

ORRA Affiliate Articles Writer's Guidelines



Basic Guidelines

Articles contributed by ORRA Affiliate members are contained within the ORRA website. Articles are intended to offer practical, “how-to” educational information to the general ORRA member on a topic related to the affiliate’s area of expertise. Promotion of products, services, and providers are not permitted.

- *Write a “how-to” feature article, not a news article or personal opinion piece.
- *Limit your article to 300-600 words.
- *Use a professional-casual voice with minimal direct address to the reader.
- *Attribute tips, action-suggestions, advice, and opinion to expert sources; avoid offering your own.
- *Avoid offering legal advice; if it’s absolutely necessary to include legal advice in the article, clearly attribute it to an attorney source.
- *Do not include references to products, services, vendors, companies, etc., per ORRA policy.
- *Provide the full name, company affiliation, and contact information of sources.
- *Submit a Word doc, not a PDF.
- *Include your name, company affiliation, and a digital portrait with your submission.
- *Expect your article and all related components (headline, subhead, sidebars, charts and graphs, etc.) to be edited for content, construction, grammar, and legal soundness.
- *Contact an ORRA editor any time for assistance with topic selection or article development.

Expanded Guidelines

Word Counts and Policies

ORRA members have a preference for short articles. ORRA member submitted articles should be between 300 and 600 words. Even less is even more! Writers who are struggling to stay within the upper word limit should consider focusing on a single element within the overall topic.

ORRA policy prohibits the editorial promotion of specific products, services, or vendors. References to general product categories are preferred. Articles that offer reviews or comparisons of specific technology products should include discussion of multiple specific products.

ORRA policy limits affiliate member writers and their company affiliations to one published article per 12-month period. Writer company affiliation and contact information is included in the credit line at the end of the article.

Subject Matter

ORRA members prefer short, practical, “how to” articles that provide insight and information they can apply to their own work. Articles falling under this category include case studies that describe actual challenges and offer attributed solutions using actual or hypothetical examples. Articles based on studies or surveys should offer insight or attributed advice that will be useful to readers. Research-based material also needs to be timely — ideally studies or surveys discussed should be no more than six months old.

One basic criterion for a good article is whether or not the author has something of value to say: Does the article provide information others might need or value? Writers should put the reader first and present what a reader needs or would want to know about a topic, not what the writer wants to say about it.

Continued on Reverse

Style

Features are the most appropriate type of articles for ORRA Committee Connection. News and opinion pieces are not suitable for this section. News-feature topics, for example an exploration of the practical applications of a newly enacted FREC regulation, are considered for ORRA Committee Connection but may be deemed appropriate for another ORRA communications vehicle. In this event, ORRA editorial staff will notify the writer to discuss options and guidelines.

Opinions, advice, and action-suggestions offered in articles should be attributed to expert sources, and should not be those of the author.

Legal advice should be avoided altogether. If legal advice is absolutely necessary to the value of the article, it must be attributed to an attorney. Please include the full name of the attorney source, along with company affiliation and contact information.

Include the complete, proper title of any surveys, studies, publications, etc., referenced in the article. Essential references should be woven into the text.

Articles should be written in a professional-casual editorial voice with minimal direct address between the author and the reader.

Authors should strive to write using plain language. If technical terms or jargon must be included, they should be accompanied by brief explanations. Slang or idiomatic language should be avoided.

Construction

Because writing an article requires a considerable investment of time and energy, potential writers are invited to e-mail an ORRA editor to discuss a particular topic or find out whether another article on the topic has been published recently.

To facilitate the writing process and develop the structure of the article, authors are encouraged to submit an outline of their ideas. ORRA editorial staff will help authors develop an article's concepts, ensure that relevant points are covered, and ensure that the article's structure is logically organized.

When composing a draft article, authors should begin with a clear, concise introduction that explains what the article is about and why the reader would be interested in it. The rest of the article should then address the points covered in the introduction and remain as focused as possible.

Articles should be broken into separate sections with subheads so that readers can more easily digest the presented information and browse section headings to determine which portions of the text are relevant to their work.

Authors are encouraged to use visual elements to help convey complex processes or illustrate an important concept. If a chart is copied from another source, be sure to cite that source completely. If a work is copyrighted, permission to use it must be obtained.

Review

Articles are reviewed by ORRA's editorial staff and by legal counsel when necessary. Articles are reviewed for: interest to general REALTOR® readership; quality of writing; perspective; technical soundness; legal soundness; timeliness; and originality.

Authors are notified when an article has been received; whether or not an article has been accepted for publication; and whether the article requires only minor editing by ORRA's editorial staff or requires rewriting and resubmission by the author. In the latter case, an ORRA editor will provide suggestions or indicate questions raised by the contents.

Articles (plus headlines, subheads, charts, and graphics) are edited for content, grammar, construction, and adherence to ORRA's editorial standards. ORRA adheres to the *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*.

Submission

Articles should be submitted electronically by e-mail, as a Word document attachment. Please do not submit PDFs.

Article submissions should be accompanied by a high resolution (minimum 300 dpi) professional digital portrait of the author. The preferred format is JPG; EPS and TIFF are acceptable.

ORRA does not pay for submissions nor hold copyrights to submitted material. Authors are welcomed and encouraged to shop their articles to other REALTOR® associations.

Questions? Contact Lisa McDuffie at lisam@orlandorealtors.org.