



Episode 02: All Right, Stop! Cooperate and Listen

Let's be honest -- REALTORS® face an ever-changing industry. With emerging tech, growing trends, and a booming market, it's vital to keep up. Join me, Gilbert Gonzalez, CEO for the San Antonio Board of REALTORS®, as I get real with experts on what REALTORS® need to know about this industry. It's time to Get Real.

Gilbert: 00:00 I'm out at the NAR conference in San Francisco. And today I'm talking with a few key staff from NAR that have some great information to share with our members. At the conference, NAR's Board of Directors passed the Clear Cooperation Policy, also known as MLS 8.0. We're here with Rene Galicia, NAR's Director of MLS Engagement, who's been responsible for educating members at the conference and around the country on the background for this policy. Thank you Rene for joining us. I actually would love to talk to you about 8.0, a lot of our members have heard about it. Can you tell us what it is?

Rene: 00:32 Absolutely. So 8.0, or as we're calling it the Clear Cooperation Policy Proposal. Simply put, it reinforces the tenant, the core tenants of what the MLS is, and you know, the aspect of cooperation behind participants joining an MLS. So the policy as it stands today just requires that within one business day of, of publicly marketing a property, a participant has to put that listing into the MLS for sharing with other participants. So again, just reinforces what the MLS is, participant's agreement to cooperate with other brokers in the marketplace and make available listing information.

Gilbert: 01:10 So some of the questions I've had is why now? We've had pocket listings for a long time. Why are we doing this now?

Rene: 01:17 So this is kind of been, you know, a long time coming in terms of you know, the guidance that's needed. The MLS Tech and Emerging Issues Advisory Board for a number of years has, has fielded questions and you know, from members and the MLS is asking for some guidance on how to deal with you know, pocket listings or off MLS listings or limited exposure listings generally. I think even back to 2012, 2014, somewhere thereabouts there was a work group that was put together to look at this issue. And initially the thinking was you know, let's leave that to the local marketplaces. The local MLS is to you know, put some rules in place or figure out how to solve for this. But with the growing use of or the growing practice of off MLS, you know, limited exposure listings it's, it's, you know, become a pain point nationally.

Rene: 02:04 And the advisory board felt that now was the time to you know, provide some clear guidance on what it is to you know, share cooperatively, share listing information within the MLS.

Gilbert: If we're calling it a pain point, then that means we're saying it's a problem. Why is it a problem?

Rene: Well, the primary problem is you know, you're, you're fragmenting the market, right? You're if you're excluding listings from the MLS not providing wide exposure you're not acknowledging what the MLS is and, and you know what it's done over the past a hundred years to make the market what it is today. You know, CMLS, the Council Multiple Listing Services you know, puts it clearly that the MLSes make the market work. And the problem is by leaving you know, certain inventory off the MLS, you excluded from access to consumers and to parties, other participant brokers in the MLS.

Rene: 02:54 They don't have a clear picture of what the market is doing, both in what's available for sale, but also in, in pricing and, and gathering market information, market statistics too for buyers brokers when they're presenting and working with clients when they're presenting that information over.

Gilbert: So I've seen some of the advertisements in favor of this and it had somebody in a wheelchair saying, I wish I would have known about that house that had larger hallways cause that would've been perfect for me. Are we talking Fair Housing on these kinds of issues or are we talking just fairness between all of the cooperating agents?

Rene: Well, it, it's, it's certainly, you know, there are several who have raised those concerns about this being a Fair Housing issue a concern. You know, certainly what we do know is that by providing the widest exposure of listing information to the widest audience of both cooperating brokers part, you know, other participants within the MLS platform.

Rene: 03:48 But also when you're sharing that listing information out IDX and to other consumers we know that that creates for more seamless you know, a one stop shop if you will, of, of, of listing information for it, for everyone involved. You don't force a, a potential buyer that's out there looking for a home. And as we know, our, you know, survey after survey shows that oftentimes the, the very first step that a consumer or potential buyer takes is to go online, do a Google search or look at property online. If we make them go through or experience a fragmented marketplace they're forced to one, you know, potentially not be able to work with one single broker. They're having to search out and try to find these private listing clubs to access listing information. And you know, certainly there are concerns there that they have been voiced.

Rene: 04:38 And this policy here seeks to, to eliminate those, those issues. You know, get that, that listing information in the one centralized source which is the MLS, which you know, makes for, for it's an efficient marketplace of, of listing inventory.

Gilbert: I'll come back. I, I have always, we've heard a lot about how this benefits consumer buyers, and I think some of the questions I've had from our members is how does this affect our client customer sellers? So I want to come back to that, but before just NAR was exploring this before you said in 2014 and I know I found an article that said there are situations when pocket listings may be appropriate. So this is a change from where we were in the past.

Rene: Well, I think that the policy acknowledges that there's still a place for pocket listings, if you will and pocket listings in terms of office exclusives, which is you know, that's what we more commonly see the, the term applied, right.

Rene: 05:37 Policy exists that allows for, for office exclusives. This, the Clear Cooperation Policy proposal doesn't change that you know, certainly where there's concerns for privacy safety if you have a sensitive transaction occurring I know in a lot of the discussions, you know, we always point to if you have a celebrity client, but what if you have a family member who is going through some litigation or, or has you know, some concerns. Divorce is another scenario. We've had some questions about you know, someone getting death threats and, and they're, they're wanting to move and they need that privacy. Certainly you can, you can take an office exclusive listing and, and serve that client that way. So we don't change that. We don't eliminate that. We don't prohibit you from, from doing that with this policy.

Rene: 06:26 That's still, there's still a place for that in the market.

Gilbert: I can do it. I take a listing, I tell my seller we're going to keep it off the MLS still. Okay.

Rene: Yes.

Gilbert: It's the moment I start to market that right. Or advertise or market?

Rene: Well and so two things he said let me come back to the difference between advertise and market. But first thing you said right as the broker telling the, the, the seller, the, the client that they're going to leave it off the MLS we would hope that it's a conversation where you know, the broker informs the seller, gives them their options discusses the pros and cons and they work together to arrive at what's in the seller's best interest. And if the seller identifies that it's in their best interest, not to, you know, privacy concern, whatever the case may be, to go down the route of an office exclusive, that's certainly allowed within the policy.

Rene: 07:16 Now what this policy does address though is when the determination has been made that it's in the, in the client's best interest and here the seller to publicly market that property then that's where the policy kicks in and the requirement kicks into expose that listing, you know, input into the MLS and make it available to other participants.

Gilbert: So is it kinda like we're defining what an office exclusive is then? That an office exclusive means it stays in your office. The moment you put a sign in the front yard, the moment you put it into any other Avenue that will make it available to other agents except the MLS, that's the moment it is no longer considered an office exclusive.

Rene: I think that's right. And, and I think the best way to look at it is this is what this policy says or, or gets at, is that public marketing is not an aspect of an office exclusive.

Rene: 08:05 And I wanted to come back real quickly to your question between the difference between advertising and marketing which is, you know, the, the committee or the advisory board rather had a discussion about whether you use advertising or marketing. They came back and centered on the word or agreed on the word marketing. Because advertising is a component of marketing. You can do, you can undertake various actions for a marketing plan. So that's their intent was to create more of a wider net so that you weren't limiting this to some forms of advertising, but rather all forms of public marketing in any medium.

Gilbert: Okay. My understanding is that you did a little bit of research on, or let me ask, did y'all do any research? I know there's some MLSes as part of the discussions going on here at NAR, that they've already implemented this. What has been the experiences of those other MLSes and their implementation of this policy?

Rene: Yeah, so we, so the advisory board did seek to, to hear from a wide range of interested parties, right. Members and various markets. MLSes in various markets. There are MLSes that provided feedback that have already implemented this. So Northwest MLS has implemented something similar. MRED in Chicago has implemented something similar. SmartMLS in Connecticut has, has done the same. And there are others in other markets that have gone down this path. Most recently BrightMLS implemented this rule. And the feedback that that was provided was that this helped to solve the problem of limit exposure listings and sharing the listing information with other participants.

Rene: 09:44 There was a lot of discussion about timeframes and statuses and how, you know, implementation concerns, how to, how are the MLSes handling you know, what's life look like after this type of policy is implemented which is the tech aspect of it. And then how do you track this on a status or what are the requirements for do you need a change or eliminate their waiver forms? You know, the operational concerns behind that.

Gilbert: How, how about enforcement? How did all of those associations enforce it, cause if, if this rule passes and today it went through the MLS, it did pass the MLS committee. So it'll go to the board of directors on Monday. How are the associations expected to enforce this? Is it a fine discretionary up to what we want? How, what is y'all's recommendation?

Rene: So from a national policy perspective co compliance or enforcement again, that's a local determination. The guidance that we provide is the recommendation that this is a whatever enforcement mechanism you put in place, that it's a progressive enforcement. So for example, on, on a first time violation you likely wouldn't, you know, hit somebody with a \$15,000 fine. For example. You know, we, we would hope that as part of the implementation, there's some time for the MLS is to put out some, some training material get the information in front of members. I know that CMLS has, has mentioned that they're putting together some resources to help with implementation, you know, the educational aspects. And hopefully you won't have to go down that route. But that determination is left to, to the local MLS and associations to set out a, a citation and find schedule. That's, that's what's needed as part of their ongoing compliance efforts.

Rene: 11:22 But again, the recommendation that it should be progressive. So I know the answer, but I'm gonna ask you anyway.

Gilbert: Our MLS is required to follow this rule. Could we locally then say, we no longer want, we, we don't agree with this rule, we're not gonna put it into our MLS rules. So broadly the rule of adoption of the rule is mandatory. And so you would have to, to adopt this locally as part of your rule set where you, if you have some leeway, if you

will. So for example you could make this a little bit more restrictive in the sense of our policy says within one business day you know, the policy I came out of committee says within one business day, we've had, when MLS inquire at least there could be others that they wanted to at the local level rather than require one business day, they wanted to go down to 24 hours. And so that's something that you could potentially do, but you couldn't make it more broad. So for example, you can't modify the rule to say we'll give you 30 days to submit the listing once you begin public marketing. So...

Gilbert: 12:18 So we can't make it, we can make it more strict, but we can't make it less...

Rene: Right. That's correct.

Gilbert: So for us, for example, if we put this in, currently we have a 72 hour period, I have a listing, I have 72 hours and my client signed it. I have 72 hours before I have to put it into the MLS. Does it change my 72 hour period that I have for my local?

Rene: 12:40 Yeah, it's a great question. And that's typically a, you know, we typically refer that to that as the, the mandatory submission policy, right? Where once you take the listing, you have, you know, you're on the clock now to get that listing input into the MLS. Nothing changes with this policy unless you undertake public marketing within that 72 hour timeframe. And in your case here you know...

Gilbert: 13:02 So I have the listing, I'm going to put it into the MLS in 72 hours, but within 24 hours, I already have it on Facebook or I'm sending out email blasts. You're saying that's when the, the one business rule applies?

Rene: That's correct. That'll kick in. Okay.

Gilbert: So as an association, SABOR did have a scheduled listing status implemented for a while now because we, we knew that agents had a need to have the listing agreement comply with the 72 hours, but then they didn't want to market it to the public. So we have a database. Does this affect the ability for us as an association, as an MLS to have our scheduled listing status? Can agents still utilize this? People have implied that this affects Coming Soons. What would be your response to that?

Rene: 13:47 Yeah, that's a great question. And that relates to the coming soon because this policy is not a, and some have even called it the coming soon policy. This policy doesn't address, doesn't prohibit or require, you know, coming soon or the practice or coming soon or the adoption of coming soon statuses locally. It, it wouldn't want to keep you from your ability to have that status. So in some markets they'll call this a delayed showing status. Some have implemented a coming soon status. I think the best way to look at this as taking, you know, referring back over to RESO, the real estate standards organization and the great work that they're doing and standardizing data, they have a standard statuses. And one of those is, you know, coming soon. So if you wanted to adopt something where there's a delayed type showing or delayed listing, you can certainly continue to do that. The goal whole goal here is that you'd have that listing information within the MLS platform. But once, if that delayed showing, for example, and I don't think that's the case with you guys, but if for example, you had a delayed showing status or coming soon status that was not exposed to other participants, it was more of an internal draft type entry, where only the listing broker could see it. If they undertake public marketing, then they would be required to publish that into the MLS platform, so other participants can see that.

Gilbert: 15:02 Okay. So a lot of the comments that we've heard is the reasons why and I think all of our members can get behind the idea of the MLS facilitates the market. It is what makes this industry work. This idea that a group of competitors come together, they put all their data in there because we want to make sure one, a house is available to as many people as possible. And that within this industry, we're all going to cooperate. The tension point for us in Texas is because we are a nondisclosure state. And earlier I said, you know, this focus is on the ability of a buyer to find the house out there. But some of our members are saying, what about the seller? What about the seller who is very much accustomed to our nondisclosure status and therefore they don't want to have it in the MLS. I'm a REALTOR®. I have a, a person who doesn't want their house in the MLS because they don't want to have the sold price placed in that database. So they say, I'd like to hire you as my REALTOR®. Please market it however you see fit, but do not put it into the MLS. That's going to be a problem for us. How are we as an association going to address that?

Rene: 16:15 Right. So non-disclosure, right, that typically applies to as I understand it you have your attorney sitting here next to me so he can, he can throw something at me if he, if I get this wrong. But my, my understanding right on nondisclosure is essentially that a governmental agency can't require the disclosure of that sold price for that sold information to the you know, to those agencies, right?

Gilbert: 16:41 Correct. It's the absence of the rule. So in our state, we don't have a rule that says you have to give the information to the state.

Rene: 16:46 Right. Where the MLS is different though is by using the MLS, you can by rule require the tracking or the submission of, of information including sold price. If we have a scenario where a seller absolutely does not want to input that information into the broker broker network, which is the MLS and they wanted to leave their listing off the MLS for those reasons then the listing broker could still take an office exclusive listing and market that to, you know, within the brokerage and find a client directly. But if the decision is made that it's in the seller's best interest to widely disseminate this listing then this rule would require the Clear Cooperation Policy would require that that listing be exposed and made available to other participants. But what they don't lose is the ability to the seller.

Rene: 17:34 If they're still concerned about that information getting out from the broker broker network that's the MLS, they can still provide a direction or instruction to exclude that listing from internet publication. So leaving off IDX and VOW for example, seller doesn't lose that ability to opt out of that leaving that information only within the MLS platform broker to broker network.

Gilbert: See and I, and I think it's not so much that the consumer seller doesn't want the property marketed. They know though if you put it in the MLS, then the XP, if you get the benefits of the MLS, right, I'm putting my house in the MLS, then the benefits are, it's going to be marketed because of IDX, because of syndication in all these places. It's not so much that they want to avoid that. They don't like the idea that information about how much that price sold for, how much of that property sold for is going to be available. Just available in general. They want to keep it confidential, kind of kinda like commercial world, right? The commercial world avoids the MLS because they don't want sales price out there and anywhere available. So it would still be that tension where, yes, I want to hire a REALTOR® to help market my property. I want them to put it in magazines. I want them to put it out there on the internet, but I don't want my sales data in your MLS. It, it, it won't be able to be done. I mean, they're gonna the REALTOR® will have to tell that homeowner, I don't know if I can list this property for you because if, if I listed, I have two options, I put it in the MLS and I can market it however we see fit, whether it's a lot or a little or I make it an office exclusive. But that means I literally can't tell anyone except for my brokerage. Right? And, and it is only brokerage, right? It's not a franchise?

Rene: Correct.

Gilbert: I can't tell anyone in my brokerage, other than my brokerage about that property.

Rene: Right.

Gilbert: The moment I put a sign in the front yard, I'm in violation of 8.0.

Rene: Right.

Gilbert: So how are we going to, is there going to be some leeway for us in Texas on how we're going to implement this?

Rene: So, so there's no, you know, relate to, to the issue of reporting. You know, the final sales price to the MLS, you know, that that's a practice that occurs today. Right? This policy doesn't have a carve out an exception for that. That's certainly a discussion and, and maybe some education that needs to occur between the listing broker and the seller. And again, if the seller determines that, you know, again, the, you know, the benefits of the MLS come, come with some requirements as well for the listing broker, which is a reporting the true and accurate information, a subject to the rules of the service.

Rene: 20:06 And they advise that they make that determination in conjunction with the seller, that if the concern about reporting the sold price is, you know, overrides all the other benefits, then an option to them is the office exclusive. But if they make the determination that the benefits of inputting the listing to the MLS override

the concerns of, you know, the potential for the information sales press information, make it over for a property value assessment, for example then, you know, that's handled accordingly. But you know, let's not forget that what this policy doesn't do. While it doesn't address those or alleviate those concerns that the homeowners might have, this is a, a conversation that's worth continuing to have and discuss whether it's a looking for solution through advocacy and employing your advocacy resources and engagement with, with governmental agencies. That's a conversation that should continue. I don't want anybody to have the impression that this policy has passed and you know the, the committees and the board of directors has spoken. So let's cut off that, that discussion. That's certainly not the intent. We want to continue to address and work together or want to continue to address those concerns and work together to find some solutions for those concerns.

Gilbert: 21:17 And I think, not so much a question, but more as what I've heard from our members is they feel as though the policy forces them to violate their fiduciary duty to their clients. Their clients are telling them, this is the way I'd like to sell my home. This is the way I'd like to market it. And they no longer have that flexibility. It's, it's two options. And I, and I think we haven't really found the solution for that with Texas. We're going to have to find it. And I know as implemented, it will become effective in January, but it won't have to be implemented until...

Rene: 21:50 Effective January one. And implementation required locally by May 1st.

Gilbert: 21:57 But I think one of our members would tell would want me to say to you is they feel like it's a breach of their fiduciary duty to their clients and how do we, how do we reconcile that with, yes, we know that the MLS should have all of the information, but ultimately doesn't the consumer have the right to tell us how we're gonna market that property?

Rene: 22:16 So what I would say is, you know, it's not just with this rule, right? We have a whole set of rules for the MLS. And the MLS has have added additional local rules where, you know, there's an aspect of, of when a property or where there's contemplation of using the MLS to market a property or to share listing information with other participants and use it as a mechanism to expose that listing information. To IDX, VOW, listing distribution you know, there are some, some limitations if you will, or some requirements where in the Clear Cooperation proposals, one where if you undertake public marketing you have to disseminate it. But there's other areas where we have requirements, right? Like the requirement to input a photograph. Some MLSes. We don't have a requirement of a set number of photographs or requirement at the national level.

Rene: 23:02 The local MLSes, have implemented, you know, requirement to upload in this case four photographs. You know, that's an area where we're not telling, just like the Clear Cooperation Policy proposal or policy. We're not telling a homeowner what they can or can't do. This policy simply says that if this action is to undertaken, in this case public marketing, then the listing broker has by rule, a requirement to disclose or disseminate this information to other participants. So it's definitely a conversation between the listing broker and their client informing them of, look, I've joined the service, I've agreed to cooperate. And there's also these other rules that I must abide by. This is how we're going to navigate and this is if we do X, Y, and Z, then I in turn have to take certain actions like uploading photographs disclosing true and accurate information, providing a clear picture and for example, in their Code of Ethics and making the, the listing information available to other participants.

Gilbert: 24:01 So what do I say to the member who tells me, you know what Gilbert, if this is what we're doing, then I'm out. I just don't want to participate. If the MLS is going to tell me how I can do my business and how I should serve my client, then I don't want to, how do, how am I supposed to address that? Their concerns? What do I tell them?

Rene: 24:18 Yeah, absolutely. And, that's again, maintaining that engagement with membership, right. And suddenly hearing, we want to make sure that members understand that their concerns are not being ignored. I think it's worth continuing the conversation of explaining the pro-competitive pro-consumer aspects of the MLS and understanding where the MLS has come or what the MLS has come to be over the past hundred years, which is, it's still continues to be the, the, the best platform, the best tool for, for a membership to not only distribute listing information amongst others, but it's what other industry do you have where we have this level of not just cooperation but competition and we're still able to maintain an orderly marketplace for the benefit of consumers. So I would just ask that, you know, the conversation, start with let's take a look on how to serve consumers and how, how best we can work with these, with each other, with other REALTORS®, with, with other participants in the service, and then continue the conversation there. Again, certainly this policy doesn't prevent someone from,

from meeting the needs of their, their consumer. It's the intent here is to further what the MLS is today which is pro-consumer pro-competitive and a great tool for membership to use.

Gilbert: 25:29 You know, and as, as the conversations have been happening with 8.0 my thought is, is this the beginning of the commercial system? You know, the commercial system doesn't, commercial real estate does not use the MLS and it is completely built on, you know, different types of networks. Is this the start of residential going the commercial way?

Rene: 25:51 So I would hope not, but you know, in saying that even even looking at commercial, what commercial is doing now you know, NAR recently signed agreements with Brevitas and Crexi to provide a national listing platform for, for members in the commercial space. And so I think that's an acknowledgement that members are looking for national platform solutions. Even in the commercial world where they understand the value of the MLS and they're looking for something MLS like for commercial. And that's in place now and we see a wider and wider adoption there. And in fact even if you don't want to sign up for Brevitas or Crexi at a discount, which NPR has secured for members, but you have a need to access that commercial information, you can access that in an aggregated format through RPR. RPR is commercial tool set gives members access today.

Rene: 26:45 They don't have to pay anything additional. They can log into RPR today and access that. But again, I think that's an acknowledgement of where commercial is wanting to go, which is leverage what the MLS is today for residential and create a more organized marketplace of, of and one centralized source in which they can share listing information. Does this new policy have anything to do with the lawsuit currently pending? Yeah. No. So this policy, again, membership and MLSes have sought guidance from NAR on this issue for a number of years, even predating the litigation that was filed this year. So it's not a response to that. Again, I, I do think though that this policy again reinforces what the MLS is and how it helps to maintain an orderly marketplace and provides a system to better service consumers and provide greater access to data for consumers so that they can work with one member that can give them access to you know, all the listing information within their marketplace.

Gilbert: 27:44 So Rene, I appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule. I know you've been speaking at lots of committee meetings about the policy, so thank you very much.

Rene: Of course, my pleasure.

Gilbert: This new policy passed NAR's Board of Directors on November 11th with 91% approval. While SABOR's Board of Directors felt it needed more deliberations, we will work to find the best way to implement this newly adopted policy in a way that serves our members and the buyers and sellers they represent. Next we have Katie Johnson, NAR General Counsel and Chief Member Experience Officer with info about some exciting things that NAR is working on, including the That's Who We R campaign, the C2EX program and advice on how members can get involved at the national level. Thank you for joining us.

Katie: Thank you for asking me.

Gilbert: So tell us, what are your roles as this Chief Member Experience Officer?

Katie: 28:31 Sure, thanks Gilbert. So in the past couple of years NAR has done a major reorganization under our new CEO, Bob Goldberg. And part of that reorg was to look at the member experience and to say how can we do better serving members and making sure we understand the value of membership in the REALTOR® organization and that we are being relevant to them and offering the products and services that they care most about and ultimately the ones that are going to help them succeed. So with that very defined strategy in mind, we created a new team or a couple of new teams at NAR called Member Experience and Engagement. And I luckily get to oversee those teams. The member experience team is really focused as the first point of contact for members regarding all things policy and national policy related. That involves participation in our governance system and it includes professional standards, MLS policies, membership policies and even our, our global committees and commercial committees.

Katie: 29:38 The engagement team is really focused on outreach with the organizations that also serve our members. So our engagement team is focused on creating strong relationships with state and local associations as well as multicultural organizations and global bilateral partners who, and our many institutes, societies and councils like CCIM and IRM and RLI that also work with the same mission of serving members.

Gilbert: Awesome. So one of the other things that I understand y'all were changing is the core values. I know y'all worked hard. Can you tell us a little bit about how you started implementing those?

Katie: Yeah, so again, CEO Bob Goldberg came in with a very defined vision of improving the member experience. And part of that is to make sure that all employees at NAR are on the same page about what's important to achieving that goal. And, and he's very clearly defined five values as being the most important to NAR employees.

Katie: 30:38 Those are: Members First - Everything we do has to be thinking, how does this benefit the member? Collaborate - How are we going to reach out beyond our individual teams to work with others to ensure a more holistic approach to serving members. Communicate - Communicate, communicate. Everyone knows that's the most important thing to success. Respect - always showing respect to each other and of course, to our members that we serve. And then very excitingly, Leading Change is a core value, meaning embrace change, understand what's necessary to adapt to the current environment in order to remain relevant. Like we strive to be. And identify what needs to change and then embrace it and lead it and just lead by example.

Gilbert: So one of the things about core values is how we actually effectuate it, right? So we write them down, but then we're going to put it in action. So you guys have done a lot of new things to put those core values in action. What are some of the ones you would highlight? I'm thinking about the Who We R campaign or just the Code of Ethics, what would you highlight?

Katie: Yeah, so let's start with the That's Who We R campaign - wildly successful consumer awareness campaign. Members have embraced this campaign more than anyone in, in my 12 years history, but also in the recent past since the consumer awareness campaign first launched in the 90s it's, it's such a success because it's so simple and yet so effective. And in 2020, we're going to build upon that the success of the campaign that we had this year and offer members new visuals, new messages, you'll see a lot more or you know, more commercials. I'm also expounding the benefits of REALTOR® value and specifically why consumers should continue to see REALTORS® as being essential to their home ownership journey.

Gilbert: Awesome. So you had also mentioned at one of the committee meetings that we're changing the requirements for satisfying your Code of Ethics training. Can you tell us a little bit about that requirement?

Katie: 32:44 Yeah. So as you know, the Code of Ethics training has been required for many years at NAR. It was when it was first implemented, it was required every four years and you could take the course that's available free online at NAR.realtor or you could use other training courses provided that they satisfy all the requirements. Members and associations have expressed some feedback as to how that requirement could be improved. And so there was a PAG implemented this year to look at that. One of the very exciting changes that has been implemented is to require more options in terms of satisfying the requirement. And so no longer, so NAR is charged with finding alternatives, not just the standard Code of Ethics, strict training, but also expand that to include professionalism. Don't just focus on the code, focus on enhancing professionalism generally. And that's how you interact with each other and that's how you interact with, with consumers. And so with that broader purpose the board of directors has already agreed that the Commitment to Excellence Program will now satisfy the Code of Ethics training requirement. So anybody who earns their Commitment to Excellence endorsement will automatically satisfy their requirement. So it's not, they don't have to worry at the end of the cycle about getting their hours in.

Gilbert: 34:15 That's good news. I know that we're always trying to address our member's needs and finding out how to make things easier and that sounds like exactly what's happening. So if you were going to advise any of our members, how do you engage with NAR? What would your advice be?

Katie: 34:31 First I'd say great question and great desire. You reaching out to NAR to, to take advantage of the many benefits and services that are available to you is the smartest thing you can do as a member. There's so many resources available and so many opportunities available. That first asking the question is the first step. So well done you. And then I'd say that our member experience team is, that's exactly what they do is they provide you the information and the resources. So it's a matter of going to the website, NAR.realtor, finding anything of interest to you because it's all tied back to a staff person at NAR. You can contact every single person listening to this is welcome to contact me kjohnson@realtors.org because I can connect you with the people at NAR who can, you know satisfy your, your questions.

Katie: 35:30 But there's a lot of opportunity to engage as well. From the educational standpoint, you want to learn more you and enhance your professionalism. Obviously we're talking here at the annual conference and trade expo where there is a number, hundreds of educational offerings available for, for attendees. We also have a similar meeting experience every May in Washington D C. In between those meetings we have broker edge or broker summits. A couple of those per year. We're really focused on enhancing the success of brokers. We have many tech edge events that are very technology related. That's where we partner with a local or state association to provide that kind of one day technology updates and trainings to make sure that members are honing their skills. And then of course if you want to actually engage at the governance level, meaning you want to contribute to the policy making and the impact that the association has on the industry as a whole.

Katie: 36:35 You are welcome to participate in our committee structure. How you do that: you go to NAR.realtor and search committees and you'll see all the information you need about the application process. It does require that you submit a profile. So the applications are open in the spring every year, I believe it's like March to May. That is the open application process. So before March, go online, check out the process and fill out your profile. Your profile is going to ask who are you, where are you from? What are you interested in? What are your areas of expertise and what else do you want us to know about you in terms of a contributor to NAR's governance and the leadership team that selects the committees is so committed to finding a role for every single person who applies that I think that everyone is well served by raising their hand and saying, give me a shot.

Gilbert: 37:32 Well, I hope we know our members will take that advice and get involved with national level. I appreciate you putting your email out there as evidence of how easy it is to engage with y'all and I appreciate you giving us the time to, I'm out of your busy schedule at the NAR conference to sit down and talk to us and tell us a little bit about NAR, so enjoy the rest of your conference and thank you.

Katie: Great! Thank you very much. I really appreciate it.

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