

ADAPTING TO A VIRTUAL WORLD AND KEEPING TRADITIONS ALIVE AMIDST COVID

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By Paige Tepping February 3, 2021, 4 pm Reading Time: 3 mins read 



The Team Store goes above and beyond for Virginia REALTORS®



Wolf

Melanie (Mel) Wolf has spent the past six years as executive assistant for the Virginia REALTORS® in Glen Allen, Virginia. Responsible for supporting CEO Terrie Suit, the entire leadership team and its Board of Directors, Wolf often purchases high-quality items complete with the association's logo for their leadership members.

"I need to know without looking at the item myself that it's high quality, that our logo is clear and precise, and that it will get shipped and delivered at the right time," says Wolf.

That's why she depends on the REALTOR Team Store®, the official supplier of REALTOR®-logo branded merchandise for the National Association of REALTORS®, through the Association's REALTOR Benefits® Program. Run by the Team Store, a 30-year-old corporation in Palatine, Illinois, the business is broken into two halves. One half is the [NARTeamStore.realtor](https://www.NARTeamStore.realtor) website, where REALTOR®-logo-branded items can be ordered quickly and easily. The other half centers around custom products that require more of a hands-on salesperson to assist in finding the right product for their unique logo.

Having turned to the REALTOR Team Store® for a variety of items over the years, there was no doubt in Wolf's mind that Jordan Dunne—a salesperson at the Team Store for 26 years—would help her pull off the impossible: a virtual champagne toast with 79 individuals located throughout the state of Virginia.

“Due to COVID, we had to cancel our in-person convention this past September, where we had been planning to celebrate our 100th anniversary and host a black-tie banquet complete with a champagne toast as we installed our new board members and officers,” says Wolf.

“Rather than cancel the event altogether, we decided to host it virtually,” adds Wolf, who challenged Dunne to create a champagne toast giftset that would be delivered prior to the virtual installation...all within a six-week timeframe.

Rising to the challenge, according to Wolf, Dunne went far and beyond what a regular vendor would do to get her exactly what she needed.

Thinking outside the box, Dunne conceptualized a gift basket that included a small serving tray encased in black leather with the association's 100-year logo prominently displayed in the bottom corner, a bottle of champagne enclosed in a sealable wineskin to help prevent any breakage and a collection of Ferrero Rocher chocolates.

Wrapped in a big bow, each basket included a note explaining that the champagne was to be saved for a toast to celebrate during the virtual installation.

The project went off without a hitch, garnering positive feedback from the member recipients, including several past presidents.

“We received rave reviews in regard to the serving tray specifically,” says Wolf, “with members noting that it was a nice commemoration of our association's 100th anniversary.”

But the true key to the project's success? Dunne and his team.

“Jordan and his entire team are very professional. They take pride in their work, and they aren't happy until the customer is happy,” says Wolf.

Always willing to go the extra mile, Dunne and his team take the guesswork out of the process, providing clients a high level of comfort in knowing that they have nothing to worry about.

"I depend on them every time," concludes Wolf. "They're the first ones I go to, even if I'm not sure that they can provide the particular item I'm looking for. On the rare occasion that they can't, they always have great alternatives available."

For more information, please visit teamstoreonline.com.

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PAIGE TEPPING

Paige Tepping is RISMedia's senior managing editor.

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A COMMUNITY OF LEADERS CONTROLLING THEIR FUTURE

How LeadingRE provides a path for brokerage growth

By Robin LaSue

In a real estate industry being reshaped by consolidation, franchise expansion, technology investment and changing capital models, brokerage owners are being forced to make big decisions about the future of their companies.

The pressure is real. Integrals are tight. Agents expect more. Consumers are more informed and more demanding. Technology is changing how firms compete, communicate and deliver value. Across the industry, companies are searching for a model that looks very different from what it did even a few years ago.

For some, that path may mean selling to or franchising with a larger organization or joining a more centralized model. But for many brokerage owners, the question is often: How do I grow without giving up what I have built? How do I offer agents and clients more while maintaining control of my company's direction, culture and reputation? How can I gain access to resources and talent without a leader in my market?

That's where Leading Real Estate Companies of the World® (LREC) comes in. The industry's leading real estate association, LREC is a powerful grouping.

The future of real estate is not only about consolidation. It is also about

Paul Bonomo, president and CEO of LeadingRE. "They are defined by what they uniquely possess: local knowledge, strong relationships, entrepreneurial agility and authentic brands that are deeply connected to the communities they serve."

LeadingRE brings these firms together through a global network and an ecosystem that includes not only Leading Real Estate Companies of the World®, Luxury Portfolio International® and RECO Group, but also its UK-based network, Redfin International (see page 44), and its Canadian-based, Avature Realty Network. Together, these brands create a platform for growth.

But not all scale is the same. In many models, scale comes with compromise. Brands grow by standardizing operations, centralizing decision-making and exiting local firms that are built around connection, quality and local authority.

The message to brokerage owners is clear: You do not have to choose between keeping your identity and gaining access to the world. You can do both.

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A Different Kind of Scale
Scale matters in today's market. Brokerage owners need technology, marketing, research, training, business intelligence, recruiting support and more. They need access to new ideas and new opportunities. They need to show agents that their company is modern, connected and positioned for the future.

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