

Preparing for the Initial Contact

1. While determining the correct time zone of the company you are e-mailing is not critical, it becomes more important if you choose to call instead. You can find out this information by checking either one of the following websites:
 - <http://www.worldtimeserver.com>
 - <http://www.timezoneconverter.com>

These sites will give you the correct time where you are calling and then you calculate the difference between your time and theirs. Be sure to avoid lunch time contacts (which sometimes go from 2-3 hours). While e-mailing is not as critical time-wise, it still looks good for you to be aware of the difference by making reference to it whether written or spoken.

2. Finding a referral company (two options):

- a. Option #1: Go to <http://www.worldproperties.com>.

- Click on “Find a Transnational Referral Certified Professional” under the ICREA Resources box on the home page.
- Search based on appropriate criteria for client (location, language, etc.).
- You should have a list of brokers/agents that have completed the Transnational Referral Certification training program and are “TRC” (Transnational Referral Certified)*. These agents will be most familiar with the referral process. This is the recommended first course of action for locating a foreign broker to whom to make a referral.

**The TRC certification was launched in Jan. '05 and will be translated into four other languages by Sept. '05. Some countries may not actively market the certification until the translations are complete.*

If you are unable to locate an agent in the specific area you need, you may search more broadly to locate an agent who is affiliated with the ICREA Member Association** in a country, but who has not had specific training in referrals. This secondary search will provide you with contact information for *all* professionals who are members of the association. The agent may or may not be familiar with the referral process and the ICREA Transnational

Referral System, so some education may be required on your part in your communications.

- b. Option #2: Go to <http://www.worldproperties.com>.
 - Click on “Find a Professional.”
 - Click on the country where you want to make the referral.
 - Click on the town within the country. You should have a list of agents before you with the name of their company, a telephone number and most times an e-mail address. The agents shown will all belong to an association affiliated with ICREA, nearly all of which have signed the ICREA Protocol, agreeing to an enforceable arbitration process to address any disputes regarding payment of referral fees.
3. Decide which agent you want to contact first. Make a list of questions you want to ask. Be sure you consider the client’s needs and personality as well as significant property information. Since so much of our initial work is completed via e-mail, we will assume our first contact is being made in that manner.

***Signing the Transnational Referral Protocol is voluntary by ICREA Member Association, as is its use by individual brokers/agents. Nearly all Member Associations have signed the Protocol (NAR included). A list of association signatories can be found at the private side of WorldProperties.com under the Referral Network tab. As of May 2005 only two groups (Argentina and Venezuela) had not signed the Protocol. You must be registered at WorldProperties.com to access this information. Registration can be done from the home page. NAR members must use their NAR NRDS ID to register.*