



Advertising Policy

Pursuant to Section 250-8.070 of the MREC Business Conduct and Practice on Advertising:

(3) "No real estate advertisement by a licensee shall show only a post office box number, telephone number or street address. Every advertisement of real estate by a licensee shall contain the broker's regular business name or the name under which the broker or the broker's firm is licensed and shall indicate that the party advertising is a real estate broker and not a private party."

(4) "Every advertisement of real estate by a licensee where the licensee has no interest in the real estate shall be made under the direct supervision and in the name of the broker or firm who holds the licensee's license. If the licensee's name or telephone number, or both, is used in any advertisement, the advertisement also shall include the name and telephone number of the broker or firm who holds the licensee's license."

This policy is in addition to the MREC rules and applies to each and every real estate licensee who markets, promotes or advertises his/her real estate services.

"Advertising" and "advertisement" clearly defined:

1. Advertising - oral, written, visual, printed or electronically generated advertisement by a licensee OR other person on behalf of the licensee
2. Advertisement - oral, written, visual, printed or electronic media advertisement and encompasses any correspondence, mailing, newsletter, brochure, business card, for sale or for lease signage or sign rider, promotional items, automobile signage, telephone directory listing, radio and television broadcasts, telephone solicitation and electronic media to include emails, text messaging, public blogs, social media networking websites and/or internet displays (REALTOR.com, Zillow, etc.)

All advertising and advertisements must prominently display the Columbia Real Estate logo and name in such a manner that:

- It is clearly visible, discernible and easily identifiable by a member of the public
- It includes Columbia Real Estate's telephone number in a legible size

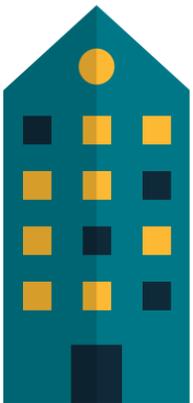
Any and all custom signs or riders MUST be approved by the Managing Broker before being ordered.

ADVERTISING CHECKLIST



NAME OF LICENSEE

Does the advertisement include your full name?



BROKERAGE NAME

Does the advertisement include Columbia Real Estate's full name or logo in a clearly visible and easily identifiable manner?



BROKERAGE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Does the advertisement include Columbia Real Estate's identified telephone number legibly?



TEAM ADVERTISING

Does the advertisement include your full name if advertising as a team?



OFFERING OF INDUCEMENTS

Does the advertisement avoid offering compensation or anything of value to the public through a contest, lottery, drawing, or other prize mechanism or element of chance?



EASY RULE OF THUMB

If you include your name in any advertisement, you should also include "Columbia Real Estate" or the logo, and telephone number.

MARKETING RESTRICTIONS & GUIDELINES

Missouri Real Estate Advertising Requirements

It is a well known fact that the ability of any business to attract new clients rests largely on the effectiveness of the business' advertising. This is particularly true when it comes to real estate. Before any broker or real estate licensee can make a commission or profit from their services, they need to find clients. Simply put, any broker or licensee who is unable to consistently attract new clients will find themselves out of business in short order. This is as true in Missouri as it is anywhere in the country.

In light of how important advertising is to Missouri's real estate industry, and the potential damage that can result from misleading or fraudulent advertising, the **Missouri Real Estate Commission Statutes and Rules** establish specific **requirements for real estate advertising**. These advertising requirements, which are enforced by the Missouri Real Estate Commission, must be observed by Missouri real estate licensees at all times.

Covered Mediums

The Missouri Real Estate Statutes and Rules apply to advertising being done in the following mediums:

- Print (e.g. newspaper, mailers, door-hangers)
- Radio
- Television
- Internet (e.g. web pages, social media)

Disclosure Required

Any advertising conducted by a broker or licensee must clearly disclose to the general public that the advertising is being done by a broker or licensee. It is prohibited for both brokers and licensees to advertise a property as for sale or for rent, or offer any other real estate services without disclosing their status as a licensee. The only exception to this requirement is when a broker or licensee is advertising their property for sale or for rent that the broker or licensee has an ownership interest in.

Whenever brokers or licensees are advertising their own property, they must advise the consumer in a conspicuous fashion that the property is for sale or for rent by one of the following:

- Owner agent
- Owner salesperson
- Owner broker

Licensee advertising must also disclose the name and contact information of both the licensee the firm that employs the licensee. No real estate advertising by licensees is allowed to include only a street address, post office box or phone number for the licensee.

Broker Supervision Required

All licensee real estate advertising must be done under the close supervision of the firm that employs the licensee or that firm's designated broker.

Social Media Best Practices

The rewards are great – and so are the risks. Develop a policy before you post!

Social media is great. In just a few years it has completely changed the way that we communicate, interact, keep in touch with friends and connect with new ones. Social media is great in business and in real estate. It provides easy exposure, increases your reach and audience, offers a source of referrals and it is free! But social media is tricky. It is social - meaning that you should use it to be social – meet people, connect, share who you are. And it is a form of media - meaning that it should be used and approached as any other media tool. So how do you balance the two? Strategically. You wouldn't write a commercial spot in ten seconds and publicly air it, would you? Similarly, don't use social media with such little disregard. This applies to both your personal and business account – because they both represent you.

Your Personal Policy

Start using social media like any other business tool. Before you write another post, stop and develop your own social media policy. Consider your business and personal strategies and goals and be sure they align – with who you are as a person, with your brand, and how you want to be perceived. Don't think you can be one person on your business page and a completely different one on your personal page. Your clients – the world – will see right through you. Set expectations about the purpose of each account and each page you manage and be consistent about your messaging and the information you share. Understand that each social media platform has a different purpose and develop a strategy for each. If it sounds like too much work then embrace one at a time and don't create a new account until you understand how it works, how you will use it and what your goal for it is. Facebook is not the same as Twitter and if you try and use them in the same way, you will be wasting your time.

Risks to be Aware of

We have all heard the stories. The smart, well-respected business professional that should have known better but made a bonehead mistake on Facebook, costing them their job and self-dignity. It all seems like common sense, but people keep doing it. The thing about social media is that when you make a mistake – it is there for the world to see. Even when you delete it – it doesn't go away. When it comes to real estate, there are some serious risks to be considered. Here are a few that you should be aware of.

- Code of Ethics – As a REALTOR® you are subject to the Code of Ethics and the Code applies to the digital world. Review the Code with your social media strategy in mind.
 - Online advertising – All the rules that apply to traditional advertising apply to online advertising. Remember this the next time you create a Facebook campaign.
 - Plagiarism – If you copy or share someone else's work (whether ideas, text or images) be sure to give them credit and properly attribute the author.
 - Fair Housing – Be careful that what you post doesn't violate Fair Housing laws or it could be interpreted as discrimination. In the world of 140 characters it is much easier to miscommunicate.
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- Anti-trust – Any activity that amounts to an unreasonable restraint of competition is a violation of antitrust law.
- Disclosure Issues – Be careful not to share or disclose private or confidential information entrusted to you as a REALTOR®. Oversharing is a true temptation of social media.
- Defamation – Everyone is braver behind a keyboard. Making an insulting or libelous statement or comment online is still considered defamation.
- Intellectual Property Infringement (including copyright and trademark issues and DMCA) - When you post or share anything online that is protected by copyright or trademark without the permission of the creator, you could be guilty of copyright infringement.

Social media can be risky because technology is outpacing the law and the rules are shades of gray rather than black and white. When it comes to avoiding risks, it is best to play it safe. If you are unsure how it could be interpreted, don't post it.

Don't:

- Don't friend everyone. Be selective about who you accept as a friend or connect with. When you determine your purpose for each page, think about your audience. If you intend to keep your personal page personal, then don't accept requests from people you don't know. Manage your online world wisely.
- Don't spam or sell. Be human and be real. Use social media to connect with people and form relationships. Posting nothing but automated listings will just annoy people. Being too "salesy" is a turn off too. People use social media for the human interaction – not to be sold to. • Don't vent. Do not use social media as your personal journal. Do not vent about clients, coworkers or other agents. Just don't do it, ever.
- Don't talk about clients or deals. You may be excited about that deal you just closed but don't risk ruining it by oversharing on social. Even if you are vague about the details, be very cautious.
- Don't assume your friends or family or clients have the same views as you on religion, politics or social issues. We all know what assuming does.
- Don't assume anything on social media is private – this includes private groups and direct messages. It is way too easy for someone to take a screen shot of your "behind closed doors" comment and use it against you. Be cautious of anything you put in writing.
- Don't let social media take the place of face-to-face interaction. Your online presence should augment who you are in person. Use it to connect but don't let it take the place of the real thing.

Social media is fun, exciting and when used correctly - rewarding. However, it takes work to make it work. Put the time in up front. Practice strategy and discipline and be aware of the risks. Remember that you are representing yourself, your business and the real estate industry as a whole. Represent well!

Dear _____,

Our records indicate you have violated Columbia Real Estate and Missouri Real Estate Commission's advertising policy. Please see the attach image reflecting your violation.

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This email notice constitutes as a **Warning**. Any future violations of the Advertising Policy immediately incur a Violation Assessment Fine of \$100.00 by Columbia Real Estate.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Thank You,
