

Measure Your Tech Success

The second NAR survey of association technology use tracks programs, products, hurdles, and success stories.

From offering members Web sites to creating blogs, REALTOR® associations of all sizes advanced their use of technology in 2007. According to the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®' second technology survey of associations, conducted in March (the first was conducted in 2005 and is posted on *REALTOR.org*), associations spending more on technology and providing more online services than ever before, while battling spam and struggling to find new ways to make members embrace technology.

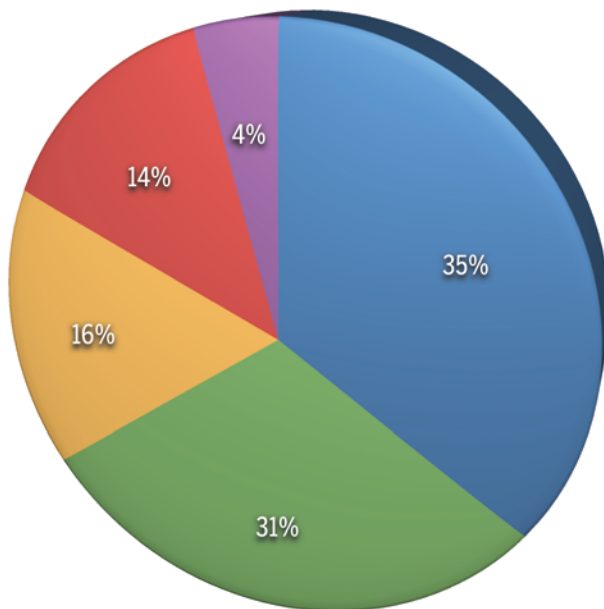
More than 200 REALTOR® associations took part in the survey and shared their technology successes and challenges in 2007 and their plans for 2008.

The charts that follow detail what technologies associations are using and what their technology priorities are, but the most revealing data from the survey came from the stories of progress and frustration that association executives shared. Here are just a few.

What was your biggest technology achievement in 2007?

- Creating a blog for members
- Ability to send mass e-mail without a large percentage being blocked
- Activated the Convio-Get Active system
- Created "Tech Wednesday," a session every Wednesday morning where members can come in and get help with any technology problem
- Bringing transaction management online
- Brought the office from a stand-alone system to a server system
- Built a new Web site to serve members and consumers
- Changed over to an electronic newsletter
- Converted from mechanical to electronic lockboxes
- Enabled electronic voting
- Installed and implemented member relations tracking system
- Established a technology committee
- Going wireless
- Having our newsletters online as opposed to printing and mailing it (popular answer)
- Hired an outside consultant to perform a comprehensive technology audit—resulting in many recommendations that will take quite some time to fully implement
- Installed a VOIP digital phone system
- Developed a technology strategic plan
- Added Wi-Fi service for members
- Set up online registration for classes and events

What's the technology task most important to your association?



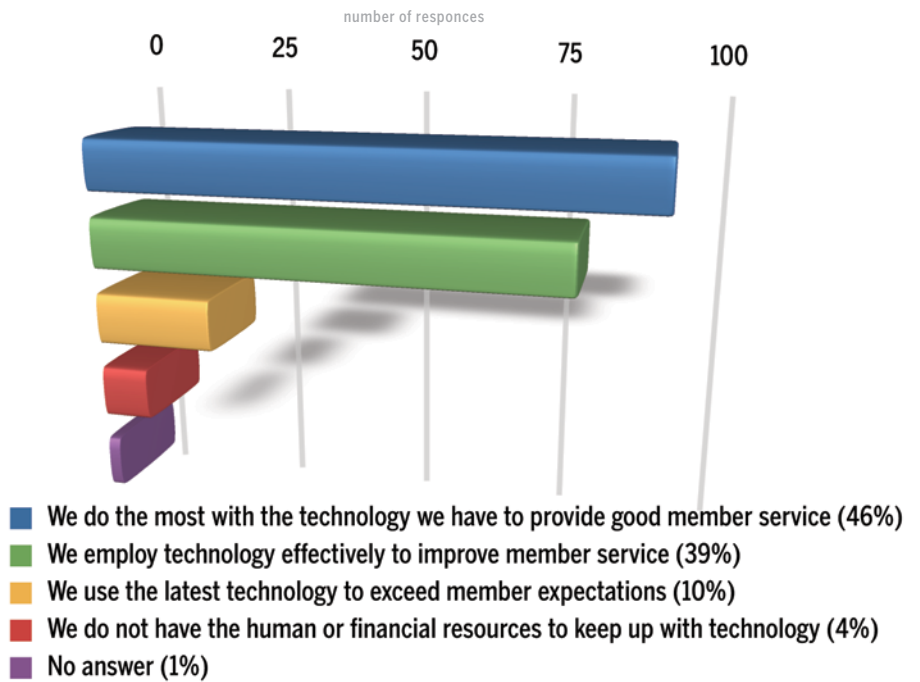
- Using technology to communicate effectively
- Securing data (including listings)
- Affording the latest technology
- Teaching members to use that latest technology
- Making money from technology

What was your biggest technology challenge in 2007?

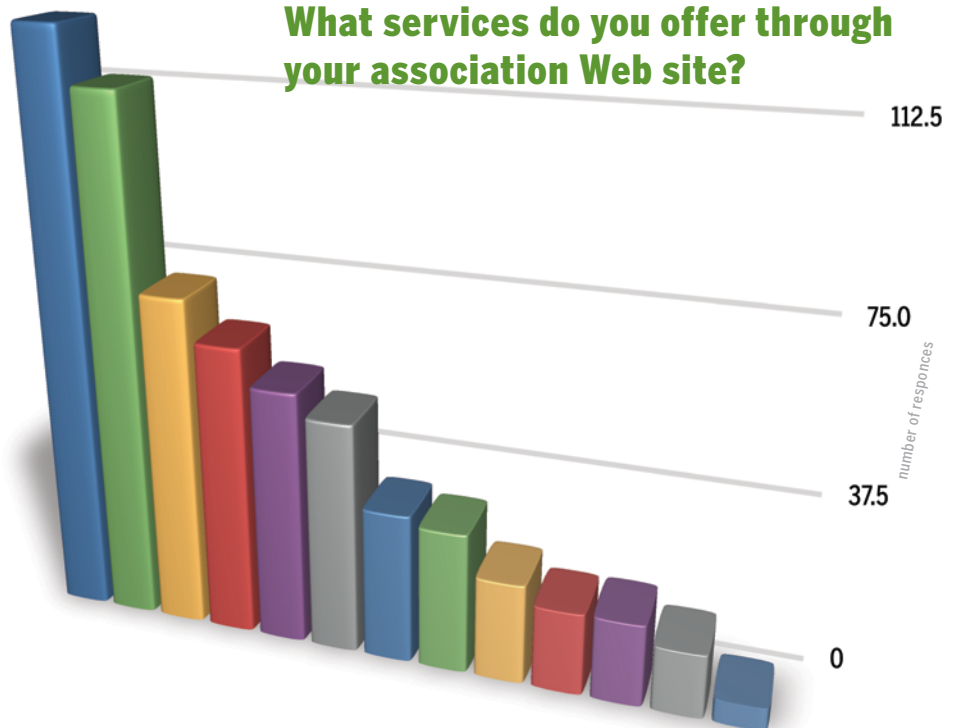
- Getting members up to speed with technology and how to make it work for them (most commonly reported challenge)
- Affordability
- Changing all office PCs to Vista
- Controlling where listings are displayed
- Communications—a constant battle
- Debugging online payment glitches
- Driving members to the Web
- Getting e-mail through to members
- Getting members to read the information pushed out to them via e-mail
- Redesign of our Web site
- Spam filters blocking association communication to members
- Trying to get seasoned members to realize the importance of technology to today's consumer
- Money and time

- Class and event registration (63%)
- Dues and fee payment (57%)
- Member surveys (36%)
- Photo gallery or slide show (32%)
- Political call-to-action portal (27%)
- Advertising space for sale (25%)
- Feedback form (16%)
- Online videos (15%)
- Blog (11%)
- Live customer service (9%)
- RSS feed (9%)
- Member chat room (7%)
- Consumer feedback form (2%)

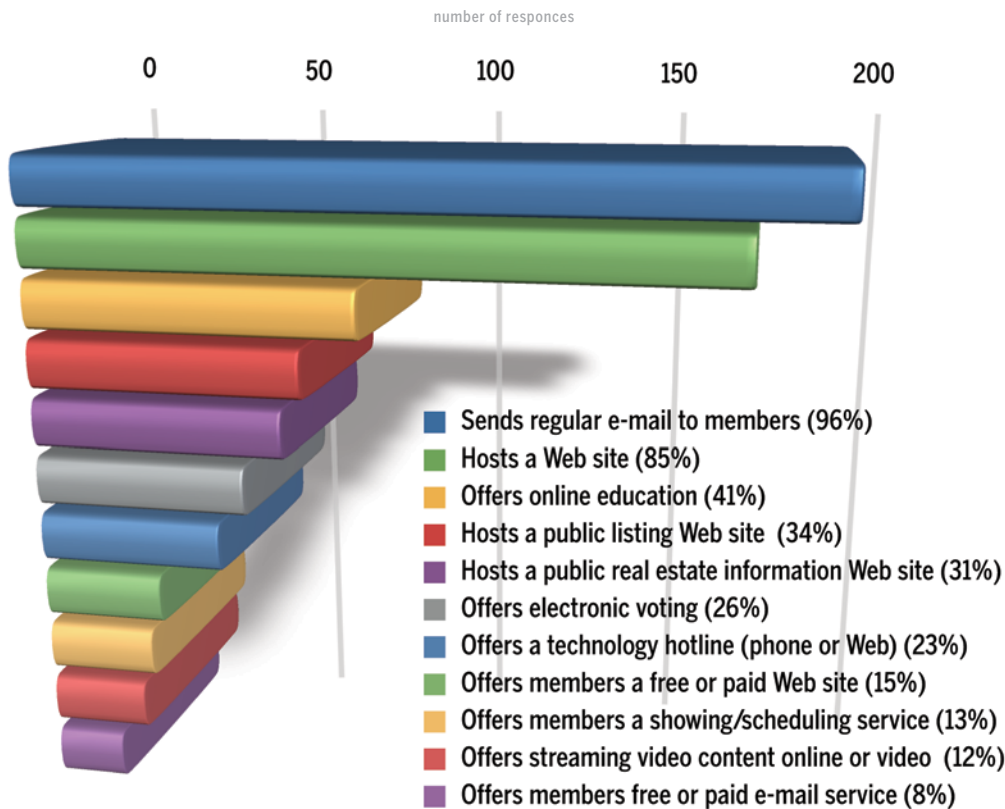
What is the current state of your technology service?



What services do you offer through your association Web site?



What technology services do you offer members?



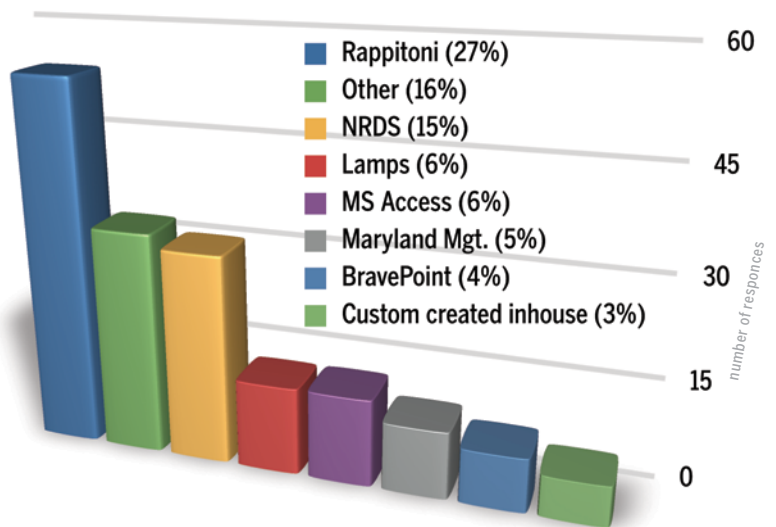
Do you have a technology strategic plan?

No: 53%
 Yes: 44%
 No answer: 2%

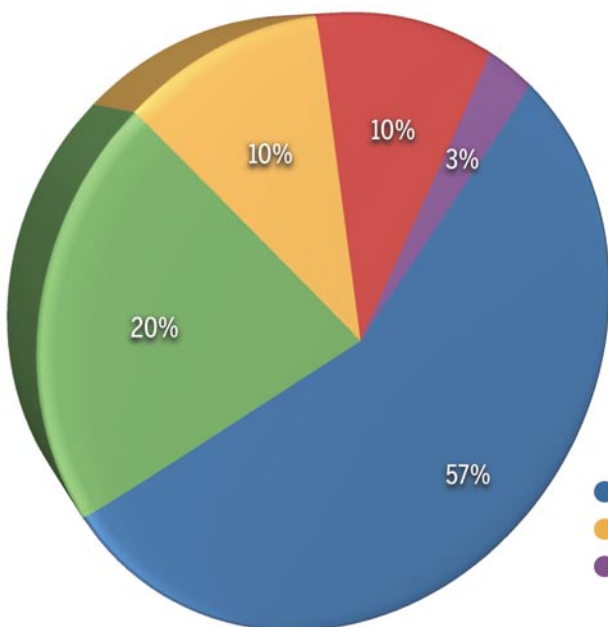
Do you have a technology committee?

No: 64%
 Yes: 35%
 No answer: 1%

What member record software do you use?



Spam is ... ?

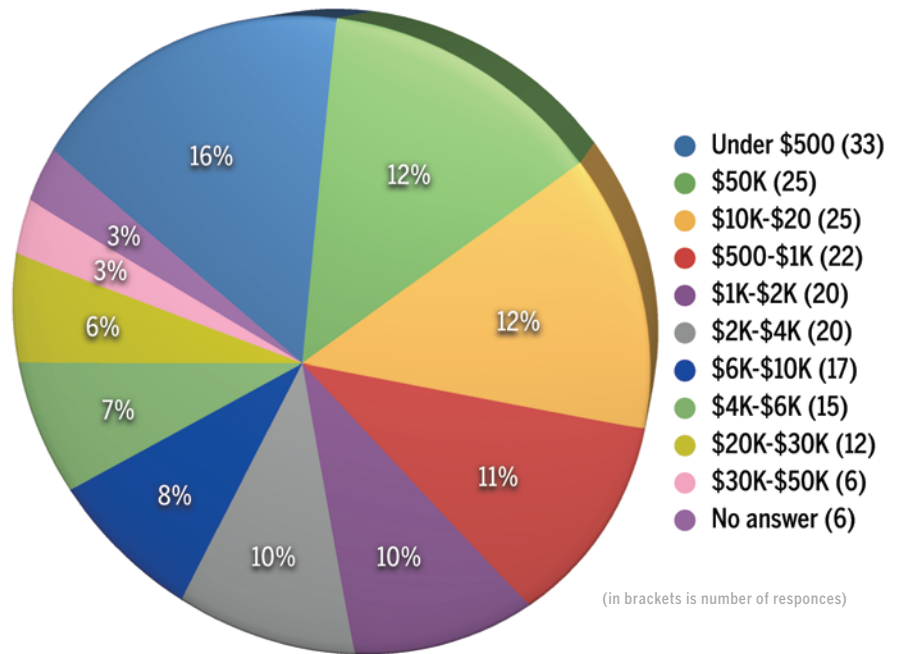


● An inconvenience ● A problem
 ● A major problem ● Not a problem
 ● No Answer

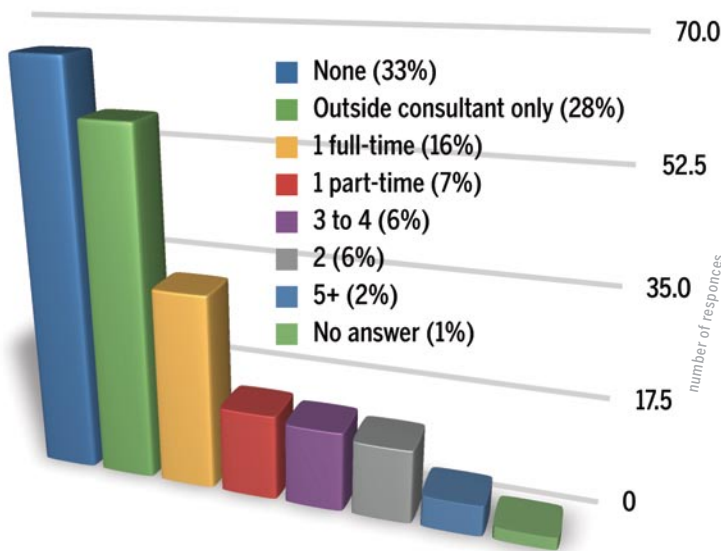
Notable shifts from the 2005 survey

- Although using technology to communicate effectively is still the number-one association priority, it is down nearly 10 percentage points from 2005. Securing data is more of a priority (up 10 percentage points), along with affording the latest technology (up 7.5 percentage points).
- More associations now offer members the ability to pay dues and fees online (up 17 percentage points).
- More associations have replaced their print newsletter or publication with an online version (up 24 percentage points).
- Slightly more associations report having no technology staff (up 5 percentage points).
- Associations have streamlined their computer hardware, with more having 1 to 3 computers (up 9 percentage points) and fewer having more than 30 (down 5 percentage points).
- Associations are getting a handle on spam, with more reporting that it's an "inconvenience" (up 9.5 percentage points) and fewer reporting that it's a "major problem" (down 6 percentage points).

How much did you spend on technology in 2007?



How many technology staffers does your association employ?



Do you send or post an electronic newsletter or publication?

