



Get Ahead and Stay There – with the Institute of Real Estate Management

By *Ronald Goss*



Ronald L. Goss, CPM®, is 2011 President of the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM®), and President of RPM Management Co., Inc., AMO®, Little Rock, Arkansas. He also is a Senior Vice President, a director and secretary of RPM Management's parent company, Rector Phillips Morse, Inc. Goss's areas of responsibility with RPM Management and its parent include leasing and management of commercial/retail, multifamily, condominium and office building properties. Goss is a long-time member of IREM's Arkansas Chapter No. 64 and has, over the years, held numerous leadership positions with the chapter, including that of President. In 1986, he was honored by the chapter as its "CPM® of the Year."

Real estate management can provide a steady and attractive income stream no matter how the housing or overall real estate market is performing. And real estate management is growing steadily as a profession driven by three concurrent trends: (1) simultaneous growth of the population and its demands for space have increased the total number of all types of buildings, (2) a larger percentage of real estate is considered investment property and (3) awareness is becoming widespread that real estate management requires special training and education. So if you're interested in adding real estate management expertise to your menu of service offerings or want to expand your activities in this market niche, the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM®) can provide you with all of the resources you need to succeed.

Overview

IREM is an international community of real estate managers and management firms who are dedicated to ethical business practices and maximizing the value of investment real estate. An affiliate of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, IREM has been a trusted source for knowledge, advocacy and networking for the real estate management community for more than 77 years.

IREM is the only professional real estate management association serving both the multi-family and commercial real estate sectors. It has a network of 80 U.S. chapters, 13 international chapters, and several other partnerships around the globe. Worldwide membership includes nearly 18,000 individual members and over 535 corporate members.

Since its founding back in 1933, after lenders foreclosed on thousands of mortgages and discovered that real estate management required specialized skills they didn't have, IREM has become a major force – arguably the major force – in enhancing the professionalism of real estate management by elevating its stature, expanding its body of knowledge, and promoting and enforcing ethical industry business practices. A consistent focus of the organization: To be the number one resource for professional property managers who want to get ahead and stay there.

Credentialed Forms of Membership

IREM maintains four highly respected, credentialed forms of membership – three of which are conferred on individuals who meet specific requirements in the areas of education, experience and

examination plus a fourth that is conferred on real estate companies who meet rigorous IREM-specific requirements:

- The Certified Property Manager® (CPM®) designation – is for real estate and asset managers working with large portfolios of all property types – residential, commercial, retail and industrial.
- ® (ARM®) certification – is for managers of residential portfolios including conventional apartments, federally assisted housing, public housing, condominiums, university housing, homeowners associations and manufactured home communities.
- certification – IREM's newest credential, is for commercial site managers of office buildings, retail properties, industrial and other commercial properties.
- ® (AMO®) accreditation – recognizes excellence among real estate management firms.

Non-Credentialed Forms of Membership

The four forms of non-credentialed membership are CPM® Candidate membership – open to those pursuing the CPM® designation; Associate membership, open to real estate professionals who are involved in virtually any area of real estate management; Student membership, for full-time undergraduate and graduate students attending an accredited college or university; and Academic membership, for individuals teaching full or part time at a college or university.

Ethical Pledge a Must for All

A cornerstone of IREM since its founding has been a commitment to nurture ethical business practices. So all individuals and firms across the IREM® membership spectrum – credentialed and non-credentialed, alike – must pledge to adhere to the rigorously enforced IREM® Code of Professional Ethics.

Earning an IREM® Credential: Why Bother?

Earning an IREM® credential clearly takes time, effort and financial resources. But for those who have embarked on the journey and crossed the finish line, it clearly has been well worth it. As Natalie Brecher, CPM®, principal with Brecher and Associates Consulting Inc., Redondo Beach, CA, explains, "Earning an IREM® credential documents my investment in education to assure leading-edge competency and confirms my training to manage property as an investment and to optimize ROI. It also shows my formal commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct, which distinguishes IREM and its designees from others in the industry."

IREM® Member, Mez Birdie, CPM®, affiliated with NAI Global, Maitland, FL, identifies other attributes that come with an IREM® credential: "It can justify better compensation and can accelerate career advancement. Consider, too, that IREM® Members are employed by some of the most prestigious real estate firms in the world. Perhaps most important," he adds, "our education, experience and ongoing affiliation with IREM provides us with the expertise and resources to enhance the quality of life of the people who live, work and shop in the properties we manage."

IREM: Leading the Way in Industry-Specific Education

IREM is viewed as the "gold standard" in real estate management education, with courses that cover the core competencies for maximum performance of investment real estate. IREM® courses are taken by those seeking IREM® credentials as well as others who simply want the knowledge and experience they'll gain.

IREM provides flexible learning choices through different delivery formats – ranging from traditional classroom to the latest electronic distance learning methods. IREM® education is designed for access through lap tops, e-readers, iPads and mobile phones. So students learn at home, at work or while commuting or traveling. They can study at their own pace within generous time frames. They can study via instructor-led classrooms or instructor-led on-line courses as well as in self-paced home study or self-paced multimedia select course settings.

IREM® courses are based on a job analysis that reflects today's best management practices, new technologies and fresh ideas. They help managers work better, faster and more professionally by (1) identifying the competencies required to successfully perform as managers of real estate assets, and (2) providing the theoretical and practical skills for achieving these competencies. IREM offers

introductory through advanced courses that serve all experience levels and all property types. And IREM® instructors are expert practitioners and top-notch teachers who know the issues, trends and techniques that shape today's real estate industry. For additional information on IREM® education and the full course schedule, visit www.irem.org/education.

Benefits and Services Respond to Members' Needs

In addition to state-of-the-art education courses, IREM provides a wide and ever-growing array of benefits and services that anticipate and respond to Member needs. Among them:

- Ongoing professional development opportunities through unique learning experiences at national conferences and through chapter programming
- 24/7 access to a vast body of knowledge products and working tools to help Members perform at their best – through IREMFIRST, IREM's premier online information resource often referred to as the "Google" of real estate management
- News and information needed to solve management problems and improve business operations via IREM's award-winning, bi-monthly member magazine, the *Journal of Property Management*.
- Free webinars on topics that impact Members' day-to-day professional performance
- Insights on key industry issues and trends as well as the latest management practices in various property sectors – covered in an extensive array of IREM® publications
- In-depth research reports that help Members benchmark their operating costs against others in their market area
- A nationwide advertising and public relations campaign to differentiate IREM-credentialed members in the marketplace – most particularly with owners, investors and other clients
- Tools to help Members promote their expertise directly to clients and prospects
- Leadership development opportunities at the chapter and national levels
- An online membership directory to facilitate access to Member colleagues throughout the country and in various international locations, and to enable those who retain the services of real estate management professionals to search out IREM® Members in their geographic area by types of properties managed and other key criteria
- A web-based job bank enabling Members to post open positions or search listings throughout the country in the real estate management field
- And much more.
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Legislative Advocacy Advances Policy Positions on Key Issues

Through its affiliation with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, IREM is part of a legislative advocacy team that consistently monitors and advances issues of public policy to promote and protect the right to own, use and transfer real property. IREM® Members have access to the most up-to-date legislative and regulatory information available, are kept abreast of how relevant public policy issues and problems impact their business, and are encouraged to participate directly in the legislative advocacy process.

Chapters Provide Added Resources and A Local Voice

The Institute's 80 chapters across the United States offer a wide variety of locally sponsored educational events and other support services. Chapters serve as both a voice in the local market and as a direct influence on the policies and programs developed by the association's national office.

Networking Opportunities Abound

Smart networking is more than swapping business cards. It is developing relationships –and often life-long professional and personal friendships – through face-to-face meetings and idea sharing. As Philip Cresswell, ARM®, a property manager with Essex Property Trust in Auburn, WA, said: "When you belong to the Institute of Real Estate Management, you belong to a community of professionals committed to the open exchange of experience and information – even among competitors. I have never been to a national IREM® meeting or a meeting of my local chapter where I didn't learn something, pick up a new idea or jot down the title of an article that was recommended to me."

An Invitation to Join Our Membership Community

Real estate management professionals work in a dynamic business where change is constant and staying on top of the newest trends and latest technology is challenging. So if you are looking for a

property management organization that can strengthen your ability to deal with challenges and change and to enjoy ongoing professional success, consider the Institute of Real Estate Management. Visit IREM's website at www.irem.org to learn more about the organization, its member benefits, credentialed and non-credentialed member requirements, and more.

ARM® Certification: a Great Point of Entry into Residential Real Estate Management

If you are already working in residential real estate, you enjoy a special advantage: you already know your way around the industry. And you certainly know a lot of people in the field. So real estate management savvy is much easier for you to pick up quickly, even while maintaining your current position in the industry. Think, then, about adding residential real estate management to your personal menu of professional service offerings by earning IREM's highly regarded ACCREDITED RESIDENTIAL MANAGER® (ARM®) certification.

Most people who pursue ARM® certification take IREM's course called "Successful Site Management" (RES201) to meet the credential's educational requirement. You can take RES201 in a classroom setting, as an instructor-led online course spread out over four weeks, or as a self-paced course to be completed over six-months. Course content covers residential site management from A to Z, including how to address the unique needs of affordable housing, student housing, and single family homes. More specifically, you'll learn about human resources and relationship management; legal issues and risk management strategies; professional ethics; property financial management; and marketing and leasing.

Earning ARM® certification will surely open up a wide range of new opportunities for you to consider. Those who hold the certification continue to believe that the investment they made in earning it pays off because:

- Employers place great value on those who choose to develop their skills.
- The experience and knowledge you demonstrate to earn ARM® certification assures employers and others that you possess the specialized skills they seek in residential managers.
- Earning ARM® certification will help you fast-track your real estate management career.
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Achieving ARM® certification provides you with continuing access to leading-edge educational opportunities to improve your professional knowledge. Through IREM® affiliation as an ARM® Member, you also connect to all of the resources IREM offers for professional development, increased industry savvy and career advancement. Networking as an ARM® Member at both the national and local levels also puts you in touch with others who can help you by sharing experiences and solutions to business problems – and gaining future employment.

Want more details on what it takes to earn ARM® certification and the benefits that come along with it? Click on the "Join IREM" section of the IREM website (www.irem.org), then scroll down to and click on ARM® Membership on the drop-down menu.



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