

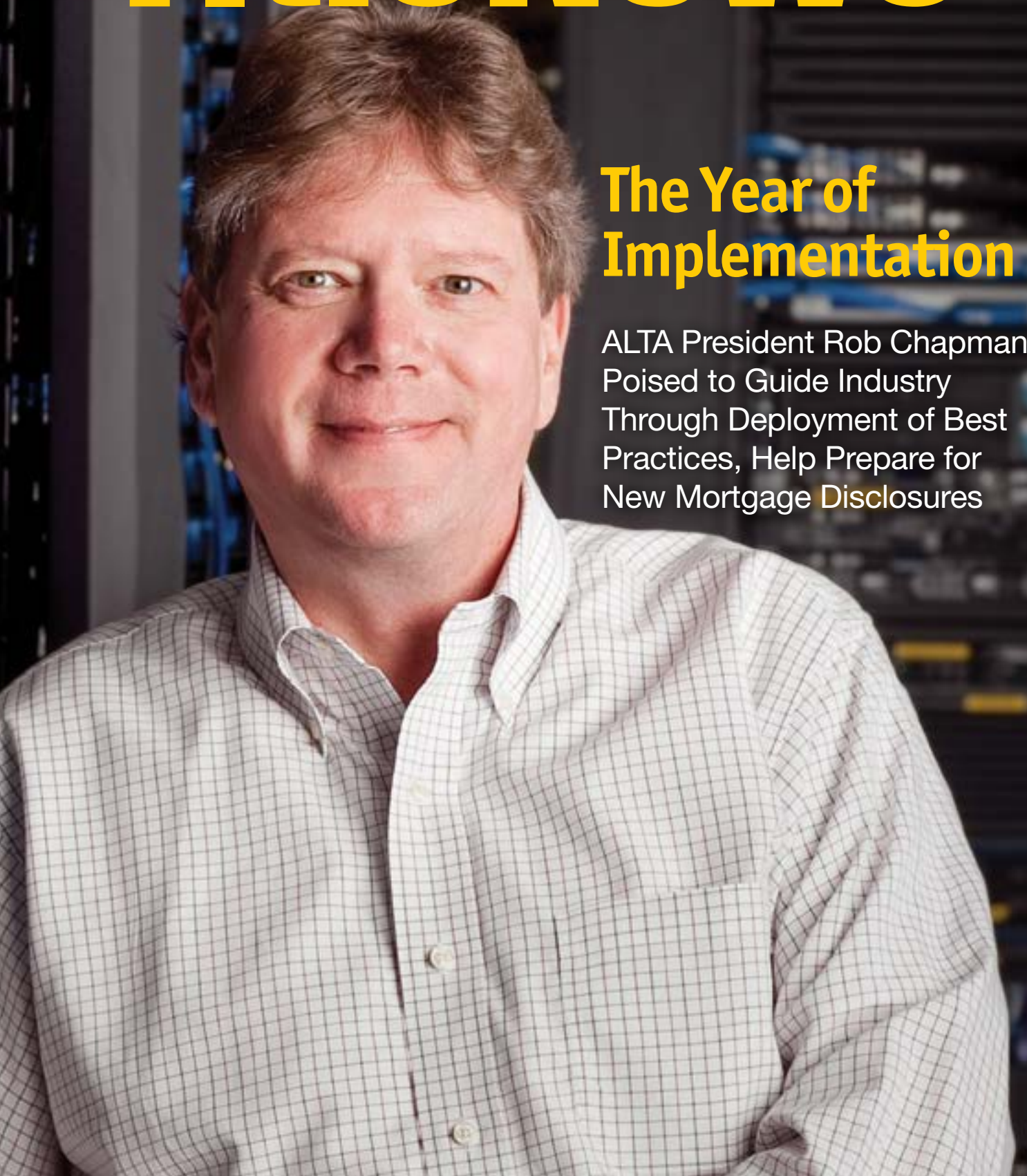
NOVEMBER 2013

Official Publication of the  
American Land Title Association

# TitleNews

## The Year of Implementation

ALTA President Rob Chapman  
Poised to Guide Industry  
Through Deployment of Best  
Practices, Help Prepare for  
New Mortgage Disclosures



**good.**

**better.**

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**never, never rest.**

## **To improve is to change!**

Our commitment to our agents is tireless. That is why we have expended significant effort to not only educate our agency personnel about the regulations and requirements proposed by the CFPB, but also to develop strong affiliations with various service providers that can help our agents in meeting the ALTA Best Practices. Change is good, but it can be daunting. We can help you find the best answers to your questions.



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## 2014 ALTA CONFERENCES

March 12-14	Business Strategies Conference Omni Nashville
May 5-8	Federal Conference Washington, DC
October 15-18	Annual Convention Seattle, WA

## BEST PRACTICES MEETINGS

November 14	New York Rochester, NY
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## STATE MEETINGS

December 4 - 6	Louisiana New Orleans, LA
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# TitleNews

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Look at What You're Missing  
in this month's Digital Issue



## Extra Feature in Digital TitleNews

In addition to the feature article on Rob Chapman, ALTA's 2013-14 president, you can watch a recording of his speech from the 2013 Annual Convention.

Go to [www.alta.org](http://www.alta.org) to get your copy of Digital TitleNews Today!

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from the publisher's desk

## ALTA Developing Solutions Today for a Better Tomorrow

The past few years has brought a sea change in the regulatory environment governing the mortgage finance and settlement industries. Now, businesses are looking for certainty and stability. Unfortunately, the market is still transforming. With the CFPB's integrated mortgage disclosures coming and many lending regulations set to take effect in January, ALTA members will need to make more adjustments to remain competitive.

Like any effective trade association, ALTA focused on developing products to help ensure all of our members have the tools they need to turn market challenges into opportunities. Frank Pellegrini put the association in a strong position to respond to the challenges ahead. Now, the association will be guided for the next year under the capable leadership of Rob Chapman as our association president. As chief information officer for Old Republic National Title Company, Rob brings a unique perspective on addressing regulatory and market challenges and is the perfect person to be at the helm during this time. I know you will enjoy the article on page 10 that discusses in detail Rob's vision for ALTA.

So, what has ALTA done to help prepare for a brighter future? We've capitalized on products we produce for the benefit of the entire industry. We've tightened the communications with our very important state land title association partners. We've built the Title Action Network to reach policymakers more effectively on the state and federal level. We've launched the National Title Professional designation to help our members differentiate themselves in the marketplace.

To help members compete in the market and highlight compliance of policies and procedures, ALTA rolled out its "Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices" and associated tools such as the Assessment Procedures, Certification Package, Assessment Workbook and policy-building tool. While ALTA has been busy the past year developing the Best Practices framework, 2014 will be the year of implementation. The focus now will be on communicating with lenders to show them the benefits of the Best Practices and how they can supplement their risk-management programs. We are working to ensure that lenders continue to utilize a large network of settlement agents.

There is a lot to managing change. It involves understanding where you are at the moment, understanding where you want to be, getting support from the people within the system and developing a plan to get where you want to go. Rest assured—ALTA is here to help be that support.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Korsmo". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

- Michelle Korsmo, ALTA chief executive officer

## ALTA Gains 1,000 New Members in 2013

ALTA reported during its Annual Convention in Palm Beach, Fla., it has recruited more than 1,000 new members in 2013. Earlier this year, ALTA reported record membership for a fourth consecutive year with membership now totaling nearly 4,800 member companies.

“It is an exciting time to be part of the land title industry,” said Frank Pellegrini, ALTA’s immediate past president. “We continue to grow as an association because of the dedication and enthusiasm of our members. With new initiatives such as the ‘Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices,’ ALTA continues to unite the industry and increases the

value proposition of ALTA to our members.”

ALTA’s membership includes title insurance companies, title agents, abstracters, and real estate attorneys; the majority of these members are small business owners who rely on the variety of services and benefits that ALTA provides.

“As the national association for our industry, we remain focused on increasing the benefits we offer our members,” said Michelle Korsmo, ALTA’s chief executive officer. “Our recruitment and retention efforts thrive when the association is able to provide new and exciting opportunities and tools for our members.”

## Reminder: ALTA Website to Undergo Updates in December

ALTA’s website will be unable to process transactions from Dec. 24-31 as upgrades are implemented. All store transactions—such as meeting registration, membership dues

payments, license payments and store product purchases—will be unavailable. Other member services requiring logins also may be affected. Watch TitleNews Online for updates.

## ALTA Awards Four New National Title Professional Designations

ALTA announced it awarded four additional National Title Professional (NTP) designations. The professional designation was received by Tim Evans of Evans Title Agency in Tipp City, Ohio; Linda Grahovec of Fidelity National Title Group in Carol Stream, Ill.; John (Jack) Robichaux of Ironclad Title in Lake Charles, La.; and Alma Rushing of Orange Coast Title Company in Santa Ana, Calif.

“I applaud these talented and dedicated members of the land title industry on their National Title Professional designations,” said ALTA President Rob Chapman.

“Their experience, wealth of knowledge and professionalism make them deserving recipients of this designation.”

The NTP designation recognizes land title professionals who demonstrate the knowledge, experience and dedication essential to the safe and efficient transfer of real property.

The designation has several elements, including industry and compliance prerequisites and training requirements. To apply for the NTP designation and for more information, please visit the NTP section of ALTA’s website at [www.alta.org/ntp](http://www.alta.org/ntp).

## Call for Presentations: 2014 Business Strategies Conference

There’s no better way to share your industry knowledge and expertise than speaking at ALTA’s 2014 Business Strategies Conference, which will be held March 12-14 at the Omni in Nashville, Tenn. Deadline to submit a proposal is Friday, Nov. 22. Suggested topics include Best Practices implementation, CFPB’s integrated mortgage disclosures, strategies on generating new business and technology trends.

For more info, go to [www.alta.org/bsc-cfp.cfm](http://www.alta.org/bsc-cfp.cfm).

## ALTA Releases Workbook for Each Pillar of Best Practices

ALTA has completed the rollout of Best Practices Assessment Preparation Workbooks that members can use to examine adoption of ALTA's "Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices" and measure if a company is prepared to undergo an assessment.

ALTA has produced a Workbook for each pillar of the Best Practices. The final Workbook released is for pillar No. 3, which addresses protecting non-public personal information. ALTA also will publish a policy-building tool to help members develop their own written procedures.

The Workbooks consist of various tabs that include a cover page, an introduction letter, instructions, a questionnaire, worksheet(s) and an action item report. In addition, the Workbook for pillar No. 3 includes an information security glossary, which provides a definition for many technology-related terms.

The Workbook questionnaire tab includes a series of questions asking about a company's business practices. Questions are broken out by each pillar of the Best Practices and are designed to match up with the requirements of the Best Practices and the Assessment Procedures.

The questionnaire in the Workbook for the third pillar is broken into eight sections and includes 157 questions. Each question should be answered with either a "yes" or "no." Some questions may require an explanation. In addition, the Workbook asks to indicate whether the practice is documented in a company's written procedures and whether the company has a system for determining if employees follow the procedures.

For more information and to access the Workbooks, go to [www.alta.org/bestpractices](http://www.alta.org/bestpractices).

## Title Action Network Passes Membership Milestone

The Title Action Network (TAN), the premier grassroots organization promoting the value of the land title industry, has recruited more than 6,000 members. The organization was launched in 2012.

"We are extremely pleased with the growth and participation in TAN this year," said Michelle Korsmo, ALTA's chief executive officer. "TAN members continue to recruit land title professionals from around the country to help promote the value of the industry to legislators and regulators."

TAN is also pleased to announce partnership with 36 state land title associations. State association partners include: Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Dixie Land (Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama), Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan,

Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont and New Hampshire), New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

"The participation from the state land title associations has been exceptional," said Rob Chapman, ALTA's president. "Through the use of TAN, several states, including Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota and New York have already seen legislative victories on industry issues. The continued growth of TAN depends heavily on the continued partnership with our state partners. We are grateful for their support."

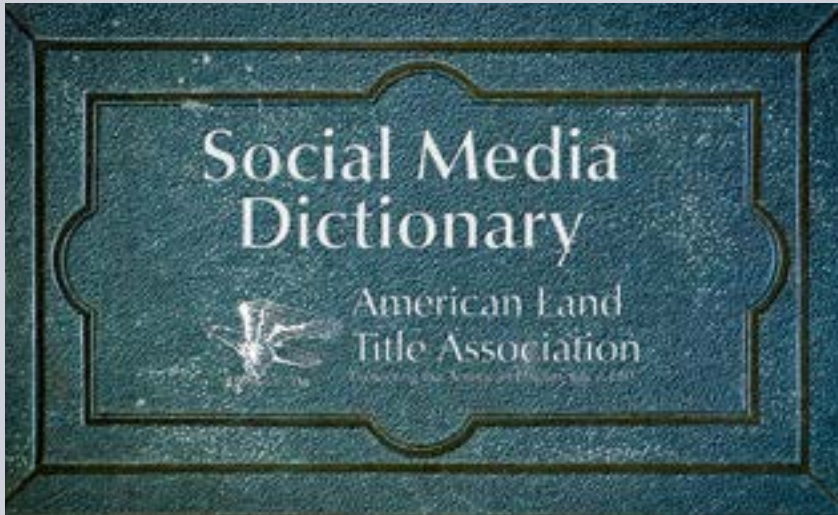
For more information about TAN, go to [www.titleactionnetwork.com](http://www.titleactionnetwork.com).

## ALTA's Romeo Continues on Property Records Industry Assoc. Board

During its Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minn., the Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) elected seven directors for two-year terms on the Board of Directors. Among the directors continuing for

the second year of a two-year term is Kelly Romeo, vice president at ALTA, who represents the business segment with David Ewan, underwriting counsel for Westcor Land Title Insurance Co. Ewan will serve as

PRIA president in 2013-14, while Larry Burtness, recorder, Washoe County, Nev., is vice president; Joan McCalmant, recorder, Linn County, Iowa, is secretary; and Mark Ladd of Simplifile is treasurer.



## Social Media Dictionaries Coming Soon

In January 2013, ALTA launched a series of social media dictionaries to help our members better understand the social media tools available to them. We are excited to launch four new dictionaries this month including Instagram, YouTube, Flickr and Foursquare. These new editions will join our previously released Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest dictionaries. If you'd like a copy of any of these dictionaries, please email [social@alta.org](mailto:social@alta.org).

### Are You Being Reviewed?

Is your company being reviewed on peer review websites like Yelp and Google? If you're not sure, you should check today. Oftentimes, even if you aren't aware, consumers have already created a page for your company or organization. Many studies show that 90 percent of consumers trust peer review sites. By having a presence on peer review sites, you will be able to showcase consumers that positively review your products and services. For negative reviews, you can

reach out to the consumer to try and resolve the situation for them. This shows other consumers that you are listening and working to ensure the consumer is satisfied. Whether you have a social media presence or not, peer reviews cannot be ignored. If you ever need help with peer review sites, contact Wayne Stanley, ALTA's manager of external communications, at [wstanley@alta.org](mailto:wstanley@alta.org).



### Title Trick-or-Treat



ALTA's social media accounts were full of trivia tricks and treats in October. One of most popular trivia questions was "True or False – Abstracts originated in England under the common law." The correct answer is false – abstracts of title are American in origin. They have no foreign prototype. Do you have a clever title trivia post to share? Email it to [social@alta.org](mailto:social@alta.org) and we'll post it on Facebook!

### Share Your Digital Title News

As you know, Title News has gone digital this month. This new digital offering will allow ALTA to share more multimedia content with our members including video and audio. As you check out your new digital *TitleNews*, be sure to share some of the content on Facebook and Twitter and include the hashtag [#ALTAdigital](https://twitter.com/ALTAdigital).

### #ALTA2013 Videos

Did you miss ALTA's 2013 Annual Convention? No worries! You can catch videos of the general session speakers by going to our YouTube page at [www.youtube.com/altavideos](http://www.youtube.com/altavideos). Be sure to subscribe to our channel and enjoy all of the videos that ALTA provides.





The eyes of a chameleon allow 360-degree vision because they are mounted on conical turrets that can move independently of each other. Because of this, the chameleon is always aware of its surroundings.

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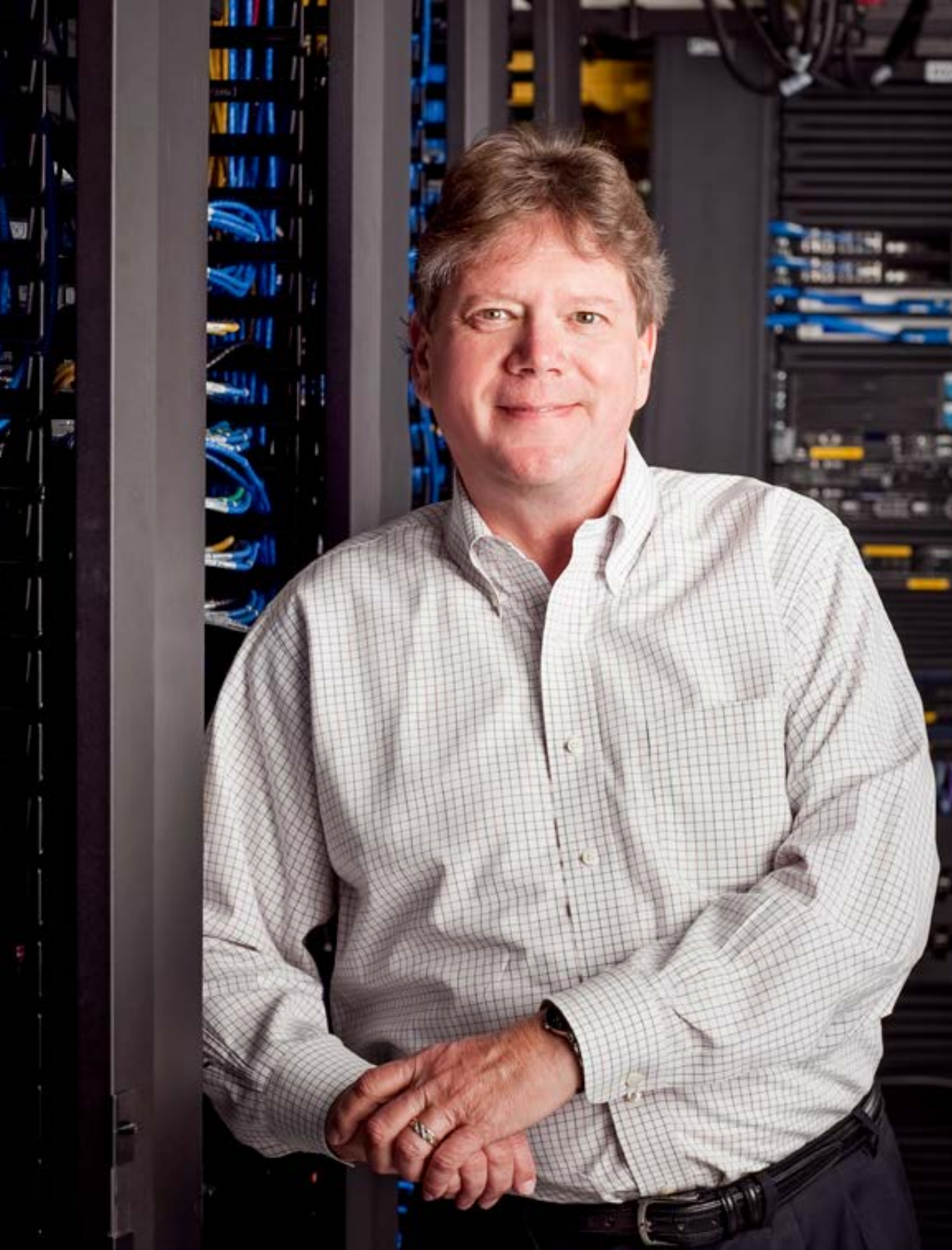
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# The Year of Implementation

ALTA President Rob Chapman Poised to Guide Industry Through Deployment of Best Practices, Help Prepare for New Mortgage Disclosures

**A**t an early age, Rob Chapman wanted to be an airline pilot. He often flew with his father and obtained his pilot's license at the age of 17. Not even a plane accident could thwart Chapman's passion. During a flight, his father made an emergency landing at the Ford Motor Co. assembly plant in St. Paul, Minn., along the Mississippi River. >>

By Jeremy Yohe



“It was the best landing he ever made,” said Chapman, who described his father as a salt-of-the-earth guy. “It made me believe that if you could live through that, you could live through anything.”

While Chapman grounded himself after breaking his back in a non-flying accident in 2003, he maintains an innate aptitude to see the entire landscape when making decisions

## “Flying is like the insurance business; you are managing risk.”

and the ability to develop the best route to get from one point to another. According to a 2011 study by professors from the University of Notre Dame and the University of Oregon, the kind of risk-seeking behavior that motivates certain people to fly personal aircraft may also make them effective corporate leaders.

“Flying is like the insurance business; you are managing risk,” Chapman said with a laugh, adding that his favorite plane is a Piper Aztec twin-engine.

His gift of a steady hand on a plane’s yoke is one attribute that makes Chapman the perfect person at a critical time to lead ALTA over the next year. The chief information officer of Old Republic National Title Insurance Co. was installed as ALTA’s 2013-14 president during the Annual Convention in October.

Chapman’s skill of seeing things literally from a 30,000-foot view will be helpful, but his background in technology will be the trump card that pays dividends over the next

year with implementation of ALTA’s “Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices” and getting prepared to work with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s integrated mortgage disclosures.

“The insightful past presidents who led this great association before me laid the foundation for development of the Best Practices,” Chapman said. “The words

to ensure that our message gets out. I believe that there has never been a better time for us to truly come together as an industry with pride and simplicity. We’ve worked hard for many years and built Best Practices standards that we can be proud of. Now, we must implement them.”

Frank Pellegrini served as ALTA’s president over the past year and was at the helm when the Best Practices were unveiled. He believes there’s no better candidate with the skills and talents to tackle the task at hand than Chapman.

“Rob will guide us through actual deployment of the Best Practices throughout the industry,” he said. “We are fortunate to be in Rob’s hands in the coming year.”

*uncomfortable, misunderstood, vague and silent* will no longer be associated with this incredible industry. We are doing more than ever before



▲ Rob Chapman with ALTA Past President Mark Bilbrey.

## Industry Mentors

Chapman said he's had many industry mentors over the years, including Rande Yeager, CEO of Old Republic National Title Insurance Co.

"Rande was a tremendous mentor, as well as some others who have already retired," Chapman said. "If you are going to succeed as a CIO, you need to be intimate with the industry or you can't be an effective technology leader and develop effective applications. Rande's input helped me quickly learn the tools industry participants needed."

Having served as president of ALTA in 2006, Yeager can once again offer advice to Chapman. Yeager believes Chapman must listen to the members, validate their positions and always give credit to the contributors during his year as ALTA's president.

"It's essential to engage the association for the benefit of the membership," Yeager said. "Rob is a tireless worker and takes personal

■ "Rob brings a unique perspective to ALTA and his time as president couldn't have come at a better time."

pride in all that he's involved in, so I'm confident ALTA members will be proud of what he can accomplish for them.

"Rob knows the business from many different perspectives and can clearly articulate the industry's position," Yeager added.



▲ Rob enjoys a cooking class with (from left to right) Rande Yeager, Frank Pellegrini and Herschel Beard.

Former executives at Old Republic Title offer similar praise about Chapman. Dick Cecchettini was president of the Old Republic Title Insurance Group when the company acquired Chapman's imaging technology business. He quickly

points out Chapman's high integrity. After Cecchettini retired, the two have remained close friends.

"Rob is straight with people and a very quick learner," said Cecchettini, who served as ALTA's 1991-92 president. "He's a strong leader of the troops and of the people who report to him. Rob brings a unique

perspective to ALTA and his time as president couldn't have come at a better time."

Chuck Gregory, who retired as Old Republic Title's chief financial officer 10 years ago, said there were many changes taking place within the company's IT department as far as developing automation for title plants, and the closing and escrow process.

"Rob was instrumental in bringing our systems into the 20th century," Gregory said.

Like the relationship with Cecchettini, Chapman's relationship with Gregory grew beyond business.

"Rob's a good manager and has demonstrated that over the years," Gregory added. "He's a very knowledgeable guy and an excellent technician. But more importantly, he's a genuinely nice person."

Another former ALTA president, Mark Bilbrey, current president of the Old Republic Title Insurance Group, believes Chapman is

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“absolutely the right person at the right time to lead ALTA.”

“With Best Practices in the forefront, and with IT and all of the issues surrounding the security of the information we deal with every day, I cannot think of a better person in our industry to lead us through this maze,” said Bilbrey, who served as ALTA’s 2004-05 president. “Rob is a very multifaceted person and a CIO who does not fit into the typical mode. He is very passionate in everything he does and I have no doubt that passion will serve ALTA and our membership well.”

### Down to Earth

In addition to having a passion for flying, Chapman is an avid fisherman and motorcyclist. Chapman finds serenity fishing with friends or hitting the open road on his bike with his wife. For many years, he has attended Sturgis, the

largest motorcycle gathering in the world where more than 5,000 bikes converge annually in South Dakota.

“Nancy and I have toured a large part of the country on our Harleys,” Chapman said. “Biking lets you see the world from a different perspective and helps you connect with your surroundings.”

The Chapmans have been married for 22 years and live in Ham Lake, Minn., a northern suburb of Minneapolis. Chapman said raising three children gave him a different perspective on life.

“I learned that patience in life is a virtue and that the best motivation is positive criticism,” Chapman said. “The old adage ‘you can get more bees with honey’ is so true to me. It’s the positive criticism that helps people work toward goals.”

### Technology Background

When Chapman wasn’t taking to the skies, he was busy early in his career selling IBM equipment when mainframes computers were the rage. He eventually started his own network integration business and

“Biking lets you see the world from a different perspective and helps you connect with your surroundings.”



worked with county governments in Minnesota. Chapman became familiar with the land registration system and started developing online title plants in the early 1990s. At the same time, Old Republic Title was looking for a solution to automate title plants.

In 1996, Chapman joined Old Republic Title as manager of Image Technologies for Old Republic Business Information and Technology, which was established to provide customers and company-owned locations with image-enabled real estate information. It flourished and has achieved great success under Chapman’s direction. Currently, ORBIT supports and delivers image-enabled title plant information to more than 1,000 users.

▲ Rob enjoys riding his Harley Davidson, and for many years has attended Sturgis, the largest motorcycle gathering in the world.



▲ Rob Chapman and his wife, Nancy, have been married for 22 years.

Chapman leads a team of more than 200 information services employees, who provide support and services in nearly 350 company locations. He says his employees would characterize him as a fair and equitable leader.

“The only difference between me and my employees is that I have veto power,” Chapman said. “My employees are responsible for suggesting recommendations for the best technology solution. My job is to decide if the solution is economically feasible. If you don’t listen to the solutions and proposals the business units provide, you won’t be an effective IT leader.”

When Chapman started in the industry, there wasn’t a Windows-based closing solution. Over the years, however, technology

■ “While technology brings efficiencies, it will not generate business for you. We are still in a relationship-driven, service-providing industry.”

has become essential for today’s operations.

What started with automation of online title evidence evolved into deeper integrations with production systems. Because of the regulatory environment, there will be lender requests that bring agents and underwriters together through technology. A driver of this movement will be the CFPB’s

Closing Disclosure, which combines the HUD-1 and revised Truth-in-Lending disclosure. In addition, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have jointly created a new Uniform Closing Dataset in an effort to standardize the underlying data required by the Closing Disclosure.

“At the end of the day, this means settlement companies will need to verify their systems and can share electronic information with their lender clients,” Chapman said.

Because of the movement to improve the quality and accuracy of loan data, Chapman warned the industry must avoid becoming “Luddites.” The original Luddites were 19th-century English textile artisans who protested against newly developed labor-saving machinery during the early 1800s. Today’s Luddites are technophobes.

Some title professionals bristle at using technology, but changes in the marketplace will soon require integrations with business partners. Although technology advancements are moving quickly and the title industry must be responsive, Chapman understands the essence of the industry remains.

“While technology brings efficiencies, it will not generate





▲ Rob enjoys spending time outdoors. Here he's pictured with Bob Liebrecht showing off some of their catch.



unique position of viewing the business differently and observing the need to develop affordable technology for everyone in the business.

“The market will drive itself and there

business for you. We are still in a relationship-driven, service-providing industry,” he said.

Chapman also realizes the technology needed to complete real estate transactions must be financially feasible for title agents and attorneys to remain relevant in the process. As the CIO of a national company, he’s in a

will low-cost integration options for agents,” Chapman said. “Between the underwriters and lenders, there will be portals that an agent can use to facilitate the transaction. Applications that are developed need to have the agent in mind.”

## Equipped for the Future

As the industry moves forward and applications are developed aimed at keeping agents competitive, ALTA has worked hard in creating its “Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices” to help all members—especially title agents—remain relevant to the real estate transaction.

“ALTA provides the most real-time factual information that can be obtained about the industry,” Chapman said. “The regulatory landscape evolves daily and you need to be plugged into ALTA, which provides a great analysis of how and when these changes impact our business.”

While joining ALTA is important, being an active member is just as vital in order to have a seat at the table and influence change, according to Chapman.

He canvassed the country the past summer speaking at eight state land title associations informing title professionals across the country about the importance of implementing Best Practices and how changes at the federal level will impact business on Main Street.

“When the other Board of Governors and I visit regulators and legislators, we now have something tangible, something we can show these individuals: this is what we stand for, this is how we protect our consumers and clients, and this is our value,” Chapman said. “ALTA will be the steady hand on the rudder and guide us through turbulent seas.” ■



**Jeremy Yohe** is ALTA's director of communications. He can be reached at [jyohe@alta.org](mailto:jyohe@alta.org).

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# ALTA Announces 2013-14 Board and Executive Committees

ALTA is pleased to present its 2013-14 ALTA Board of Governors, as well as the Abstracters and Title Insurance Agents Executive Committee, and the Title Insurance Underwriters Executive Committee.



## 2013-14 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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- One-year term:** Mary O'Donnell (*Winter Park, Fla.*)

# Title Companies Can Use CFPB Database to Examine Mortgage Trends

## Tool Provides Insight into Local Markets and Can Be Used to Generate Business

**T**he Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) launched an online tool to provide access to public mortgage information collected under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA). The tool can help businesses and consumers understand trends in their local mortgage markets.

“HMDA data is a really powerful tool to help title and settlement agents understand their local markets and develop business,” said Frank Pellegrini, CEO of Prairie Title and ALTA past president. “Title professionals can use the information to get insight into the volume and types of loans being made in their markets.”

In 1975, Congress passed HMDA requiring most mortgage lenders to make loan information available to the public. In 2012, there were approximately 18.7 million HMDA records from 7,400 financial institutions. This information includes the majority of the country’s mortgage

applications and loan originations by banks, savings associations, credit unions and mortgage companies.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act transferred HMDA rulemaking authority from the Federal Reserve Board to the CFPB on July 21, 2011. While the CFPB has the rulemaking authority, other federal banking regulators and the Department of Housing and Urban Development still share other authorities. Each year, the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC), comprised of the federal banking regulators, releases the full public HMDA data set to the public.

“Just as the real estate motto ‘location, location, location’ was true before the recent financial crisis, it was true for the crisis.

Every community was affected differently,” said CFPB Director Richard

Cordray. “Our tool puts valuable information into the hands of the public in an accessible way, so they can understand what is happening in their local mortgage markets. A more transparent mortgage market will lead to a better marketplace and better outcomes for consumers.”

The CFPB tool provides data on the number of mortgage applications and originations—in addition to loan purposes and loan types—for 2010 through 2012. Using the tool, businesses and consumers can see nationwide summaries or they can choose interactive features that allow them to isolate the information for metropolitan areas.

Trends and highlights from the information shown by the tool include:

**Heat Map:** One way to measure the strength of a local mortgage market is to look at the number of mortgage applications and originations. The CFPB tool contains a nationwide “heat map” showing that applications and loan originations increased in most local mortgage markets in 2012. This tool allows users to drill down to see this information by metropolitan area. The data shows:

- Nationwide, loans for home purchases increased by 13 percent from 2011 to 2012.



Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

- In most counties across the country, mortgage applications were down from 2010 to 2011, but they rebounded in 2012. Of the nearly 13 million applications in 2012 for home purchase loans, home improvement loans, and refinancing, more than 8 million resulted in loan originations.
- The number of loan originations increased by about 2.4 million, or 39 percent, from 2011 to 2012.

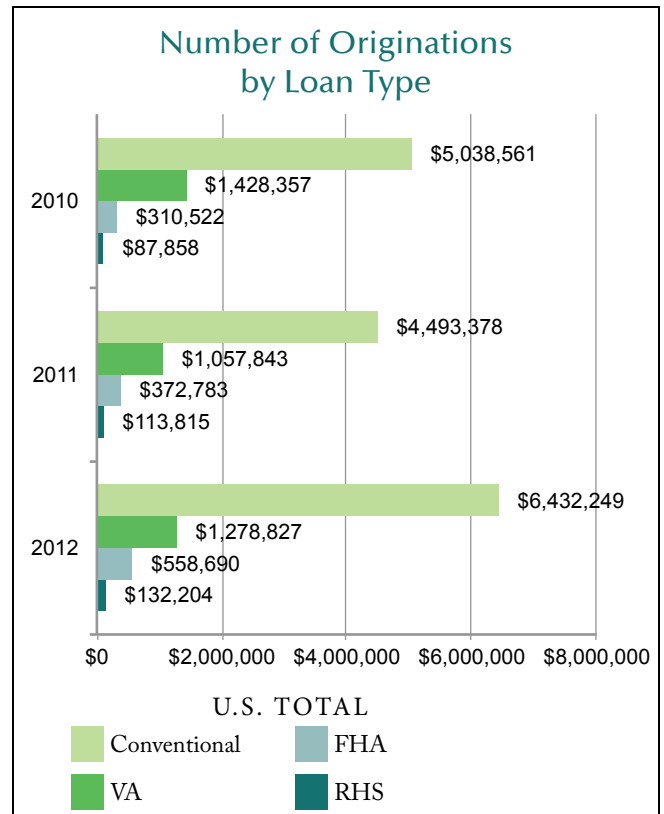
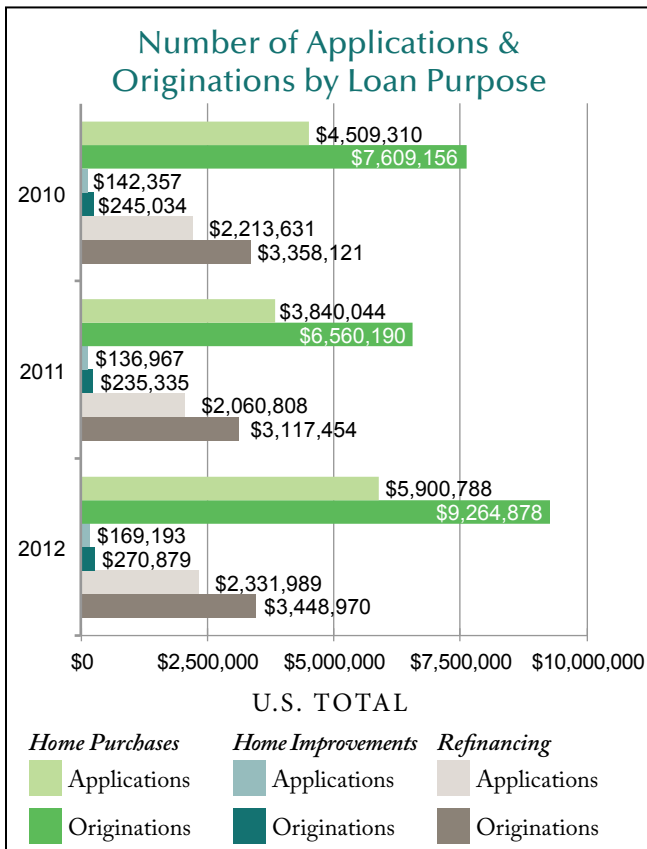
- The number of refinancing applications increased from 6.6 million in 2011 to 9.3 million in 2012.
- The number of refinance loan originations increased from 3.8 million in 2011 to 5.9 million in 2012, representing a 54 percent increase.
- Refinance origination activity continues to vary by location. For example, Cincinnati, Ohio experienced a 47 percent increase while Las Vegas saw an increase of 205 percent.

guaranteed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). An interactive graph in the CFPB tool, which breaks down the number of loans by type and by metropolitan area, shows:

- In 2012, FHA- and VA-backed loans accounted for about 15 percent and 7 percent, respectively, of home purchase, refinance, and home improvement loans combined. In 2011, these figures were 18 percent and 6 percent, respectively.
- Areas with large numbers of military families often have a higher share of Veterans Affairs (VA) lending, as seen in metropolitan areas such as Gulfport, Miss., where 21 percent of loans were VA, and Fairbanks, Alaska, where 29 percent of loans were VA. ■

**Interactive Graph on Mortgage Volume:** A significant driver of the increased mortgage numbers in 2012 was a rise in the number of refinancings. An interactive graph in the CFPB tool, which breaks down the number of loans by purpose and by metropolitan area, shows:

**Interactive Graph on Loan Type:** Since the housing crash, homebuyers have been heavily reliant on mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) or



\*Data is for first-lien, owner-occupied, 1-4 family and manufactured homes.

**Family/Company Title Premium Summary (2013 - Six Months)**

Company Name	Premium Written Direct	Premium Written Non-Affiliated Agency	Premium Written Affiliated Agency	Total Premiums Written	Market Share
<b>FIDELITY FAMILY</b>					
Chicago Title Ins. Co.	110,171,421	464,722,956	415,324,105	990,218,482	15.89%
Fidelity National Title Ins. Co.	54,659,573	413,072,234	276,835,975	744,567,782	11.95%
Commonwealth Land Title Ins. Co.	30,028,661	172,123,200	98,345,048	300,496,909	4.82%
Alamo Title Ins. Co.	-	7,590,381	21,135,814	28,726,195	0.46%
<b>TOTAL - FIDELITY FAMILY</b>	<b>194,859,655</b>	<b>1,057,508,771</b>	<b>811,640,942</b>	<b>2,064,009,368</b>	<b>33.11%</b>
<b>FIRST AMERICAN FAMILY</b>					
First American Title Ins. Co.	259,621,072	916,231,172	383,924,531	1,559,776,775	25.02%
First Canadian Title Ins. Co.	43,189,306	-	-	43,189,306	0.69%
First American Title Ins. Co. of LA	114	22,060,493	1,238	22,061,845	0.35%
<b>TOTAL - FIRST AMERICAN FAMILY</b>	<b>314,846,852</b>	<b>948,159,006</b>	<b>383,925,769</b>	<b>1,646,931,627</b>	<b>26.42%</b>
<b>OLD REPUBLIC FAMILY</b>					
Old Republic National Title Ins. Co.	38,357,180	749,930,582	91,975,575	880,263,337	14.12%
American Guaranty Title Ins. Co.	5,522,635	17,263,578	1,580,101	24,366,314	0.39%
<b>TOTAL - OLD REPUBLIC FAMILY</b>	<b>44,041,199</b>	<b>779,103,807</b>	<b>93,555,676</b>	<b>916,700,682</b>	<b>14.71%</b>
<b>STEWART FAMILY</b>					
Stewart Title Guaranty Co.	77,864,813	367,701,168	193,905,294	639,471,275	10.26%
Stewart Title Ins. Co. of NY	15,093,535	81,989,214	90,026	97,172,775	1.56%
<b>TOTAL - STEWART FAMILY</b>	<b>101,404,734</b>	<b>449,690,382</b>	<b>193,995,320</b>	<b>745,090,436</b>	<b>11.95%</b>
<b>FAMILY TOTALS</b>	<b>655,152,440</b>	<b>3,234,461,966</b>	<b>1,483,117,707</b>	<b>5,372,732,113</b>	<b>86.20%</b>
<b>INDEPENDENT COMPANIES</b>					
Westcor Land Title Ins. Co.	232,787	126,602,126	26,213,319	153,048,232	2.46%
National Title Ins. of NY	3,386,508	16,276,065	129,070,690	148,733,263	2.39%
Title Resources Guaranty Co.	1,156,047	60,429,999	65,659,568	127,245,614	2.04%
WFG National Title Ins. Co.	6,592,655	69,323,548	12,170,091	88,086,294	1.41%
North American Title Ins. Co.	-	21,323,020	39,771,764	61,094,784	0.98%
Investors Title Ins. Co.	13,145,823	28,819,270	369,316	42,334,409	0.68%
Alliant National Title Ins. Co.	-	36,361,933	-	36,361,933	0.58%
Attorneys' Title Guaranty Fund of IL	181,276	34,407,928	72,634	34,661,838	0.56%
Connecticut Attorneys Title Ins. Co.	-	32,015,475	-	32,015,475	0.51%
WFG Title Ins. Co.	7,309,083	15,213,635	6,128,546	28,651,264	0.46%
Security Title Guarantee Corp. of Balt.	3,434	24,315,055	-	24,318,489	0.39%
Land Title Ins. Corp. of CO	-	-	14,724,423	14,724,423	0.24%
National Investors Title Ins. Co.	7,215	12,361,126	-	12,368,341	0.20%
<b>TOTAL - INDEPENDENT COMPANIES</b>	<b>41,822,931</b>	<b>506,907,892</b>	<b>311,637,676</b>	<b>860,368,499</b>	<b>13.80%</b>
<b>TOTAL - ALL COMPANIES</b>	<b>696,975,371</b>	<b>3,741,369,858</b>	<b>1,794,755,383</b>	<b>6,233,100,612</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<i>Note: Individual numbers may not equal total as all underwriters are not listed</i>				<i>Source: ALTA</i>	

# Lessons Learned from Losses: Risk Management Tips

## Advice When Handling Deals With Mineral Rights

**F**or centuries the allure of gold, oil and other precious minerals has built cities and sparked countless disputes amongst neighbors and others. Times have not changed. The Title Industry Assurance Company (TIAC) provides advice for title companies on how to handle transactions where mineral rights are reserved or sold at a premium.

### The Facts

Mr. and Mrs. Hatfield could not make the mortgage payments on the family farm and were in danger of losing the land to foreclosure. Faced with no alternatives, they sold the farm to Mr. and Mrs. McCoy.

Big Sandy River Closing Company conducted the sale of the land from the Hatfields to the McCoy's. The purchase contract stated that the Hatfields reserved for themselves all rights to, and interests in, any oil, gas, coal, clay, sand, gravel, uranium and other minerals lying in and under the land. The purchase contract also stated that the Hatfields were reserving ingress and egress rights

for the purpose of exploration and development of the minerals.

Big Sandy drafted the warranty deed through which title to the land was transferred from the Hatfields to the McCoy's. Big Sandy neglected to include the Hatfields' reservations in the warranty deed. At the time of the closing, neither the Hatfields nor the McCoy's discovered the error.

Years after the closing, a modern-day gold rush occurred in and around the town where the land is located. The Hatfields claimed ownership of the gold, arguing that they never intended to transfer the mineral rights. Similarly, the McCoy's claimed ownership of the gold, swearing that the purchase contract was modified to include the transfer of mineral rights, and that, regardless, the warranty deed trumps the purchase contract. In an updated, slightly more civilized twist to the old tale, the Hatfields filed a lawsuit against the McCoy's and Big Sandy to establish their rights in the minerals or, alternatively, for damages from Big Sandy for losing their rights to the minerals. All parties involved are paying their attorneys a small pile of gold.

### Lesson Learned

In certain parts of the country, the price to purchase mineral rights can be substantial. In those same communities, rural tracts where minerals typically are found often consist of hundreds of acres. Accordingly, a small oversight concerning the reservation of mineral rights can have significant consequences. Title companies operating in areas where mineral rights often are reserved or sold at a premium, should strongly consider having the buyer(s) and seller(s) initial next to the language in the warranty deed where such rights are reserved. In situations where the mineral rights are being sold with the land, and the warranty deed is silent with respect to mineral rights, the title company should consider having the buyer(s) and seller(s) sign a separate document that states the mineral rights are being sold. By requiring signatures in both situations, the title company can better assure that mineral rights do not slip through the cracks and—at the same time—prevent neighborly feuds.

As of April 1, 2013, the FDIC instituted a nationwide policy of reserving its mineral rights in all residential and commercial property, except property worth less than \$50,000 and individual condominium units. Accordingly, when selling property owned by the FDIC, the issue of mineral rights now must be addressed. ■



## **Celebrating 25 Years of Service to ALTA Members and the Title Industry!**

Times were tough for title professionals in the 1980s. Like today, E&O insurers were either ceasing to offer coverage or raising rates dramatically. To respond to this crisis, ALTA members created Title Industry Assurance Company (TIAC) to provide a long-term stable E&O market for its members.

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- w. [www.cpim.com/tiac](http://www.cpim.com/tiac)

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# Industry Remembers 'Mr. RESPA'

## Grant Mitchell Spent 34 Years With HUD and Wrote the 1992 RESPA Regulations

**G**rant Mitchell, considered by many to be the most experienced lawyer and regulator working with the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA), passed away Sept. 10 at the age of 76.

Mitchell spent 34 years with HUD, and as the senior attorney for RESPA he interpreted the statute for a variety of presidential administrations, HUD secretaries and HUD general counsel. He wrote numerous RESPA regulations, statements of policy and interpretive letters. Along the way, Mitchell earned the nickname "Mr. RESPA" as his analysis of the regulation impacted every segment of the residential mortgage and settlement services industries.

Mitchell wrote the 1992 RESPA regulations, which required mortgage brokers to disclose the yield-spread premium received for the first time. The rule was written following the merger of Bank of America and Security Pacific. One bank required disclosure of the information on the HUD-1, while the other didn't. At the time, mortgage brokers started growing as a major origination source,

but RESPA did not specifically consider this business.

Phil Schulman, an attorney with K&L Gates, worked with Mitchell for 10 years at HUD and the two appeared on numerous panels together in private practice.

"He was Mr. RESPA and I would introduce myself as Mrs. RESPA," Schulman said. "His word was the law on RESPA for that period. He was a mentor to all who practiced in the RESPA area."

Rod Alba, vice president and senior regulatory counsel for the American Bankers Association, worked briefly with Mitchell at HUD before moving to the Mortgage Bankers Association.

"RESPA is an extremely difficult law to apply with all the variations that exist," Alba said. "But the gift that Grant brought to the table was his willingness to pick up the phone, answer the questions, and not only meet high-level issues, but engage and wrestle at seemingly minute problems that would come up with RESPA. By tackling these issues, he could make the law work at a national level. Grant put the grease into the RESPA machinery."

Alba joined HUD as a junior lawyer and Mitchell took him under his wing. Alba said he holds Mitchell in such high regard because of his humanity and patience.

"He answered the same questions if he had to," Alba said. "He was a companion and that's rare. I don't think I'd have the confidence or success had it not been for his early guidance."

Marx Sterbcow, managing attorney of The Sterbcow Law Group LLC, described Mitchell as a legend in the real estate community who enjoyed educating and mentoring attorneys about regulatory mortgage laws.

"Grant was unique in that he truly understood the delicate balance between industry and consumers," Sterbcow said. "If he believed in a practice that was harmful to consumers or conversely a practice that unintentionally harmed industry, he would actually put his reputation on the line to solve the issue."

Over the years, Mitchell testified before Congress and spoke at more than 100 events. He also served as an expert witness in 24 cases. Sterbcow said success of one's case "always hinged on whether Grant Mitchell decided to take the case and which side he was on."

"He possessed what many other notable attorneys in the industry will never attain—genuine respect, reaching 'legend' status and a legacy that will carry on for a long time thanks to the long line of attorneys over the years he mentored,"

Sterbcow added. “It didn’t matter what firm you worked for or who you were, he relished the fact that he could pass on his knowledge to others.”

After leaving HUD, Mitchell moved to the private sector, joining the firm Reed Smith Shaw & McClay. He later spent time with the law firms Lotstein Buckman LLP and Buckley Sandler LLP. Robert Lotstein, managing attorney of LotsteinLegal PLLC, knew Mitchell for more than 20 years and considered the two to be colleagues and good friends.

“It was an honor having someone of his intellect and background,” Lotstein said. “He was an icon in the industry. People throw around

that term all the time, but how many could hold onto the title of Mr. RESPA? I remember almost 20 years ago we were at HUD negotiating rulemaking concerning RESPA reform and Grant came into the room with a leather cowboy hat. Only Grant could pull that off and he looked good doing it.”

“A man for the details, Grant would provide specifics when asked a question. Not only would he provide the answer, he’d tell you when it happened. He also was magnificently clever,” Lotstein added.

“Before we had all the technology, Grant would distribute versions of documents with a different typo on each version so he would know if it got leaked who did it,” Lotstein said.

Bart Shapiro of C3 Compliance Consultants was in HUD’s Office of General Counsel when Mitchell was in the Office of RESPA. Mitchell retired shortly after Shapiro moved to RESPA, but the two came to know each other over the years.

“He helped mentor me on RESPA,” said Shapiro, who like Mitchell transitioned from government to the private sector. “Even after he left the government, he still offered advice. He loved to share his knowledge, but it didn’t always have to be business when speaking with Grant. He was so proud of his family.” ■

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### New iPhone Fingerprint Scanner Raises Security Questions

Apple's release of its new iPhone 5S that features a new fingerprint sensor to enhance security raises questions about the device's ability to protect non-public personal information. The Touch ID fingerprint scanner allows users to scan their fingerprint to access the iPhone and download media or apps from iTunes without the need to type in a PIN code.

Addressing privacy concerns, Apple said the new feature doesn't store images of users' fingerprints. Instead, the system stores fingerprint data that is encrypted within the phone's processor. Already, however, hackers are offering a bounty to the first person to hack the biometric lock. A week after the phone's release, a hacking group figured out how to bypass the fingerprint login using lifted finger prints and household items.

Gregory McDonald of Cloudstar Consulting Corp. is concerned the fingerprint scanner will

give iPhone users a false sense of security.

"The iPhone is an extremely popular platform," he said. "That means hackers and criminals will try desperately to defeat the new security measures. We have no reason to believe the new fingerprint scanner is foolproof. Security measures seldom are and Apple's current "passcode" system is already easily bypassed. You can always change your password, but you only have one set of fingerprints. If your digital fingerprints fall into the wrong hands, it's a problem that could haunt you for life."

McDonald believes we'll soon see a combination of passcode and fingerprint. "In other words, something you have, in addition to something you know," he added. "That will be the best combination."

With many people using smartphones and tablets for multiple things, including work, it's important to protect the non-public information

(NPI) included in documents you send and receive on these devices. ALTA's "Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices" provides guidance on protecting NPI. Additionally, here's a list of best-practice tips from the IT management and solutions company ISON to help ensure compliance and that NPI is safeguarded:

1. *Password protect all devices.*
2. *Make sure that emails and messages are encrypted. If your email provider does not have the option for encrypting, you need to find a new provider. Microsoft Office is an option as it has privacy protection plans that are accepted under HIPAA guidelines. Every email can be encrypted or users can opt to encrypt certain emails.*
3. *Delete all voicemails and messages regarding any NPI. Plan a weekly time to go through your devices and clear any unneeded information.*
4. *Have a remote wipe tool on your device in case it is lost or stolen.*

*Activation of a "lost my phone" application may also be helpful. The app on the iPhone is "Find My iPhone." It can find a missing phone and you can wipe it if necessary. The new i07 will have a remote lock option that will lock the device down—no matter who has it or where it is it will be locked down. If you backup your device in the cloud you can always reboot your phone if you get it back, according to ISON.*

5. *Never look at NPI on a non-secure WiFi network. Be aware of snoops.*
6. *Always update applications. This is important for users of Android operating systems. The amount of mobile malware has been on a constant and steep incline over the past four years.*
7. *Educate yourself and train staff on safe mobile use. Know what mobile malware looks like and what to avoid when using your phone. For instance, don't open a text message from someone you don't know.*

### Counties Accepting Electronic Documents Passes Milestone

A new milestone in the number of recording jurisdictions that are electronically recording documents has been reached. With its initial electronic recorded document, Alamance County, N.C., became the 1,000 recording jurisdiction to enable the e-recording process in the United States.

### TitleOne to Expand into Northern Idaho

Boise, Idaho-based TitleOne will expand its title and escrow business to northern Idaho. Plans to open a new Coeur d'Alene office in early October will mean the addition of 10 to 12 new positions, including escrow and title officers.

"We've wanted to bring our legendary service to north Idaho

According to PRIA's tracking system, it took from the late 1990s until August 2006 to reach the 200 e-recording counties mark. Close to 1,200 counties are expected to be electronically recording documents by the end of 2013, which equates to one-third of all recording jurisdictions in the country.

for quite some time," said Mark Tidd, president of TitleOne Corp. "As we've carefully watched the real estate recovery around the state, we've been very impressed with what we've seen in Kootenai County, including reports of nearly 40-percent annual increases in home sales in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls alone."

### Bank Fined \$1B for Suspicious Transactions

The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) announced the assessment of a \$37.5 million civil money penalty against TD Bank for failure to file suspicious activity reports related to the massive Ponzi scheme orchestrated by Florida attorney Scott Rothstein. The Office of the Comptroller of the

Currency also announced the assessment of a concurrent \$37.5 million penalty against the bank for related violations.

Additionally, the Securities and Exchange Commission assessed a separate \$15 million penalty against the TD Bank for related securities violations.

### HUD Removes Ban on Dual Agency in FHA Short Sales

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) removed language from a mortgage letter issued in July that would have prevented dual agency agreements in FHA pre-foreclosure transactions.

HUD reissued Mortgage Letter 2013-23 and removed all dual agency language (Part Three of the PFS Participation Requirements). The dual-agency restriction would have been implemented Oct. 1.

The letter outlined a number of new anti-fraud

requirements for short sales and deeds-in-lieu of foreclosure, including policies to ensure "arm's length" transactions. HUD had proposed the policy change in response to fraud and abuse detected by the HUD Inspector General in the pre-foreclosure sales process.

In a letter sent to HUD, the National Association of Realtors highlighted the concerns about the policy and the disruptive effect its implementation would have on communities across the nation.

### LenderSecure Offers Security Options, Tools

Protecting escrow funds and consumer personal information are among the most critical regulatory and compliance challenges. LenderSecure offers a package of solutions and tools that enable title and settlement agents to demonstrate how they safeguard and protect escrow funds, client data and documents containing non-public personal information.

As regulators and lenders struggle to identify precisely what to require of the

industry, safeguarding of both lender mortgage disbursement funds and consumer personal information is important.

LenderSecure offers bundled security-related services and offers a security toolbox, which includes RynohLive, Real Estate Data Shield and other security solutions including escrow fund transparency and security, data security and compliance, cyber-security, data destruction, background checks, E&O insurance, cyber insurance and more.

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## North American Title Group Names New President to Replace Retiring Reed

North American Title Group (NATG) named Tom Fischer as president and chief executive officer to replace Linda Reed, who is retiring at the end of 2013.

Reed, who spent 37 years with Lennar Corp. and North American Title, will serve in an advisory role through the end of the year.

“Under Linda’s leadership, North American Title Group has grown to become one of the largest and most respected title companies in the nation, with over 125 offices and more than 1,000 associates,” said Bruce Gross, vice president and chief financial officer of Lennar Corp. “We are all very proud of her career and what she has

accomplished at North American Title.”

Reed began her career in 1976 with Lennar Corp., the parent of North American Title. Moving to Lennar Financial Services as executive vice president in 1992, she became president of Lennar Title Services in 1997—helping Lennar acquire eight title companies and integrate them into what is now the North American Title family.

“I am grateful to have spent over 37 years with this great company and deeply honored to have had the opportunity to lead it for the past 15 years,” Reed said. “I am very proud of what my North American Title colleagues around the country have accomplished together during a period

of both success and challenges.”

Stepping in to replace Reed is Fisher, who brings nearly 25 years of leadership in legal, title, escrow and homebuilder operations to this position.

Fischer began his career as an attorney at an Ohio law firm. After eight years in the legal profession, he started a title agency in 1998 that was later sold to Commerce Title, a Centex Homes subsidiary. Fischer served as regional vice president, senior vice president, and ultimately as president of Commerce Title Insurance Co. He

also was executive vice president, director of national title operations for Commerce Title. Most recently, Fischer served as director of homebuilder sales and operations for the Eastern division of First American Title Insurance Co.

“The combination of Tom’s national title, retail and escrow operations experience, his leadership style and skills, and his knowledge of homebuilder sales and operations make this opportunity a perfect fit for him and for North American Title,” Gross said.

## Arizona-based Title Company Names President

Arizona-based Landmark Title Assurance Agency recently appointed Vicki Etherton as president. Landmark Title is a member of the Title Security family of companies.

Etherton began working for Stewart Title part-time while attending high school, learning the real estate business. She was promoted to branch

manager at the age of 21. After working for more than 13 years at Stewart Title, Etherton left the company to join Lawyers Title as a commercial escrow officer. In 2005, Etherton was recruited by Title Security to launch the commercial division for Magnus Title and to help the company expand its presence in Maricopa County.

## Skalka Joins Old Republic Title

Old Republic National Title Insurance Co. (ORNTIC) announced that Michael Skalka was recently named executive vice president, as well as manager of national commercial underwriting and business development. In this role, he provides commercial underwriting services to the company on a national basis, and is responsible for growing and developing ORNTIC’s national footprint.

Skalka has more than 35 years of experience in the title and real estate industries. He has held a number of significant

legal and management roles within the title industry, including general counsel, chief legal officer and president of one of the major national underwriters.

Active in a number of industry organizations, Skalka is a member of the Illinois, New York, Virginia and American bar associations. He’s a member of ALTA, and served on the association’s Board of Governors from 2010-2012. He also served as president of the New York State Land Title Association from 1992-1993.

# BEST PRACTICES

## It's Time to Implement Best Practices

ALTA created the Best Practices framework to help members highlight policies and procedures the industry exercises to protect lenders and consumers, and to assist lenders in satisfying their responsibility to manage third party vendors.

Now, it's time to show lenders the benefits of the Best Practices and how they can supplement their risk-management programs.

### What's included in the Best Practices?

**Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices:** *Guidance on policies and procedures for the seven pillars of the Best Practices.*

**Assessment Procedures:** *The standard assessment procedures can be used by third parties to evaluate settlement services providers.*

**Assessment Preparation Workbook:** *Exclusive to ALTA members, the Assessment Preparation Workbook is a tool to help companies prepare for a Best Practice Assessment.*

**Certification Package:** *The Certification Package can be used by title professionals to demonstrate to lenders that they have implemented Best Practices.*

**Best Practices Policy and Procedure Creation Guidance:** *This guide provides members step-by-step directions on how to draft formal policies and procedures for the Best Practices.*

**Template for Best Practices Policy and Procedure:** *The template can be used to help members build a policy and procedure for each of the Best Practices.*

**Sample Outline/Table of Contents for Best Practices Policy and Procedure:** *The outline provides an example of items a final policy and procedure should include.*

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## We've Built It, Now We Must Implement

**M**any of us have worked in the land title business for many years. And, I bet you, like me, have always been frustrated because people don't seem to understand what we do and how our work is integral to the health of our country.

The once-favorite phrase of past ALTA President Dick Cecchetti was that our industry had a bit of an "ostrich syndrome." Dick was frustrated because many title folks felt that our "keep your head down" approach to industry standards and lobbying was the best way to stay out of the spotlight.

Many past ALTA presidents have worked very hard to show their colleagues that this isn't an option for us, and I am proud to represent ALTA and carry on the work of these great professionals. These efforts came to a tipping point through the development of ALTA's "Title Insurance and Settlement Company Best Practices" framework. The creation of the Best Practices stemmed from a conversation that past presidents Chris Abbinante and Frank Pellegrini had when they shared their concerns about the future role of the title agent in the industry.

There is no tool offered by ALTA that better highlights the integrity and honor of our profession than the Best Practices. Being an IT guy, I appreciate the back-office piece of every title operation. For some of our member companies, the IT department is one individual. For others, the department is made up of many people. Regardless of the size of your business, the Best Practices are designed to help support the back office of our industry. I know this just about better than anyone. It's what I worry about every single day in my own operation.

While building the Best Practices was an important process, proper implementation will be crucial for the industry's future. We've worked hard for many years and built standards to meet industry needs. Now we must implement them.

Rande Yeager, another past ALTA president and a mentor of mine, may have said it best during his presidency that the "title insurance industry will flourish on its ability to adapt to customer needs in a changing marketplace." We have adjusted, and we will prosper.

In this era of increased regulation, new consumer demands and economic uncertainty, we cannot afford to muddle our message. The time spent in front of potential consumers, departments of insurance and policymakers must be focused and simple. We must take advantage of all the tools ALTA provides. Joining the Title Action Network and earning your National Title Professional designation are examples of two opportunities.

We have built an industry that we can be proud of. We have built an association with tools to help all of our members succeed. We have built all of these incredible things. I'm honored to lead ALTA over the next year as we implement all we have built.





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Visit us at the ALTA<sup>®</sup> Annual Conference booth #104/106 to find out more about Stewart's initiative to provide our agencies with the knowledge and tools needed for success in the new regulatory environment.

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