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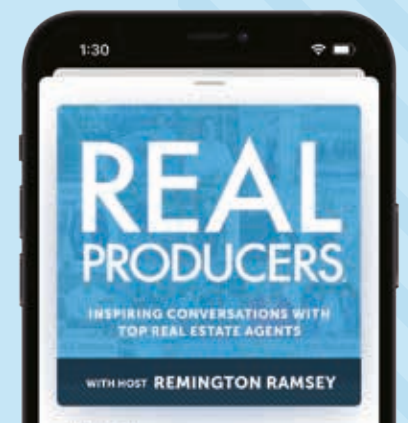
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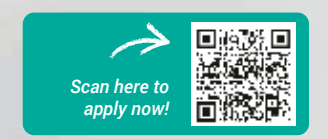
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TRANSFORMING REAL ESTATE MARKETING

BY RYAN ZINN



A Journey Nearly Two Decades in the Making

Founded in February 2006, Virtual Vista has been a trailblazer in real estate marketing for nearly 19 years. What started as a bold idea from Ric and Brian Castro, a dynamic father-son duo, has transformed into a top-tier real estate media agency, second to none in the industry.

Long before professional photography was the norm—and when newspaper ads were still the go-to for listings—Virtual Vista entered the market, offering high-quality photography and virtual tours. Over the years, the company has evolved, expanded, and redefined what's possible in real estate media.

“We started in the basement,” Brian shares. “Now, we have a beautiful office and studio. Seeing our growth—from a small photography business to a full-scale media powerhouse—has been one of the most rewarding parts of our journey.”

Inspired Beginnings

Brian credits Virtual Vista's inception to Ric's entrepreneurial spirit and sharp eye for opportunity.



“I was just out of school, and Ric said, ‘Let’s start a business.’ He bought some camera equipment, and that was it,” Brian recalls. “Real estate marketing wasn’t exactly in my life plan, but it turned out to be a perfect fit.”

Of course, the early days weren’t easy. With no portfolio, no track record, and a steep learning curve, they took things one step at a time.

“I remember our first shoot—my dad told me, ‘Take one shot on each setting. One of them has to be good,’” Brian laughs. “Looking back, we can joke about it, but that’s truly how it all started.”

Raising the Bar in Real Estate Media

Today, Virtual Vista is known for elevating the way real estate is marketed. Their mission is clear: to help agents not only sell listings but also establish powerful brands and grow their businesses.

“We don’t just take photos; we create strategic marketing assets that set agents apart,” Brian explains. “Every listing is an opportunity—not just to sell a home but to showcase the agent’s brand and expertise.”

From stunning photography and virtual tours to cinematic drone footage, 3D technology, social media, content

creation, and everything in between, Virtual Vista provides agents with an unmatched suite of marketing tools.

Adapting, Innovating, and Always Delivering

Real estate is ever-changing, and Virtual Vista has built its reputation on adapting, innovating, and exceeding expectations.

“Markets shift. Technology evolves. Agent needs change,” Brian says. “Some companies struggle with that—we thrive on it. We go the extra mile and accommodate virtually any request because our service is second to none.”

Their ability to anticipate industry trends comes in part from Brian’s background as a former REALTOR® who weathered the 2007-2008 market crash.

“That experience was invaluable. I understand the pressure agents face

because I’ve been there. That’s why we don’t just provide media—we provide real solutions that help agents succeed.”

A Commitment to Client Success

For Virtual Vista, success isn’t measured by sales—it’s measured by the impact they have on their clients.

“When we help agents market their listings effectively, build their brands, and generate real business growth, we’ve done our job,” Brian says. “Our clients’ success is our success.”

Advice for REALTORS® Who Want to Win

Brian’s advice for agents looking to dominate their market?

“Think like a business owner, not just a salesperson. Build a brand. Stay consistent. And stop treating social media like a necessary evil—it’s one of the most powerful tools you have.”

More Than a Media Company—A True Partner

At Virtual Vista, the mission goes beyond photography. They are a trusted partner, committed to helping agents grow their businesses and stand out in a competitive market.

“We’re not just here to sell photo shoots. We provide a full-scale marketing engine that helps agents thrive, from their first listing to the peak of their careers,” Brian emphasizes.

From humble beginnings to industry leaders, Virtual Vista’s story is one of passion, perseverance, and partnership. They’re more than a media company—they’re a catalyst for real estate success.

Check out Virtual Vista on their YouTube channel for content about the best in real estate: <http://www.youtube.com/@InsideRealEstatePodcast>. Also follow them on Instagram: @virtualvistaphoto for their creative and inspiring content.





MEET **Grace** A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE AND SUCCESS
Caseella

BY RYAN ZINN
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY
 JACOB SNAVELY

From Finance to Real Estate

With just three years in the real estate industry, Grace Casella has already made her mark. Her journey began with a dream inspired by her father. “I wanted to be an entrepreneur just like my dad,” Grace shares. Armed with a finance degree and a brief stint as a financial advisor, she entered real estate with a mission: “I really wanted to help people!”

Grace’s entry into real estate was also sparked by a friend’s encouragement. “I never thought to get in sales until my good friend Mr. Steve told me I could sell ice cubes to an

Eskimo. He pushed me to get my license, and I’m forever grateful to him for that!” she says.

Before her career change, Grace worked in a corporate setting at J.P. Morgan. “It was a stuffy corporate office with 8 hours of being on the computer every day,” she recalls. Now, she thrives in a dynamic environment where she interacts with clients and helps them achieve their goals.

A Rising Star

Grace’s achievements are remarkable. In 2023, she closed 31 deals, and in 2024, she achieved an even greater milestone, selling

50 homes. Her efforts earned her recognition as a top producer by Keller Williams. She’s also been featured on a young top producers panel and recently received the Explosive Production award from Crown Homes Real Estate.

Her dedication doesn’t stop with personal success. “I’m passionate about helping my new team be successful. I want to change their lives like I’ve changed mine by helping families, fortunate or less fortunate, get the best possible deals on their real estate transactions,” she explains.

Transforming Lives

For Grace, the most rewarding aspect of her work is helping first-time homebuyers achieve their dreams. She recalls a client who told her, “We weren’t sure if we’d ever be able to have a home before talking to you. You literally have helped make dreams come true.” Moments like these fuel Grace’s passion and commitment.

However, high-volume work comes with challenges. “Trying to make sure I have the best people in my corner to provide a smooth transaction for my clients” is an ongoing effort, Grace notes.

Family and Resilience

Grace’s strong bond with her family, especially her siblings, is central to her life. “I’m very close with my siblings and want so badly to be able to help them financially. That’s my why,” she shares.



Her journey has been shaped by profound loss and resilience. Grace's father, her best friend and mentor, passed away while she was in college. "When he passed, my world was rocked. I had no money, no plan, and lost what felt like everything," she recalls. Despite the hardships, Grace emerged stronger, learning invaluable lessons about perseverance and financial discipline. "The absolute most pivotal part of my life was losing my papa," she reflects.

Grace also attributes her success to her fiancé, Brett. "Without constant support from Brett, my contractor fiancé, I don't know where I'd be," she shares.

Advice for Aspiring Realtors

Grace's advice for those starting out in real estate is simple yet profound: "Always be kind and try your best for the client, no matter the price point. It's the best way to keep your business flowing because everyone gives referrals."

Beyond Real Estate

Outside of work, Grace leads an active life filled with hiking, mountain biking, pickleball, and gym sessions. She also gives back to her community as a frequent food bank volunteer and a regular blood donor. Her dedication to both her personal and professional life is truly inspiring.

Looking Ahead

Grace Casella's journey is a testament to the power of resilience, hard work, and a genuine desire to help others. As she continues to grow her career and support her team, there's no doubt that she will keep transforming lives and making her mark in the real estate world

“ I want to change their lives like I've changed mine by helping families, fortunate or less fortunate, get the best possible deals on their real estate transactions. ”



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Meet Dawn Wilson

BY RYAN ZINN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIRSTIE
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A LEADER IN REAL ESTATE AND MENTORSHIP

In the dynamic world of real estate, certain individuals stand out not just for their accomplishments but for their commitment to others' success. Dawn Wilson is one such individual. Her impressive \$76.4 million in sales volume over the past four years speaks to her achievements.

As the leader of the Dawn Wilson Real Estate Team—which includes Jennifer Johnson, Executive Assistant who joined the team in 2020, and Marie Shaw, Marketing Specialist who

joined the team in 2019—Dawn has built a reputation for excellence. With 18 years of industry experience and a passion for mentorship, Dawn has established herself as a trusted advisor, an accomplished leader, and an inspiration to many.



Building a Legacy of Excellence

Dawn's career is defined by exceptional achievements. A recipient of the Mentor of the Year Award (2020), she takes pride in having guided her last three mentees to earn Rookie of the Year honors. Her team has also earned recognition in the Elite Circle (Top 25 small teams in the region) and Chairman's Circle Platinum, marking over \$500,000 in annual gross commission income.

"I've been featured in Delaware Today Magazine in 2022, 2023, and 2024," Dawn shares. "I'm also a proud director on the board for the New Castle County Board of Realtors and an RPAC committee member this year."

These accolades underscore Dawn's dedication to her craft and her community.

A Vision for Mentorship and Community

One of Dawn's greatest joys is mentoring others. "I am enthusiastic about helping other REALTORS® grow their business," she says. "The systems and strategies my team and I have developed include education, leading technology, and unique marketing tools. These have allowed us to build lasting relationships with clients while helping team members become high income earners."

Community and Connection

Networking has been a cornerstone of Dawn's career. In 2018, she co-founded the Powerful Professionals Networking Group alongside Jennifer Johnson. "We have a diverse group of 450 professionals who inspire and collaborate to be the best in our industries," Dawn notes. This group has been instrumental in helping members grow multi-million-dollar businesses.

A Passion for Real Estate Investing

Dawn's journey into real estate began during her time at Temple University, where she double-majored in Management and Marketing. "I purchased my first two rental properties at the age of 22 while still a student," she recalls.

This early foray into investing ignited a passion for creating generational wealth. "Investing in real estate offers a

tangible path to increase your net worth. Unlike other forms of investment, it provides avenues like rental income, appreciation, and tax advantages. The sooner you invest, the more time your assets have to appreciate."

Dawn's advice for aspiring investors? "Buy as many properties as you can to create passive income and diversify your portfolio."

“

The freedom of time and money, working with my husband and daughter, and meeting people from all over the world are what I treasure most.”

Dawn Wilson and Jennifer Johnson at their recent Powerful Professionals Networking event



The Rewards of Real Estate

For Dawn, the rewards of her work go far beyond transactions. "The freedom of time and money, working with my husband and daughter, and meeting people from all over the world are what I treasure most," she shares. "Helping my clients build wealth and maintaining lifelong relationships is deeply fulfilling."

Her team's client appreciation program, which includes celebrating birthdays, home anniversaries, and hosting annual events, is a testament to her dedication to her clients' success and happiness.

A Family Business and a Shared Vision

Dawn's husband, Linwood, and daughter, Sya, are integral parts of her journey. Together, they flip houses and manage an investment portfolio across three states. "We've even created affordable housing for seniors in 55+ communities in West Palm Beach, Florida," Dawn explains.

The family's connection to real estate will deepen further in 2026 when Sya, currently studying real estate at Temple University, joins the business full-time.

Advice for Future Top Producers

Dawn's advice for rising stars in the industry is simple yet profound: "Become a student of your craft. Learn something new daily. Provide exceptional customer service, be patient, and have an unstoppable mindset. And most importantly, commit to lead generation activities every day."

With her authenticity, tenacity, and genuine care for others, Dawn Wilson exemplifies what it means to lead with purpose in real estate. Her story serves as both an inspiration and a roadmap for others aspiring to achieve success while making a difference.

Join Dawn's Facebook Group - Powerful Professionals Networking - and connect with like-minded changemakers. You can also follow Dawn on Instagram @dawnwilsonrealestate

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