

# BEST PRACTICE

## Online Orientation Program

### Who

The MetroTex Association of REALTORS® represents more than 14,000 real estate professionals involved in all aspects of the real estate industry. Established in 1917, MetroTex represents the entire North Texas region as the area's largest REALTOR® association. MetroTex is an advocate for the real estate industry, the real estate professional and private property rights.

The MetroTex Association of REALTORS® exists, in conjunction with the Texas Association of REALTORS® and the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), to serve all members by providing products and services which help members succeed in their business in an ethical and professional manner.

Among the services provided by the Association to their members is the education they provide within the classroom as well as online. Included in the online offerings are the full online catalog of the NAR Designation and Certification Courses allowing members to satisfy many educational requirements online. These courses also provide continuing education credits for their members.

### Why

As members join the association they are required to complete an association orientation course within 30 days of joining. Failure to complete the orientation may result in suspended access to their Multiple Listing Service. In consideration of schedules and in some cases remote location from the Association's office, many members were challenged to meet this deadline.

An additional challenge for the association is the cost to deliver the orientation courses with the frequency to service the influx of members. They scheduled the orientation class twice-monthly to serve their members. In consideration of staff time, printing, refreshments and instructors, their budget for this program was considerable and was an expense that came from members' dues.

### Solution

Using the Learning Library (LLI) course delivery platform and course development services, MetroTex wrote a two-hour orientation program to be delivered online through their private labeled LLI e-learning campus. The written materials were submitted to LLI who then applied MetroTex branding and interface design, content instructional design and overall programming resulting in a two-hour interactive course in a multi-device friendly online environment. MetroTex offers the program free to their new members with the option for existing members to participate in the course for a nominal fee.

The course includes field trips to the association website allowing members to familiarize themselves with the services of the association as well as learning to navigate through their website. The course also features interactivity, quizzes and promotions to encourage future participation and engagement by their new members.

## Results

The 50% budgetary savings and feedback from members exceeded expectations. The results of the success helped initiate a national program which now includes participation of many State and Local Associations and the National Association.

As an additional benefit to MetroTex, new members are directed to their e-learning campus which provides opportunities to complete courses from a generous list of available NAR Designation and Certification Courses and other business building courses, tools and resources. MetroTex receives revenue from these course sales to further support their return on investment.

In summary the results of the program include:

- Significant budgetary savings plus new revenue for MetroTex
- Time and cost savings for new members
- Promotions to increase member engagement
- Increased traffic to the e-learning education portal and other education

### Testimonial

*"As a result of offering this program, our new members can now satisfy the orientation requirement quickly and conveniently within their own schedule. They are provided resources and encouragement to participate in association events and our association's budget is realizing a significant savings".*

## Top 3 Reasons to Offer an Online Orientation Program

### 1. Budgetary Savings

This model has fully eliminated the recurring overhead of staff time and cost, venue, printing, and refreshments for the organization and their staff. The overhead saved has been passed along to new programs and support for members. Members also enjoy the time and money saved by doing this program online.

### 2. Member Service

Members may now easily complete an Orientation Program within the first days of new membership thus improving their organizational knowledge and kick-starting their own businesses. This also reduces staff support needed to address basic questions included in Orientation material now consumed so much earlier than before. This online program is a relief for those living far from venues previously which impacted a large number of their members. By including field trips to the association website and the inclusion of promotional opportunities for other organization events and members are aware of all programs and services available much sooner. This increases awareness, reduces support, and increases participation and revenue. Finally, introducing members to elearning early provides a simple way to train those new to elearning and will encourage other program participation.

### 3. Revenue

Awareness of all programs, plus the additional new online program access available from the LLI master catalog, provides royalties on education sales previously unavailable to the organization. Sponsors, vendors and partners of the Association can also provide sponsorship in the LLI environment thus providing an additional new revenue source. Cross-promotion opportunities have also grown substantially and provide both budgetary savings and opportunities for increased revenue.