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Affiliate Spotlight
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ESTATE SALES

Millie Weaver

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24 COVER STORY
Millie Weaver



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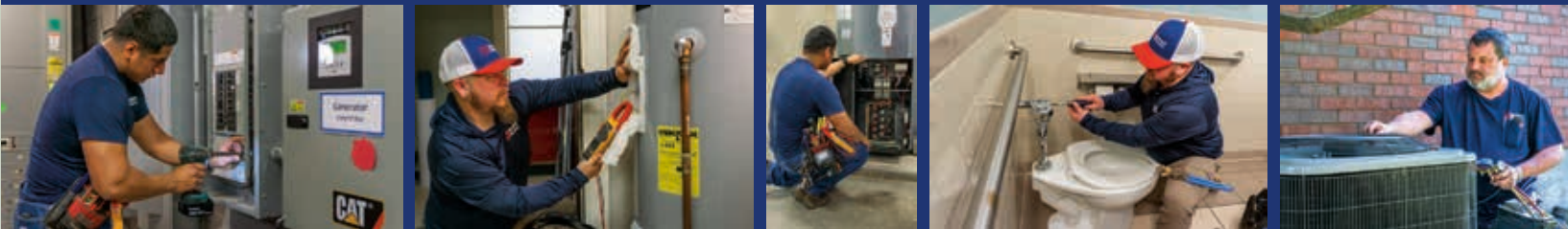
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Renée Hensley
Photography



Brett Rybak
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- Farm your favorite neighborhoods



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RELAY FOR AMERICA

As I related to last month, and many of you know this already, but I’ve spent a lot of time training for endurance events. Countless early mornings, long runs, bike rides, and hours invested in building fitness that, at times felt like it only served one purpose, preparing for race day. Then something unexpected happened.

Recently, I had the opportunity to join a portion of the Relay for America, a nationwide relay where ordinary people volunteer to carry one American flag across the country, non-stop from the coast in San Francisco to Washington D.C. arriving in time for America’s 250th birthday on July 4th. This flag moves non-stop all day and night and gets handed from one person (or group) to another to continue carrying out the mission. There was no elaborate plan for me to participate or months of preparation for this specific event. On a whim, I decided to join the 12.5-mile segment of the relay, and in true runner fashion ended up doing a 13.1-mile run. In fact, I actually committed about 9 hours before my portion of the run started, due to the uncertainty of some of my kids sports schedules.

As I reflected afterward, I realized something important. I wasn’t able to say yes because I had prepared for that particular run. I was able to say yes because of the years of preparation that came before it. The miles I had logged



over countless training sessions made that opportunity possible.

It reminded me of something I see every day in connecting with the best in real estate. The best agents rarely appear calm during a difficult transaction because they simply got lucky or happened to know the answer. They’re able to navigate uncertainty because of years spent building experience, developing systems, learning from mistakes, and earning the trust of their clients. The difficult moments reveal the preparation that has already taken place.

When inspections become challenging, financing changes unexpectedly, negotiations become emotional, or timelines begin to shift, that’s when years of experience become visible. The client may only see the solution, but the agent knows that solution was built over hundreds of transactions and countless lessons learned along the way.

Preparation creates options and preparation breeds confidence. It gives us the confidence to step into situations that might otherwise feel overwhelming because we’ve invested long before the opportunity arrived.

As meaningful as the run itself was, what impacted me a ton was witnessing the people who made the relay possible.

All along the route, complete strangers stood outside cheering for runners they had never met. They weren’t there because someone asked them to be. They simply wanted to support people doing something they believed was worthwhile.

I also saw homeowners graciously allow their yards to become temporary parking areas for volunteers picking up and dropping off runners. Many had little idea what was happening beyond knowing people were coming together for something bigger than themselves. Their willingness to help made the day easier for everyone involved.

It was a reminder that some of the best moments in life happen when people choose to contribute without expecting anything in return.

In a world that often celebrates individual achievement, it was refreshing to witness a community built on encouragement, generosity, and shared purpose. There was no competition among the runners. No concern over who carried the flag for any short or extended portion of the route. Just people making sacrifices, supporting one another, and doing their part to move something meaningful forward.

As I thought about our *Bluegrass Real Producers* community, I couldn’t help but see similar qualities. This magazine has never been just about recognizing top producers. It’s about creating a community where professionals encourage one another, share knowledge, celebrate success, and help elevate the industry together.

The strongest communities aren’t built solely by the people in the spotlight. They’re built by those willing to encourage, contribute, and invest in others, often without expecting recognition in return.

Whether you’re navigating a challenging transaction, mentoring a newer agent, supporting a colleague, or simply showing up for someone who needs it, remember that those moments matter. They reflect the preparation you’ve invested over the years and the character you’ve chosen to build along the way.

Sometimes the greatest opportunities arrive unexpectedly. When they do, I hope the work you’ve put in allows you to say yes with confidence.

Cheers!

Aaron Hutchison
Bluegrass Real Producers
ahutch@realproducersmag.com

Crystal Gail Smith

PHOTOS BY RENEE HENSLEY

Crystal Gail Smith, Owner and Managing Broker of In House Real Estate in Lexington, Kentucky, built her career on collaboration rather than competition. As the eldest of eight children raised in a low-income household after moving from Eastern Kentucky to Fayette County, she learned early how to stretch resources and make people feel valued—lessons that still guide her business today.

Before real estate, Smith spent a decade in senior care, an experience that gave her deep empathy for older clients and sparked her belief that Lexington needs more 55+ communities. Her father-in-law's Lexington home, purchased in 1970 for \$9,000 and now worth hundreds of thousands, reinforces her conviction that homeownership changes lives.

After working as Principal Broker at a large firm, Smith decided to build something more personal. She

launched In House Real Estate as a boutique brokerage of seven agents, offering in-house legal counsel, estate planning, and auction services—all built around a service-first philosophy rather than corporate structure. She's especially passionate about coaching agents, encouraging them to protect their time and learn to say no.

Smith has also carved out space in Lexington's horse-farm real estate scene, historically dominated by men. She recently sold the historic Josephine Henry House and hopes to see more women succeed in high-end equestrian property sales.

Outside work, Smith is married to a retired horseman, has two adult children she travels with annually, and is preparing to become a grandmother in January. She also enjoys country dancing and lifelong learning, believing wisdom comes through mentorship and experience.

Her guiding philosophy: treat people—clients and agents alike—the way you'd want to be treated, protect your time, and focus on doing a few things exceptionally well rather than trying to be everything to everyone.





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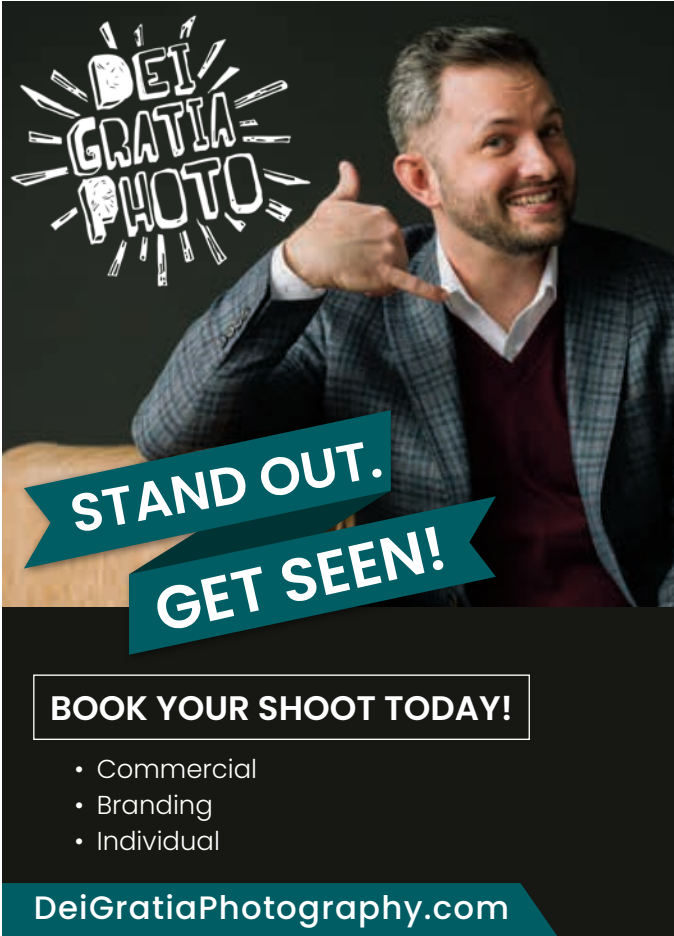
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TOTAL
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SALES VOLUME



\$3,670,000,000



AVERAGE SALES
VOLUME PER AGENT
\$12,200,000

AVERAGE
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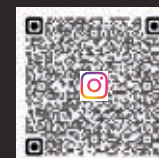
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Long before the front door opens, the line has already started forming.

Some people arrive searching for vintage artwork or antique furniture. Others come hoping to uncover hidden collectibles, rare finds, or a one-of-a-kind conversation piece buried somewhere inside the home. There is an electricity surrounding estate sales, especially with a mix of nostalgia and the thrill of discovering something unexpected. After all, you never know what you might find!

But inside Blue Moon Estate Sales, something deeper is happening.

For sisters-in-law Anne and Kelli Helmers, every estate sale represents far more than tables filled with people's possessions. Behind every collection, every piece of furniture, every closet, and every garage shelf is a family navigating a major life transition.

"We don't just sell belongings," Anne says. "We help families through emotional moments." That has become the heartbeat of Blue Moon Estate Sales, serving Lexington and East Louisville, Kentucky.

The sisters-in-law launched the business in 2018 after seeing a growing need for compassionate, ethical estate liquidation services. Anne had already spent years immersed in the vintage world and kept encountering families overwhelmed by the emotional and logistical process of handling a lifetime of possessions. "There weren't a lot of supportive options for families," Anne explains. "We wanted to be a trusted source."

That trust matters because many clients are downsizing,

relocating, retiring, or grieving the loss of a loved one. "It can be incredibly overwhelming," Kelli says. "This is a huge emotional process for families."

Fortunately, Blue Moon Estate Sales helps carry that burden. Their team transforms homes into beautifully staged retail-style pop-up shops, organizing and pricing everything from antiques and fine art to tools, clothing, collectibles, and everyday household items. "We can sell everything," Anne says with a smile. That includes the car in the garage as well.

Sometimes, the surprises are remarkable. Kelli remembers homes where comic books in forgotten boxes in the basement turned out to be worth more than the home itself. One upcoming sale even features an extraordinary kaleidoscope collection unlike anything Anne had ever encountered. "It's fascinating to see what people collect and treasure," she says.

What truly sets Blue Moon apart is the experience they create inside each home. Rather than chaotic digging or disorganized clutter, visitors walk into thoughtfully merchandised spaces with professional staging, lighting, signage, and carefully curated displays. "We want it to feel organized, elevated, and welcoming," Kelli explains. "Like a retail pop-up experience."

That attention to detail has helped create a loyal following throughout Kentucky. Some shoppers come every single weekend, eager to see what

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Blue Moon Estate Sales

Where Life's Treasures Find Their Next Story

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH MCCABE
PHOTOS BY JARON JOHNS

stories and treasures await inside the next home. “The thrill of the hunt is part of it,” Kelli says. “People really look forward to our sales.”

The company also invests heavily in marketing before every event, taking hundreds of photographs and promoting items through social media and online listings to attract the right audience.

“People fall in love with the contents of a home before they even walk through the door,” Kelli explains.

Blue Moon Estate Sales has also become a trusted resource for REALTORS® throughout Kentucky. The company regularly partners with agents needing help preparing homes for the market, navigating tight closing timelines, or clearing out homes efficiently and professionally. It makes a

world of difference for top agents who need to get homes sold fast.

“We can step in at any stage of the process,” Kelli says. “Whether the house is completely full or almost ready to close.” And the estate sales themselves often help market the property “We’re almost like an open house,” Anne laughs. “People are lined up before the doors even open.”

Potential buyers may initially come for the estate sale, but often end up appreciating the home’s layout, charm, architecture, or character along the way. That opportunity is priceless. For REALTORS®, they can showcase the property while simultaneously helping clients clear out the home in an efficient and cost-effective way.

For Anne and Kelli, there is also a strong sustainability component



“
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to what they do. Rather than watching belongings end up in landfills, they love helping treasured pieces find new homes and new life.

“We want people’s belongings and stories treated with respect,” Anne says. Why toss them in a landfill when they can find a new home?

Over time, Blue Moon Estate Sales has built something else entirely: a community. Many shoppers now attend sales every weekend simply because they enjoy the experience, the friendships, and the excitement

of the hunt. “We know them and they know us,” Anne says. “It’s become part of their routine.”

Perhaps that is what makes Blue Moon Estate Sales feel different. Yes, people come looking for antiques, collectibles, and hidden treasures. But often, they leave carrying something much more meaningful: a story, a memory, and a connection to the lives that came before them. 🍷

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6 Things Every REALTOR® Should Know About Home Warranties

BY KRISTEN MOORE VP OF SALES, ACHOSA HOME WARRANTY



Home warranties help homeowners offset the cost of unexpected repairs and replacements on major home systems and appliances. After more than 17 years in the industry, I’ve seen home warranties save transactions—and I’ve also seen them create frustration when buyers and sellers weren’t properly educated.

Not all home warranties are created equal. Here are six things every REALTOR® should know.

1. Choose a company that offers local support.

Any home warranty company can sell a policy, but the real test comes when a homeowner files a claim. Look for a company that has a local representative—or at least someone dedicated to your market. Having a knowledgeable contact to answer questions or help resolve issues can make all the difference when a claim doesn’t go as planned.

2. Set the correct expectations.

One of the biggest misconceptions about home warranties is that they cover everything. They don’t.

A home warranty is much like health insurance, auto insurance, or homeowners insurance, you don’t buy it because you know you’ll need it. You buy it because you don’t know when you’ll need it.

Most resale home warranties cover major systems such as HVAC, plumbing, electrical, water heaters and appliances. Items such as structural components, windows, flooring, drywall and cosmetic issues are generally not covered.

Unexpected breakdowns happen more often than many homeowners realize. The goal of a home warranty isn’t to eliminate every repair expense to help reduce the financial burden and provide peace of mind when something unexpected happens. At Achosa Home Warranty, homeowners average approximately two claims per contract each year.

3. Compare claims processes—not just coverage.

Many people compare home warranties based on what’s covered and/or the cost, but the claims experience is what matters most.

Ask how claims are handled, whether homeowners can choose their own contractor, how contractors are paid, how

quickly claims are approved, and whether coverage limits apply. Understanding the claims process is just as important as understanding the coverage itself.

4. Take advantage of complimentary seller coverage.

Some home warranty companies offer complimentary seller coverage, yet it’s one of the most underutilized benefits available to REALTORS®.

Seller coverage helps protect covered systems and appliances while the home is actively listed for sale. If something breaks before closing, eligible repairs may be covered, helping avoid unexpected expenses, delayed closings, and difficult negotiations.

5. Make home warranties part of every transaction.

Educate every buyer and seller about home warranties before writing an offer. Even if your client ultimately declines coverage, they’ll understand their options and appreciate that you took the time to explain them.

A simple conversation today can help prevent frustration tomorrow while demonstrating that you’re looking out for your clients long after closing.

6. Ask for a home warranty on every transaction.

Make requesting a home warranty part of your normal contract process. Encourage buyers to ask for one and encourage sellers to offer one whenever possible.

A home warranty isn’t just another line item in the contract—it’s an important risk management tool. By educating every buyer and seller about their home warranty options, you’re helping protect yourself, your clients, and every party involved in the transaction. Even if your client declines coverage. A simple conversation today can save you from potential headaches later!

Have questions about home warranties or want to learn how they can benefit your clients and your business? I’d be happy to schedule a time to talk.

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VP of Sales, Achosa Home Warranty
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People First, Houses Second

PHOTOS BY JARON JOHNS



The Extraordinary Story of Millie Weaver

Some people enter real estate for the commission checks. Millie Weaver entered it to be present for her daughter. What happened next is a story about purpose, perseverance, and a philosophy so rare it leaves clients reaching for a hug at the closing table.

A Career Born From Love

Before selling a single home, Millie Weaver was selling advertising for a local newspaper. It was steady work, but it wasn't flexible enough for the life she needed to live. Her daughter was severely handicapped, and Millie needed a career that would give her the freedom to show up when it mattered most. Real estate offered that freedom. What she didn't expect was how deeply she would fall in love with it.

"I genuinely love people, building relationships, and helping others through some of life's biggest decisions," Millie says. "Being able

to guide families through buying or selling a home while making a difference in their lives is incredibly rewarding, and I feel blessed to do it every day."

That was 2005. Today, Millie leads The Millie Weaver Team at KW Bluegrass Lake Cumberland, closing 188 transactions totaling \$42.3 million in a single year. The numbers are impressive. But they are not, she will quickly tell you, the point.

Rooted in Resilience

Millie grew up, as she puts it, "poorer than Job's turkey." One of five daughters raised in a home with more grit than income, she learned early that hard work wasn't

optional. It was survival. All five sisters carry that same relentless drive. It is perhaps the greatest inheritance their parents left them.

While caring for her daughter, Millie earned her college degree. She describes those years as overwhelming at times, but she kept going. During quiet drives through upscale neighborhoods, she made her daughter a promise: "One day I'm going to become a successful REALTOR®, make a lot of money, and buy you a house in here." Those drives were not really about the houses. They were about refusing to let circumstances define a future.

Her daughter passed away. And rather than let grief extinguish her purpose, Millie let it clarify it. "After my daughter passed, I spent a lot of time reflecting on purpose and what really

“
I genuinely
love
people.”

matters. I came to realize that God left me here for a reason, and that reason is to serve others.”

What She Does That No One Else Does

Ask Millie how she differentiates herself and she won't talk about marketing funnels or social media reach. She'll tell you about the time she opened her home to clients who had nowhere to stay between closing dates. She'll tell you about the homes she purchased herself to help

sellers escape financial hardship when no traditional path forward existed. She'll tell you about the clients who called her years after the sale and how she still answered.

“Many agents disappear after the sale, but I continue to be a resource for my clients for years afterward. Whether they need contractor recommendations, help with a life change, advice on an investment property, or simply someone they can trust, I'm always just a phone call away.”



Her guiding motto captures it perfectly: People First, Houses Second. It is not a tagline. It is a way of operating. Millie treats every client the same whether they are buying a million-dollar lakefront property or a modest starter home. Every person, she believes, deserves the same level of respect, attention, and care.

A Moment That Defined Everything

Long before real estate, Millie had already mastered generosity. At 16, she bought her first car with money she had earned. Every Sunday, she noticed an older man walking to church along the road, Bible in hand. She learned his wife was seriously ill and that, without a vehicle, getting to medical appointments was a constant struggle.

Millie handed him the keys to her car. Not a loan. A gift. It took her a long time to save up for another vehicle, but she never once regretted it. For years afterward, every time he passed her on the road, he would honk and wave as big as he could. “Those waves reminded me that even small acts of kindness can have a lasting impact,” she reflects.

That 16-year-old girl is still showing up to work every day.

Success Measured Differently

Millie lives by a quote she returns to often: “You reap what you sow.” She has found it true in every corner of life. Plant seeds of



hard work, kindness, and integrity, and the harvest eventually comes. It may not arrive on your timeline, but it comes.

Another piece of wisdom she carries: “You can’t reach your destination if you stop and throw rocks at every barking dog along the road.” Critics, distractions, and negativity are part of any journey. Millie’s answer is to keep moving. Fix your eyes on the road ahead. Trust the process.

She does not measure her greatest achievement by sales volume or industry awards. She measures it by the clients who spot her years later and wrap her in a hug. By children who grew up watching her serve others and chose to do the same. By a life that leaves the world a little better than she found it.

The Road Ahead

Millie’s vision for the future is as generous as she is. She wants to grow her team without losing what built it. Mentor the next generation of agents. Help more families find their footing. And be remembered not for the transactions she closed, but for the people she loved well along the way.

In an industry often associated with hustle and competition, Millie Weaver is proof that the most powerful thing a real estate professional can offer isn’t market knowledge or negotiation skill. It’s showing up, genuinely caring, and treating every single client like family.

That’s not a strategy. That’s a calling. 🏡



“
Even small acts of kindness
can have a lasting
impact”



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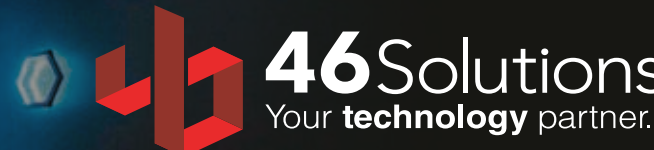
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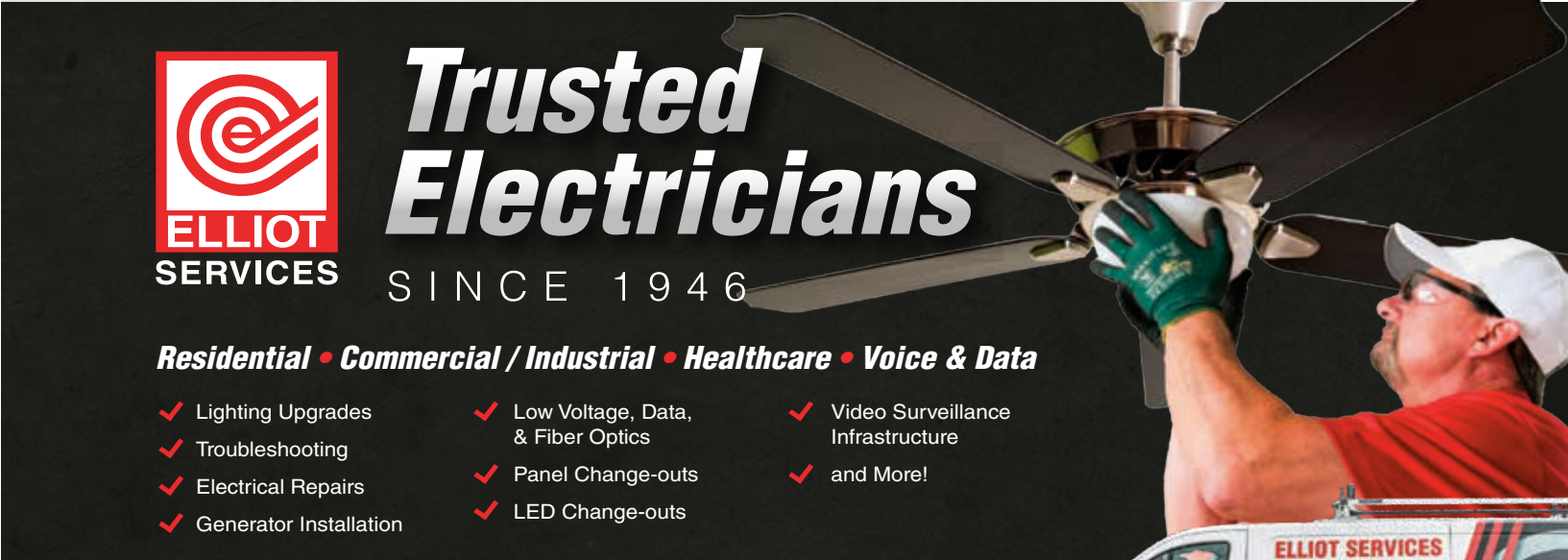


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