



BY EMAIL

July 5, 2023

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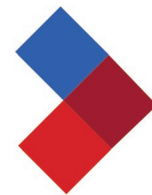
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RE: Openn Offers

Dear Mr. Mitchell, Ms. Atfield, Mr. Westergard, Mr. Tennant, Ms. Bailey, Ms. Maxwell, Ms. Bray,  
and Ms. Lindbjerg,

I am responding to your letter dated June 27, 2023 in which you express your opposition to  
CREA's plans to make Openn available to members in Alberta for use on REALTOR.ca.



As you know, CREA is engaged in a pilot project with Openn with the goal of providing greater transparency to consumers regarding the offer process via REALTOR.ca. Openn Offers is an offer management platform that will be able to display real-time tracking of offers on REALTOR.ca listings. This pilot involves REALTOR.ca only, is not a CREA software offering, and does not interfere with the ability of boards and associations to offer their own goods and services to their members.

It is also important to underline that participation by brokerages in this pilot is entirely voluntary and is open to all brokerages on an opt-in basis, and they do so by working with Openn to subscribe to the software. Brokerages in Alberta are free to decide whether they wish to take part, and their seller clients must also provide consent to participate.

As you note in your letter, Rob Reynar and a representative from the company provided an information session to AREA and representatives of local boards and associations in Alberta in the spring of 2022, shortly after the pilot project with Openn was announced. CREA's decision to proceed with this pilot was made on a cross-Canada basis. While this pilot is focused on Openn, we are aware that other offer management platforms exist, and CREA is willing to consider options to include such platforms on REALTOR.ca in the future.

The incorporation of an offer management solution on REALTOR.ca addresses a number of issues. First, it promotes member choice by providing an additional tool that brokerages can offer to their clients via REALTOR.ca. Second, it is a pro-active response to growing calls for increased transparency for Canadian consumers (e.g., the blind bidding issue) which may help to pre-empt additional regulations being imposed on our industry by politicians and regulators. Third, it is a progressive, new tool which REALTORS® can promote to clients as a positive and forward-facing initiative to help them compete against new and evolving product and service offerings, including through VOWs and new entrants, some of which may offer similar functionality.

Please understand that CREA respects the cooperative nature of our industry. However, we disagree with any allegation that CREA's actions were inappropriate or somehow went around the provincial association to work directly with the provincial regulatory body with respect to this pilot project. CREA regularly and frequently undertakes work to determine compliance with provincial regulatory frameworks with respect to any number of issues and proposals as part of its legal due diligence. It is unreasonable and impractical to suggest that AREA, and by extension all other provincial associations, must be the sole channel through which CREA may determine legal compliance issues with respect to a legislative or regulatory framework.

Lastly, I must express my surprise that a provincial association and its member boards and associations would take collective action to impede the development of a product or



service which stands to benefit both REALTORS® and consumers, which relates to REALTOR.ca only, and which does not involve their own goods and services offerings.

We do hope that we can move forward on the basis of a more cooperative relationship in the future.

Yours truly,

Michael Bourque  
CEO, The Canadian Real Estate Association  
cc: Larry Cerqua, 2023  
CREA Chair