

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

TO LOCAL, INTERNATIONAL & LIFESTYLE REAL ESTATE



CIPS

Certified International Property Specialist

> AFTER THE PIN

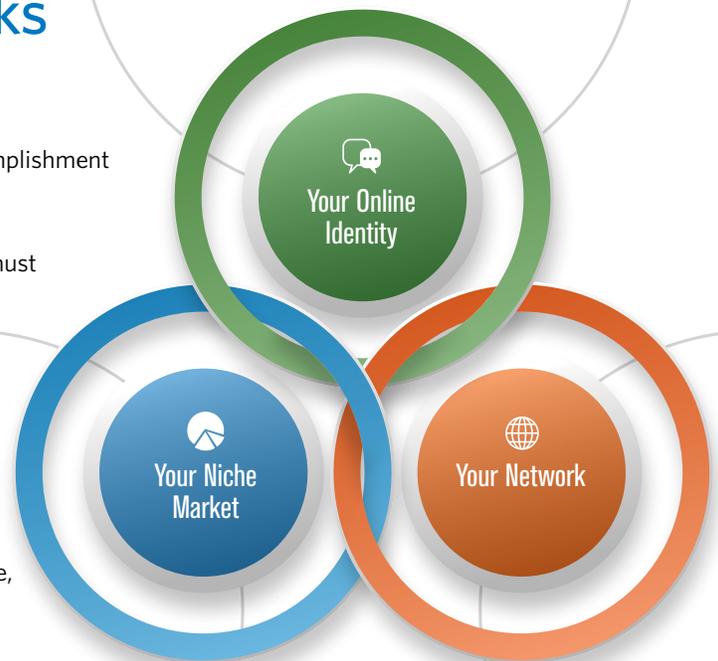
Three Essential Building Blocks for Global Business

Congratulations, you've earned your CIPS designation! It's a major accomplishment that places you in a unique position to build a global real estate practice.

While the CIPS coursework provides a solid education, your next steps must occur outside the classroom. This is the point at which many new designees scratch their head, wondering "now what?" To answer that question, this issue of *Global Perspectives* examines three key aspects of laying a foundation for future success: your online identity, your niche market, and your network.

While discussed separately, these three dimensions often overlap. Additionally, they don't apply exclusively to new designees. Consider these foundational elements as an ongoing work in progress. For example, you may discover a new niche you'd like to cultivate, which will prompt modifications to some aspects of your online identity and your networking contacts.

In addition to a wide range of tips and resources, this issue also includes several Action Items specifically intended to answer the question, "now what?" Following these steps will go a long way towards charting a path to a thriving global real estate practice. 🌍



Note: Special thanks are extended to Amanda Wernick, CIPS, who conducts agent training for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices and shared several insights covered in her global network coaching program.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of REALTORS®
Official Designation



Can people find you?

In the global real estate arena, it's impossible to ignore your online footprint. The Internet gets credit for making the world a smaller place, facilitating instant communications and online research.

As a result, the very first step in laying the foundation for global business success is a robust online presence. Here's how to make sure people will find you—and will form a favorable impression.



Step 1. Your CIPS Profile

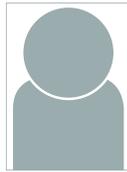
For global agents, a strong profile in the CIPS directory is a must-have. This is the starting point for building your global network, as well as encouraging other CIPS designees to connect with you. Your profile should be complete, including a photo and bio, and showcasing all aspects of your expertise—the regions and countries you serve, any languages spoken, and other specialized knowledge.

Between Marjorie Moore (a fictional agent) and Brigitte Richter, which of these two CIPS Search results is more likely to grab your attention?

**fictional agent profile*

CIPS Search

Certified International Property Specialist (CIPS) designees are REALTORS® who have undergone specialized training focused on conducting business in the international real estate arena.



Marjorie Moore, CIPS*
Bricksford, CT
East Coast Properties

Specializes helping buyers in: USA
Speaks: English

[VIEW FULL PROFILE](#)



Brigitte Richter, CIPS
Avon, CT
BHHS New England Properties

Specializes helping buyers in: USA
Speaks: English, French, German

[VIEW FULL PROFILE](#)

Designee Profile



Brigitte Richter, CIPS

[View REALTOR.com profile](#)

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England

172 West Main St
Avon, CT 06001

Phone: (860) 677-7321 | [Send Brigitte an email](#)

Designee Profile

Brigitte is a realtor at Berkshire Hathaway in Avon, Connecticut and she specializes in residential relocation, buyers and sellers who plan to move in or out of the Farmington Valley. She moved to Simsbury, CT from Munich, Germany in 2012 together with her family. Brigitte holds a Masters degree in Urban Planning from the University of Technology in Berlin, Germany and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Brigitte has 15 years of marketing, business planning and management experience in the real estate and the IT industry working for large corporations like Siemens and Microsoft. She likes to travel and loves art. She is a member of the West Hartford Art League and supporter of the Farmington Valley Arts Center. VISIT MY WEB SITE: www.brigitterichter.bhhsneproperties.com VISIT ME ON FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/agentbrigitte.

How to Create a Strong Profile

Photo - It's best to use the same photo across all your online profiles, for the sake of consistency and "branding." That said, two different photos are okay if your appearance remains very similar, and if both photos reflect the same image. (For example, don't mix a crisp, professional look with a casual one, since this sends two very different messages.)

Your Name - It's also important that your name appears the same way on all your profiles. But what if you have a fairly common name, potentially causing confusion? Amanda Wernick, CIPS, suggests several options for dealing with "vanilla" names, such as: 1) always include a middle initial or

name; 2) always add REALTOR® or CIPS to your name; or 3) create a unique social media handle for all your profiles.

Your Credentials - Make sure each profile includes your CIPS designation and any other qualifications that will help attract clients and referrals.

Keywords - Be mindful of the search terms people use, and how you can include them in your profile. For example, if your desired clientele is high-net-worth buyers seeking a second home along the coast, potential terms include: luxury, resort, vacation, waterfront, etc. as well as the names of local communities.

Testimonials - In today's digital world, people rely heavily on others' opinions and ratings. Make sure positive feedback from your clients and other referral/professional relationships appear across all your profiles.

Proofreading - After updating, reread your profile to make sure errors haven't slipped in. It's fairly common for web pages to misinterpret the formatting code contained in word processing documents. For example, a simple apostrophe may be converted to something like ᙠ. To fix these problems, edit directly on the profile page.



Step 2. Your realtor.com® Profile

If you're a CIPS designee based in the U.S., your CIPS profile includes a link to your profile on realtor.com®. Since these two profiles are so closely connected, it's essential that both are fine-tuned for global business opportunities.

realtor.com BUY SELL RENT MORTGAGE Find REALTORS® MY HOME NEWS & INSIGHTS LOG IN SIGN UP

Back to Search | Viewing: Home > Find A Realtor > Avon, CT > Nuala-Brigitte Team

Nuala-Brigitte Team, Agent Avon, CT Team

5 1 Review

Ask a Question Write A Review Recommend Me Contact Info Share

About Team Listing Activity Ratings & Reviews Local Expertise

About Nuala-Brigitte Team with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties

Agents: [Edit this profile](#)

Born and raised in Germany, Brigitte lives in the U.S. since 2012. She holds a degree in Urban planning and Economics from the University of Technology in Berlin and spent a year at the department of Urban Planning at the University of Illinois. She joined Microsoft in 2001 and owned several positions in market research, marketing and sales. After working for more than 11 years for an American company she felt it was the right time to make the move. Brigitte joined Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England in 2014. "Real estate has always been my passion and with my relocation background I feel I can be a great resource for other families moving into the Greater Hartford Area", Brigitte says. "It is a wonderful place to be and to raise kids. We are part of a great community that looks out for each other." Buying or selling a home is not just a transaction. First of all it is a decision that changes your life and it can be a very emotional experience on both sides of the table. ... [Show More](#)

Years of Experience: 4

Specializations: first time home buyers, relocation, residential home selling, condo, rental listings, tenant representation, new construction

Areas Served: Avon, Barkhamsted, Bristol, Burlington, Canton, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Harwinton, Litchfield [Show More](#)

Brokerage
BHHS New England Properties

Designations & Certifications

Price Range (last 24 months)
None Reported

Recommendations
Did you have a great experience working with this agent? [Make Recommendation](#)

Step 3. Other Profiles

Make sure all your other profiles are current, complete, and supporting your business strategy, including your "About" page on your brokerage website and, if applicable, your personal site.

In terms of social media sites, Facebook and LinkedIn are usually top priorities for global agents, but don't overlook other important platforms, like Twitter and Yelp.

Additionally, you may want to use the new CIPS cover photos for your social media profiles on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. **To download, look under CIPS Designee Resources at printingstorefront.com/narglobal.**

If this is your first time logging in you will need to login using your NRDS ID for both the user name and password. You will be prompted to change your password.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Google Yourself** – This is the first thing other people will do—both potential clients and your professional network—to check you out. See what they'll see. Do you appear on page one of the search results? Does each profile/link generate the best possible impression? Make note of any problems and take steps to fix them.
- 2. Take Inventory** – A master list of all your profiles (including links to each) simplifies the process of keeping all your information up to date. As you continue to shape your global business strategy, it will also be easier to go back and refine your message, add keywords, new credentials, testimonials, etc. across all your online assets.
- 3. Test All "Contact" Links** – A profile can do more harm than good if people can't use it to connect with you. People reach dead ends for one of two reasons: 1) the link doesn't work, or 2) the agent isn't checking and responding to messages. Pretend you're a potential client and send yourself test messages.



What is the primary focus of your global business?

Your online profiles will be much more robust if they tell readers a story, clearly articulating who you are, what kind of business you focus upon, and what specific skills you bring to the table. (Incidentally, being able to articulate this story is also essential for developing an effective marketing plan.)

But how do you select a niche? Determining the focus of your global business involves examining your opportunities from two different perspectives:

1. **Your Market** - What opportunities exist in your immediate area, either for inbound or outbound global business?
2. **Your Self** - What aspect of global business is most appealing to you? What personal skills do you bring to the table?

Understanding yourself requires private introspection, but understanding your market involves research and exploring potential opportunities across a broad spectrum of possibilities.

Doing Your Research

Global business enters your market via many different paths. These paths are commonly referred to as “indicators of global business.” Researching these indicators means exploring the many different avenues to identify cross-border opportunities, including¹:

Companies

What foreign-owned companies are in your market and which countries of origin dominate the list? Google “foreign direct investment in [location]” to research details, or see if your state’s office of economic development provides this information. The answers will hint at international relocation opportunities, especially among the company’s management team.

Which companies are hiring workers from abroad? Many employers, regardless of the company’s headquarters location, hire skilled workers who need housing and lack familiarity with a foreign market. The site

myvisajobs.com includes state-by-state reports that list, by company, the number of H1-B and H2-B visa applications.

People

Who has immigrated to your market? Where are residents from and what languages do they speak? To collect this data, visit the American FactFinder (factfinder.census.gov) and enter the name (or zip code) of your market. This will take you to a page that offers numerous data tables from the 2010 Census, as well as the more recent American Community Survey (2015) and Population Estimates Program (2016).

For a state-level snapshot specifically developed for NAR members, download

your state’s International Business Report at www.nar.realtor/reports/state-by-state-international-business-reports. Updated annually, these reports include population demographics, languages spoken, immigration and naturalization trends, non-immigrant visitors, and metro level economic, real estate, and commercial data (where available).

Who visits your market? International tourism can be another important source of business in certain markets. Check your state and local tourism websites, as well as your chamber of commerce/department of economic development for additional details.

¹ The resources listed here are primarily geared to U.S. agents, however, CIPS designees based outside the U.S. may have comparable resources for conducting parallel research.



Universities

Institutions of higher learning can be a rich source of global business, including opportunities with students from other nations, as well as faculty members.

The *Open Doors Report* on International Educational Exchange is one excellent resource for data on U.S. students studying abroad, and international students studying in the U.S. Visit iie.org for data, fact sheets, infographics and more.

Another approach is to go directly to university websites. Many institutions actively recruit international students and provide extensive details on enrollment data, by country, in addition to helpful student resources.

Medical Centers

Often affiliated with major research universities, medical centers can be another important source of international business. Visit their corporate website to research hiring activity and resources in human resources department. Their visa applications should also be listed at myvisajobs.com.

EB-5 Regional Centers

Many industrialized countries use investment visas to attract outside capital, including the U.S. EB-5 immigrant investor visa. As of August, 2017, there were 847 approved regional centers in the U.S., authorized under the EB-5 program. For a complete list, visit uscis.gov/eb-5centers.

Commercial Investment

Of course, large flows of capital also cross borders in the form of commercial investments. Getting involved in this aspect of global business requires different knowledge and networking resources than the residential side of the business.

That said, residential agents can readily find opportunities to grow their global business by networking with commercial practitioners, especially those focused on cross-border transactions. Check the April 2017 issue of *Global Perspectives* for more ideas and resources.

Outbound Business

It may also be possible to build a global practice focused on helping local clients purchase property in another country, for vacation purposes or overseas retirement. One potential angle to explore is representing a particular developer in another market. (Consult the June 2015 issue of *Global Perspectives* for additional tips.) 

Potential Niches for Global Agents

Your area of specialization can be based on any number of (potentially overlapping) factors, including:

Location - a local immigrant community, buyers from another country/region, etc.

Type of property - luxury, vacation, managed community, land, etc.

Type of buyer/seller - relocating employee, student, retiree, etc.

Language/culture - fluency in another language, or interest in other cultures.



ACTION ITEMS

- ❑ **1. Download a Local Market Assessment** - In addition to the state-by-state reports already noted, NAR has developed local market assessments for 16 states (listed below). These summaries of global influences and opportunities look at many of the same topics already discussed, highlighting specific data for each state.

Alabama	Georgia	New Mexico	Utah
Arkansas	Kentucky	North Carolina	Virginia
Arizona	Missouri	North Dakota	Washington
Colorado	Nevada	Ohio	Wyoming

Even if your state isn't profiled, reviewing one or two case studies can help you learn how to apply the research process to any market. Copies can be downloaded at www.nar.realtor/global/local-market-assessments.

- ❑ **2. Pick Your Niche** - Selecting a specific focus for your global practice is an important decision, because it drives all your other major activities (refining your online identity, building your network). Once you've defined your niche, put as much effort as possible into growing your business in that direction. By the same token, don't be afraid to modify and refine your focus as you learn more about what is and isn't working.
- ❑ **3. Keep Digging** - Research is an ongoing process. New data may shed light on new opportunities. Determine your best sources for news and updates, including publications, reports, and your professional network.



How will you build your network?

People-to-people relationships are an important element of success for any real estate professional, but are absolutely critical for global agents. You will rely on your network for many things: to generate and share business opportunities, to continue expanding your knowledge, and to support you and your clients in completing sometimes-complex real estate transactions.

Three Types of Networks

1. Other CIPS Designees

One of the very best benefits of earning your CIPS designation is the access it provides to other CIPS designees. There's no limit to the number of ways you can leverage this resource. A few of the best and easiest ways to find and connect with other designees and build your network:

- Use the online directory (www.nar.realtor/cips-search)
- Network on Facebook (see Action Items)
- Attend the REALTORS® Conference & Expo (www.nar.realtor/conference)
- Attend Global Business Council meetings and events (see Action Items)

Each time you establish a new CIPS connection, add them to your preferred relationship management and tracking system, including a plan for periodic follow-up.

2. Professional Team Members

Global real estate transactions are inherently more complicated than most transactions involving domestic buyers and sellers. As a result, you'll want to assemble a team of experts who can help your clients navigate a wide range of issues, potentially involving taxes, immigration, currency fluctuations, and more.

The type of professional assistance you'll need hinges on the focus of your business. For example, helping a foreign buyer invest in a U.S. multi-family property requires very different support than helping a foreign investor who is interested in the EB-5 visa program.

Even if you focus on one type of client, such as buyers of resort properties in a particular development, each buyer can have a unique set of issues and challenges, requiring different types of professional assistance.



More Agent-to-Agent Connections

Beyond CIPS designees, it's also worth exploring valuable opportunities to network with other real estate professionals with strong ties to ethnic influences in your local market. In North America, these groups include:

National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP) – Has over 50 chapters in 18 U.S. states. To learn more, visit nahrep.org.

Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA) – Includes 35 chapters across the U.S. and Canada. Learn more at areaa.org.



ACTION ITEMS

- ❑ **1. Connect to Other CIPS Designees on Facebook** – Called “Official Group: NAR CIPS Designees,” this closed group has over 1,700 members located around the world. It’s an excellent forum for sharing business-building tips and referral opportunities.
- ❑ **2. Attend a Global Business Council Event** – Organized through various local REALTOR® associations, these groups provide many opportunities to make face-to-face connections and learn from other CIPS designees. If your local or state association doesn’t have its own Global Business Council, you’re always welcome to attend other associations’ events. (Find a GBC here: www.nar.realtor/global/global-business-councils/global-business-councils-directory)
- ❑ **3. Explore (at least) One Other New Group** – Whether it’s a convenient local event (like an expat meetup, or a special program at a cultural community center)—or a larger commitment (such as participating in a trade mission, or attending an overseas real estate trade show)—commit to at least one new activity that could open the door to additional global opportunities.
- ❑ **4. Work Your Network** – Decide how you will maintain contact with your professional network, commit your plan to paper, and add specific action steps to your calendar. In this way, aspirations turn into accomplishments...and lead to more global business!

Networking with other CIPS designees is one of the best ways to obtain recommendations for experts in:

- Currency exchange
- Financing
- Immigration/visas
- Legal issues
- Taxes
- Translation

Once you’ve assembled your “team,” consider ways to support one another in your marketing efforts. (For example, feature them, along with their photos/bios/links, on your website.)

Reach out to your team on a regular basis, even if you don’t have clients in immediate need of their services. These exchanges can be very beneficial in staying informed about new issues that may impact your clients, as well as generating informal referral opportunities.

3. Local Professional Referrals

Like your team of professional experts, which might be physically dispersed across multiple cities, you can also build an excellent professional network in your immediate vicinity. This might include local attorneys and lenders with ties to an immigrant community, members of your chamber of commerce, or owners of ethnic restaurants or other businesses with global ties. Each of these people, and many others, represent a potential resource for sharing business tips and referrals. 🌐



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 ACTION ITEM



CIPS

Work Your Network at the 2017 REALTORS® Conference & Expo!

Complete your first Action Item by attending the 2017 REALTORS® Conference & Expo, taking place **November 3-6** in Chicago. Meet up with fellow CIPS designees and make new contacts with over 1,300 international visitors from more than 60 countries, along with over 20,000 U.S. REALTORS® and guests! Don't miss these key events:

Meet the World

Last year was a hit, so we decided to do it again! Meet face-to-face with over 60 countries in one place at our second 'Meet the World' speed networking session, held on **Friday, November 3** from **3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.** at the Global Networking Center (Booth #4824) on the Trade Show Floor.

CIPS Breakfast & Pinning Ceremony*

Start your day off on a productive note and connect with fellow designees at the CIPS Breakfast & Pinning Ceremony, held on **Saturday, November 4** from **7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.**

International Night Out & Awards Ceremony*

Kick up your heels at our Chicago World's Fair themed gala on **Saturday, November 4** from **7:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.** Enjoy a formal dinner as we honor top leaders in the global community, followed by dancing to live music. Attire is black tie optional.

*Ticketed events. Please make sure to add your ticket while registering or add to an existing registration online. Space is limited.

Register today at nar.realtor/conference.



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