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'Apologize' and 17 other common-sense ways to begin reforming NAR

Even before the courts resolve how agents are compensated, the National Association of Realtors has an opportunity to set a course for victory ahead of further disruption, Brad Inman writes.

BY [BRAD INMAN](#)

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Here are a few of my ideas for reforming the National Association of Realtors.

What are yours?

1. Adopt an association manifesto that clearly defines the purpose and vision of the organization and an action plan that every member understands and is willing to pay for.
2. Show courage with a mea culpa — a sincere and unqualified apology to NAR members for actions that damaged the industry.
3. Humility, action, and service should define a new organizational culture. Build on positive steps that interim NAR CEO Nykia Wright has taken to restore morale internally.
4. Reach out proactively to well-intended NAR critics. Encourage and don't punish legitimate whistleblowers.
5. Break up the three-way agreement between NAR, state, and local associations.
6. Push aggressively for MLS and association consolidation and take steps to assist local leadership in making it happen.
7. Diligently enforce the mandates from the commission lawsuit settlement and future FTC and DOJ edicts.
8. Help agents and brokers change their real-estate business practices to conform to the new rules. Expel those who don't comply.
9. Overhaul NAR governance, including ending the de facto tenured leadership track, decreasing the size of the board of directors, and commit to complete transparency in all association business.
10. Invite qualified independent directors to join the NAR Board of Directors.
11. Help reduce the costs of intermediaries that capture too many commission dollars.
12. Sell the NAR real estate holdings in Chicago and Washington, DC, and find more appropriate office space. Edifices are expensive symbols of excess that only a few NAR members benefit from.
13. Use NAR influence to lead a crusade to bring down housing costs. Collaborate, partner, and lobby for national and state policies that work. Infuse the organization with a new passion for a larger public purpose.
14. Conduct a top-to-bottom strategic audit of the sprawling organization. Spin off or sunset those projects, positions, or businesses not core to the mission.
15. Adopt a brutal new conflict of interest policy that prohibits NAR leaders and the association from benefiting from opaque relationships with industry vendors and outside business interests.
16. Create a transparent policy for perks and travel — to end boondoggles.
17. Rebuild trust with the membership through meaningful actions that elevate the profession. After an association overhaul, make plans to reduce member dues.
18. Only slow down the reforms when members are proud once again of their national trade association.