What do you think of REALTOR® Care Day?

For this issue’s Member Perspective, we sent an email to over 600 randomly selected members asking them what their key takeaways were from REALTOR® Care Day and/or what they would tell others about REALTOR® Care Day. Check out who responded and what they had to say!

I have participated in REALTOR® Care Day since it began. REALTOR® Care Day was a project Skip Weller started when he was President of our Board to assist neighbors and non-profits that needed a helping hand. I was so excited to be a part of a collective group to assist our fellow Columbus neighbors who either lack the physical ability and/or financial resources to maintain their homes. Every day we have the privilege of making the American Dream a reality, the thought of coming together as a collective group to help sustain that dream for those who need our help really gives me great joy. We have an amazing group of REALTORS® and affiliates in central Ohio who want to make a difference. This day is one small way we can contribute. REALTOR® Care Day means many things to me. It is a networking day with fellow REALTORS® and Affiliates that I often do not even know. I love to see REALTORS® bring their children to participate in the event to teach them valuable life lessons. It is most rewarding to meet so many of the homeowners and to witness their gratitude for the help we provide. Having the ability to leave a place better than we found it and making a difference for people and their communities. Plus, occasionally, I can use a power tool (which my husband would never allow at home). I would encourage all my fellow REALTORS® to be a part of something bigger than us... THAT'S WHO WE ARE! - Sue Lusk-Gleich, KW Capital Partners

REALTOR® Care Day is a great way to give back to the community! It is an opportunity to be a part of something big and make a lasting impact! It is also an opportunity to show our city as REALTORS®, that we are involved, and are connected to the communities in which we work, and care about the wellbeing of the people that make up our communities. That is what it's all about! - Andrea A. Bame, HomeServices Professional Realty

I worked with the Powell group in the morning building beds, and in the afternoon with Dublin redoing a house make over which was a huge project. I would strongly suggest that anyone and everyone gets involved in REALTOR® Care Day. - Bill Briggs, Keller Williams Greater Columbus

I did participate in REALTOR® Care Day in both Marysville and Hilliard. I would tell others that they should make it a point to come out and volunteer next year. It is such a rewarding experience to give back to the community and spend time with other REALTORS® and affiliates. - Eric Looney, Coldwell Banker King Thompson

We REALTORS® and affiliates spend a lot of time competing against each other. This event brings us all together for one cause and it's the reason we do this in the first place. (Sure, we all need to earn a living), but first and foremost... WE CARE!!! - Sue Berg, Coldwell Banker King Thompson

I know in just the past couple of years — over $110,000 has been “re-invested” back into various communities here in central Ohio. The support seems to be growing from many sources including grants from the Joseph A. Jeffrey Fund at the Columbus Foundation plus the Scott's Miracle-Gro Foundation Community Garden Academy. The real thanks go to the volunteers who made it happen! - Michael Bishop, RE/MAX Revealty

I always look forward to participating in REALTOR® Care Day! It's a day of giving back to the community, it's a day of helping others who are less fortunate, and it's a day of working with colleagues and getting dirty! I have helped at many RCD projects, from laying sod, cutting down a tree, weeding and planting flowers in a park, to scraping a deck and painting it, to buying 3 tons of landscape blocks to edge flower beds and realizing that you only have a 1/2 ton truck. You never know what you're going to do until you get there, but when you see the project you're assigned, you see how badly the community or homeowner needs our support. At the end of the day you step back and see the progress and changes that our hard work did for the people in the community, the smiles and tears of joy on their faces; they all are so appreciative! Then you crawl (literally) back to your car and every bone in your body hurts, but then you remember the look on their faces and the tears in the homeowner's eyes, you know it was worth it! It's a day that you can say "I helped" and it's the greatest feeling ever! - Donna Brozovich, e-Merge Real Estate

Key takeaways that I see from REALTOR® Care Day is exactly what the name suggests... care. It is a day that our community comes together to give under privileged areas and properties the tender, loving care or TLC for short (a term all REALTORS® know), they need. We set the example for others on how properties should be kept, maintained and presented. When properties are nicely kept, everyone wins. Sellers make more money. Buyers invest less in improvements. REALTORS® do good jobs and improve communities. I encourage anyone who can help, to help. It is a great cause. - Andrew A. Balalovski, Balalovski Real Estate, LLC

there and to be able to chip away at even a bit of it, makes a difference. It also reminds you how much more you could be doing and every year we try to step up our game and help even more or go even bigger with our projects. I can’t wait to see what next year brings! - Katie Crocco, RE/MAX Winners
What’s cool about HOMESNAP

For this issue’s Member Perspective, we sent an email to 600 randomly selected members asking them how they were using Homesnap and what their favorite feature on the Homesnap app was and why. Check out who responded and what they had to say!

When I read the “coming soon” announcement for Homesnap, I instantly knew it was going to be a game-changer for business. The ability to take a picture of a home and get the information you need is amazing! I use Homesnap daily for home searches. It is quick and easy to set up showings, chat with clients, and communicate with other agents. This technology of “Homesnap” says it all, and I have been using another feature that sets Homesnap apart from everything else — the “AR Walk” feature. I have been to properties with unclear property lines, and with this feature, the clients are pleasantly surprised to see the virtual property line. Walking the entire property line gets them comfortable with the property.

Barry Allen, Red I Realty

I like Homesnap because when I am in an area that I am not familiar with, I can pull up homes for sale and help my clients find their dream home. It also allows me to just search any area that my clients are thinking about buying in and see if there is anything there that might be of interest. Homesnap Rocks! — Bob Yazrombek, RE/MAX Achievers

I recently learned how to use the Homesnap app via the webinar and it is a wonderful tool for myself and my clients. While I continue to prepare an MLS home search for my clients, I am introducing them to this app as well. I feel that transitioning to a new tool can be challenging for some. I like to educate my clients first before blindly sending a link to an app they know nothing about. We all get so much spam, and I would hate for that to be the first impression of this wonderful app. The feedback from my clients has been so positive and it is providing them with control over their own home search. I’ve had a few clients unsubscribe from the MLS online search as well since this app is so user-friendly and accessible. What I love most and use most frequently on Homesnap is searching for other available homes in the area, where I am out showing with clients. Homes pop up all day long and having this app at my fingertips is a saving grace while on the run.

Lisa Hafpert, Home Central Realty

I have been encouraging my clients to use Homesnap as the primary tool for their home search since Homesnap combines a large wealth of information such as recent sales, commute time, and listing information all in one app. I like the Send a Rapid CMA feature because I can quickly create and send a snapshot of market trends and area comps to help my clients make educated decisions.

Maggie Yakovac, Coldwell Banker King Thompson

Homesnap is my go-to app for real estate on my phone. It’s reliable and up to date with the Columbus MLS. My clients have downloaded the app and have even been “snapping” photos of listings as look for their next home. My favorite part of the app is the search feature where I can simply put in a zip code and all the properties pull up. It saves my recent searches even so when walking through a property, it’s a great resource of information. The app also alerts me to when my clients “snap” a home or do a search.

Tricia Tennyson, Columbus Realty Source

I like sending listings to my clients via Homesnap after seeing them listed in the MLS. I think it offers a more consumer-friendly experience than previous tools available to us. My favorite feature is being able to schedule showings directly from the Homesnap app. Simply put, it saves time.

Josh Dawson, Core Ohio Realty

I am using Homesnap in many ways! I find that it is very helpful to have up during showings for my clients because the layout looks very nice when pulled up on a phone or iPad. I have also used Homesnap to message agents about listings, to create quick CMA’s, and to send to my clients for them to use during their home search. My clients really enjoy the feature where they can take a picture of a home as they are driving by and get all the info right in the app! It’s hard to choose because I like the app for many reasons! If I had to choose, I’d say the feature where my clients can take a picture of a home as they drive by and get all the info right in the app. My #1 goal is to make things as convenient as possible for my client and that feature does just that.

Candace Netf, eXp Realty

My favorite feature of Homesnap is the “notify of price changes” feature that keeps me up to date on anything that changes with a property that has made my client’s watch list, so I can monitor the status as well.

Christopher J. Hoermie, United Real Estate Home Connections

After downloading the Homesnap app, I quickly received a referral through Homesnap from a previous client that I sold a home to many years ago. I do like the way I am receiving the updates weekly. I began selling in 1974 and this is something new that I think is a positive benefit. Cheers!

Cricket Such, RE/MAX Achievers
Homesnap is a very interactive website and app. It is social media for the real estate industry and reminds me of Facebook in the sense that your clients and you can talk about properties on the market, see pictures of new listings, like/dislike them, etc. For a new buyer, you can search for homes anywhere. You can choose an agent based off what you are looking for all in one. If you are a seller, you can see how neighboring properties compare to what your property offers the market. Homesnap allows you to be a counselor versus a traditional REALTOR®. Based off these features and many others, we are better able to spend our time helping our client’s versus doing things the old school way. Homesnap prepares our clients for listing or buying. It gives them an edge on the market. The way I use the program is as an intranet. I can connect with local brokers to see what inventory they have available or coming up. I can guide buyers to photos of properties and use the system as an MLS. We can pull CMAs and can also link Homesnap to my social media sites. There is a lot that can be done! My favorite feature of Homesnap is the ability of working from anywhere. You can be on vacation and your whole MLS is there. You have the ability by a few clicks of buttons to see what you are missing. Connecting with clients and being in touch is vital. Also, being able to blast market your property listings by way of the paid advertising is great too—one thing you can’t do with a traditional MLS. - Andrew Balakovski, Balakovski Real Estate

Thank you for the request! So far, I love Homesnap! I downloaded the app to my phone and literally the next day a new investor met me at a property and asked for comparable, that is my favorite feature thus far. Being able to show clients on the fly when they ask questions and I don’t have to print and bring everything with me every time. - Dustin Zadel, Golden Gate Real Estate

Love Homesnap and my clients like it too! Easy to sign them up for new active listings and see photos also! - Michele Ball, Bright Waters Realty

In general, Homesnap seems so much easier to use than the flex app on the smartphone. I hardly use the flex MLS app on my phone since I installed Homesnap. I also like the automation for my clients. I have gotten positive feedback from them as well. I love the quick CMA app! It really came in handy last month when I was on vacation and did not have my laptop handy. Just a few quick clicks and I had the CMA. - Kathleen Fornes, Key Realty

I am integrating Homesnap into my buyer’s consultations now as an easy, efficient way to navigate the home buying search process. My clients love it and it gives me a way to stay on top of their searches, and get them into homes sooner, ultimately increasing their chances of winning the bid! I love love love the farm my zips feature because it puts targeting a particular neighborhood on autopilot essentially by being able to create a video ad in a matter of seconds! - Brittany

L.B. Eddy, Coldwell Banker King Thompson

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Andi Brown Dalton, Stewart Title
After reducing my hours for over 10 years, I started back full-time in August of 2016. With a full work schedule, a husband that travels, and three very active teenage daughters, staying organized is a priority. I primarily use my phone. I use three separate colors - one for business appointments/closings, one for my girls activities, and another for my non-business commitments. I utilize the 'alert' function for extra reminders. We also have a large monthly calendar, and a weekly 'white board' we use at home. This way we never miss a closing, an appointment, a meeting, a play rehearsal, or a basketball (or volleyball) game!

Brittany Eddy, Coldwell Banker King Thompson
In a society full of distractions, organization is, indeed, key to any successful entrepreneur or business professional — especially in real estate! That is why for me, the systems and apps that I use on a daily basis keep me sane. I love Google Drive and its app for storing documents and being able to view them on the go. Google Drive also saves automatically after a certain period of time so you never lose any of your content. I use the Intuit Quick Books app, which is similar to Mile IQ but instead of only tracking mileage, Quick Books tracks your business profit, spending, mileage, calculates your estimated quarterly taxes for you and is easy to sync at the end of the year when you file your taxes! It's like a mini accountant on your phone. Hootsuite for social media management and of course, essential real estate apps such as Dotloop, CSS, my CRM and the local MLS app. If there is an app for it, it's on my phone!

Barbara Waters, RE/MAX Waters/Todaro Partners
I am a firm believer in Dotloop! Dotloop is effortless editing, sharing and e-signing. It is a seamless end to end experience wherever you are in the office, at home or on vacation! Dotloop saves time and money plus goodbye to paperwork. It has easy access and stores transactions securely. An incredible tool for REALTORS® to lighten stress and enjoy life more!

Andrew A. Balalovski, Balalovski Real Estate
Every December, I reflect on successes and pitfalls. The successes are repeated and the mistakes are not. I look at how business is conducted and ask myself, is there a better way to get better results? We all have demands born from responsibility. Paperwork, bills and administrative documents need to be taken care of. A key aspect in all of this is organization. It’s 2017 and I would like to share how Balalovski Real Estate stays organized. I got into real estate in 2005. Since then, vendors from different companies call me to try out their software for organization. Top Producer and Outlook are a few of the programs I have used. They are good programs. They offer many different functions, but honestly, I keep it simple. On my desk, you will find a yellow legal pad of paper and an assortment of pens. I make lists of what I need to do each day. I also use sticky notes and send myself e-mail reminders too. I group things in categories based off of importance. Organization style is unique to each individual REALTOR® and differs for everyone. The main thing is not to let anything slip through the cracks. Use what works best for you and your business, but keep an open mind to new ways of doing things because you may get better results.

Alicia Finsterbusch, Real Sharp Realty
I'm a little old fashioned, I love three ring binders! For every client of mine, I create a binder that has all of the information on the house they bought or sold, including any inspections or important e-mails. I think it's important to have a hard copy of those things in case something were to happen to my computer.

Drew Fitzgerald, Keller Williams Classic Properties
Top Producer is the system our team has used for many years now. While this is the core of what keeps our team running, there are additional tools we have on hand to use as an auxiliary to keep us running smoothly; everything from a simple text document for daily to-do's, to an excel spreadsheet with formulas I built into a spreadsheet to auto-calculate deadlines for our contracts. To sum it up, we have learned to embrace technology to help us keep all our ducks in a row...and even then, we find ourselves constantly adjusting with the times!
MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

We asked the following REALTORS® to share their thoughts on REALTORS® Property Resource (RPR), which has been in place for approximately 10 months and how they use RPR in their real estate practice. Check out what they had to say!

The RPR program is a great added bonus to our other great tools that Columbus REALTORS® offers to us. It provides us extensive knowledge at our fingers before we even ring our client’s door bell. In our business details matter and RPR has those details. The program can be used in many ways in our business. The first way is for pricing property. You have the ability to do adjustments on prices based on amenities your subject property lacks compared to other properties in the market place. Another aspect of the program is that all your information you need is in front of you: the listing agent, contact information, neighborhood values, property characteristics and pictures in one place. It is a more robust presentation of a comparable market analysis and a great listing tool to have. The program can also be used as a buyer’s guide to save money in negotiation. You have a summary page you can view. Past mortgage, deed history and loan amounts are available to us. Neighborhood trends are accessible. It also provide historic data on the property buyers make offers on! It doesn’t matter if you practice commercial or residential real estate. RPR has both sections and works on both properties. The program is a must for our sellers and buyers. It can help us gain listings and save buyers money when making offers. This is how Balalovski Real Estate uses RPR. – Andrew Balalovski, Balalovski Real Estate

RPR has been so helpful for us. Finally, an app and tool that is as mobile and active as we are! It allows us to pull reports and answer our clients’ questions immediately, all while being user friendly and extremely interactive. – Lacey Wheeler, Core Ohio, Inc.

I’ve generated several different types of RPR Reports for my clients. Whether I’m working with Buyers or Sellers, they’ve really been impressed by the amount of relevant information that they contain. – David Gill, Berkshire Hathaway HS Calhoun

I have found that not only does RPR make a wonderful presentation when showing a home owner a more detailed evaluation of their neighborhood when pricing their home, but it also is a fantastic tool for home buyers when they are contemplating offering on a property. Because of our fast paced market, the RPR can be used to reassure a buyer that they possibly may want to offer list price or more when competing in a multiple offer situation. It’s a good feature to have the ability to customize the report as not to overwhelm clients with data. In many cases I am finding that it is spurring conversation that we may have not otherwise had if I did not have the report in my “toolbox” of goodies when I meet with clients. It’s a great tool! – Vicki Workman, Keller Williams Consultants

Thank you for including me! I love the RPR report. I found it accidentally on the MLS page and I am hooked. I use the report in various ways. I give the property report to buyers who are considering a particular property and to sellers along with the seller’s report so that they are informed about the market. I use the seller’s report along with other information in my listing presentation to help set the listing price. I would love to dig deeper into the report and that is on my to do list for 2017. I hope this is what you wanted. Let me know if you need more information. – Kathy Welch, Coldwell Banker King Thompson

As REALTORS®, our clients rely on us to provide them with the best and most current information in the marketplace. The MLS has always done that. Now with REALTORS® Property Resource, I go above and beyond my client’s expectations with educating reports.
MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

We asked the following REALTORS® to share what strategies they use to encourage potential sellers to get off the fence and commit to selling their home. Check out what they had to say!

My strategies for encouraging sellers to put their house on the market include getting to know them and finding out what they would like to do as far as potentially relocating and buying another home. I find that a price trend analysis is a good way to show them what current market values are in their neighborhood and what they could potentially sell their home for. Once they realize that they could get more for their house than they thought they are more open to listing their property. I also encourage them to get pre-approved with a lender so they know what they can afford to buy once their house is in contract.

— Colleen A. Welch, New Millenium Realty

In the current market, this is one of the most difficult hurdles and we hear this hesitation from clients quite often. When we meet with potential sellers, we walk through the different options with them in regards to closing dates and possible contingencies in the contract. We also remind them that there are always new properties coming on the market every day! We like to set them up on a search through the MLS so they can start to see what is available prior to listing their home. Inevitably they will start seeing homes they love and this will help motivate them to sell.

— Craig and Amy Balster, Coldwell Banker King Thompson

Listing a property is a seller’s biggest decision they make. The way Balalovski Real Estate makes the decision easier for sellers to commit to selling their property is to present a compelling professional presentation describing the present market realistically to them. So many tools are available to us to help share the story with them. There is the auditor’s website, the MLS, Xcelgent and many other data service providers which provide statistics and aid us in telling the story. Having a reliable network of contractors and affiliated professionals to assist in the closing process of the seller’s property helps too because it gives sellers confidence that their REALTOR® is being supported by a knowledgeable staff. One REALTOR® can’t do it all. That is why showing sellers confidence will help any REALTOR® win a listing. Make sure that it can sell though. At the end of the day, sellers want the stress-free result of a done deal. Providing sellers statistics on other successful projects you have worked on builds their confidence in you as their REALTOR®. REALTOR® are all business owners. How do you want a seller to see your business represented to them?

— Andrew Balalovski, Balalovski Real Estate

The real estate climate is fertile now with several positives converging. As always, in central Ohio spring brings blooms and buyers and sellers come out of hibernation. It is another year/season of low interest rates coupled with options in financing like, zero down OHFA FHA loans that are now available. The result is more qualified buyers and a potential shortage of inventory. In addition, the real estate transaction is more streamlined now than ever from pre-approval to closing due to many newer value-added services such as showings.com, CSS, dotloop and DocuSign. And with tools like realtor.com, Zillow and Facebook marketing, reach has never been greater or more impactful. Share these facts with your clients who are apprehensive to list and encourage them to "spring" into action as there is never a time like the present!

— Alissa Pugh-Clark, Mills Realty & Management Co.

This seller’s market makes it a little easier to get people "off of the fence" for sure, but I always discuss current conditions (low inventory, interest rates are low, days on the market) and try to educate people as much as possible. When you present all of the facts to people it does allow them to make a much more solid and educated decision.

— Beth Throckmorton, HER Realtors®