



New Report Studies Virtual Assistant Industry

by Blanche Evans

A comprehensive report of the demographics, profiles and pricing of the virtual assistant industry has been completed by the Brenner Information Group on behalf of the [Alliance for Virtual Businesses](#) (A4VB), and shows data of interest to real estate professionals and those who may wish to serve as virtual assistants (VAs) in the real estate vertical.

According to [Sharon Williams](#), chairperson for the A4VB, the report is the "first-ever, detailed, industry-wide study" to "offer a comprehensive look at the size, strategy, tactics and pricing decisions of practicing VAs."

Most virtual assistants have been around since the 1970s, but they proliferated on the technology scene by the mid-90s, when improved Internet services allowed more entrepreneurs to work from home or from remote locations in the service of clients. The A4VBs definition of a virtual assistant is "an independent entrepreneur providing professional administrative, creative, managerial, technical, business office and/or personal support services. They use the most advanced means of communication, and the newest and most efficient and time-saving office products and work delivery, regardless of geographic boundaries. Virtual Assistants work from their own offices, on a contractual basis, and abide by an established Code of Ethics requiring integrity, honesty and due diligence."

Virtual assistants can provide the same services to real estate professionals as any industry - customer management, marketing assistance, office management, mailing assistance, photo and art services, PowerPoint presentations, graphic design, notary services, project management, secretarial services, Web services, copyediting, reminders, sales support and numerous other services.

A survey of 350 virtual assistants participating in various parts of the survey supplied the following information:

- Most virtual assistants are women (98.2 percent of participants)
- 81 percent are located in the U.S., predominantly in California, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, and most international VAs are in Canada and Australia.
- The largest number of VA participants began their businesses in 2003.
- Most operate as sole proprietorships as home-based businesses.
- 86.7 percent have an active Website.

- Annual gross revenue was \$26,519 in 2003, ranging from \$760 to \$280,000. With the top and bottom 10 percent removed, top income dropped to \$52,000 and the average income was \$19,800.
- Partitioning part-time and full-time VAs yielded widely differing results in income, with part-time VAs averaging \$13,813 and full-time VAs averaging \$38,759.
- VAs expect to gross 28.5 percent more in 2004 than they did in 2003, with part-time VAs expecting to earn and average \$17,678, and full-time VAs expecting to earn \$41,834.
- VAs participants support between one and 116 clients each month, with an average of 6.6 clients per VA. Removing the outliers - top and bottom ten percent - drops that number to 4.7 clients per month.
- VAs work an average of 5.4 days a week, with an median of 40 hours per week worked. However, it was found that part time VAs work about 20 hours per week, while full-time VAs average about 47 hours per week.

The full 270-page report is available at [Brenner Books](#).

The report is the "result of a year-long analysis of the virtual assistance industry," says Robert Brenner with Brenner Information Group. "It provides anyone in the real estate industry a good insight into the demographics and operation of VAs who support real estate professionals."

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Blanche Evans is the award-winning editor of Realty Times, the Internet's largest independent real estate news service, where she oversees the nation's leading real estate writers and columnists.

Known for her keen insight on real estate industry issues and for her ability to make complex subjects easy to understand, Blanche is the author of two best-selling real estate books: The Hottest e-Careers In Real Estate, an Internet marketing primer for real estate professionals, and Homesurfing.net: The Insider's Guide To Buying And Selling Your Home Using The Internet, a comprehensive homebuying and selling guide.

In 2006, Blanche will have three new consumer books published, including:

- ***Housing Bubbles, Booms and Busts***, McGraw-Hill
- ***National Association of REALTORS® Guide to Selling A Home***, Wiley & Sons

- **National Association of REALTORS® Guide To Buying a Home**, Wiley & Sons

In addition to authoring books and her duties at Realty Times, Blanche is sought out for her expert opinions by the nation's premier print and broadcast news organizations, including: CNN, The Wall Street Journal and The Associated Press. She's also in demand by real estate organizations -- from MLSs to real estate brokerage companies to large franchises -- who hire Blanche to address their groups and provide up-to-the-minute analysis of real estate industry happenings.

To hear Blanche speak, click [here](#).

Blanche has been named one of the "25 Most Influential People In Real Estate" by REALTOR Magazine, recognized as one of nine "Notables," and was named "Top Reporter Covering the NAR," (Delahaye-Bacon's, 2005)

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