BEST PRACTICE
Ohio Association of REALTORS® Online Equivalency Exam

Who

The Ohio Association of REALTORS® (OAR) was formed in 1910 and now counts as the state's largest professional trade organization with nearly 28,000 members. OAR offers services to its members in addition to protecting private property rights for the public. Education is a significant resource offered by OAR. Many courses satisfy continuing education requirements of licensees and may also satisfy education requirements of designations and certifications.

Why

Among the services provided by the Association to members is timely and effective education. The Graduate REALTORS® Institute (GRI) is a significant component of OAR educational offerings. The GRI designation is one of the most prestigious and widely held designations among REALTORS®. The Ohio GRI Program is a professional development program designed to enhance a members' knowledge of real estate marketing and teach skills that will set members apart from the competition.

The overall goals of the GRI program are: a) provide a variety of programming to help licensees succeed, b) provide solutions to accommodate the varied experience levels among the membership and, c) provide a solution that will not compromise the integrity of the GRI program.

A core challenge to delivering a successful GRI program is to educate a vast audience at different levels of practical experience in the industry. Challenging experienced licensees without overwhelming new licensees requires a balance of course content difficult to achieve.

Solution

To satisfy this challenge, OAR opted to offer an equivalency exam online through the OAR e-learning campus powered by Learning Library.com. The GRI 100 Equivalency Exam allows experienced licensees to save the time invested previously and continue the endeavor of completing the requirements of the GRI Designation. The online exam also provides immediate results with the option of retaking the exam if the passing grade is not met.

Results

OAR members now have additional options to achieve the GRI Designation and OAR is benefiting from the increased interest in completing the additional classroom courses. OAR quickly recovered the development costs and given no license or recurring fees, all those who purchase the equivalency exam provide a profit to OAR as well as add more students to the classroom courses.
In summary the results of the program include:
• A member service targeted specifically to experienced OAR members
• Immediate results of the exam for the members
• A quick cost recovery in development
• Recurring profitable revenue
• Reduced administration for OAR
• Increased traffic to the e-learning education portal

Testimonial

"OAR is continuously looking for new services to provide members to assist in growing their business while remaining fiscally responsible to the association. The GRI equivalency exam not only provides another education option, but also helps us reinforce the value of the GRI Designation particularly to the more experienced agents. As a bonus to us, the Learning Library Learning Management System greatly reduces the administrative tasks that would otherwise be a burden and also provides an additional revenue source for the association".

-Tim Lockwood, Vice President/Professional Development

Top Four Reasons to Consider Equivalency Exams

1. Increase adoption of an existing program and additional training:

Those who pass the GRI 100 exam will then work towards completing the balance of the designation and other training provided via the LMS or otherwise.

2. Member Service

The convenience and immediacy of the Equivalency Exam provides an option for experienced agents to reduce time and opportunity costs both highly valued by these professionals. The exam is a useful resource illustrating thoughtfulness for their members.

3. Enjoy revenue while reducing administration:

Administration relief is realized through the systemization of education delivery, registration, tracking, grading and reporting. This allows the focus to be centered on marketing, support and follow up. Furthermore, overhead is reduced thus maximizing profitability.

4. Elearning Adoption:

Creating opportunities for members to utilize elearning options helps to overcome elearning barriers for those not already enjoying the benefits of elearning.