in other shows throughout the year."

## Nervously excited

"I must admit when Nat, our marketing officer, came to me suggesting we get involved with

the Civic Theatre, I was a little bit nervous. For two reasons: we hadn't been involved in anything like that before and the play itself was a bit left field," Ms Jay said.

Real estate proved a powerful partnership for the theatre as Leah Jay was able to provide marketing support for the performance through its wide network within the local and wider regional community – thanks also to its Maitland office.

## Community work

Beyond the work the agency does with the Civic Theatre, Leah Jay has been a sponsor of the Hunter Hurricanes women's water polo team for the past three years.

Recently the agency has also started working with women's refuges through the local Girl Friday not-for-profit that raises money for women's and children's issues in the Newcastle area.

In the future, the agency hopes to marry their partnership with the Civic Theatre with their work with the refuges by offering tickets to children's shows to the women and children at the refuges. ♦

## SHARE YOUR STORY

Tell us about the work you do in the community or for charity, and you could feature on our 'Last word' page. Email [jill@mahlabmedia.com.au](mailto:jill@mahlabmedia.com.au)

## IN THIS YEAR: OCTOBER 1963

Communications were a common theme in the *Journal* throughout the early sixties, as answerphones entered the market and agents tested out the precursor to mobile.



Answerphones have gone through a bit of an evolution since they were first introduced. As the Teleslave advert in the October 1963 *Journal* proves, answerphones used to be quite cumbersome machines. However, the technology,

which we now take for granted, was revolutionary for the real estate industry at the time.

Writing in reference to the Alibiphon Telephone Answering Unit, the *Journal* reported:

*"Several hundred of these units have already been sold in NSW, mostly to doctors, who were quick to seize on its obvious advantages in regard to the handling of emergency calls outside hours, and now it is being brought to the notice of Estate Agents, with the thought that the commission on even one sale saved by its use will pay for the unit."*

However, what about when you are on the road in your car? The *Journal* had an answer for this quandary too. Ahead of the times in many respects, one writer suggested exploring the opportunities posed by two-way radio.

*"Could you use travelling time in your vehicle for useful business transactions? Could you offer improved service to your clients by having direct vehicle to office communication? Can your business image appear contemporaneous without the modern aid of two-way radio?"*

Do you know any agents that used two-way radio? Do you still have an old answerphone machine in the store cupboard? Share your stories at [twitter.com/REINSWnews](http://twitter.com/REINSWnews)

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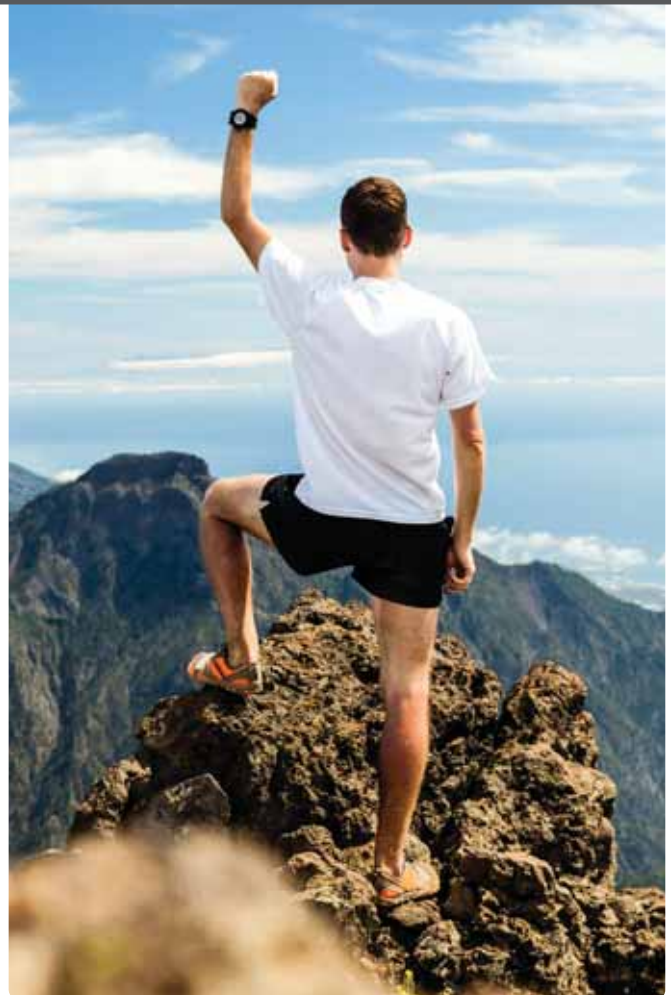
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