

Best 2026 Real Estate Conferences for Brokers

So, if you want to figure out exactly what real estate marketing is getting completely wrong right now, you actually shouldn't be looking at a top-producing broker. You should actually be looking at a canned water company with a heavy metal aesthetic. Which, I mean, that sounds totally counterintuitive, right? Until you realize that selling a house in a really crowded, noisy suburban market is suffering from the exact same problem as selling a can of water in a grocery store.

It's just noise. Exactly. It is the absolute crisis of commoditization.

You're talking about how to actually stand out when everyone else looks and, well, sounds exactly the same. And that really brings us to the core mission of our discussion today. We are directly answering a very specific question for you that just keeps coming up, which is, which conferences would you recommend this year for brokers? And it is a critical question for your business right now.

To set the parameters here, the list we've put together is not exhaustive. Right. There are tons of them out there.

Right. Plenty of other events. But these specific recommendations hold immense actionable value, depending on your specific goals and needs for the year.

And we are going to walk through them chronologically, just looking at the strategy behind each one. And the absolute best part for our local listeners, for the most part, these incredibly valuable events happen to be right here in Colorado this year. Super convenient.

But before we get into the spring calendar, I want to be the voice of the skeptical broker right now. Yeah. Because taking three or four days away from the desk means I am not out there closing deals.

Fair point. With so much information available online, like industry blogs, daily newsletters, massive Zoom webinars, why is physically packing a bag and attending these events in person still a critical strategy? Like, what is the actual return on investment here that I can't just get from a PDF? I mean, I completely understand the hesitation. Time is your most valuable asset, hands down.

But look at the landscape. The real estate industry is undergoing massive structural shifts right now. Huge shifts.

Yeah. We are looking at major commission changes, intense AI disruption, and totally shifting market dynamics. You can read a newsletter to find out what happened yesterday, sure.

But navigating how to adapt your actual operational business model, that requires face-to-face strategic alignment. It requires getting out of your local echo chamber. Precisely.

It requires those unfiltered, kind of off-the-record hallway conversations with peers who are facing the exact same challenges you are. You cannot vibe check the future of the industry over a Zoom call. You just can't.

You have to be in the room where the new playbooks are being written. I love that framing. So let's get you in the room.

Starting our chronological look at the year, your foundation in the spring should be the Colorado Connections Con Forum. The registration deadline is coming up on April 11th. And I mean, the venue alone is a draw.

It's held the brand new Hotel Polaris in Colorado Springs. Oh, it's gorgeous. Yeah.

We are talking modern, sleek architectural design blended with these just incredible panoramic views of the Rockies. But you aren't just going for the view. The strategic focus of this forum is fundamentally about professional momentum and navigating an increasingly automated landscape.

It's not just sitting in a dark, cavernous room looking at bullet points on slides. The agenda is built around forward-thinking keynotes. Like for example, Debra Fine is giving a keynote specifically on the fine art of building relationships.

Which feels, honestly, more important than ever. When AI can write your listing descriptions and automate your email drips, the actual human relationship is your only true differentiator. Exactly.

And to pair with that interpersonal focus, they also have a strategic think tank forum led by Nick Bailey. Oh, nice. Yeah.

He's the chief real estate officer of T360. And for those who don't know, T360 is essentially the management consulting heavyweight of the real estate industry. They know their stuff.

They really do. When Nick Bailey leads a think tank, it is usually backed by massive amounts of verified industry data. They study brokerages across the country to see what is actually working and what is failing.

So having access to that level of strategic insight locally is huge. Now here is a really important caveat for you listening. While up to seven hours of continuing education or CE credit might be available at the Soror event, we want to be crystal clear.

Yes, please. Earning CE credits is absolutely not the primary reason you should attend this forum. No, definitely not.

If you just need to check a compliance box to keep your license active, there are much cheaper and frankly easier ways to do that online. Yeah. Don't go just for the credits.

Right. The real return on investment at Colorado Connections is found at the Soror open house reception. It's found on the shared meals and the casual conversations in those stylish lounges overlooking the mountains.

That's where the magic happens. That is where collaboration happens. That is where referrals are exchanged and where you find out how a broker in a neighboring county is solving the exact inventory problem that you are facing.

Okay. So you've grounded your local network in the spring. You've got your relationships dialed in.

But as we move into the summer, it's time to refine your actual brand messaging. And that brings us to June 2nd through the 4th in Denver for Signal 2026. This is produced by the agency 1000 Watt and it's taking place at the Sewell Ballroom.

The energy around this event is just, well, completely different from a traditional real estate expo. It is entirely unique. The core theme of Signal this year is escaping what they call the universe of uniformity.

I love that phrase. It's so accurate. Right? Think about the modern real estate landscape from a consumer's perspective.

When strategy is scarce, when marketing posts lack a definitive point of view, real estate brands just start to blur together. Everything looks the same. Exactly.

Every agent's social media feed looks identical. Just sold, just listed, another generic market update. It all becomes noise.

So Signal is an event dedicated entirely to bold ideas. It's about taking your brand and making it the clear signal cutting through that noise. Looking at the schedule, it is packed with sessions that directly challenge how we operate.

They have one session called the five stat lie. Oh yeah. It is a deep dive into how data and AI are actually exposing what real estate marketing consistently gets wrong.

It breaks down how relying on the same five generic market statistics actually alienates buyers instead of attracting them. Because data without narrative is useless. And that ties directly into another major session they are running called the new story of how to sell a house.

They are explicitly declaring that the old one and done listing marketing playbook is just toast. It's completely toast. It no longer works.

And instead of just complaining about it, they are actually going to build a new marketing play live right there on stage. Which is fantastic because you leave with actual take home deliverables. But I have to push back on one thing I saw on the agenda here.

Okay. What's that? There's a session on taking risks and breaking from the pack. And the speaker is Andy Pearson.

He's the VP of creative for Liquid Death. Yes. For anyone who hasn't been in a grocery store lately, Liquid Death is a canned water company with melting skulls on the packaging and a heavy metal aesthetic.

What on earth does a heavy metal water brand have to teach a traditional residential real estate broker? I mean, it sounds crazy, but it's actually a brilliant booking because it answers

the fundamental question of what a brand really is. A brand is identity, value, and difference. Water is the most commoditized, boring product on the planet.

Everyone needs it. It's all essentially the same. And the market is completely saturated.

Yet, Liquid Death built a fiercely loyal following and a massive valuation purely through disruptive, wildly differentiated branding. So they didn't change the water. They just changed the story around the water.

Exactly. True brand differentiation is completely industry agnostic. If you can understand the psychology of making a simple can of water stand out in a crowded beverage aisle, you can absolutely apply that same psychology to make your brokerage stand out in a crowded suburban housing market.

Wow. It really forces you to rethink how safe and invisible your current marketing really is. That completely slips my perspective.

It forces you out of the real estate bubble to see how real marketing works. So Signal handles your branding in June. But by late July, you might be looking at the larger macroeconomic forces threatening your business.

Right. And while we love the convenience of staying in Colorado, if you're willing to pack a suitcase this summer, there's a heavyweight contender you have to consider. That is Inman Connect San Diego, happening July 28th through the 30th.

Yeah. If you're going to get on a plane, Inman Connect is where the entire ecosystem converges. And what stands out about the San Diego event this year is their unapologetic, no fluff agenda.

They aren't sugarcoating it. Not at all. They aren't sugarcoating the reality of the market.

They are explicitly targeting the tough stuff. Because brokers are living through some incredibly muddy waters right now. We are dealing with unprecedented shifts.

And that is exactly what they are diving into. They are tackling the massive commission changes head on. They are looking at the realities of AI disruption.

The actual disruption. Right. Not the hype, but how it is actually replacing administrative roles.

And they are analyzing the rapid pace of brokerage consolidation. If you are feeling the squeeze on your margins, this conference is designed to give you battlefield strategies to really thrive in a market that is undeniably getting tougher. You can see that just by looking at the speaker lineup.

It is a powerhouse of industry leaders who are actively shaping these changes. Oh, absolutely. You've got Glenn Kellman, the CEO of Redfin, discussing operational efficiency.

Yeah. You've got Andy Florence, the founder and CEO of CoStar Group, talking about data dominance. Daryl Fairweather, the chief economist at Redfin, is breaking down the macroeconomic numbers.

These aren't motivational speakers. These are the architects of the modern industry sharing their actual operational playbooks. Right.

It's about surviving those macro-residential challenges. But interestingly, after looking at those massive battles in San Diego, some brokers realize they need to hedge their bets. Make a pivot.

Yeah. As we head into August, you might realize your best defense is diversification. You might want to pivot and expand into a highly lucrative, specific niche right back home in Colorado.

Which perfectly sets up our next recommendation for late summer. We are heading back to Denver for Real World, taking place August 9th through the 11th. Now, context is important here.

This is a massive gathering. They are expecting over 1,500 attendees from more than 300 property management companies. Real World is essentially the ultimate gathering for the rental housing and multifamily industry.

It features over 33 breakout sessions focusing heavily on hands-on training and the latest innovations from RealPage. RealPage is a major software and data analytics provider for the real estate industry. Okay, I have to challenge this one.

I am looking at this through the lens of a traditional residential broker. If my bread and butter is helping families buy and sell single-family homes, why am I spending three days in August at a multifamily property management conference? It feels like a complete distraction. It entirely depends on your specific goals as a broker.

You have to look at the broader ecosystem. We're seeing massive shifts in housing affordability and consumer demographics. A huge portion of your potential buyer pool is currently navigating the rental market and institutional money is heavily invested in multifamily properties.

You're saying I can't really understand the buying side if I'm totally blind to the rental side. Exactly. If you are a broker looking to diversify your income streams, maybe expanding into multifamily investments for your high net worth clients, or if you simply need to understand the massive rental housing trends that are shifting the broader market, this is the place to be.

That makes sense. You need to understand the data and the software innovations driving the property management side to fully grasp the pressures on the residential side. Right.

It's about future-proofing your business model. Plus, my notes here say they throw a legendary-themed client party on the final night. They do.

Which honestly sounds like a fantastic environment to network with property managers who might have leads on investors looking to buy or sell. It's all about building those cross-discipline connections. Absolutely.

Okay. Let's round out our primary recommendations for brokers as we look toward the late fall. November 6th through the 8th takes us to New Orleans, Louisiana for the NR NXT, the Real Tour Experience.

Such a huge event. It is. Now, I want to make this explicitly clear to you listening.

You do not have to travel this year. Between the car forum, Signal, and real world, you have incredible options right here in Colorado. But if you have budget and can make the trip, NR NXT is still a fantastic capstone choice for your year.

The sheer scale of the resources available at NR NXT is what makes it so valuable. You aren't just getting high-level theories. You have access to deep dive, top line research.

Like the granular data. We're talking national, regional, and granular metro market level housing statistics as well as comprehensive commercial research analysis. It's the data you need to confidently advise your clients.

And beyond the data, they cover the critical day-to-day practical and legal realities of managing a brokerage. The educational tracks include extensive resources on legal issues, fair housing regulations, arbitration. Dispute resolution.

Yeah. All of it. It's the infrastructure of your business.

And to be completely thorough regarding the event's massive scope, the agenda also heavily covers federal, state, and local advocacy efforts. This includes the Realtors Political Action Committee, or RPAC, and their federal lobbying work. And just to be completely clear for our listeners in the context of the topic today, we are entirely neutral regarding any political stances or lobbying efforts.

Absolutely. Like we aren't endorsing any of it. We are simply reporting to you that those advocacy topics are a significant component of the programming you will find if you attend the event in New Orleans.

Exactly. It's just a comprehensive industry event. It covers absolutely everything from tactical marketing to environmental sustainability, all the way to testing out the latest prop tech software.

It really is a macro view of the entire profession. So those are the core recommendations tailored specifically for your goals as a broker. But to wrap up our discussion today, as we were digging through all the source material and calendars, three other major real estate conferences popped up.

Yeah. We should mention those. We want to save you some time and potential confusion by quickly clarifying who these three events are actually for, because they are not really for brokers.

No, they're really not. We'll give each of these just a quick, like, under a minute introduction. It's an important distinction to make.

So you don't accidentally spend your marketing budget on a ticket to an event that has absolutely no alignment with your daily operational business. Right. So first up on the not-for-brokers list is the REEA conference.

That's R-E-E-A, happening July 21st through the 25th in Denver. REEA stands for the Real Estate Educators Association. As the name suggests, this is strictly for real estate educators and association development directors.

Right. The sessions are entirely focused on pedagogical things, you know, like instructor development workshops, their gold standard instructor classes. It's a fantastic, vital event for the people who teach the continuing education courses.

But it is not really for the brokers taking them. Makes perfect sense. Next on our addendum is the RISO Fall Conference.

Interestingly, this one is also taking place in Colorado Springs at the Hotel Polaris, just like our very first recommendation. But this one happens in the fall. RISO is the Real Estate Standards Organization.

This event is highly, highly technical. How technical? Like, the attendees here are the top decision makers, software engineers, and developers in real estate industry technology. They are dealing with web APIs, data dictionaries, interoperability standards that make different real estate platforms talk to each other.

Oh, wow. So unless you are an MLS technology professional who deals intimately with back-end data standards, this one is really only for the MLS folks, not for brokers directly. Which brings us to the third and final event on our list.

And honestly, it breaks my heart to say this one isn't for us. It's the Arello Annual Conference happening September 15th through the 17th. And why does that one break your heart? Because it's taking place at the Westin Maui Resort and Spa in Hawaii.

I am deeply, deeply sad we won't be going to Maui for this one. I mean, I show your disappointment. The venue is incredible.

But Arello stands for the Association of Real Estate Licensed Law Officials. This is a conference specifically for the regulators. Oh, okay.

Yeah, it's for the people working in regulatory agencies and some industry-adjacent folks who deal on real estate regulation issues. They are discussing license verification systems, disciplinary action databases. It's a remarkably well-run conference, and it has very important implications for the real estate education industry and timeshares.

But again, it's not a broker's conference. Sadly, my Hawaiian shirts will have to stay in the closet this September. So what does this all mean for you as you plan your year? Looking back at the incredible value available, whether you are looking for local networking in the spring, deep strategic brand overhauls to escape the sea of sameness in the summer, or

niche expansions into multifamily property data, you can find almost all of it right in your Colorado backyard.

Truly. And of course, there are a few very worthy exceptions if you really want to pack a suitcase. It is a robust calendar tailored to whatever specific challenge your brokerage is facing.

But I want to leave you with a final thought to mull over as you decide where to invest your time and capital this year. We're seeing more and more of these events, like RACO and massive tech tracks at the other conferences, dedicated entirely to AI, digital data standards, and workflow automation. As the actual mechanics of the real estate transaction become increasingly automated, frictionless, and digital, will the traditional handshake and happy hour networking conference eventually become a relic of the past? Or because technology is commoditizing the transaction itself, will face-to-face human connection become the only actual premium currency left in the industry? Oh, that is a fascinating question.

If AI can do the paperwork, the only thing you have left to sell is trust, and you just can't build trust with a data dictionary. Yeah, you can't. You have to look someone in the eye.

The technology can give you the fastest route to closing, but it takes actual human insight, the people you meet in those hotel lobbies and conference halls, to teach you how to actually survive the journey. Until next time, keep exploring.

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