



Recruiting, Training Keep Profitability High

► **The Real Estate Simulator keeps North Carolina broker in the black**

While optimists inside the real estate industry have taken to describing the current market as leveling out after a sustained period of abnormal growth, many analysts are simply calling the current market flat, or even declining. This rapid downturn hasn't touched all sectors of the market, however.

In the areas of Greensboro and Burlington, North Carolina, Jodi Tate, general manager for Coldwell Banker Triad Realtors, saw a spectacular 26% growth in 2005 with nearly \$1 billion in sales. Despite the national trend toward zero-growth or even gross losses, her offices are already ahead for the year and on their way to a 10-13% increase.

Tate attributes part of this growth to utilizing AlignMark's Real Estate Simulator in order to attract and screen top agent recruits; this is part of an aggressive overall integration of new technology to help keep her company performing significantly ahead of the curve.

"We've got eight offices and more than 320 sales associates here in the Triad Region," Tate explains. "But when you look at our growth here locally, and compared to national trends, we think the difference is our intensive focus on hands-on training and our use of dig-

ital technology. Real Estate Simulator (RES) came into the picture about two years ago because of our focus on using the best digital technology to define the best people."

According to AlignMark, the Real Estate Simulator is an assessment tool that uses simulation technology to recreate the real-life challenges that real estate agents encounter on a daily basis. Using a three-in-one assessment strategy, the Simulator evaluates selling skills, intelligence and personality to provide comprehensive information about a person's strengths and weaknesses in real estate sales.

Tate reports that in 2005, as her office was going like gang busters, she used the RES online system to screen almost 650 potential agents and to hire only 94.

"The candidates we recruited using the RES system became more productive more quickly, and were more satisfied with their career choice," she says. "This is where the investment in recruiting and training has paid off for us."

"The Real Estate Simulator has even improved our managers' efficiency and interview skills because they are able to use the online assessment when meeting recruits face-to-face," Tate adds. Tate's offices are even urging existing sales associates to take the online assessment to help make each member of the team that much stronger.

Backing up the product is the level of customer service that AlignMark provides. "Our director of recruiting, who is responsible for the day-to-day integration of the RES system, has been provided single rep support and an open line of communication," Tate says. "While she admits to not being a 'techie,' she never feels any intimidation when providing suggestions or asking questions.

"The company was even willing to enhance the content of their assessment product based on our need for more narrative information on recruits' backgrounds so we could better assess their skill level," Tate says. "And they were very receptive to our idea."

Tate believes that integrating AlignMark's technology into their business is directly reflected in her firm placing 10th in the nation on the NAR "Top 100 Brokers of the Year" list.

"Our training and usage of the RES system is directly tied to that distinction," says Tate. "When you get that kind of national recognition, you know you are running a profitable operation with very happy people."

—John Voket

For more information, visit www.realestatesimulator.com.