

TOP PRODUCER COACHING & TRAINING

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Certified Professional 2009 **Top Producer 8i** Certified Trainer **Top Producer 8i**

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TOP PRODUCER® e-mail newsletter for December 2010 from Dwight Kitchens

Please deliver this subscription newsletter to :

We're getting ready for a progressive open house within our community this month. Six to eight homes are decorated and open for viewing while snacking on appetizers. Rather a nice way for many of us to get together during the holiday season. We hope that your December is enjoyable no matter which event you are celebrating.

Should you be considering sending e-mail greetings to your clients, please remember that there is a 1,000 a day mass e-mail limit. This insures that all subscribers get an opportunity for their mass e-mails to be merged and delivered. Therefore, should you have a large mailing list, may I suggest that you filter your data into groups which can be sent on different days? Yes, this may be slightly inconvenient, but doing so will certainly insure that your message is delivered without difficulty.

Dwight

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Check www.DwightKitchens.com for the latest details.

Please forward a copy of this newsletter to friends using TOP PRODUCER8i.

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1. Printing your TOP PRODUCER documents as a .jpg file

Why would I ever want to do this when TOP PRODUCER 8i can print and/or publish its' documents as .pdf files? There are certainly benefits to printing items as .pdf files, as all the hyperlinks shown within the document are still active. But, we generally deliver .pdf files either as a hyperlink taking the client to your published materials folder, or as an attachment (which I don't recommend when compared with making a hyperlink). But, what you get by publishing your document as a .jpg photo is that most e-mail packages can display the photo directly within an e-mail program without having to bring anything else into play.

As an example, if you publish a flyer as a .jpg graphic file rather than as an Adobe Acrobat .pdf file, no add on program is required, and the client can see the flyer without having to separately open it. Let's see how this might work. While I attempted to use a free [Windows Virtual Printer Driver](#) with Windows 7, it would not work properly on my computer. I believe that it would probably work with Windows XP and Windows Vista. Therefore, for Windows 7, an alternative is to either use a commercial printer driver such as the [Universal Printer Driver](#) (\$69 without watermark), or use a program which will convert a .pdf file to a .jpg file.

The first option of using the commercial [Universal Printer Driver](#) lets you print your TOP PRODUCER 8i document directly to a .jpg file rather than to a standard Epson / HP / Canon / etc. printer. This will save your document to a named .jpg photo graphic file.

Now, to deliver this graphic to your client(s), you send either an individual or mass e-mail by inserting the .jpg graphic file into the body of the e-mail (between your salutation and your signature block). When the client receives the message, they see the subject, salutation, flyer (graphic), and signature block. They don't have to open the flyer, as one would with a .pdf document, as the graphic is automatically displayed.

The second option has you print your TOP PRODUCER 8i document as a .pdf file, then run it through a converter (example: www.zamzar.com [a few for free then a monthly fee], www.convertpdftoimage.com/ [\$36 one-time fee]) to make a .jpg file. Therefore, this becomes a two step process. Then, insert the converted .jpg file again into your outgoing e-mail message. To avoid a watermark advertisement by the software manufacturer you may need to pay a fee. Since this is a two step process, I would recommend either the Universal Printer Driver above as the best solution for converting directly from within TOP PRODUCER 8i, or the free use of www.zamzar.com .

In both cases, your client sees an e-mail message with a fully formed .jpg file embedded with the message. No need to separately open the .jpg file as an attachment.

As I've mentioned before, I like to do everything that I can from within TOP PRODUCER 8i. If, by chance, you have been making documents in either Microsoft Word or Microsoft Publisher, these programs also give you the capability of producing a .jpg graphical output. Then, so long as your e-mail program (Outlook, Outlook Express, Thunderbird, TOP PRODUCER 8i, etc.) permits you to insert graphics within your e-mail message, you should be able to have your .jpg file automatically opened within the e-mail message.

Many REALTORS will use this technique to produce holiday cards which they can e-mail to clients. As the e-mail opens, the card is automatically displayed.

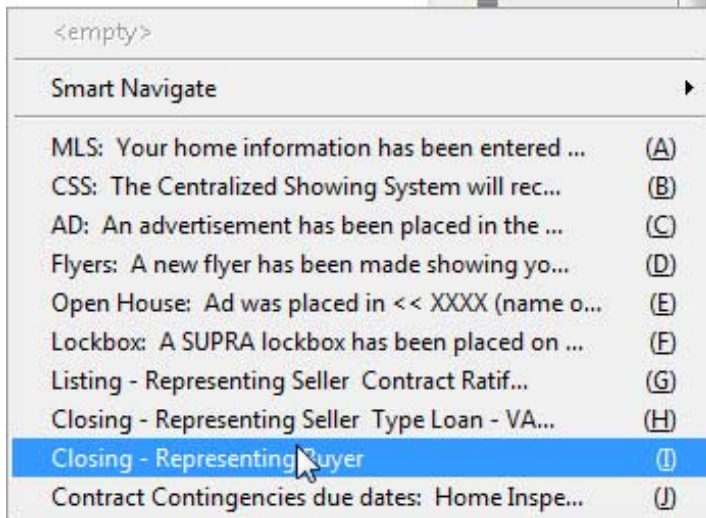
If you have Microsoft Office 2010, Martha Stewart and Microsoft worked together this year to produce holiday card templates. While these were intended to be printed, they could also be produced and output as .jpg files. Once done, the card could be inserted within an e-mail sent to your client. Again, the card materializes without any additional actions required by the recipients.

See: <http://www.marthastewart.com/article/custom-holiday-cards>

2. Using a clipboard extender with TOP PRODUCER 8i

Often, when commenting upon completion of listing and closing tasks within TOP PRODUCER 8i, the same comment can be used for each client. [ClipX](#), is a clipboard extender that provides a great way to save you time. Additionally, it can store up to 256 paragraphs which you can instantly recall for pasting within any program, TOP PRODUCER 8i included. The program has a basic module, plus a few add-ons which you will want to use. Download and install all the modules and you have one very good clipboard program.

When clicked, the stored history reflects the first few words of your saved paragraph. Hopefully, this is enough for you to make your selection. Just in case, I've put a few letters at the front of the description to give you a better idea of what the paragraph covers.

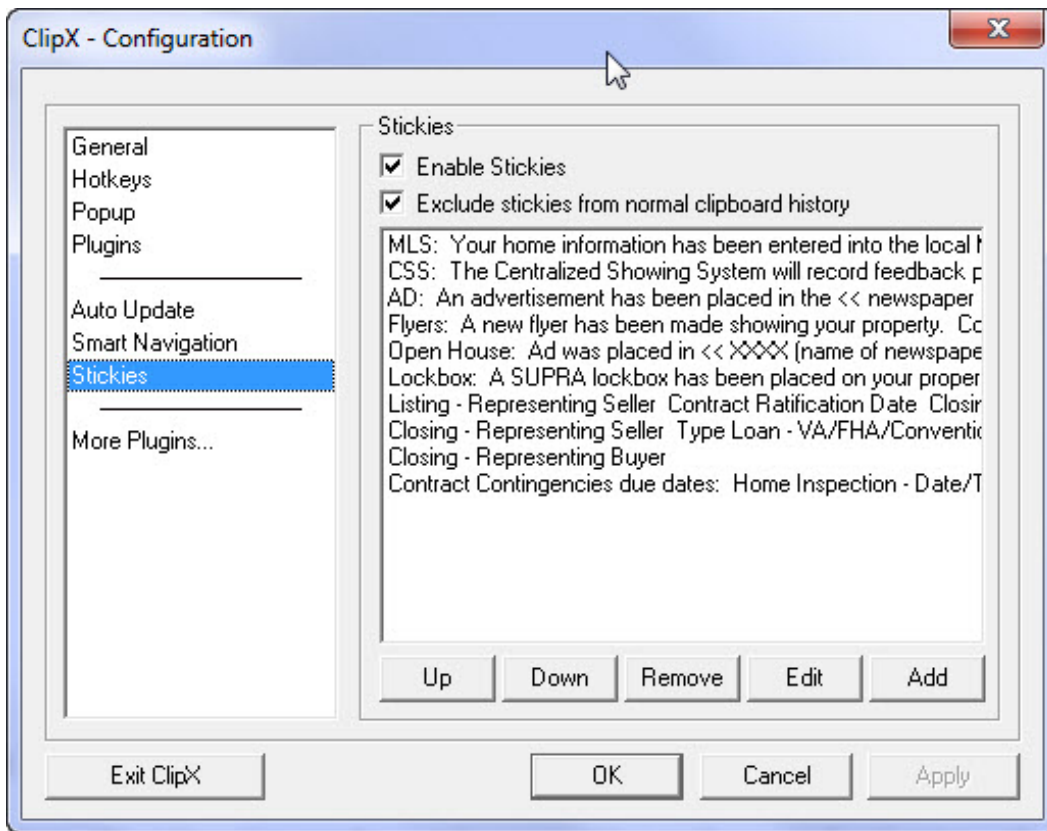


As an example, should you choose the MLS paragraph, the expanded paste looks like:

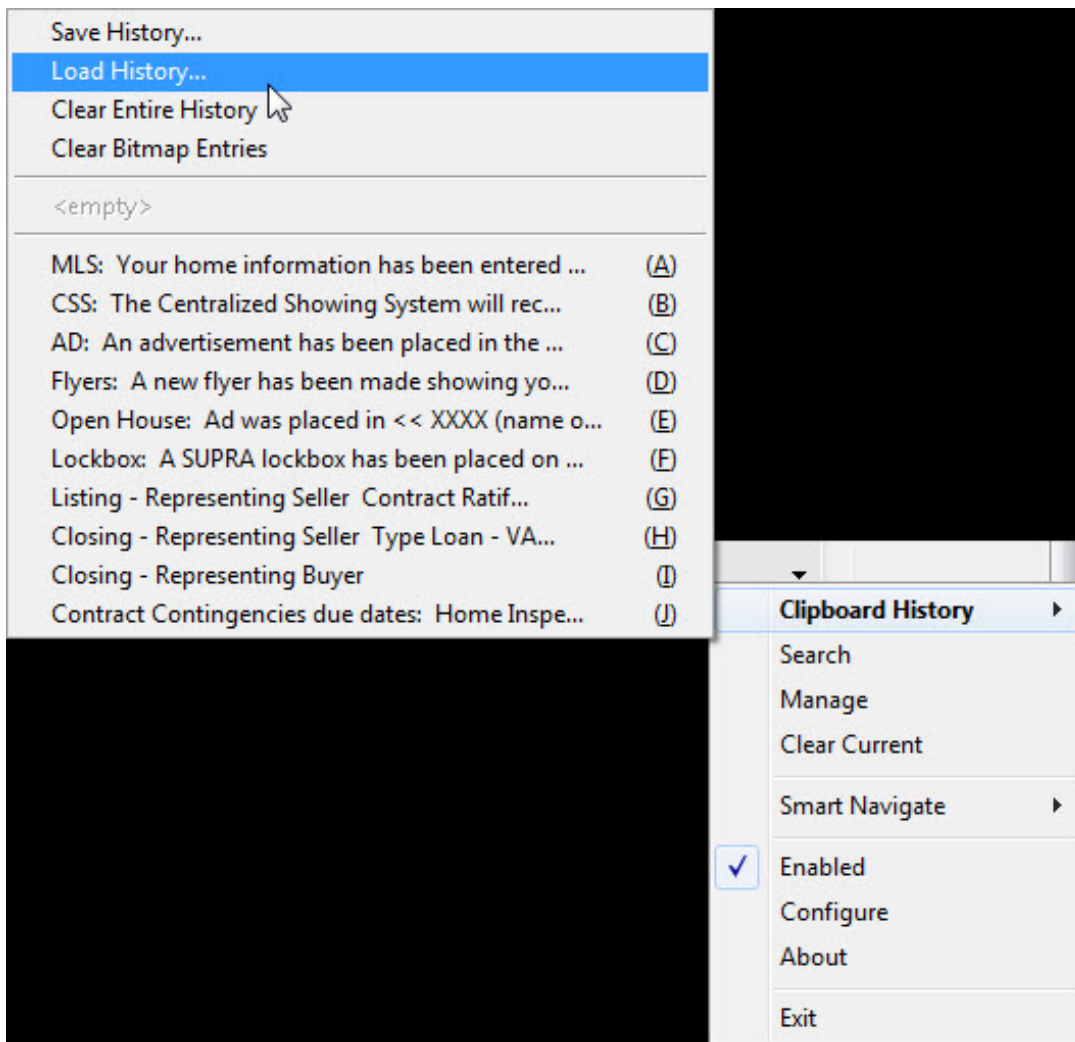
MLS: Your home information has been entered into the local Multiple List System. This information may be seen by prospective purchasers as they browse web-sites such as www.REALTOR.com, << www.XXXX.com, www.XXXX.com >>.

Now, you would generally replace the <<www.XXXX.com, www.XXXX.com>> with your own data, such as www.HowardHanna.com, www.Prudential.com, etc.and resave it so that it replaces the example paragraph I provided. You now have a completed paragraph which you can use as your own client feedback.

In order to edit all the paragraphs which I have written, you right-click the ClipX icon in your system tray, select configure, select the item you want to change, and click edit. This box permits you to add/edit/reorder your entries. You may save upto 256 entries for reuse within this program.



Download all the files from www.clipx.org . You want to first run the Clipx Setup program, then each of the supplemental programs (stickies, updates, etc.). Once this is done, you will have the Clipx show as an icon on your system bar (bottom right of your computer screen). You may now write paragraphs populate your clipboard with multiple comments to use as listing feedback within TOP PRODUCER 8i.



This has many uses, whether you are within or outside of TOP PRODUCER 8i. Having a clipboard which permits you to recall past entries is great when you need to repetitively use the same material over and over again.

3. Deleting Activities and Assigned Plans within TOP PRODUCER 8i

Recently, I was asked how one might go about deleting previously scheduled activities from within TOP PRODUCER 8i. My thoughts are as follows:

You can see all the tasks in question by clicking Calendar / Activities Summary. The resulting list of tasks may come from individually assigned activities or from your plans. While you can delete the activities within the Activities Summary, this only clears out those items which are already due. Future tasks are still scheduled.

There are a few different approaches you may desire to take.

One, delete the assignment of the plan to **the individual in question**. When in the Activities Summary, look in the name column, and click the name of the party in question. If a plan is assigned, it will be so reflected within the Contact Record header. If you desire to delete this

plan from this client, click the Activities tab within the Contact Record, click Select Action Plans (third item at the bottom left of the page), Uncheck the plan which you desire to remove, and click Save. This will remove all tasks not yet due from your client. Once removed, they will no longer show up in your Calendar / Activities Summary.

Two, delete the assignment of the plan to **all individuals within a group**. This will remove a specific plan from everyone you select, no matter when you started that plan. You have an option of selecting a narrow range of clients, or all your clients. Once your group is selected, you want to perform a Mass Update, choosing Action Plan / Remove and selecting the appropriate plan from the drop down list. Once you click Update Contacts, the chosen plan will be removed from all clients included within your search selection. You may be asked if you want to keep a record of all the previously completed activities within the Contact Record or not. Generally, I would keep them for their historical significance.

Three, within Calendar / Activities Summary, you could expand the date range, choose incomplete activities, select a number of activities using the check box, then check Mass Delete at the bottom left of the screen.

Personally, if your activities are coming from plans which you have previously assigned, and you are thinking of rewriting them and then either assigning the revised versions or a new plan to your clients, I would tend to choose deleting a plan(s) rather than deleting individual tasks. This fixes your Contact Records to reflect the proper plan you are using, while merely deleting tasks does not.

4. Have you changed your e-mail address since subscribing to TOP PRODUCER 8i?

From time-to-time, I find that a REALTOR has had a change in e-mail address. Whether from a move to another firm, a change in Internet Service Provider, or finally getting their own domain name, such changes can be fraught with difficulties. One is certainly that TOP PRODUCER Systems, Inc. might not know your current e-mail address. Should they have a problem with your subscription, a change in your credit card information, or need to notify you of a new feature, they may have no ready means to make contact. I suggest that if you have changed your e-mail address within the past few years that you contact Customer Service, 800-444-8570 to insure that your record has the correct e-mail address and a valid telephone number. This might save your significant grief in the future.

5. Exporting your TOP PRODUCER 8i data

Yes, TOP PRODUCER Systems, Inc. is responsible for maintaining your data so long as your have a subscription to their product. They do an exemplary job performing this task. But, I've known REALTORS who took a break from real estate. During this break, they didn't either frequently or thoroughly check their e-mail, update subscriptions, etc. The result is that after a period of time, when the credit card backing up their subscription lapsed, and the company's e-mails were not heeded, eventually the client's database was actually deleted. Six to nine months later, the client wanted to renew their TOP PRODUCER 8i subscription and wanted all

their old data back. Oops! While TOP PRODUCER Systems, Inc. keeps data for awhile, eventually lapsed subscription data will disappear.

Because 'stuff happens', I suggest that exporting your database to an external file once or twice per year may be prudent. If a REALTOR has their own copy of the database, and for some reason the subscription is permitted to lapse, they have the capability of putting their last set of exported data back onto the system.

The TOP PRODUCER Campus has a very extensive section on Importing and Export contacts, including a video you may want to view:

<http://www.topproducer.com/campus/8i/import-export/menu-id-149>

6. Keep a copy of all your computer's drivers

Hopefully, you've never had either a computer crash, or a problem with your machine's driver software. In either case, while the restore partition of your computer may permit you to put your system back to its' factory fresh settings, all the Windows updates and driver updates since its' manufacture still need to be reinstalled. A nice program to help with the reinstallation of drivers is [Double Driver 4.0](#), a freeware product which backs up your drivers. It backs up all your drivers individually, or as a self-executable set. I've often had a printer driver become corrupted and had to spend lots of time attempting to find the correct driver online. With Double Driver 4.0, I could easily point my computer to the set of files I made using this program and be up and running quickly. Of course, as you update drivers, you need to run Double Driver 4.0 again to make a fresh backup set.

7. Create a keyboard shortcut to power off your monitor

No matter how many monitors you have up and running, using the power buttons to turn off the monitors can be a little bit of a pain. Why not create a desktop/keyboard shortcut to turn them all off at once? You'll need to download a small utility called NirCmd, which you can get either from http://download.cnet.com/NirCmd/3000-2094_4-77191.html or <http://www.vistanews.com/9I1P6M/090723-NirCmd> .

The program can also do much more. NirCmd is a small command-line utility that allows you to do some useful tasks without displaying any user interface. By running NirCmd with a simple command-line option, you can write and delete values and keys in the Registry, write values into INI file, dial to your internet account or connect to a VPN network, restart windows or shut down the computer, create a shortcut to a file, change the created/modified date of a file, change your display settings, turn off your monitor, open the door of your CD-ROM drive, and more.

Version 2.37 added a help command function to the program.

After making your download, create a shortcut to turn off your monitor as follows:

1. Right click the desktop and select New

2. Select Shortcut
3. Browse to the location where you saved NirCmd.exe
4. In the Create Shortcut dialog box, where you type the location of the item, put quotation marks around the path, then add this to the end: cmdwait 1000 monitor off (Thus the contents of the box should look something like this: "C:\ Users \ YourName \ Downloads \ nircmd.exe" cmdwait 1000 monitor off)
5. Click next
6. To assign a keyboard shortcut, right click the shortcut icon and select Properties
7. On the Shortcut tab, pick a key combination
8. You can also change the icon to something more appropriate by clicking the Change Icon button
9. Click OK

Now you can shut down the monitors by clicking the icon or by pressing the shortcut key combination.

8. Driving Route Planner

Buyer representatives are often on the road showing properties. It is often nice if you have an idea before you depart as to how long it will take to show all those homes. Well, one online program which may help is found at <http://www.drivingrouteplanner.com/>. Here you can put in each address, stop times, start times, etc., and it will map out the route for you.

11. Wishing Our Troops a Happy Holiday Season

If you go to this web site, www.LetsSayThanks.com you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving in Iraq. You can't pick out who gets it, but it will go to a member of the armed services. How AMAZING it would be if we could get everyone we know to send one!!! It is FREE and it only takes a second. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the soldiers received a bunch of these? Whether you are for or against the war, our soldiers over there need to know we are behind them. This takes just 10 seconds and it's a wonderful way to say thank you. Please take the time yourself and consider passing it along to others. We can never say enough thank you's. Thanks for taking to time to support our military!

10. Training

We still have not determined where we will be training during 2011. If you want us to come by your area, please, let us know. While it is often difficult to coordinate with either Associations, Boards, or Brokerages, we will see what can be done. We are considering traveling during April - May, and then again in September - November during 2011. As many REALTORS would rather do anything but training during the Summer months, this might work out better for all parties.

Agent.signature

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