

## What's your username?

As social networking websites and blogs continue to gain popularity in the real estate marketing world, real estate professionals are striving to create unique and clever usernames that identify them publicly to others viewing the site. "Number1realtor" or "yourMichiganrealtor" or "jane\_chicago\_realtor" may sound like unique usernames, but each of these examples violates the National Association of REALTORS® trademark usage rules as well as the bylaws of the [INSERT NAME OF LOCAL ASSOCIATION].

The rules governing the use of the REALTOR® marks are the same regardless of the medium in which the marks are being used, i.e., print advertising, web advertising, URLs, e-mail addresses, usernames, and more. These rules require the REALTOR® marks to be used with the name of a member or with the legal name of a member broker's real estate business. A separate rule prohibits use of REALTOR® with descriptive words or phrases. Because domain names must be lowercase and cannot accommodate the R symbol, the requirements to use capitalization and the registration symbol "®" with the REALTOR® marks are relaxed for usernames. Here are some examples of acceptable and unacceptable usernames:

### Acceptable usernames

janesmithrealtor  
jsmithrealtor  
smithrealtor  
jane\_smith\_realtor  
realtorjanesmith  
realtorjsmith  
realtorsmith  
realtor\_smith  
chicagoassociationofrealtors  
Illinois\_association\_of\_realtors  
jane\_the\_realtor  
jane\_a\_realtor  
realtorjanechicago  
chicagojanerealtor  
realtor\_jane\_number1

### Unacceptable usernames

realtor  
chicagorealtor  
yourchicagorealtor  
your\_chicago\_realtor  
cyberrealtor  
virtualrealtor  
realtor\_mom  
realtorsolution  
localrealtor  
top\_chicago\_realtor  
number1realtor  
hotshotrealtor  
residentialrealtor  
commercial\_realtor  
janechicagorealtor

What's your username? Does it comply with the trademark usage rules? To learn more about proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks online, contact [INSERT NAME OF LOCAL ASSOCIATION]. Additional information is also available on the Law & Policy page of Realtor.org at:  
<http://www.realtor.org/letterLw.nsf/pages/TrademarkLogoRules>.