



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

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To association members: Don't leave now! This is when we can help you most

November 25, 2008 - Spotlights

This past June, I was installed as the president of the New England Land Title Association, the trade association for professionals engaged in all aspects of the title industry in New England. Since its inception in 1970, NELTA has consistently provided its members with unmatched opportunities for region-wide education, information and networking, and I am honored to serve such a great association.

Taking the helm of any organization in difficult financial times is always a challenge, but, when the 'ship' is one so closely aligned with the success and failure of the mortgage lending industry, and the difficulties are so substantial, the task can look pretty intimidating. Having been involved in the mortgage lending/title business for over 30 years, I have seen some tough times. Having been active in many of the associations that support those businesses (and having been the chair/president of 4 of them), I have worked through those tough times from the trade association perspective as well. And yet I am optimistic, because these adverse conditions are precisely when associations can rise to the challenge and work their hardest to prove their worth to their members by helping them to survive and perhaps, even thrive, for two basic reasons.

First, members look to their associations for industry stability and to provide needed tools for sustainability in difficult times. The second, of course, is pragmatic. If associations cannot maintain membership, there is no Association. It takes hard work to avoid that fate.

My goal for NELTA in this tough economic time is to do everything possible to keep our members relevant in, and to, the current marketplace. To borrow from a basic sales rule, our members need to sell what their customers need to have, not what they need to sell. Mortgage lending as an industry is not going away, but it is being re-defined and the association's job is determine what that new marketplace looks like, communicate the changes to the members and facilitate any innovation they need to take to adapt.

Our primary tool to accomplish that goal is through education, and as someone who considers herself primarily an educator, I take that commitment very seriously. My suggestion to NELTA, as to any association, is to create and nurture educational programs that are industry specific, yet participant neutral and of interest to the widest range of members and potential members. Utilize the expertise of all industry partners and create forward looking programs to increase attendance and through that, membership. Remind members that while they may be competitors in many ways, this business has always prided itself on collegiality, and encourage that outlook.

On the practical side however, the association faces the challenge of keeping members in tough economic times. Accomplishing that goal requires assistance from our members.

To those who are asked to volunteer-please do. This is when you are needed the most. Your commitment will make a difference. We cannot assume that those who were available in the past

are still available (or even in the business) today. Your mentoring will help guide the next generation and your continued presence is reassuring to those worried about their own future.

To the current members - don't leave now. This is when we can help you most. Let us know what you see as the tools to success and we will work to provide them. We want to be here to provide support throughout all the business cycles. Your continued support lets us do that. But, without You, there is no Us.

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