



REALTOR® Blogs and Let's Talk Real Estate! on REALTOR.com®

Frequently Asked Questions

Using a Blog

Q: What is a blog?

A Weblog (or 'blog' for short) is a frequently updated Web site where entries, or 'posts' – often no longer than a paragraph – are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order. A real estate blog, unlike an online forum, is 'owned' by an industry professional. This means that if you're an agent, the blog is branded with your agent identity and you control the discussion topics and provide the main posts. These posts are then commented upon by visitors to the blog, and you have the option of approving all reader responses before they are posted to your blog. Blogs are as easy to use as email. They require no technical expertise or support staff. All you have to do is write and post your entry.



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Demographics

Posted by Yvonne Chong under [Regional - West](#)

Population and Housing Counts

Year	Census Bureau **		State Department of Finance ***	SANDAG ***		
	1990	2000	2006	2010	2020	2030
Population	62,846	78,247	98,607	107,217	120,597	128,700
Housing Units	27,119	33,717	42,086	45,321	48,975	50,728

Notes:

* Census Bureau estimates are as of April 1 of the years stated.

** State Department of Finance estimates are as of January 1 of the year stated.

*** The SANDAG (San Diego Association of Governments) housing and population estimates are from the SANDAG Final 2030 Forecast. Figures for 2030 are considered to reflect "buildout" conditions.

Select Statistics about Carlsbad from Census 2000 (As of April 1, 2000):

Summary

- The median age of Carlsbad's 78,247 residents was 39 years.
- The median family income was \$77,151, up from \$51,629 in 1990.

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Q: Why do I need a blog? How will it help me be more successful?

There are many benefits of using a blog, all of which involve helping you to provide better service, expand your client base and increase your sales. Blogs can enable you to:

- Build a community resource Website that becomes a prospect magnet
- Expand your sphere of influence online by creating a dialogue between willing participants
- Foster trust and cultivate warm prospects who are much easier to convert into clients and referral sources
- Develop an online professional network that can provide answers for every kind of real estate related question or need
- Demonstrate your professional expertise, local market knowledge and community involvement, as well as create a unique personal brand
- Improve your search engine placement and drive free traffic to your Web site(s)
- Reinforce all of your drip marketing campaigns

In short, blogs are an easy and inexpensive way for you to communicate with prospects and clients in a direct, informal and genuine tone that will encourage interaction and build trust, all via a medium they're comfortable using.

Search Engine Optimization

Q: Will my blog increase the likelihood that search engines will find my web site? How?

Yes, blogs are very search engine friendly. Featured Blog have Search Engine Optimization (SEO) features that increase the odds that your blog posting will not only get picked up by the major search engines such as Google and Yahoo!, but also get a high ranking.

Blogging provides fresh content and fresh content raises your profile in search engine rankings. Done effectively, this can result in better results than if you bought your way to the top! Linking is another component to Blogging.

Q: How will prospective buyers and sellers find my blog?

There are four main ways that consumers will find your blog:

- 1) Featured Blog has Search Engine Optimization (SEO) features that enable search engines to more easily find your blog, the result being that it may get higher placement and a likelihood of more traffic.
- 2) Selected posts on popular topics may be shown on REALTOR.com®, thereby giving you huge marketing exposure at no charge. These highlighted posts at REALTOR.com® will also link back to your blog.
- 3) You can drive traffic to your blog by advertising it as a valuable service and source of information in all your other Internet-based and print marketing collateral.
- 4) If you develop an excellent blog that serves your readers' needs, they will act as your ambassadors, spreading the word both in person and over the Internet.

Getting Started

Q: Who can request a blog?

Any REALTOR® may request a Featured Blog website-page from REALTOR.com®

Q: How much does a blog cost?

There is no charge for a Featured Blog.

Q: How do I sign up for a blog? How do I get started?

To sign up for a “Featured Blog” member’s can visit <http://www.featuredblogsignup.com>. These Blogs are only available to REALTORS, and require submission of a NRDS ID.

Request a blog.
Please provide the following information:

* Mandatory fields

Desired Username:*	<input type="text"/>	Phone Number:*	<input type="text"/>
Desired Password:*	<input type="text"/>	Street Address:*	<input type="text"/>
Re-type Password:*	<input type="text"/>	City:*	<input type="text"/>
First Name:*	<input type="text"/>	State:*	<input type="text"/>
Last Name:*	<input type="text"/>	Country:*	<input type="text"/>
Email Address:*	<input type="text"/>	Zip:*	<input type="text"/>
NRDS ID:	<input type="text"/>	Website URL:	<input type="text"/>

REQUEST BLOG *

Q: What will be the URL of the blog? Can I change it?

The URL of the blog will be [username].featuredblog.com. This cannot be changed.

Q: Can I add a domain to my blog?

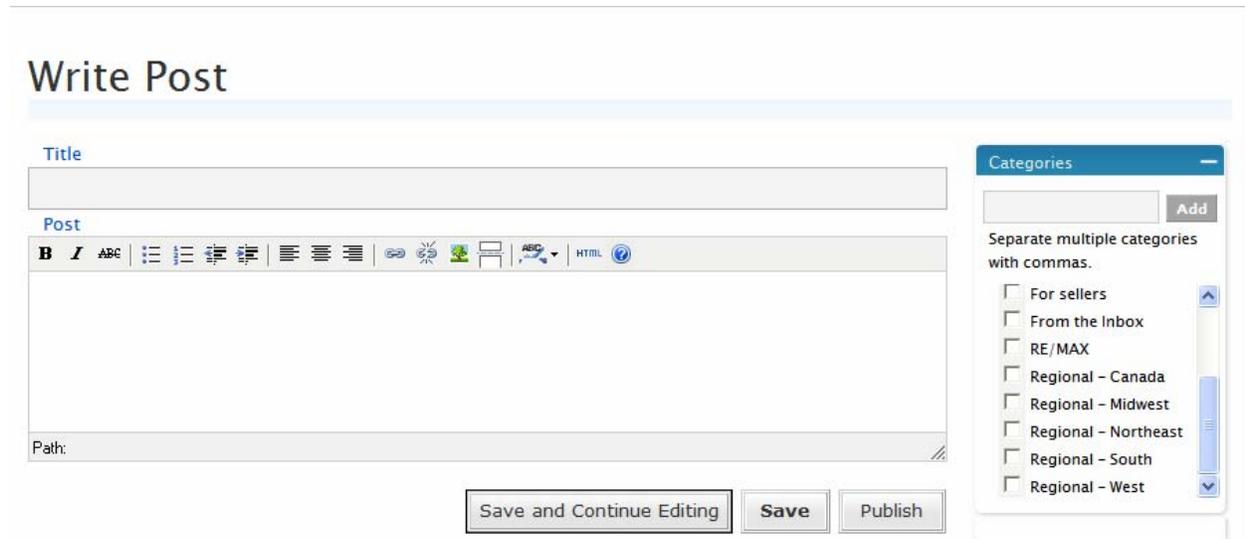
REALTOR.com® does not provide the facility to add a domain to a blog. You can contact your domain registrar for assistance for a re-direction from a domain of your choice.

How Do I Use My Blog?

Q: How do I use the blog (e.g. how do I add content, how do I respond to comments, can I turn comments feature on/off--how)?

Featured Blog supports both what are called 'pages' and 'posts'. Pages typically contain static content – for instance, a description of your services or the communities you serve. Posts, on the other hand, are more dynamic in that you can add to them any time you like, be it moment-to-moment, daily or a few times a week.

Once you publish a post that you have written it becomes visible on your blog. In contrast, visitor responses to your posts will not, by default, be visible on your blog until you review, approve and publish them. You also have the option of setting up your blog so that the responses of trusted visitors will automatically be published.



Q: What are best practices in blogging?

Blogging will drive consumers to your site; keeping them there by creating a 'sticky site' and providing regular commentaries through your Blog.

- Create a virtual community with your contacts and clients
- Become the “ask Bob” person through your online touch-points
- Relate to people you are in contact with – like in community
- Put “a face on the machine”

Here are some examples of blog content that does work well:

- Stories
- Data (Charts, Tables, Maps)
- Book Reviews
- Current Events
- Neighborhood Descriptions
- Local Events (fun stuff!)
- Links
- Interviews
- Advice for Buyers & Sellers
- Advice for Other Agents

For additional information on blogging best practices, see [Learning to Blog from the Best](#). Additionally, you'll find a list of influential real estate blogs at: realestatemarketing101.topproducerblogs.com.

Q: What are poor practices in blogging?

Blogs form part of your personal brand so you need to make sure that your posts project the professional image of integrity, credibility, trustworthiness, and industry know-how that will attract readers. So any content that detracts from this professional image should be avoided. Additionally, although blogs are marketing vehicles as well as sources of real estate information, it is best to avoid giving yours posts a sales and marketing tone. Here are some examples of blog content that does not work well:

- Bubble Articles
- Attacks
- Cut-and-Paste from some other source
- Automated Content
- Obvious Self-Promotion
- Questions
- Link-less content (diminishes search engine optimization possibilities)
- Listings without context
- "Brochure" Type Information
- Incoherent Rambles

Q: Can I customize the look of my blog?

The look of your standalone blog can be customized. You can upload your own banner image or pick from the available stock images. You can change the side-bar widgets as desired and decide whether the side-bar is presented on the left or right. The framed-in look is less customizable as it has been designed to work with a REALTOR.com® Featured Website.

Q: Can I control the font, color and other visual aspects of the blog?

Generally, no, but in an upcoming release, blogs that appear within your REALTOR.com® Featured Website will automatically match the website color scheme and fonts.

Q: How do I add my picture to a post?

You probably want to add your agent photo to the sidebar instead of to a post. Doing so will associate your photo with the blog as a whole, and will save you the time of having to add it to each post. One of the sidebar widgets is a profile and it's designed to support a photo. Use the image upload feature.

Q: Can I include screenshots, photos and other graphics within the content of my blog?

Yes. The Featured Blog platform enables easy updating of content, including graphics. It has been specially designed for the non-technical user who does not know HTML.

Q: How long can content stay on my blog? Is there a file size limit like my email account?

Content will stay on your blog as long as your blog account is active. The limit for attachments is 10MB, excluding 2MB for a banner and 2MB for an agent photo. Posts, comments and pages do not count in the limit.

Q: Can other people post to my blog?

Yes, if you invite others to be contributors to your blog, they can write posts on your blog. As the blog owner, you must approve every post written by a contributor before the post is displayed on your blog.

Q: Can I add listings to my blog?

A Featured Blog is not intended to be a website so there is no facility to explicitly support listings. You can add listings as a blog post and in fact, when integrated with Featured Website, auto-posting new listings, sold listings, and open houses is an option. However, experience shows that blogs are most effective and popular when used as an information source, not as an overt marketing vehicle.

Q: Are there any limitations at all to what I can do with my blog?

Featured Blog are subject to a subscriber agreement. Generally, a blog is intended to be used for real estate purposes and should not be considered as a replacement for a website.

RSS Feed

Q: What is an RSS feed?

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated digital content, such as blogs, news feeds or pod casts. Through RSS you have the possibility of syndicating your content. Featured Blog will support the ability for you to syndicate your content using RSS.

Q: How do people subscribe to my RSS feed?

People simply visit your blog site and click on the RSS feed icon. Alternatively, you can provide them with the RSS feed, which is: [http://\[username\].featuredblog.com/?feed=rss2](http://[username].featuredblog.com/?feed=rss2)

Integration with Featured Website

Q: Can I link my blog to my website?

You can add Featured Blog to your Featured Website using the Add a Blog Page. This special page type available only with Featured Website supports the permalinks in your blog. This means readers of your syndicated posts can be directed back to your website when they click on your post. You can also show your blog as an RSS feed webbox on your Website.

Q: How do I add my blog to my Featured Website?

Simply add a blog page type. If you have a username and password already, enter it on the configuration screen. Otherwise, click on the request link and an account will be created for you. You will then receive a welcome email containing your username and password.

Support

Q: I can't remember my username/password, how do I retrieve it?

Please check your welcome email for your username and password. If you no longer have your welcome email but remember your username, you can reset your password by going to [\[username\].featuredblog.com/wp-admin](http://[username].featuredblog.com/wp-admin) and following the "Lost your password?" link. If you do not know your username, contact Customer Care at 1-888-393-8944.

Q: Who do I contact if I have problems with my blog?

Check the product's Online Help first to see if it answers your question. If not, Contact Customer Care at FeaturedBlog@REALTOR.com or 1-888-393-8944.

Q: If I already have a Top Producer Blog, do I need a Featured Blog??

No. Your Top Producer Blog has the same features as Featured Blog. Top Producer Blog posts may also be selected for display on REALTOR.com

Visibility on REALTOR.com®

Q: What is "Let's Talk Real Estate!" ?

"Let's Talk Real Estate!" is a new real estate blog containing content of interest to the consumers who visit REALTOR.com. Visitors to REALTOR.com can discover it via the REALTOR.com home page. Editorial staff at REALTOR.com will choose posts that are interesting and relevant to consumers.


Real Estate Talks! Read the daily roundup from the best blogs in real estate. [Get it now!](#)



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Home & Garden

From Landscaping to

Search

- Buy a Home
- Rent a Home
- Find a Community

Q. What does “Let’s Talk Real Estate!” look like?

“Let’s Talk Real Estate!” will host blog posts culled from the many agents using Featured Blogs across the country. Attribution and a link back to the agent’s original Featured Blog post will be included.



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REALTORS®: Join [Sign up for a Featured Blog](#)

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10:05 am

Tax Assesments Vs. Offer!

Recently, we were asked by a buyer if we should make an offer based on a % of the tax assessment. Short answer. NO! Tax assessment typically has no bearing on the homes actual value. An offer is typically based on 6 month recent sales in a half mile radius. With flat sales prices over the past year, we prefer to narrow the search to 1/4 mile radius and expand sales out to a year. This is now and it is subject to change. Stay away from Tax assessment and you will be far better off. As always seek advice from an experienced professional.

[Originally posted by [Keith Carberry](#) under the post title, “[Tax Assesments Vs. Offer!](#)”]

 | [No Comments](#) | [Permalink](#) | filed under [For buyers](#)

MAY

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2:05 pm

Fix broken items before listing

One of the biggest mistakes home sellers make is listing a home with obvious problems. Any house-even a new one-needs fixing from time to time. It's just that buyers don't want to be reminded of this when it comes time to plunk down cash.

As a seller, your top priority is to overcome any real or imagined obstacles buyers have. Fixing stuff that's broken and selling a home that looks as if it has been impeccably maintained through the years is a good start.

Special Feature for Monday, 25 June

First-time home-buyer? Check back next Monday for sound advice from real estate professionals on how to successfully purchase your first home in today's economy.

Topics

- [For buyers](#)
- [For sellers](#)
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