

# CONNECTIONS

## Editorial Policies

### MAGAZINE PURPOSE

Connections magazine is mailed eight times a year to all national WCR members. In union with the overall mission of the Women's Council of REALTORS®, the magazine's primary purpose is to provide timely, relevant tips and techniques to assist REALTORS® in their daily transactions and to serve as a tool for personal growth and professional development of the individual REALTOR®. The magazine strives to be the premier resource to effectively position the readership on the cutting edge of industry information, ensuring success in their field and in their lives.

### EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

As professionals in the real estate industry, the Editorial Advisory Board provides real-world analysis and ensures that Connections magazine covers timely and relevant topics for REALTORS®. While Advisory Board members are welcome to write original articles, they are not required to do so. Everyone, regardless of Board membership, is limited to two article submissions per calendar year (publication between January and December). These two articles will not appear in the same issue. If a member volunteers to write two articles in a calendar year, he/she will not be considered for an additional spot as an interviewee in that calendar year.

In some cases, members of the Board may be called upon by the Editor to provide peer review of articles to ensure relevance and accuracy prior to publication. The Editor will edit all submissions in accordance with the most recent edition of the Associated Press (AP) Manual of Style. Membership on the Board does not guarantee publicity in the magazine. Plagiarism of another person's written work is strictly forbidden. Also, multiple failures to submit scheduled volunteer assignments may result in removal from the Board.

### EDITORIAL CALENDAR

The Vice-chair of the Editorial Advisory Board and the Staff Editor set all editorial emphases for issues by August 1 of the previous year with the assistance and input of National WCR staff, National Line Officers and the outgoing Vice-chair of the Advisory Board. The calendar provides a foundation for individual issues and helps to define issue focus for advertising companies. Issue emphases are rarely changed after this initial date. At least three articles per issue should pertain to the issue emphasis. Following is the current Connections Editorial Calendar:

### 2004 Editorial Calendar

ISSUE	FOCUS	ARTICLES DUE
Jan/Feb	Negotiation Strategies and Practice	November 12
March	Networking	January 7
April	Cultural Awareness <i>Fair Housing Month</i>	February 6
May/June	Special Technology Issue <i>*Distributed at Midyear Meeting In DC</i>	March 5
July/Aug	Top Producer Profiles	May 7
Sept	Organizational Performance Management	July 7
Oct	Personal Strategies for Success	August 9
Nov/Dec	Industry Forecast <i>*Distributed at National Conference in Orlando</i>	September 7

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### NATIONAL, NONPROMOTIONAL FOCUS

Connections maintains a national focus through coverage of national trends and general professional development rather than news related to local or regional events or issues. Connections is a strictly nonpromotional publication, and editorial promotion of individuals or companies is prohibited.

### WCR NEWS

All coverage of WCR is written by National Staff, including Council News and national meeting updates.

### INTERVIEWEE CRITERIA

The Editor selects interviewees to be assigned to volunteer authors. Selections may be based on research, Staff recommendations, Chair and Board recommendations and self-recommendations. The Editor maintains a list of past interviewees to ensure that interviewees are not closely repeated. The Editor also maintains a list of recommended interviewees. Authors should confirm all interviewees with the Editor prior to writing an article.

National WCR participation is not a requirement for interviewees, nor are specific production levels on the job. However, Connections interviewees should be active, full-time REALTORS® and dynamic top achievers with proven track records in customer satisfaction, office leadership and/or strong team-building results and other professional successes.



For each issue, the majority of interviewees are WCR members, and all REALTOR® interviewees are WCR members. Some non-member interviewees may be included who are technology experts, business and financial consultants and professional speakers or trainers.

### INTERVIEW PROCESS

The expert perspective of real estate professionals provides the basis for each published article. Therefore, the interview process is the backbone of the article. Weak interviews produce weak articles. While “convenient,” e-mail is discouraged as an interview medium. The quality of the interview and response rate of interviewees improves when conducted via phone rather than via e-mail.

Volunteer writers should be prepared to interview up to five different people for each article, without reimbursement for phone calls. Writers should prepare 10-20 questions in advance of the interview that are related to the topic and ask all interviewees the same questions. Writers are not required to submit unpublished article drafts to interviewees for approval.

### UNSOLICITED ARTICLES

Unsolicited articles are rarely published.

### ARTICLE AUTHORSHIP

Volunteers should contact the Staff Editor prior to writing to determine if an idea is appropriate for an upcoming issue. All editorial, advertising, art and production is coordinated by the Staff Editor, who may reschedule or cancel editorial for failure to follow these Editorial Policies, for late submission or any reason deemed detrimental to editorial quality.

Individuals who volunteer and are assigned emphasis-related articles are crucial to magazine production and are especially expected to fulfill commitments to write. Upon submitting a request to write or article proposal to the Editor, the volunteer may receive the go-ahead to write from the Editor if the volunteer’s article proposal meets the magazine’s editorial standards of quality,



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timeliness and relevance to the main audience of the magazine.

The Editor will send a confirmation letter to the volunteer's business address, as it appears in the national membership database. This letter will include recommended interviewees, word count and topic, and it may also include suggested questions for the interviews. Volunteers should not wait to begin the interviewing and writing processes. If any interviewees appear to be inappropriate to the topic or are nonresponsive, the volunteer should notify the Editor immediately to receive new interviewee leads.

If a volunteer is unable to fulfill a writing commitment, the Staff Editor should be notified as soon as possible prior to the article submission deadline. Informing the Editor of intent to submit the article late in advance of the submission deadline does not ensure publication of the submission. Multiple failures to submit volunteer assignments may result in removal from the Advisory Board.

Author publicity is published as follows at the end of the article with a professional headshot photo of the author:

"NAME, DESIGNATIONS, of COMPANY in CITY, STATE, may be reached at PHONE # or E-MAIL ADDRESS. His/her Web site is ADDRESS."

If an author provides a special service, up to one sentence may be included about this.

### SUBMISSION FORMAT

Each volunteer writer is assigned the same article submission deadline, and each is expected to submit article text as a PC-formatted MS Word document on or prior to the article submission deadline. Photos or other graphic elements should not be embedded into Word documents. Articles and photos should be e-mailed separately to [connections@wcr.org](mailto:connections@wcr.org).

### ARTICLE CONTENT

First-person voice is rarely used. Authors are expected to avoid referring to themselves in their articles. If an author's personal experience may provide a significant reference for a particular editorial topic, he/she should withdraw as an author and volunteer as a potential interviewee, for the consideration of the Editor.

### REAL ESTATE EMPHASIS

Articles should focus on business building, best practices and the professional tips and techniques of full-time real estate professionals. WCR leadership titles may be included in reference to an interviewee, but the primary focus of feature articles should **not** be an individual's involvement and leadership in WCR. Even the "Member Spotlight" column should primarily focus on professional techniques, ideas and achievements rather than WCR involvement. There are exceptions to this standard, such as the annual profile of WCR's incoming National President in the January/February issue.



### ARTICLE STYLE

Authors should use the following editorial guidelines for feature article submissions:

Be concise. Illustrate the point in as few words as possible, without losing style or meaning.

Never plagiarize, or "borrow," another person's written word. Doing so is a serious liability issue for WCR, Connections and the author.

Use the most up-to-date information possible.

Use Internet sources sparingly. The best sources are expert individuals with whom the author has personally spoken (recently) in regard to the article subject.

Don't editorialize in feature articles. For example, "Mary likes selling homes, she said with a sly smile," should read: "Mary says she enjoys selling homes."

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Use subheads to separate different points or themes within the article.

Use active voice rather than passive voice. For example, instead of writing “the project was completed,” write: “Paula completed the project.”

Avoid questions and exclamation marks. If a sentence doesn’t express excitement with the exclamation point removed, it should probably be rewritten.

Avoid slang, sexist comments and socially or racially inappropriate language.

The lead-in is the most important part of the article. It should not include questions. It should be short, catchy, stylish and to-the-point.

Only use direct quotes that are colorful and interesting.

Try to attribute most of the info in the article to a credible source. The author should not be a primary source in the article. Also, avoid first-person voice. Ex: “I think” or “I believe.”

Always leave a few days between writing the article and the submission deadline. Then, revisit it for a fresh perspective. Pass it on to a colleague for feedback, proofreading, etc.

Submit only thoroughly edited and proofread text. Check carefully for spelling, grammatical and typographical errors and for factual accuracy.

### ARTICLE STRUCTURE

The following structure is suggested for a 1,200-word feature article:

- Introduction = 200 words
- Interviewee #1 = 300 words
- Interviewee #2 = 300 words
- Interviewee #3 = 300 words
- Conclusion = 100 words or less

Each interview should produce at least one direct quote to personalize the message and to make the article more interesting and readable. The Editor will coordinate photo submissions with each interviewee. Size and placement of photos is determined by space availability.

### MISCELLANEOUS

Sidebars. In addition to articles, Connections also publishes one-liner marketing tips, updates on useful Web sites and book suggestions. Members and others are encouraged to submit an unlimited number of these items to the Editor for inclusion.

Obituaries. Connections limits obituaries to current National WCR officers and past National WCR Presidents.

### Press Releases.

Connections rarely has space for the publication of press releases on individual achievement of WCR members, such as company and local real estate awards. However, these press releases can be submitted to the Editor, who will consider these individuals for inclusion in upcoming “Member Spotlight” articles.

### Designation Schedule.

Each issue, Connections publishes the WCR Designation Course Schedule as supplied by the course managers, Business Specialties Group (BSG) of NAR. To have a course published, you must have your course officially registered with BSG. If you would like to have your course published in a specific issue, you must have your course registered by the article submission deadline for that issue as indicated on page 1. For more information on deadlines, contact the Education Department 800-245-8512 or designation@wcr.org.



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Women's Council of  
**REALTORS**