

The Power of Community

An Interview with Julie Faupel, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, REALM

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to the launch of REALM, Julie Faupel co-founded Jackson Hole Real Estate Associates which is a market leader and the 2011 and 2014 recipient of the coveted Christie's International Real Estate Global Affiliate of the Year award. Earlier, she had 12 years of management and consulting experience for luxury hotels and small businesses. Faupel has served on the Jackson Hole Community Foundation Board for the past eight years. She is the former Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce Board Chair, has served on the Christie's International Real Estate Global Advisory Board and is a member of the Young Presidents Organization, Global One Chapter. Faupel and her husband are avid supporters of entrepreneurship as trustees of the Silicon Couloir and independent investors in a number of start-up ventures. They are dedicated community contributors through numerous organizations including Co-Challengers of Old Bill's Fun Run, Rungius Members of the National Museum of Wildlife Art, and Sponsors for the Jackson Hole Center for the Arts.



Julie Faupel

their clients. Using the platform's database, agents develop profiles for buyers, sellers, and properties. REALM then connects agents with other agents in REALM whose properties pair with the passions of their clients based on an extensive range of metrics. Brokers can use the information sourced by REALM to provide those clients with the highest levels of tailored, white-glove service. REALM fosters valuable relationships between real estate professionals and strengthens existing relationships between agents and their clients through collaborative, lifestyle-inspired experiences and the power of data.

What was the vision for creating REALM and how do you define the company mission?

When I transitioned from luxury hospitality to real estate, I was taken by the fact that in hotels we had the ability to replicate a guest experience regardless of market, but in real estate there were so many barriers to providing that same level of service. As I learned more about the industry, I started to recognize that the "silos" in real estate were creating a disconnect between the agent and the overall client experience.

Prior to REALM, whether by brand or geography, there was no way for me to reach out to other real estate professionals and "activate" their sphere of influence directly. With REALM, agents can capitalize on the insight of extensive public data as well as the insight shared by other top professionals to optimize the overall client experience in a completely encrypted environment.

As REALM has taken shape over the last year, it's been about so much more than the relationships enhanced by technology – it's become a movement of sorts. A community of professionals that share the same ethos and respect for the profession. REALM strengthens the individual through the power of community. It's exciting to watch this group define that statement every single day.

How do you describe REALM's culture and how critical is culture to the success of the company?

REALM's culture is essential to its current and future success. There are several things that define who we are and contribute to our success: First, we ask agents to upload their client database to the platform. We sign an NDA and an agreement that clearly outlines that this valuable data will always be the property of the member. As these clients are truly the lifeblood of an elite agent, they must trust us implicitly. We take that responsibility seriously.

Second, REALM is an annual subscription. There are no additional fees or costs to the member-agent on top of that. We want every member to feel that REALM is a value. We only work with elite agents, and we strive daily to be an integral part of their future business, while honoring the success that they have had to date.

Third, REALM is humble. As a membership, we represent the most accomplished group of real estate professionals ever assembled. That said, the candor and humility shown by the REALM community on our weekly calls, member-to-member communications or in-person meetings is remarkable and truly foundational to the success of the platform going forward. Again,

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individually, the membership has achieved great things but, collectively, we are all better for the REALM community.

Will you provide an overview of REALM’s service offerings and how do you define the REALM difference?

Our service offerings define the REALM difference. REALM is not the first community of elite professionals, but we are the first who combine the top agents, data and patented technology solutions together in order to provide the highest level of service to our clients.

One of the largest differentiators about REALM is that we are entirely brand-agnostic. We exist to break down barriers and serve individual real estate professionals and developers that engage in the platform.

We are also the first-ever solution that has been developed by top producing real estate professionals for our peers. Because we are intentionally member-driven, we stay close to the industry and the shifting needs of our constituents. We are extremely proud that since inception, every solution implemented within the REALM platform has been an idea sourced from a REALM member.

Another key difference with REALM is that we foster connections amongst our members, but we do not get involved in the transaction. We are relationship enablers and community-builders. We leave the mechanics of the transaction to the individuals that are stewarding the transactions.

How has REALM adapted its business to address the challenges caused by the pandemic?

REALM launched in the heart of the pandemic. We quickly recognized the opportunity to truly “lean-in” and be a resource

and leader through very uncertain times. Our concept quickly became a virtual community, and we used the shifting consumer psychology to study how adversity was affecting the definition of luxury in the minds of our members, our advisors, and the clients that we all serve. We provided programming and thought leadership regarding how to set our clients at ease through the challenges of lockdown. We also implemented strategic partnerships, technical innovations and mastermind groups to help support our members’ professional goals.

How proud are you to see the strength and resilience of REALM’s members during this unprecedented time?

An elite real estate professional must be resilient. If you’ve achieved the echelon of success that our REALM members have, you have likely survived a recession or two, a business setback, difficult clients and transactions, cut-throat competition and a constantly changing industry. The pandemic created challenges that none of us could have expected, but the grace, camaraderie and innate service mentality that our membership displayed is inspiring. I’ve never been prouder to call a group of people my colleagues.

Where do you see the greatest opportunities for growth for REALM?

The REALM technology is patented, and that patent encompasses all luxury sectors. We have been strategic with our growth and we will continue to be the most discerning membership in whatever new verticals we expand. We see tremendous opportunity in building out an elite ecosystem of trusted advisors that share the REALM ethos and commitment.

Will you highlight REALM’s global network?

REALM is in 35 states, 10 countries and includes 12 of the most exclusive developments in the world. Our reach spans top producers from over 100 different real estate brands and our strategic partners include family office advisors, wealth managers, private aviation and publishing.

What advice do you offer to young people interested in a career in real estate?

Working in real estate is not only exciting, but it can also be incredibly rewarding. That said, it’s hard work, competitive and, sometimes, overwhelming. There is so much that can be learned from those who have navigated this challenging path successfully. We are all looking for talented, smart, proactive people who are excited about the field and serious about a career. Finding a great mentor will foster learning and growth for a junior agent, while enabling an individual to create their own reputation under the guidance of someone established and credible. Real estate is more than a career – it is a lifestyle. It can be so rewarding, but not without sacrifice. In short, you must be ready for it all.

What are your priorities for REALM as you look to the future?

Quality and culture are fundamental to everything that we do. My priority is to ensure that we protect the incredible culture and enthusiasm that we are building among our members and our internal support team, while also continuing to innovate. The quality and the integrity of the membership and the overall platform will never be compromised. We are building something that can bring about positive change in the industry, and we understand the responsibility which this entails. As I said before: We’re ready for it all. ●

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