

# Just Some of the NACHI Events that made 2005 a Great Year

Starting with most recent:

N.W. Washington NACHI Chapter meeting on December 12th., 2005

Northeast Florida Chapter Meeting in Jacksonville, Florida on December 3rd.

Bay Area Chapter of NACHI Professionals (formerly PIA) meeting in Livermore, California on December 3rd, 2005.

NACHI Southwestern Ontario to host CATS Education on November 20th and 27th.

FREE 2-day educational event in New York on November 18th-19th.

PennJersey NACHI Chapter meeting on November 17th, 2005.

Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting in Hauppauge, NY on November 15th.

NACHI's Atlanta Chapter meeting on November 15th.

Colorado NACHI Chapter to host CATS Training Caravan on November 12th and 13th, 2005.

Ohio State NACHI Chapter meeting in Columbus on November 12th.

Chicago NACHI and People's Energy offer continuing education to NACHI Members, on November 9th, 10th, 16th and 17th.

Metro-East St. Louis Chapter meeting on November 9th in O'Fallon, Illinois.

NACHI Training Caravan in Springfield, Missouri on November 4th and 5th

Western British Columbia Canada NACHI meeting on November 4th.

Berks County Chapter Meeting in Wyomissing on October 29th.

FREE training at Mid Tennessee NACHI Chapter on October 28th, 2005.

1-day mold certification in Pittsburgh, PA on October 27th.

Colorado NACHI Chapter Meeting on October 25th in Castle Rock.

Northern Idaho/Spokane Washington Chapter meeting on October 21st.

Central Florida NACHI Chapter meeting on October 18th.

NACHI booth at Colorado Association of REALTORS state convention on October 16th-18th.

Connecticut NACHI Chapter meeting on October 12th.

Northwest Washington Chapter Meeting on October 10th.

St. Louis Metro-East Chapter Meeting on October 5th.

Free 2-day home inspector training in Missouri on September 30th and October 1st.

Western Pennsylvania NACHI Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh on September 29th, 2005.

Certified Adult Training Services to teach at Kansas City Chapter on September 27th-28th.

Central Florida Chapter Meeting and PRO-LAB's Mold Certification on September 24th and 25th.

New Jersey Chapter Meeting on September 22nd.

NACHI booth at Illinois Association of REALTORS Convention on September 20-22nd, 2005.

Gerry Beaumont and Skyetec presen-

tation at Atlanta NACHI on September 20th.

NACHI Founder Nick Gromicko speaking at A-Pro Event in New Orleans on September 17th, 2005. (Postponed due to Katrina)

Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting on September 15th, 2005. (Postponed)

SW Ontario Canada NACHI Chapter meeting on September 14th, 2005.

NACHI at Idaho/Montana REALTORS Convention in Sun Valley on September 14th-17th.

NACHI booth at Ohio Association of REALTORS Expo on September 11th-14th.

Merrell Institute provides training in NY on September 14th-17th, 2005.

South Carolina NACHI Chapter organizational meeting on September 10th, 2005

Carlos Albizu University in Miami home inspection course on September 10th, 2005.

Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting on September 1st.

NY Metro NACHI Chapter meeting on September 1st.

Lake St. Clair Michigan Chapter meeting in Clinton Twp on August 29th.

Mold Certification in NE Florida on August 27th.

W. Pennsylvania NACHI Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh on August 25th.

Ohio State NACHI Chapter meeting on August 20th.

Asst. Commissioner of Regulatory Boards speaking at Nashville NACHI meeting on August 20th.

PennJersey Chapter of NACHI meeting in Bethlehem, PA on August 18th.

Atlanta NACHI Chapter meeting on August 16th, 2005.

NACHI North Texas Chapter meeting on August 16th, 2005.

St. Louis Metro East Chapter of NACHI meeting on August 13th.

South Florida NACHI Chapter 2-Day Educational event on August 12-13th.

NW Washington meeting in Bellingham on August 8th.

Maine State NACHI Chapter meeting in Portland on August 5th.

Free Electrical for Home Inspectors training seminar in MO on July 30th.

W.PA NACHI Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh on July 28th.

Hawaii NACHI Chapter meeting in Aiea, HI on July 28th.

NACHI Idaho Chapter meeting in Coeur d'Alene on July 20th.

Atlanta NACHI Chapter meeting on July 19th.

NACHI booth at Wurtsboro, NY Trade Expon on July 19th.

NACHI booth at Coldwell Banker day in Illinois on July 16th.

NACHI's Chicago Chapter meeting in Rosemont, IL on July 15th.

Great Lakes NACHI Chapter meeting in Lansing, MI on July 13th.

New York Capitol Region Chapter meeting in Albany on July 9th.

South Florida NACHI Chapter meeting in Miami on July 6th, 2005.

Orange Empire NACHI Chapter meeting on June 30th.

Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting on June 30th.

Silicon Valley, California NACHI Chapter meeting on June 30th, 2005.

Colorado NACHI Chapter meeting on June 29th, 2005.

Hudson Valley, NY NACHI Chapter meeting on June 28th.

Continuing education in Montana on June 24th.

NACHI at NorthEast Florida Association of REALTORS meeting on June 23rd.

Western Pennsylvania Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh, PA on June 23rd.

Northeast Florida Chapter Meeting on June 22nd in Jacksonville, FL.

NACHI Atlanta Chapter meeting on June 21st.

North Texas NACHI Chapter Meeting on June 21st in Grapevine, Texas.

Central Pennsylvania NACHI Chapter meeting in Harrisburg on June 17th.

NACHI sponsors REALTORS Golf Tournament in Ontario on June 15th.

Northwest Washington NACHI Chapter Creative Marketing meeting on June 13th.

Central Missouri NACHI Chapter meeting on June 12th.

Free 1-day Electrical for Home Inspectors training seminar in Tulsa, OK on June 11th.

SE Florida NACHI Chapter's 2-day educational event in Ft. Lauderdale on June 10th-11th.

DuKa NACHI Chapter meeting in Bowmanville, ON on June 8th.

Southwestern Ontario, Canada NACHI Chapter meeting on June 7th.

NACHI Idaho Chapter meeting in Boise, ID on June 4th.

NACHI Idaho Chapter meeting in Coeur d'Alene, ID on June 3rd.

Puget Sound NACHI Chapter meeting on June 1st.

Western PA NACHI Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh on May 27th.

ITA's Safe and Sound in Miami, FL on May 21st-22nd.

S. Houston, Texas Real Estate Commission approved continuing education on May 21st.

South Sound Home Inspectors Chapter of NACHI meeting in Tacoma on May 20th.

Long Island, New York NACHI Chapter meeting on May 19th.

PennJersey NACHI Chapter meeting in Bethlehem, PA on May 19th.

Southeast Wisconsin Chapter meeting in Kenosha on May 18th, 2005.

NACHI sponsors REALTOR's Spring into Technology even in Canada on May 18th.

Ready, set, make money! Atlanta NACHI Chapter meeting on May 17th.

NACHI North Texas Chapter meeting on May 17th.

Dallas-Fort Worth Mid City, Texas Real Estate Commission approved continuing education on May 14th.

NACHI-DUKA meeting in Ontario on May 11th.

New York Assemblywoman who

sponsored licensing law speaking at NACHI meeting on May 7th.

San Antonio, Texas Real Estate Commission approved continuing education on May 7th.

Illinois Association of REALTORS Spring Conference on May 4th-5th.

North Dallas, Texas Real Estate Commission approved continuing education on April 30th.

Mr. NACHI (a horse) running in Conquer Cancer charity race on April 30th.

Orange County, California NACHI Chapter meeting on April 29th, 2005.

New Jersey NACHI Chapter meeting in Somerville on April 28th.

New Jersey NACHI Chapter meeting in Atlantic City on April 27th.

Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting on April 21st.

Denver/Colorado NACHI Chapter meeting on April 21st.

EEF/EPA Online mold training on April 19th & 20th.

NACHI Atlanta Chapter meeting in Georgia on April 19th.

NACHI Chapter meeting in Grapevine, Texas on April 19th.

North Houston, Texas Real Estate Commission approved continuing education on April 16th.

NACHI training day in Montana on April 15th.

NACHI booth at PACNY in Verona, NY on April 14th-15th.

NACHI-ECO meeting in Kingston, Ontario on April 13th.

Ohio State Chapter of NACHI meeting in Columbus on April 9th.

NACHI Idaho Chapter meeting in Coeur d'Alene on April 9th.

NACHI booth at Westchester County, NY Home Show on April 8th-10th.

Central Florida NACHI Chapter codes & licensing meeting on April 1st.

Berks County NACHI Chapter's 1-day Energy Inspection course in Reading, PA on March 25th.

Berks County, Pennsylvania NACHI Chapter meeting in Reading, PA on March 24th.

New Jersey NACHI Chapter meeting in East Windsor, NJ on March 24th.

NACHI-DUKA chapter meeting in Ontario on March 23rd.

NACHI Oklahoma Chapter meeting in Tulsa on March 19th.

BuildFax and NACHI joint press release at Houston Home Show on March 18th.

Western Pennsylvania NACHI Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh, PA on March 18th.

West Central NACHI luncheon presentation in Guelph, Ontario on March 18th.

NACHI Sacramento Chapter meeting in California on March 16th.

Online EEF/EPA mold training course on March 15th-16th.

Educational day and licensing meeting in Billings, Montana on March 14th.

Long Island NACHI's all-day WDI training seminar on March 12th.

Associations join to host 1-day EIFS

certification in Pensacola, Florida on March 12th.

HVAC training at NACHI's NY Fingerlakes Chapter on March 12th.

North Texas NACHI meeting in Euless, TX on March 12th.

CAPHI's immediate past president speaking at NACHI Chapter meeting in Canada on March 9th.

Heritage Homes Seminar and Field Trip in Ontario on March 5th & 6th.

Earn 2 CEUs for New Jersey licensing at NJ NACHI Chapter meeting on March 3rd.

Western British Columbia meeting in Canada on March 2nd.

NACHI free 1-day Advanced Electrical for Home Inspectors in Kansas on February 26th.

NACHI-DUKA Chapter meeting in Ontario on February 23rd.

Western Michigan NACHI Chapter meeting on February 23rd.

Earn 2 CEUs for New Jersey Licensing at NJ NACHI Chapter meeting on February 23rd.

FREA's Chris Butler at Alabama NACHI Chapter meeting on February 22nd.

Hudson Valley, New York NACHI Chapter meetin on February 22nd.

Colorado NACHI and Denver NACHI Chapters meeting on February 20th.

Middle Tennessee NACHI Chapter meeting in Nashville on February 19th.

NACHI booth at Housing Fair in Kalispel, Montana on February 19th.

Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting on February 17th.

Atlanta NACHI Chapter meeting on February 15th.

International Code Council/NACHI advanced training in Austin Texas on February 14th-18th, 2005.

Enviro-2005 Conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey on February 16th-17th, 2005.

EEF-EPA online mold course. ONLINE! on February 15th-16th, 2005.

Washington state marketing and licensing meeting in Seattle on Februry 9th.

NACHI-ECO Chapter meeting in Ontario on February 9th.

W. Pennsylvania NACHI Chapter meeting in Pittsburgh, PA on January 29th.

New Jersey NACHI Chapter meeting on January 27th.

NACHI Home Inspection Convention in Orlando FL on January 25-29, 2005.

Hernando County, Florida NACHI Chapter meeting in Spring Hill, FL on January 22, 2005.

Professional Equipment demo at Long Island NACHI Chapter meeting on January 20.

NACHI at the Calgary Real Estate Board Conference in Alberta Canada on January 19th.

Atlanta monthly NACHI Chapter meeting on January 18th.

Berks County NACHI Chapter meeting in Wyomissing, PA on January 17th.

**Pickup Two Clients by Marketing Pre-Listing Inspections**

Have your home inspected by a NACHI inspector before you list.

Eventually your buyers are going to conduct an inspection. You may as well know what they are going to find by getting there first. Having an inspection performed ahead

# Brutality Online: Gromicko on Home Inspection Websites

By Nick Gromicko

## PREFACE

The home inspection business is different than most any other business in that you (the home inspector) never meet your client until AFTER you are hired. That's right, when you get out of your truck at the inspection site and introduce yourself to your client he/she has already hired you. There is almost no salesmanship involved in the home inspection business. Success relies almost solely on marketing. But where should an inspector market? Well, a home inspector's clients are nearly always home buyers. And many of these home buyers are nicely all in one place... online. They are online touring new homes, researching schools, emailing their real estate agents, shopping for mortgages and looking for home inspectors. In my own career at NACHI I have never pulled any punches when touting the fact that there is no place a home inspector can spend 79 cents a day that is better or more profitable to his/her business than joining NACHI. In my heart I truly believe that NACHI members get far more back from NACHI than the membership dues they spend and that nothing can compete with the value provided by membership in NACHI. If you feel your clients, about to make the purchase of their lives, are served well by hiring you... you shouldn't pull any punches either. Marketing is no place for humility. You are serving your clients by allowing them learn of, and benefit from, your good works.

even be found in the code of the many thousands of NACHI-owned sites on the internet sending members work. It is how some mediocre NACHI inspectors are able to compete with excellent inspectors and how some excellent NACHI members can dominate entire markets. Some advice I offer here is very much in keeping with my marketing strategy. So be forewarned.

Having said all that, if you are a good home inspector, you have an ethical duty to market yourself and stay in business so as many of your fellow citizens as possible can use your services. In my own career at NACHI I have never pulled any punches when touting the fact that there is no place a home inspector can spend 79 cents a day that is better or more profitable to his/her business than joining NACHI. In my heart I truly believe that NACHI members get far more back from NACHI than the membership dues they spend and that nothing can compete with the value provided by membership in NACHI. If you feel your clients, about to make the purchase of their lives, are served well by hiring you... you shouldn't pull any punches either. Marketing is no place for humility. You are serving your clients by allowing them learn of, and benefit from, your good works.

## NOPE:

### Your website is not a brochure.

A company brochure is nothing more than a pompous business card. Brochures are widely accepted as corporate propaganda. Readers don't expect to find much real information in them and so brochures are not really something a potential client is going to study with any seriousness. You should consider yourself lucky to have a potential client even open your brochure. However, internet users are much more goal driven. They have clicked on your website for a specific reason, not to just flip through the pages. Therefore your web developer has to predict what information these visitors are seeking and then quickly give it to them, or at least make the visitor believe they are but a click away from getting it. I believe a website is far more important to a home inspector than a brochure.

### Your website is not a TV.

There still exist some web developers who forget what the real purpose of a home inspector's website is... to generate inspection business for the inspector. Some designs still include slow loading graphics, a happy couple standing in front of their new home, virtual tours, and of course the obligatory tie-wearing, clip board-holding, smiling faced inspector. These sites look great but generate very little inspection work for their owners. Visitors are seeking information. Your web developer's job is to quickly make visitors believe that the information they seek is just a click away (at most) and then shape the delivery of that information such that it leads each visitor toward a decision to hire you for the inspection. That's it. This isn't art, it's science. There is a big difference between a professional looking website and a pretty one. Gromicko's Law of Websites: *Pretty websites only sell their developer's services.*

However, there is some correlation between clean, visual design and quality. Gromicko's Law of Websites: *Pretty websites only sell their developer's services.* However, there is some correlation between clean, visual design and quality.

The worst thing I ever saw on a home inspector's website was a virtual home inspection tour. I confess, we almost created one at NACHI until

we discovered that most visitors misinterpreted it as some sort of newfangled, online sample inspection report that they did not like.

### Your website is not a magazine.

Your website is not a magazine and your homepage is not a magazine cover. The purpose of a magazine cover is to grab your attention so you pickup (or visit) the magazine. However, there is no sense in trying to make your homepage grab attention as no one can see it until after they choose to visit it anyway. It is the links on your homepage leading the visitor toward a decision to hire you that must be attention grabbers. A homepage cannot attract or send visitors to itself.

### Your website is not a building.

Your website is not a building and your homepage is not a true lobby. Most websites have a homepage that act as a lobby, directing traffic in different directions. However, a home inspector's homepage should be a trick lobby. The signage (links) should appear to offer visitors directions to different departments. But in reality, they should merely take visitors through sales pitches that all lead back to making the visitor decide to hire you. These departments (pages) are not destinations in and of themselves, but rather routes you allow the visitor to pass through on his/her way to hiring you. Common link titles that lead to such sales routes are "*Reasons to hire me*", "*My qualifications*", "*What my full home inspections include*", and "*My promise to you*".

### Your webpage is not a newspaper.

Your webpage is not a newspaper and your homepage is not a newspaper's headline. A newspaper or a site like nachi.org, is expected to have fresh news every day and readers revisit the same newspaper every day correctly expecting to read something new. However, your homepage is not going to be visited daily. Very likely, you'll get only one chance to say anything to a potential client with your homepage. Forget about freshness. People only buy a house once in 7 years on average. Throw your same, old, but best pitch every time.

Furthermore, a newspaper's format is recognized all over the world. Readers all know that the sports scores and weather are on other pages within the newspaper. This advantage permits newspaper publishers to dedicate their front pages to big headlines. However, your visitors are not as convinced that what they seek exists within other pages of your website, so you will have to use part of your homepage to assure them. For instance, if you offer ancillary inspection services like wood destroying insects or radon, you will need to say so, on your homepage. Little changes make all the difference.

## YEP:

### A home inspector's website should have only one, lone goal.

A home inspector's website is not a newspaper, not a television, not a magazine and not a building. Unlike most websites it should not serve multiple purposes. Don't give your visitor any freedom to find anything but reasons to hire you. You must have an understanding of who your visitors are and which of those are important (likely to hire you). A home inspector's website has only one purpose... to cause visitors to contact and hire you.

While your website also may cause someone (typically a real estate agent) to refer business to you... this is still essentially the same.

## Virgins.

Because people only buy homes every several years, nearly all visitors to a home inspector's website are first-time visitors (and likely never return again). This is the main reason your homepage must use universally adopted conventions and be so finely tweaked.

Your website is a series of billboards. No visitor reads your website content. They glance at your homepage, scan it, and make a crucial decision, crucial to you the home inspector. The decision they make is whether or not to click anything on your home page, or to exit and head for a competitor's website. There are only two ways to get them to choose to stay:

- Give them what they want quickly. Unlike other industries that have to worry about fulfilling many visitor needs, your visitors know what they want. Immediately let them know that you have what they want and that it is at most a click or two away. This should be easy because home inspectors already know what their visitors want... to hire a good home inspector... so just give it to them.

or

- Give them something they weren't originally seeking, but rather something that appears so enticing that they can't help but click it. An irresistibly titled link pointing to [www.nachi.org/3mistakes.htm](http://www.nachi.org/3mistakes.htm) is an example of this strategy being used on a NACHI owned site.

Omit needless words on your homepage. This will make the pertinent words more prominent. Your homepage is like a billboard that your visitors are whizzing by. Give them only those words which will cause them to hit their brakes. Gromicko's Law of Site Stickiness: *Stickiness begins with one click on the homepage.* Yes, I know this sounds obvious, but your homepage must compel visitors to make that first click.

## THE MARK:

### Your visitors arrive with baggage.

By the time most visitors arrive at your website, they will likely have experienced thousands of other sites and expect yours to follow standard conventions. Visitors expect your site design to follow common conventions. To the extent that your web design veers from these internationally adopted conventions, your visitors will find it uncomfortable, assume your inspection report is similarly difficult to navigate and, with a click of their mouse, leave. Most visitors won't dig if they don't immediately find what they want, where they expect it to be, so your site has to be smooth. Smooth in terms of meeting visitor expectations. Forget about being creative. Play the odds and appeal to the masses. Let your competitor's web developer be creative. If you want to be an artist go be one. Many web developers should be on stage doing interpretive dances or pounding lumps of sculpture clay. They have no business screwing up our website designs. I once saw a home inspector website where the links were all placed on different parts of a picture of a house. It was

cute, but almost impossible for a first time visitor to navigate. Conventions only become conventions under the forces of natural selection. In other words, they are conventions because they work. Visitors get a reassuring sense of comfort from a website that doesn't veer from standard conventions. This sense of comfort earned by your website then transfers to their sense of you, the inspector. This is a science (and your business!), not an art.

## You must deny your visitors their freedom.

[www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org) is a horrible example for a home inspector to follow when developing his own website. It is the opposite of what your website should be. [www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org) is hailed by usability experts as near perfect, in large part due to its homepage. Within a second or two, first-time visitors to [nachi.org](http://nachi.org)'s homepage, regardless of what they are looking for (online education, interactive message board, industry news, etc.) all come to the conclusion that they've found it, or at least found the page that will take them to it with just a click or two. This is fine for the homepage of one of the world's best trade associations because [nachi.org](http://nachi.org)'s 55,000+ other pages truly deliver what its homepage promises. [nachi.org](http://nachi.org) is able to be everything to all visitors and grants visitors the freedom to seek, and more importantly find, anything they might want.

Conversely, a home inspector's website must deny this freedom. Every link on your homepage should lead to a page that starts with something relating to that respective link title (lead in). Then, every link from that page should link to a sales pitch lead for your services. Then every link from that page should lead to sales closings (reasons to contact you now). Then every link from that page should lead to your contact information. I love to link these pages with the one way title "*Continue*" as visitors have no business navigating themselves around. Your site should covertly chauffeur your visitors. Don't worry, your visitors won't ever figure out that they aren't behind the wheel unless you give them a site map... so don't.

Unlike [nachi.org](http://nachi.org), your website should have only one goal... to cause your visitor to hire you. Like the former Soviet Union's elections where every candidate was a communist, your visitors should also be free to choose any link that leads them toward a same end. Your website is a funnel with visitors freely and unconsciously choosing to spiral down it. You cannot afford to grant your visitors any real freedom.

Let your competitor build a website like [nachi.org](http://nachi.org), one that provides visitors with real freedoms and lots of information. You build a website that provides food for your family, one that will pry visitors away from their hard-earned money. Gromicko's Law of Site Usability: *Visitor freedom and sales are inversely related.* Grant your visitors the complete freedom to never choose incorrectly.

## How to treat visitors seeking something you don't sell.

If your visitor wants something else, something you don't sell, treat that visitor like trash. Well, not really, but just don't let them cost you anything. Let your competitors waste precious homepage real estate with stuff like "*Search the Web*" functions. Design your site as if every visitor was there to hire you.

## WARNINGS:

### Some of the advice in this article is wrong.

Most of what I have to say here is specific for home inspector's websites. In fact, it is so specific that it is actually bad advice for most other website designs. If you are not developing a website for a home inspection service, stop reading now. This article is not for you.

### Some of the advice in this article isn't.

I'll admit that I have a big ego and like to see my own name in print, hence the title of this article. But the other reason for including my name in the title is to make it clear that this is not so much set of general guidelines as it is my own commentary on the subject. I did not offer a boilerplate website for good reason. This article is more my own personal thinking than a set of rules.

### Nearly none of the advice in this article is technical.

A technical paper geared more toward website developers is in the works. This article is its precursor. I also saved the subjects of traffic generation and search engine optimization for my future articles to run in *Inspector's Quarterly*.

### Some of the advice in this article is brutal.

I've always fancied myself a gentleman and so I am rarely crude. However, when it comes to giving marketing and sales advice, I am often brutal. This marketing brutality can

## DESIGN:

### Don't use too many pics on your homepage.

People are naturally drawn to photos (pics) so if a pic does not tell a story that sells your inspection service, don't use it. An example of a pic that sells would be you (the home inspector) kneeling to check a gas valve near a heating system with an electronic leak detector. This action shot of you holding a gadget that the average client likely does not own or understand is a strong visual sales pitch you might consider building your homepage around. You can't judge a book by its cover but many visitors will, so reconsider using your picture if you:

- look very overweight. It implies that you can't inspect the crawl space.
- look very young. It implies that you are inexperienced.
- look like a mass-murderer.

If you are male and have a ponytail, hide it in the photograph. You want the reader to identify with you. Keep your picture as simple as possible. Consider using digital air brushing to touchup your picture. Don't wear a tie. Except for maybe in My Promise (discussed later). This is too professional and implies that you are so dressed up you won't inspect the attic. Don't wear a t-shirt. This is too unprofessional. You are a step above, inspecting the work done by men in T-shirts. Try to find middle ground. Perhaps a nice collared shirt with the top button undone.

Another pic you could add to your homepage would be a cutout of a sample of your home inspection report all fanned out and laying on a table. Make it a cutout instead of a square photo though. It will look much better. Trust me.

There is one additional pic which may serve to increase sales. That is a pic or a cutout of something, anything, that conveys that you are locally owned and operated. Something depicting the local sports team, a familiar town monument, or recognizable local geographic feature. Visitors like to contact local inspectors, which is why I'm generally against toll free numbers. Local exchanges are much friendlier. Anyway, a pic that shows you are a *local* is a fine addition to your homepage.

Fight the temptation to include most other pics on the homepage. Other pics such as those of defects can go in their respective pages, but not on the homepage. They will dilute your visitor's attentiveness, so critical to sales. Pics also slow download times. Gromicko's Law of Pics: *Pics distract visitors away from critical, interactive sales text, unfortunately.*

### Use high-contrast colors for legibility.

Dark text on light background works best especially since convention dictates blue for links.

### Scroll.

Avoid blank space between bodies of text or insert blank lines between paragraphs if it looks like it might fall on the fold of the homepage. Otherwise a blank space might happen to land at the bottom of the visitor's screen making it appear to be the end of the text. A continuous body of text will allow visitors to realize they should scroll to reach the end.

### NACHI Certification Verification Seal.

Put your NACHI certification verification seal somewhere above the fold

(where a visitor wouldn't need to scroll to notice) of your homepage and with the other logos at the bottom of every page. The seal is a NACHI member's most powerful sales tool, designed to be interactive with your visitor. Use it. [www.nachi.org/webseal.htm](http://www.nachi.org/webseal.htm)

### Add logos to the very bottom of every page.

Use logos demonstrating third-party certification or qualification if you've earned them. They should go at the very bottom of every page.

*Certified.* The word Certified creates the most positive response from the general public which is why you should write out the words Member of the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors, not just use the acronym NACHI. Various NACHI logos are available for member use in [www.nachi.org/logos.htm](http://www.nachi.org/logos.htm)

*Licensed.* The word Licensed along with your state license number (Texas for example: TREC #12345) should be included and its inclusion may in fact be required in some states. However, consumers give you little credit for being licensed as they know licensing is a bare minimum standard and they assume that you are operating legally, even in states without licensing.

*Society.* Anything with the word Society in it should be avoided as studies have shown that the general public equates a society with a social club, not a professional trade organization.

*Training Institute.* Unfortunately the schools or training institutes you attended can work against you a bit. Schooling is sometimes associated with being a novice. Use only their logo (if permitted). Don't write out "graduated from..." Your qualifications list (discussed later) is the better location for detailing your educational background.

*InterNACHI.* NACHI and InterNACHI, the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors recently entered into an agreement that gives automatic InterNACHI membership to NACHI members. NACHI members may use the InterNACHI logo as well [www.nachi.org/internachilogos.htm](http://www.nachi.org/internachilogos.htm).

*NACHI Foundation.* The NACHI Foundation (a separate registered charity) grants sponsorship logo use to donors. Civic merit logos are also good to include.

### Your company logo.

Put your logo in the upper left hand corner. It should be bigger than anything else on the homepage, except maybe one main pic (described below). 100 pixels is about the max though. Avoid cartoons. Cartoon graphics do not present a professional image. No Sherlock Holmes characters looking at a house with a magnifying glass. Would a professional engineer use cartoons?

There is an emerging convention that makes logos link to the homepage. There is no harm in linking your logo to your homepage but many users are not aware of this convention yet (so maybe I'm premature in calling it a convention). Therefore, link your logo to your homepage if you wish but not in place of having a link titled "homepage" on every page. Every page should have a link titled "homepage."

### Your tagline.

This is the most important part of your homepage. The main role of a tag line is to communicate what you do quickly. It is the sign over your

store and should be placed to the right of your logo. A tagline is especially important to inspection companies that don't have the word "inspection" in their company name. For example:

A & B Enterprises, LLC

This company name doesn't clearly convey what business they're in. Imagine seeing a sign for a store without knowing what it is they sell. A tagline solves this problem. The best tagline for home inspectors is *Inspected once, inspected right!*® It not only quickly defines what business the company is in, but it is also a powerful ad within itself. *Inspected once, inspected right!*® insinuates that if you hire someone else you might end up having to have it inspected a second time. It also confidently touts that A & B Enterprises, LLC inspects it right the first time. Anyway, see how much better the company name looks with a tagline under it:

A & B Enterprises, LLC  
*Inspected once, inspected right!*®

Another good tag line is "Anyone else is just looking around."® And for multi-inspector firms a good tagline is "*The right inspector, right away.*"®

Note: "*Inspected once, inspected right!*", "*Anyone else is just looking around.*", and "*The right inspector, right away.*" taglines are Registered Trademarks of the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors (NACHI). NACHI members may use the taglines as they wish. NACHI recommends that members italicize and punctuate the tagline as depicted.

### Fonts.

Avoid using many different fonts. It diminishes the continuity of your website. Stick to two fonts, one for headlines and one for the body text. Impact fonts are best reserved for headings. Impacts command attention and they help the reader determine what is important. Choose a Serif font such as Verdana, Arial or Helvetica for the body text. Serifs exist for a purpose, they help the reader's eye pick up the shape of the letter. Bolding or italicizing do not necessarily count as separate fonts. Same thing goes for varying colors. Use an alternate color to emphasize a word or set of words but don't over do it. Only use these techniques as emphasis to add clarity. And never use comic fonts...you are a professional, not a clown.

### NAVIGATION:

#### Your homepage links constitute an ad, in and of themselves.

Because homepages serve as the portal to the different areas of a site, homepages tend to have more links than other pages. I like a wide border of navigational links. However, be mindful that navigation facilitation is only a secondary purpose of home inspector's homepage. The primary purpose is to sell your services. Therefore the links on your homepage should create an ad for your home inspection company, in and of themselves, even if your visitor never clicks any of them. Compose your navigation links as if they weren't live links, but rather copy (advertising industry's term for text within an ad).

#### Left border navigation vs. top horizontal navigation.

Most tests that have been conducted on this subject declare that navigational links are best placed vertically in the left border for left-to-right reading languages like English. Visitors often suffer from banner blindness and so ignore anything horizontal at the top of a webpage. Further-

more, vertical lists imply hierarchy where horizontal tabs do not. This hierarchy can be especially exploited by home inspector's websites (which are typically selling only one service) to compose a sort of ad (made up of link titles). More below.

### Home vs. homepage.

As a home inspector, you will likely use the term "home" a lot within the content of your website. Therefore don't also use the term "home" to refer to your homepage. Instead, reserve the word "homepage" for your homepage and use the term "homepage" instead of "home" to link to your homepage.

### Distinguishing your homepage.

Unlike monster sites like nachi.org, where many millions of visitors arrive at nachi.org through pages other than the homepage, your visitors will almost all arrive at your website through your homepage. Nevertheless it should still be apparent to your visitors when they are on your homepage. The best way to distinguish your homepage from other pages is with the word "Welcome." The word "Welcome" is universally used as a signpost for homepages. This signpost will help ensure that visitors recognize their starting point should they return to your homepage after exploring other pages of your website.

Don't be compelled to offer a lengthy welcome message or *happy talk* that eats up prime homepage space. Simply the lone word "Welcome" at the start of your homepage text is plenty.

Don't make "Welcome" the first word in your window title, determined by the title tag of each HTML document, as titles play a critical role in search engine bookmarking. Use "inspector" or better yet your city name to exploit differentiating site information. A good window title might be Boston's best home inspector or even NACHI's tagline *Inspected once, Inspected Right!*®

### Border links to include.

The following are the links your website should have. They should probably be placed in a left border underneath your logo in this general order. But again, this is not meant to be a boilerplate. Toward that end I offer this example of the development of your navigation composition. Remember, your links comprise an ad in and of themselves, even if your visitor doesn't click any of them.

[HomePage](#)  
[Full Home Inspections](#)  
[Additional Inspections](#)  
[radon gas](#)  
[wood destroying insects \(termites\)](#)  
[mold](#)  
[Why Hire Me](#)  
[My Qualifications](#)  
[NACHI Certification Verification](#)  
[Standards of Practice](#)  
[Code of Ethics](#)  
[My Promise to You](#)  
[Contact Me Now](#)  
[andy@abenterprisesllc.com](mailto:andy@abenterprisesllc.com)  
(123) 456-7890 (8:00am-10:30pm)

If you can offer a sample report that is downloadable online, put it as link at the bottom of the "Full Home Inspections" page as well as a sub line underneath it. It is frustrating to be thrust into a new medium; so if the sample report link goes to another site or is a pdf file, warn your visitor in parenthesis like so:

[HomePage](#)  
[Full Home Inspections](#)  
[download a sample report \(pdf\)](#)  
[Additional Inspections](#)  
[radon gas](#)  
[wood destroying insects \(termites\)](#)  
[mold](#)  
[Why Hire Me](#)  
[My Qualifications](#)  
[NACHI Certification Verification](#)  
[Standards of Practice](#)  
[Code of Ethics](#)  
[My Promise to You](#)  
[Contact Me Now](#)  
[andy@abenterprisesllc.com](mailto:andy@abenterprisesllc.com)  
(123) 456-7890 (8:00am-10:30pm)

I like each word of categories to be capitalized and sub categories to be all lowercase as it helps make clear the distinction between their relative importance. All uppercase words are difficult to read. However, if you are an inspector that has many qualifications you might want to capitalize every letter in your "MY QUALIFICATIONS" link and/or make it bold font so as to draw attention and more clicks to it like so:

[HomePage](#)  
[Full Home Inspections](#)  
[Additional Inspections](#)  
[radon gas](#)  
[wood destroying insects \(termites\)](#)  
[mold](#)  
[Why Hire Me](#)  
[My Qualifications](#)  
[NACHI Certification Verification](#)  
[Standards of Practice](#)  
[Code of Ethics](#)  
[My Promise to You](#)

### Contact Me Now

I like putting the word "Gas" after "Radon" to help those who are unfamiliar with radon. And I like putting the word "(termites)" in parenthesis after "Wood Destroying Insects." Don't use "WDO" as few visitors are familiar with that abbreviation.

The whole purpose of your website is to get your phone to ring so if you have both an email address and answer your phone regularly, you might want to also turn "Contact Me" into a category titled "Contact Me Now" and put the actual contact information under it. Also, if you are willing to answer your phone in the evening, say so in parenthesis after your phone number. This removes a visitor's hesitation to call you late.

I also believe that there is a small percentage of visitors (mostly real estate agents) that visit a home inspector's website for the sole purpose of looking up a familiar inspector's contact information. Some real estate agents who regularly used my home inspection services for years never committed my phone number to memory and always went back online to retrieve it. Therefore repeating your contact information again on the right side of your homepage, near the top, seems reasonable. Furthermore, some clients referred to you only by company name may be visiting your site solely to retrieve your contact information to schedule a home inspection. Ahhhh, the power of referrals.

[HomePage](#)

[Full Home Inspections](#)

[Additional Inspections](#)

[radon gas](#)

[wood destroying insects \(termites\)](#)

[mold](#)

[Why Hire Me](#)

[My Qualifications](#)

[NACHI Certification Verification](#)

[Standards of Practice](#)

[Code of Ethics](#)

[My Promise to You](#)

[Contact Me Now](#)

[andy@abenterprisesllc.com](mailto:andy@abenterprisesllc.com)

(123) 456-7890 (8:00am-10:30pm)

I like each word of categories to be capitalized and sub categories to be all lowercase as it helps make clear the distinction between their relative importance. All uppercase words are difficult to read. However, if you are an inspector that has many qualifications you might want to capitalize every letter in your "MY QUALIFICATIONS" link and/or make it bold font so as to draw attention and more clicks to it like so:

[HomePage](#)  
[Full Home Inspections](#)  
[download a sample report \(pdf\)](#)  
[Additional Inspections](#)

[radon gas](#)  
[wood destroying insects \(termites\)](#)  
[mold](#)

## **MY QUALIFICATIONS**

[Why Hire Me](#)  
[NACHI Certification Verification](#)  
[Standards of Practice](#)  
[Code of Ethics](#)  
[My Promise to You](#)  
[Contact Me Now](#)  
andy@abenterprisesllc.com  
(123) 456-7890 (8am-10:30pm)

There is a small percentage of visitors who, despite your "MY QUALIFICATIONS" being blue, underlined, and its own live link, will misinterpret it as a category title and everything under it as a subcategory and therefore not click on your "MY QUALIFICATIONS" link. Solve this problem by changing the order of your "MY QUALIFICATIONS" link and your "Why Hire Me" link (see above) and then listing the content from your qualifications page underneath the content on your "Why Hire Me" page, so that they get it either way.

I also like the "MY QUALIFICATIONS" link title to be bigger and bolder than the others as if you were gloating with pride about it. It is its own mini-ad.

### **Where are we taking them?**

Your "Homepage" link takes your visitors to your homepage of course. Many web developers add extra code to prevent the homepage link from being live on the homepage itself. Some even remove the homepage link from the border on the homepage since there is no reason to try to go to a page you are already on. I think this is unnecessary code and may even cause, not eliminate confusion. Nowadays internet users are well aware that navigational links often include links to the very page they are on.

Your *Full Home Inspections* link takes your visitors to a page which describes what you inspect. It is really a subset of NACHI's Standards of Practice and should include something like this:

Our Full Inspections include:

- Roof, vents, flashings and trim.
- Gutters and downspouts.
- Skylight, chimney and other roof penetrations.
- Decks, stoops, porches, walkways, and railings.
- Eaves, soffit and fascia.
- Grading and drainage.
- Basement, foundation and crawlspace.
- Water penetration and foundation movement.
- Heating systems.
- Cooling systems.
- Main water shut off valves.
- Water heating system.
- Interior plumbing fixtures and faucets.
- Drainage sump pumps with accessible floats.
- Electrical service line and meter box.
- Main disconnect and service amperage.
- Electrical panels, breakers and fuses.
- Grounding and bonding.
- GFCI's and AFCI's.
- Fireplace damper door and hearth.
- Insulation and ventilation.
- Garage doors, safety sensors and openers.
- And much more.

Review our Standards of Practice at [www.nachi.org/sop.htm](http://www.nachi.org/sop.htm) for complete details.

Note: There are sound legal reasons to include a live link to NACHI's Standards of Practice at the bottom of this list.

Each of your links under "Additional Inspections" should take the visitor to a page that offers information about that issue, a short description of how you inspect that issue and the additional fee you charge for that inspection (so that no one accidentally assumes they are included with your full home inspection).

Your "My Qualifications" link should take your visitor to a page that lists every qualification you can come up with. Make your list of qualifications as long as possible. Your list of qualifications can be broadened to include information such as your reporting system and schedule availability. If you make the list long enough, no one will read it. Your visitors will be impressed enough by its sheer length. Gromicko's Law of Surfing: *Only competitors read your webpage content, everyone else just scans it.* Each qualification you have can be broken up and expanded. For instance, instead of only stating that you are a member of the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors, state something like this:

- I am a member in good standing of the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors (NACHI).
- I have passed NACHI's Online Inspector Examination.
- I have completed NACHI's Code of Ethics Obstacle Course.
- I have taken NACHI's Standards of Practice Quiz.
- I abide by NACHI's Code of Ethics.
- I follow NACHI's Standard of Practice.
- I fulfill 18 hours of continuing education every year.
- I own and use high-tech equipment such as a gas leak detector and SureTest meter.
- I am available Saturdays.
- I generate easy-to-read inspection reports.

Deliver the message: *I am the quality home inspector you want to hire.*

If you use sub-contractors to perform any portion of your inspections, include their qualifications. For instance: *"Wood infestation inspection performed by licensed pest control inspector #12345."*

Notice that the last few qualifications are nothing more than reasons to hire you. Again, make this list as long as possible.

Your "Why Hire Me" link should take visitors to a page that is similar to your qualifications page only backwards. List the reasons to hire you first followed by your formal qualifications.

Your "My Qualifications" page list and your "Why Hire Me" page list are really just the list in reverse order.

Your "NACHI Certification Verification" link points to NACHI's online certification verification seal system. When making a purchase online, most consumers will look for a seal of approval from a company such as Thawte or VeriSign. You can give your clients the same kind of confidence by letting them know you are certified by the world's largest home inspection organization. HTML code for this link can be found at [www.nachi.org/webseal.htm](http://www.nachi.org/webseal.htm)

Your "Standards of Practice" link should point to [www.nachi.org/sop.htm](http://www.nachi.org/sop.htm) and be included for legal reasons.

Your "Code of Ethics" link should point to [www.nachi.org/code\\_of\\_ethics.htm](http://www.nachi.org/code_of_ethics.htm)

Your "My Promise to You" link should take visitors to a page that has a promise and a pic of you. Include a head-shot picture of yourself looking straight into the camera above the promise. Also add your signature on a slight angle below it. Few will actually read the promise (word for word), but the message will be conveyed none the less. See a sample at [www.nachi.org/promise.htm](http://www.nachi.org/promise.htm)

*My Promise to You*

*Choosing the right home inspector can be difficult. Unlike most professionals, you probably will not get to meet me until after you hire me. Furthermore, different inspectors have varying qualifications, equipment, experience, reporting methods and yes, different pricing. One thing for sure is that a home inspection requires work, a lot of work. Ultimately a thorough inspection depends heavily on the individual inspector's own effort. If you honor me by permitting me to inspect your new home, I guarantee that I will give you my very best effort. This I promise you.*

*John Smith*

*A&B Enterprises, LLC*

*Inspected once, Inspected right!®*

Your "Contact Me Now" information is obvious. However, if you do not have a professional looking email address, NACHI offers them for free at [www.nachi.org/membersemail.htm](http://www.nachi.org/membersemail.htm) None of this [debbieandbobgone-fishin4321@aol.com](mailto:debbieandbobgone-fishin4321@aol.com) stuff.

### **Know when to shut up and take the money.**

NACHI.org hosts the industry's largest message board. It is open to all and un-moderated which sometimes leads to comments being made which are somewhat *less than disciplined*. It was once proposed that such comments or posts be deleted for fear that a member's potential client would read them. I argued that no potential client would make a decision to hire a home inspector based on another inspector's comments found within a post, within a thread, within a forum, on a message board, hosted by a trade association that the inspector being considered also belonged. I further argued that if such a scenario was anywhere near reality, I would jump for joy and could make us all rich. The unfortunate truth is that potential clients don't spend much time researching before choosing their home inspector. And a visitor, if you are savvy enough to get him/her to your website at all, is likely going to grant you 3 clicks, maybe 4 at most. I hate to burst any home inspector's bubble here, but *you ain't all that*, at least not to most potential clients.

This leads us to the length of the text on the pages the navigation links point to. The answer is short. Even if you have a lot to say, don't say it without offering the visitor a chance to shut you up with cash. For example, let's say you have a link titled "Radon Gas." It may be tempting to put all sorts of scientific definitions of radon, the history of radon, graphs alerting visitors to the cancer risks high radon levels pose, etc., but refrain. Instead, have the link go to a short radon page which quickly describes why testing for radon is important, why your form of testing is the best, and how to contact you to order the inspection. If you are worried your sales pitch on this short radon page doesn't satisfy overly inquisitive visitors, simply add a "More About Radon" link at the bottom of your short radon page that contains everything anyone would ever want to know about radon and then some. Include all the information

you can on this page. Make it all one long page and feel free to make it as long as you like with pics. Include the advantages of your testing method (your testing equipment manufacturer or your analysis laboratory can provide you with plenty). However, have this long "more" page periodically offer to bring the visitor back to your short radon page with "Back" links. Let your visitors decide for themselves when they've been sold.

### **Avoid naming links "Click Here."**

Never title a link "Click Here." Instead, tell them what they get when they click the link. For example, rather than saying "Click Here for my Code of Ethics" just title the link "Code of Ethics" or "My Code of Ethics."

### **Avoid naming links "More."**

Rather than having a link titled "More" at the end of a list, tell them what there is more of. For example, "More references and testimonies from my past clients."

### **Don't change your link's colors once visited.**

Most websites have links that change colors once visited so as to keep a visitor from revisiting a page. However, assuming every page of your website is designed to sell your services, I see no reason to stop a potential customer from reading anything twice. Therefore, if possible, remove the code that provides this courtesy to your visitors so that all your links remain underlined and blue even after being visited. I know, it's brutal.

### **Don't choose icons or buttons over simple text links.**

Nearly all visitors to a home inspector's website are first time visitors. First time visitors can read a word faster than they discern what an icon means. Don't make them interpret icons (other than maybe a well recognized one like a printer icon). Use text-only links.

### **Don't live link any graphics.**

If a visitor's pointer changes over a graphic indicating a live link the visitor will often check every other graphic for live links. This is a distraction.

### **PRICE:**

#### **You're not fooling anyone.**

Don't offer a downloadable discount coupon. Such built-in coupons are a silly way of simply charging less and everyone knows it. Something available to everyone is worthless. Don't make your client download and present a \$20 coupon when they are buying a several hundred thousand dollar house. You might get away with it if you announce that it exclusive and *only available on this website till the end of the month* or something.

### **Huh?**

Avoid complicated or ambiguous pricing formulas. Example: "base price + \$1 for every \$1,000 in home price over \$250,000, additional fees and Saturday/mileage surcharge applies, call for quote." Instead keep your price structure straightforward and respectably high.

### **Nothing says quality louder.**

If your pricing is much higher than you competitors, flaunt it. High pricing is the sure-fire way to convince a customer that you are one of the best. Americans believe that you get what you pay for. If your website is making the contention that you are the

best home inspector in town, your pricing has to support this contention. Charging too little contradicts this claim. Read [www.nachi.org/convert.htm](http://www.nachi.org/convert.htm).

## **MISTAKES:**

### **Noise.**

Don't use watermarks, background images or wallpaper. They add clutter, decrease visibility, slow download time, and are merely decorative. Some tasteful exceptions exist, but few.

### **Don't offer a search feature.**

Don't grant your visitor any real freedom to search your site, or worse, the entire web from your website. No weather forecasts or stock quotes. The goal of your website is to lead the visitor toward a decision to hire you. Your website does not exist to provide your visitors with any information other than that which you want them to get, in the order you want them to get it.

### **Don't offer to ship visitors anything.**

I was a licensed REALTOR with RE/MAX for many years. Typically an inspection addendum within a real estate sales contract only gives the buyer a week or two to perform all the inspections. This means that when visitors are on a home inspector's website, they are not looking for a home inspector... they are looking to hire a home inspector. 99% of them have no spare time. And you shouldn't offer some trinket or costly book to your visitors in hopes that they'll give you their address, in hopes that you can ship them something, in hopes that it will arrive before they hire a home inspector, in hopes that upon receipt, they'll hire you. As my fellow New York NACHI members would say... *forget about it*. It is better to ask for their email address. Besides, all visitors are justifiably hesitant to give up their actual home addresses but have no problem giving up their email addresses. So if you get their email address, use it! Email them something every day, forever, or until they scream *stop!* Work every lead to death or until that lead turns into a scheduled home inspection. The top real estate agents will often work leads for years until those leads produce. We can learn something from these agents. NACHI is developing custom e-brochures that include each member's unique contact information for this purpose.

The worst give away I ever saw was the "Pocket Idiot's Guide to Home Inspections" for obvious marketing reasons I don't have to explain why this is so... well... idiotic.

### **Help wanted = poor service.**

Never use your home inspection website to advertise employment opportunities. It gives the impression that you are short handed or that you might send your client an inexperienced inspector to the job site. Reserve your home inspection website for only one thing... to convince visitors to hire you.

### **Forget about online booking.**

Any hint of online booking, even posting your schedule on an online calendar, will deter sales. No home buyer, or agent representing one, about to make the purchase of his/her lifetime, under the contractual time constraints of a home inspection contingency, is going to trust some new-fangled online booking function of your website. It may be cute, but there is a reason real salespeople are employed all over the world. Answer your phone.

## Don't yell.

There is no reason to use exclamation marks on your homepage ever. Never yell at your visitors!

## Don't act like you've never been in the end zone.

Avoid giving the impression that you are new-to-the-business...even if you are. Don't put anything on your website that would reveal your inexperience. Kiss-of-Death terms include: *New to the business, Affiliate, Just-licensed, Grand opening, Associate, Recent graduate, Introductory offer*, and the Mother of all Kiss-of-Death terms... *Candidate*.

## Don't misspell.

Because home inspectors are in the report writing business it is important to check and double check for typos and broken links.

## Don't pollute.

Your site should not contain any slow loading intros, ads, popup windows, rollovers, pulldowns, music, animation, Flash, banners, things that move content, things that blink, things that make sounds and instructions. Yes, instructions. If you have to include long instructions, even for downloading sample reports, you are doing something wrong. Don't make your visitors think.

## POSSIBLE ADDITIONS:

### Warranties.

The jury is still out on this one. I've tried to figure out if the marketing advantages of advertising that you offer a warranty outweigh the disadvantages. Those being that warranties give a negative connotation (that a visitor will need a warranty if they hire you) and that warranties may attract clients most likely to want to file a claim (this is called adverse selection in the insurance industry). Anyway, if I don't know something, I'm the first to admit it. I admit it. I don't know about offering warranties. A goal other than direct sales.

If you market heavily to real estate agents, you might want to put something on your website that causes them to refer clients to it. Links pointing to [www.nachi.org/what\\_really\\_matters.htm](http://www.nachi.org/what_really_matters.htm) and [www.nachi.org/3mistakes.htm](http://www.nachi.org/3mistakes.htm) are examples of links that generate referrals.

### Agreement between you and your client.

Some inspectors argue that displaying your standard agreement (or contract) between you and your client on your website might be useful in defending the charge that your client "didn't have time to read it" on-site. NACHI's pre-inspection agreement is the best in the industry at [www.nachi.org/newagreement.htm](http://www.nachi.org/newagreement.htm)

### Testimonials.

When I was in the inspection business I used to ask every client (after they moved in) for a letter of reference. I used to send them a postage-paid envelope and a letter asking them to scribble me a reference letter. I found you get more replies if you permit them to scribble. After you accumulate at least 20 you can put them on a page and link to it. No visitor will really read that many, but they might just check to see how many you have, so wait until you collect a bunch. NACHI did this at [www.nachi.org/thankyou.htm](http://www.nachi.org/thankyou.htm)

## MATH:

### Website design is only one third of the equation.

For example, if your website is getting 500 hits a month, and of those hits 3% contact you (attributable to website design) and of those that contact you 1/3 schedule inspections, then you are getting 5 jobs a month from your website.  $500 \times .03 \times .33 = 5$ . However if you can double all 3 factors in the equation so that you are getting 1,000 hits a month, 6% are contacting you, and you are converting 2/3rds of those contacts into scheduled inspections then you far more than doubled your results as  $1,000 \times .06 \times .67 = 40$  extra jobs a month! Each factor counts. Do the math.

In my next article "Bumper to Bumper, Gromicko on Generating Traffic to Home Inspector's Websites" I'll not only show you how to double your hits, but get on average 15 times more traffic. This next article will be available in NACHI.org's members-only section. NACHI promotes its members sites aggressively. Just the sheer volume of consumer traffic at [www.InspectorLocator.com](http://www.InspectorLocator.com), [www.InspectorSEEK.com](http://www.InspectorSEEK.com) and [www.FindanInspector.US](http://www.FindanInspector.US) make it silly for non-NACHI members to even own websites. No one will find a non-member's site as NACHI continually buries them beneath search engine results. NACHI is also hard at work improving the search engine ranking of member's websites and we are building some online tools for members to use to optimize their websites themselves. But first things first: Get your website design working for you. Make sure your website is not the weak link in your formula to success.

### Brutal truth.

The total number of inspections to be performed is a constant. The margins in the home inspection business are greater than nearly every industry as there are so few supplies to buy. So every inspection job you perform after you pay your overhead for the month is nearly pure profit. Every inspection counts. Furthermore, every job you get is one your competitor doesn't. Like I said, the total number of inspections is a constant. Make sure you are doing everything you can to get your share of the pie.

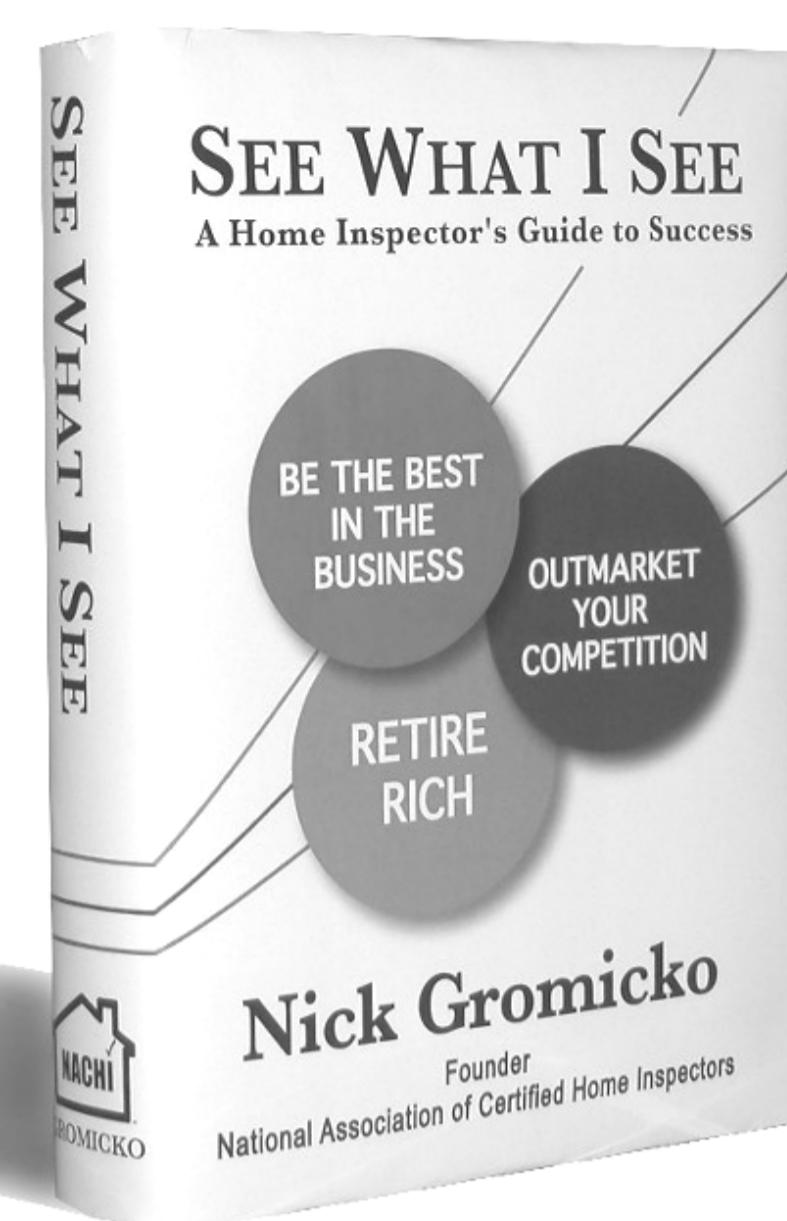
### MORE HELP:

#### Want me to test drive your site?

I'll test drive your home inspection website and write up a report containing all my suggestions for improvements. There's a not so brutal catch though. You have to promise to make a modest donation to The NACHI Foundation, NACHI's registered charity at [www.nachifoundation.org](http://www.nachifoundation.org). Whatever you can afford is fine, no matter how little. Email me at: [nick.gromicko@nachi.org](mailto:nick.gromicko@nachi.org) for more information.

## No More Excuses

For those of you who have been waiting on getting your web sites up and running, there no more reasons to wait. NACHI members can get an affordable, professional web site for your business, complete with over 50 pages of pre-built home inspection content for less than the cost of dinner for two! "Quick Start" NACHI web sites are only \$75 plus hosting - the best deal in the industry and exclusively for NACHI members! Order yours today, online at [www.homeinspectionwebsite.com](http://www.homeinspectionwebsite.com)



## A Home Inspector's Guide to Success

**Be the best in the business, outmarket your competition and retire rich**

Order online now at:

[www.nachi.org/book.htm](http://www.nachi.org/book.htm)

If you do not wish to order online with a credit card you can simply

send \$85 to:

"NACHI"  
1750 30th Street  
Boulder, CO 80301

\$85/each (includes shipping and tax)  
Proceeds benefit The NACHI Foundation at [www.nachifoundation.org](http://www.nachifoundation.org)

Best money you'll ever spend.

## ReportHost Offers NACHI Members Free Reports

ReportHost Announces Partnership with National Association of Certified Home Inspectors (NACHI)

ReportHost LLC, the premier "web-based" home inspection report writing service is now in partnership with the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors. Poised to become the leading professional organization for home inspectors, NACHI's mission is to foster excellence in the home inspection industry.

NACHI members who use ReportHost will enjoy a number of benefits including:

Extra free reports when signing up with ReportHost.

Ease in writing reports that comply with NACHI's Standards of Practice.

A special version of the ReportHost website, similar in appearance to and conveniently linked with NACHI's website.

The NACHI logo easily included in reports and the free home page provided by ReportHost.

"NACHI is a natural partner for ReportHost," said Jim Gallant, ReportHost's founder. "like us, NACHI leadership is keenly aware of the importance of the web in effective communication and in building a community of professionals. We also like NACHI's interest in helping new home inspectors, and feel we have value to offer in a report writing service that doesn't require inspectors to purchase software."

ReportHost, the premier web-based inspection report writing software, provides report writing and hosting services, as well as free home pages to inspection professionals in North America. Visit <http://www.rephost.com/nachiflyer.htm> for more information. Press Contacts:

Jim Gallant  
ReportHost  
(360) 697-3820  
(888) 248-2156 - voicemail  
[info@rephost.com](mailto:info@rephost.com)

Jim will be speaking at NACHI's National Convention in Orlando (see page 1).



Awards for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place, longest drive and closest to the pin being given out at the NACHI Foundation's four-person modified scramble at the NACHI Convention in Orlando Florida.

Hole in One wins \$150,000.00 with a chance to win \$1,000,000.00!

Visit:

[www.nachi.golfreg.com](http://www.nachi.golfreg.com)

RealMatcher... coming soon!

## NACHI Super Bowl Extravaganza

We will be having a stupendous Super Bowl party on Sunday, starting at 4:00pm and continuing through the post game show including a big screen TV, food and cash bar. Just bring your team spirit! Gary planned the food, so you know it will be fattening and good... see page 1.

# NACHI's Online Inspector Examination

## The Industry Standard for Assessing Inspectors

How much does it cost to take NACHI's Online Inspector Examination?

The examination is free. You can take the free online exam now from the comfort of your own home. There is no charge. It is graded instantly online.

Do I have to be a member of NACHI to take the free online examination?

No. Anyone can take the exam. Passing the exam is an entrance requirement to join NACHI. You can take the free online exam now, from the comfort of your own home. There is no charge. It is graded instantly online.

Does the exam contain many questions about NACHI?

No. It is a well-rounded general examination to determine the competency of any home inspector. The exam is not association-specific. But much more than that, more people have taken NACHI's Online Inspector Examination than all other inspection examinations combined. Over 40,000 have taken this exam as the printing of this issue. Furthermore the system has built-in intelligence which constantly calculates and recognizes everything from individual repeat improvement to overall industry knowledge trends. All this combined with constant nationwide expert participation and improvement makes NACHI's Online Inspector Examination the industry standard for assessing inspectors.

How many times can I take it?

You can take the free exam as many times as you like, whenever you like, wherever you like. It is different every time. Mathematically there are trillions of versions of NACHI's Online Inspector Examination.

Is the NACHI's Online Inspector Examination different every time I take it?

Yes. It is different every time anyone takes it. The 120 questions are generated randomly. The order of the possible answers is random. The 120 questions are drawn randomly from a much larger pool of questions. Some questions are the same, only worded differently. New questions are being periodically added to the pool after psychometrically testing them.

I heard that NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is too difficult. Is this true?

No. The exam is difficult for some and easy for others. A general understanding of residential construction and components is helpful. Most exam takers who have a background in construction are able to pass on the first attempt even though they have no inspection experience. Remember, if you fail we can use your exam results to help determine what you need to study. NACHI gathers national statistics about each question on the exam. These statistics are automatically updated every time someone takes the exam. Statistics concerning level of difficulty are displayed for each question as you take the exam. Some of the national statistics about the exam, including pass/fail rates, are available on our web site.

I heard that NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is too easy. Is this true?

No. The exam is difficult for some and easy for others. Only about 1/2 the people who take the exam for the first time pass. The average grade is failing. You need a score of 75 to pass. NACHI gathers national statistics about each question on the exam. These statistics are automatically updated every time someone takes the exam. Statistics concerning level of difficulty are displayed for each question as you take the exam. Some of the national statistics about the exam, including pass/fail rates, are available on our web site.

How many questions do I have to answer to pass?

It is impossible to say. The exam uses a weighted scoring system. Each of the 120 questions is weighted based on importance. Questions that have safety implications or cover larger issues count more than questions that have less serious implications or are geographically regional. In other words, questions that test to see if you know things every inspector should know are weighted heavily. Questions that test to see if you know things that are near the outside of the scope of a home inspection are weighted lightly. This weighted system is why your score is of a possible 100 though you will be asked 120 questions. Frankly, it is one of the main features that makes this exam great.

Is NACHI's Online Inspector Examination a timed test?

Yes. You will be given only 60 minutes to answer 120 questions (30 seconds per question). If you run out of time before you answer all the questions but still answer enough to score 75 or more correctly, you will still pass the exam.

I understand that the exam contains many questions about wiring and electricity. Why?

It is true that the exam contains extra questions about wiring and electricity. Although "electrical" is only a small part of a home inspection, it is one of the more important parts. This is because electrical problems, unlike plumbing for example, can destroy property and kill people. Safety questions are weighted heavily.

I understand that the exam contains questions dealing with subjects outside the scope of our Standards of Practice. Why should I be tested about items I don't inspect?

It is true that the exam contains questions about subjects outside the scope of our Standards of Practice. However, an inspector must be able to talk intelligently about items such as mold and radon even though he/she is not providing such testing services.

I understand that the exam contains some very easy questions and some very difficult questions. Why?

Some questions may appear too easy or too difficult. That is because there

are questions on this examination that are not counted toward your score, but are used by NACHI to monitor overall knowledge of the industry. Eventually questions that are either too easy or too difficult are removed altogether.

Are the questions true/false or multiple-choice?

Both true/false and multiple-choice questions are used. Each question page has two parts. The first tells you how much time you've spent so far, and how much time you're allowed. It also tells you how many questions you've answered, and how many there are in total. A new feature also gives you an idea of how hard the question is by telling you how well other people have done on it. This information is useful, but don't spend too much time on it, as it will slow you down. The second part is the test question itself. Some questions will be true/false and others will be multiple-choice.

Should I skip a question if I don't know the answer?

No. It is statistically better for you to guess than skip so we have made it impossible to go on to the next question until you pick an answer. Always choose the best answer out of the options given, even if two or more answers seem correct. If you see a question that could be improved or you think is in error, please write it down and contact NACHI once you have finished the examination.

If I don't run out of time can I go back and double-check my answers?

Yes. Examinees are given the opportunity to double-check their answers and correct mistakes before they submit them (within the time constraints of the exam).

How did NACHI determine the passing score of 75?

NACHI used several reasonable methods to come up with this passing score. National pass/fail rates are automatically updated every time someone takes the exam and these statistics are posted on our website. It is interesting to note that one of the methods used for setting the passing score, a version of the Modified Angoff Technique, determined the passing rate should be set at 71.

Can't someone just keep taking the exam until they pass?

Our statistics show that immediate repeat exam takers fair no better over time. NACHI has numerous examples of the exam being taken sequentially by the same exam taker without marked improvement. Some exam takers have tried as many as 15 times in the course of one day without establishing a correlation between success and number of attempts. Post exam interviews show improvement can only come with study between attempts.

Can't a computer hacker cheat?

NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is very secure. Each exam is dynamically created using advanced randomization techniques. The data is then stored server-side, making it nearly impossible to cheat the system.

Is there something I can do to prepare for taking the exam?

Yes. Visit NACHI's Online Inspector University. It is free.

Is it an open book examination?

Yes. You may use notes and books. This statement is included in proctor instructions. Our exam is difficult to pass, even though it is open book.

What will I need to take the exam?

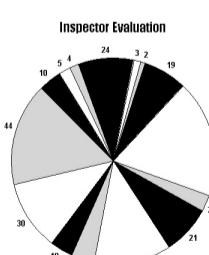
Nothing except a reliable internet connection. Your time will NOT be extended if your connection fails or if your computer crashes during the test. In the case of a connection failure you should be able to re-connect and continue from where you stopped. If you cannot, don't worry because NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is completely free, and you can retake it whenever you wish. If you exceed the test's time limit, the unfinished questions will be counted as incorrect.

I only have a dial-up modem and an older browser. Can I still take NACHI's Online Inspector Examination?

The exam is built with the latest server-side technology for increased security, but implements widely compatible client-side technology so that almost anyone with a web-browser (new or outdated) can use the system. The system is built with a 56k dial-up modem in mind: If an examinee's connection is lost mid-exam, he/she can simply reconnect and start where they left off. The system also uses optimized, low-resolution graphics for faster page loading.

I understand that each question is weighted differently with respect to score. Why?

Questions that have safety implications or cover larger issues count more than questions that have less serious implications or are geographically regional. In other words, questions that test to see if you know things every inspector should know are weighted heavily. Questions that test to see if you know things that are near the outside of the scope of a home inspection or newly introduced, untested questions are weighted lightly. This weighted system is why your score is of a possible 100 though you will be asked 120 questions.



Why is NACHI's Online Inspector Examination a useful learning tool?

Each question is categorized and cross-categorized. Many questions fall into more than one category. This provides the basis for a narrative and quantitative evaluation post-completion so that the examinee knows what needs improvement, whether they passed the exam or not. The summary even includes a color pie chart.

What if I fail NACHI's Online Inspector Examination?

Don't worry. Failing the exam will help you learn what you should study to become a home inspector. NACHI can loan you the study material for free. The exam is free and you can take it as often as you like. You can take the free online exam now, from the comfort of your own home. No charge. It is graded instantly online.

Is my individual score kept confidential?

Yes. Your privacy and the security of your personal information are very important to us at NACHI. This information is kept confidential and individual scores are only revealed to the exam taker. Scores do not appear on certificates. We only use cookies to identify you during the exam. We do not collect personally identifiable information on our web site unless you choose to give it to us. Even if you choose to give us information, we keep it confidential. We do not sell mailing lists or release your information to anyone outside our organization. We only use the information you give us to fill your order, to honor your request, to determine your apparent need, to provide information you desire or to improve the quality of your experience on our site. You can be sure that your personal privacy and trust are always safeguarded.

What if I pass NACHI's Online Inspector Examination?

Great. Passing the exam fulfills one of the membership requirements needed to join the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors. But feel free to take it just to uncover your weaknesses.

Why must NACHI members pass this exam every year? Isn't once enough?

No. Once is not enough. Our industry changes over time and our exam is a living document that keeps up with changes in the industry. Associations that permit members to maintain their membership without passing an exam every year or so... are suspect.

What if I barely pass NACHI's Online Inspector Examination?

Don't worry. Passing is passing. Your score is computed and revealed to you at the end of the exam however your score is not reflected on your certificate. There is no reason to keep taking the exam in order to try to achieve a higher score, unless of course you find it fun!

I have taken several different home inspection exams. Why does NACHI's Online Inspector Examination feel easier than other exams?

NACHI's Online Inspector Examination feels easier for several reasons:

- It is free, so there is no financial pressure to pass.
- You can take it from the comfort of your own home.
- You can take it again and again (it is different every time).
- There are no irrelevant questions (found in other similar exams).
- It is not association specific.

National statistics about NACHI's Online Inspector Examination are available online and automatically updated every time someone takes the exam.

*Does NACHI accept any other exams as alternatives to NACHI's Online Inspector Examination?*

Yes. NACHI accepts exams given by the National Institute of Building Inspectors and the International Code Council as alternatives to NACHI's Online Inspector Examination.

*I need to pass an additional state exam. Can NACHI help me pass?*

A few states require the passing of an additional state exam. NACHI will help you pass your exam. Everything you need is at [www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org)

*I need to have NACHI's Online Inspection Examination proctored. Do you offer a proctored version?*

Yes. Proctoring is provided in all 50 states by licensed school teachers. You can also use a proctor of your choosing provided he/she is a licensed, practicing teacher or professor and is not your spouse, parent, or relative. Sprint, FedEx, Kinkos, and CompUSA also provide online video conference proctoring for NACHI.

*Was NACHI's Online Inspector Examination developed in accordance with accepted psychometric standards?*

Yes. But much more than that, more people have taken NACHI's Online Inspector Examination than all other inspection examinations combined. Over 40,000 as of the printing of this issue. Furthermore NACHI's exam system has built-in intelligence which constantly calculates and recognizes everything from individual repeat improvement to overall industry knowledge trends. All this combined with constant nationwide expert participation and improvement makes NACHI's Online Inspector Examination the industry standard for assessing inspectors.

*How many exam takers pass? How many fail? What is the average grade? What is the average passing grade?*

These national statistics are on our website and are automatically updated every time someone takes NACHI's Online Inspector Examination.

*Has NACHI formed a partnership with Community Colleges to administer the exam?*

Yes. NACHI has formed partnerships with many Community Colleges across the country. The purpose of these partnerships is to create and offer quality home inspection courses and continuing education credits at the college level.

*How does NACHI's Online Inspector Examination differ from other national inspection exams?*

- NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is free to all. Other national examinations charge a fee each time you take them.
- NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is built with the latest server-side technology for increased security, but implements widely compatible client-side technology so that almost anyone with a web-browser (new or outdated) can use the system from anywhere. Proctoring is available everywhere, too. Other examinations require you to travel.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is different every time you take it. Mathematically there are trillions of versions of NACHI's Online Inspector Examination. Other exams only have one or two versions.

• National statistics about NACHI's Online Inspector Examination are automatically updated ever time someone takes the exam and these statistics are publicly posted instantly for all to see. Other national examinations refuse to release even their pass/fail rates.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination's pool of questions is compiled from submissions by experts and actual inspectors from all associations. Other exams have only used members of one association to produce their pool of questions. NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is a living document that constantly evolves.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is the official NACHI entrance exam. Other associations allow anyone to join without taking any exams.

• You can take NACHI's Online Inspector Examination from the comfort of your own home with a dial-up modem. If an examinee's connection is lost mid-exam, he or she can simply reconnect and start where they left off.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination uses optimized, low-resolution graphics for fast page loading.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is not about NACHI. It is not association-specific like other exams.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination was built with scalability in mind. Each question (and its answers) includes image support so that images can be added for further illustration. Each question can also support an unlimited number of answers for further scalability.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination permits examinees the opportunity to double-check their answers and correct mistakes before they submit them (within the time constraints of the exam).

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination uses a weighted scoring system. Questions that have safety implications or cover larger issues count more than questions that have less serious implications or are geographically regional. In other words, questions that test to see if you know things every inspector should know are weighted heavily. Questions that test to see if you know things that are near the outside of the scope of a home inspection or newly introduced, untested questions are weighted lightly. Other exams count each question equally.

• NACHI's Online Inspector Examination is very secure. Each exam is dynamically created using advanced randomization techniques. The data is then stored server-side, making it nearly impossible to cheat the system.

## Inspection Excellence Through Education and Camaraderie

By Nick Gromicko

*Just as iron sharpens iron, one man sharpens another.  
Proverbs 27:17.*

Members of the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors (NACHI) are the most educated and best trained inspectors in the world and NACHI is committed to keeping it that way. Toward that end NACHI has taken steps to encourage member pursuit and maintenance of inspection excellence and we have accomplished this without additional charge to members. We believe that fees, like taxes, deter professional development and that the best way to encourage the continuing education of our membership is by supporting variety, accessibility and affordability in educational options.

NACHI members start off by fulfilling certain requirements before they can even apply for membership. They have access to the NACHI University which is free. NACHI's Ethics Obstacle Course is open-to-all and free. NACHI's photo web gallery of defects is the largest in the world, open-to-all and free. NACHI's online visual aid frames library is the largest in the world, open-to-all and free. NACHI's online roofing course is free. NACHI does not charge for or unduly withhold approval of any organization's continuing education courses, even those offered by other inspection associations. NACHI's 48,000+ page website is itself very educational. And coming in 2005, NACHI will release a virtual House of Horrors, an online wood destroying insect course, and an occupant hazard recognition primer, all very educational and all free. NACHI's Online Inspector Examination's main purpose, besides testing competence, is to alert members to their weaknesses. The same is true for NACHI's Code of Ethics obstacle course, designed to alert members to possible infractions. And the same is true for NACHI's Standards of Practice quiz, designed to alert members to areas they are over and/or under inspecting. All three are pre-application requirements and all free. NACHI even has online educational inspection-related crossword puzzles, open-to-all and free of course.

A variety of accessible and affordable educational options encourages and enhances the professional development of all our members, but our most precious educational tool is our spirit of camaraderie. NACHI members continue to pursue, achieve, and maintain inspection excellence in an atmosphere of members helping fellow members. Please join us in this spirit.

Nick Gromicko  
Founder

NACHI is the world's largest provider and host of inspection-related events:

[www.nachi.org/events.htm](http://www.nachi.org/events.htm)

### TREC Inspector Committee Member joins

NACHI is pleased to announce that Russell Strahan, P.E. and member of the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) Inspector Committee recently joined NACHI.

Welcome Russell!



Over 130 inspectors attended the NACHI-DUKA Chapter meeting in Ontario on February 23rd.

This Canadian Chapter meets quarterly and has continuing education as its primary focus.

# Inspector tries to boost profits by offering radon testing.

Dear I.Q.,

I want to increase my profits by offering radon gas testing along with my home inspection service. What can I do to ensure profitability?

If increasing profits is your motivation for offering radon testing along with your home inspections, you may want to reconsider. Contrary to popular industry belief, adding radon testing as an ancillary service to your regular home inspection service adds little to your bottom line. Most inspectors do not properly calculate and analyze their business costs. Radon is by far the least profitable of all ancillary inspections. Hidden costs are the reason. Let's expose these costs.

1. Radon testing requires you to place testing equipment or kits in the home then come back on another day to retrieve them. Radon tests require two trips and so your time and travel costs are high.

2. Access to the home is often difficult or denied and extra trips have to be made because of dogs, the lock box being removed, or the owner not home.

3. Radon test kits have to be analyzed by a laboratory which charges for analysis.

4. You must drive or ship (often overnight) the radon kits to the laboratory, suffering shipping costs.

5. In some states radon testing certification or licensing is required:

- States charge fees for this certification
- There are usually required exams which have fees associated with them
- There are usually continuing education requirements which have fees too

6. Quality control and assurance plans often require a certain percentage of tests to be:

- Blanks or unexposed tests
- Duplicates or side by side measurements
- Spikes or tests exposed to a known radon level

All these extra quality control measurements add time, laboratory, and shipping costs and spiked samples require you to pay radon chamber fees.

7. Because radon reports often come in after your home inspection report is delivered, there are extra costs in faxing or mailing the radon reports to your client and real estate agents.

8. Radon tests often have to be redone or repeated for various reasons.

- The laboratory makes an error
- The radon kits get lost in the mail
- The owner unintentionally interferes with the test
- The owner intentionally tampers with the test
- The radon kits get over exposed
- Owner fails to maintain closed-house conditions before you arrive.

Guess who is expected to pay for retesting?

9. Using continuous monitors or electrets requires equipment purchase costs.

10. Long term liability for radon testing is likely higher than most other inspections because radon gas is believed to reduce one's life expectancy (cause death).

Tips for increasing profits on radon testing:

1. Make sure everyone knows you offer radon testing. Many home buyers will order radon testing if you let them know you offer it. Most real estate agents prefer one-stop-shopping. Spreading your costs out is smart. The more radon tests you perform, the less expensive they are per test.

2. Cut costs by placing or preferably retrieving the radon tests on the same trip as the home inspection.

3. Preferably pre-place radon tests and then pick them up during the inspection. The cost to you is the same but your clients acquire added value by receiving their results faster.

4. Join your local Board of REALTORS as an affiliate or associate member so that you can be entitled to lock box access. This allows easier placement and retrieval of radon tests. Note: NACHI can acquire affiliate membership for you if you are having trouble getting a lock box.

5. Try to schedule placement and retrieval of radon tests in conjunction with other radon tests and home inspections in order to minimize travel costs.

6. Push radon testing in your local market. Do not push radon testing on far away home inspections. Take the gravy.

7. Do not use overnight shipping on Fridays. Most laboratories won't analyze until Monday anyway so use 2-day air on Fridays to cut shipping costs.

8. Get bulk discounts by purchasing your kits together with other local NACHI inspectors.

9. Get together with other local NACHI inspectors to ship your radon kits to the laboratory thus sharing shipping costs.

10. Consider subbing-out your radon

testing so you can still offer radon testing but with less headaches and costs.

11. Use the NACHI Agreement (between you and your client) to help prevent radon-related lawsuits.

12. Charge more.

Offering ancillary inspections to your home inspection business is great way to increase profits but perhaps consider these more profitable add-on services:

1. Wood infestation/termites
2. Microwave oven leak detection.
3. Electro magnetic field assessment.
4. Lead paint.
5. Asbestos sampling.
6. Septic.
7. Water quality.
8. Well flow and capacity.
9. Natural gas leak detection.
10. Energy efficiency analysis.
11. Mold.
12. Single component inspections.

UPDATE: NACHI now offers free electret recharging to members.

Dear I.Q. is offered to provide detailed advice and possible solutions to specific questions or problems. Obviously other solutions exist and may be better suited for you and your particular situation. Please submit your specific problem for publication. Your name will not be used unless you give permission.

## REALTORS® and Inspectors An interview with Stephen Cook Vice President of Public Affairs National Association of REALTORS®

By Cory Doane

In a December 2nd interview with Inspector's Quarterly reporter Cory Doane, Stephen Cook, Vice President of Public Affairs for the National Association of REALTORS® had this to say:

"NAR believes buyers should always obtain an inspection from a qualified inspector. A good inspection not only reduces the risk involved in the largest purchase most families make, but it helps the new owner establish a maintenance plan."

Today we know much more about health risks posed by indoor environments. Inspectors can help identify and assess risks, including those from mold and radon. Increasingly, state laws require inspections for these and other potential health hazards before a house can be sold. The National Associa-

tion of REALTORS® is an active participant in the standard-setting process for indoor air quality and a proponent of disclosing known hazards to potential homebuyers.

REALTORS® should recommend inspectors who are qualified. The smartest course is to recommend several well-qualified inspectors and advise buyers to get references and ask about experience, credentials, report content, cost, and insurance coverage."

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) is to real estate professionals what the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors (NACHI) is to inspectors.

NAR is America's largest association, representing 1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

## Verizon and SuperPages to Promote NACHI Members

NACHI (the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors) recently contracted with Verizon and SuperPages.com to provide advertising designed to promote members of the association.

NACHI member's contact information will be featured prominently on various websites including SuperPages.com.

The one year, five figure, ad contract virtually guarantees NACHI members a first position in over a dozen different inspection-related categories including the search phrase most used by consumers seeking inspectors "certified home inspectors".

A similar contract to promote Canadian members on SuperPages.ca is in the works.

NACHI has had an existing similar contract with Google.com



### InterNACHI Logo Usage

NACHI is a member of InterNACHI and so all NACHI members having fulfilled NACHI's membership requirements may also use this InterNACHI logo as they wish.

Members may download various logos by visiting:

[www.nachi.org/logos](http://www.nachi.org/logos)

### NACHI.org Ranked #1

NACHI.org rated most popular inspection website ever.

Alexa.com, an Amazon.com company, recently provided traffic ranking data for the inspection industry. The lower the number rank the higher the popularity. The most popular sites in the world are : Yahoo.com with a rank of 1, msn.com with a rank of 2, daum.net with a rank of 3, and google.com with a rank of 4.

Amongst inspection related websites nachi.org ranks #1 at a worldwide rank of 52,355.

Other NACHI websites that rank high include NACHIfoundation.org, FindanInspector.US, and InspectorSEEK.com.

You can see the ratings of other websites at no charge by entering them in www.alexa.com.

**NACHI's  
Ohio State Chapter  
has a cool website:**

[www.OHnachi.org](http://www.OHnachi.org)

## Mouse Pads For Real Estate

The National Association of Certified Home Inspectors recently revealed another piece of its nationwide real estate agent marketing program. Ergonomic mouse pads, each with a gel-filled wrist rest, are being shipped to real estate agents all over the United States and Canada. The mouse pads, which depict an unhappy couple standing waist high in the flooded basement of their new home, contain the caption, "We should have hired a NACHI inspector."

"We registered the URL InspectorSEEK.com and developed software to easily add an inspector search icon to agent's desktops and start menus," said Chris Morrell, Webmaster for NACHI. "The link appears on the bottom of the mouse pad and directs visitors to NACHI inspectors in their area."

"We purchased the highest quality mouse pads available," said Beccah Levine, Director of Development for NACHI. "Each thick, non-skid, ergonomic pad includes a gel-filled wrist rest. We're sure agents will replace their existing mouse pads with ours."

The NACHI mouse pad is free upon request to any licensed real estate agent. NACHI will eventually put a mouse pad on every real estate agent's desk.



Please join us NACHIettes at the NACHI Convention in February:

[www.nachi.org/convention2006.htm](http://www.nachi.org/convention2006.htm)

*My sister and I will be serving you free nachos!*

# The Marketing Tool that Keeps on Marketing

## Make Sure your Local Real Estate Office has One



What are real estate agents reading while waiting for you to finish the home inspection? Make sure it isn't the newspaper!

Give them something interesting to read. Fill this 3-ring binder with some of the following:

- Some local articles about real estate. (Make copies from the newspaper or internet)
- Multiple copies of the article

### What Really Matters

- Multiple copies of the article *Pre-listing Inspections*
- A copy of NACHI's Code of Ethics
- A copy of NACHI's Standards of Practice
- A copy of NACHI's Continuing Education Policy
- Your marketing literature, flyers, or brochures
- Household tips, maintenance

- advice, etc.
- A copy of your NACHI certificate
- A copy of your E&O insurance certificate (if you carry insurance)
- A copy of your state license (if your state issues them)
- Copies of a few reference or thank you letters from past clients
- Your business cards (in a 3-ring holder)
- A copy of the article *Is Your Inspector Blind?*
- A home inspection glossary
- A copy of a sample home inspection report
- A copy of *My Promise*

Copy and paste the documents into your own word processor first so that line spacing and fonts are coordinated.

Make sure one of your flyers or business cards is actually taped to the inside cover.

Do not include anything that indicates that you are a "Candidate" or "Associate" member of any other inspection association. These derogatory terms will work against you

(especially on the internet). Many agents blacklist associates and candidates.

### Nick's Tip:

The time, energy, and cost of producing nicely packed binders makes them too expensive (unless you form a family assembly line) to give out to sellers in hopes they use your services on the buying end. Sellers can potentially only give you one inspection at most. However, real estate agents will give you many inspections. Let them have the binder to keep. It is too nice for them to throw away and appears to be an office reference (because it is from a national association, not a specific inspector). It will likely be kept on their office book shelf or in their real estate office library surrounded by other real estate agents. So make sure at least one of your business cards or flyers is taped to the inside cover. You can get pre-punched paper at an office supply store.

### Advanced Tip:

If you are leaving the binder at a real estate office, take a marker and write "DO NOT THROW OUT" over the back white check mark. Write it a little sloppy and at an angle over the check mark. We won't explain why...just trust us on this one.



## NACHI T-Shirts

NACHI recently purchased thousands of t-shirts to be sent out to Local Chapter meetings. They have the NACHI trademarked slogan, "Inspected Once, Inspected Right" across the back, and the NACHI logo on the front. Shirts in a variety of sizes and colors will be shipped to all Chapter heads to be given away as door prizes.

## REAL Property Times

Did you know that InterNACHI publishes *REAL Property Times*?

*REAL Property Times* stands are being distributed to every RE/MAX office in North America. The free newspaper will, among other things, remind real estate agents to refer their clients solely to NACHI members. Future issues will include the contact information of the NACHI members who service the area the stand is located. The stands will be labeled such as to welcome home-buyers to take a free copy as well. Agents can also order a free subscription online at:

[www.nachi.org/freeRPT](http://www.nachi.org/freeRPT)

Attend the next NACHI event in your neighborhood...

[www.nachi.org/events.htm](http://www.nachi.org/events.htm)

Hundreds ever year.

## NACHI Credit

Fresh from the launch of NACHI's members-only professional liability insurance program, our attorney Joe Ferry negotiated an affinity credit card with a major credit card issuer, exclusively for NACHI members.

Also on Joe's agenda is the formation of a NACHI credit union.

As Joe always says "NACHI is no longer just a trade association... it is an empire!"

[www.NACHI.org](http://www.NACHI.org)



## NY NACHI Distributes Boxes of Frisbees

The New York Chapter of NACHI recently distributed boxes of NACHI Frisbees to real estate agent's meetings. Each Frisbee contained the NACHI logo and the link to the NY NACHI website:

### A GENERAL RELEASE to Use When Refunding Fees

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME OR MAY CONCERN, KNOW THAT your client, as the RELEASOR, for good and valuable consideration received from abc inspections, as the RELEASEE, the receipt and adequacy of which is hereby acknowledged, each hereby releases and discharges the RELEASEE, each of the RELEASEE'S subsidiaries and their respective principals, affiliates, related entities, shareholders, officers, directors, agents, employees and their respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns from all actions, causes of action, suits, debts, dues, sums of money, accounts, reckonings, bonds, bills, specialties, covenants, controversies, agreements, promises, variances, trespasses, damages, judgments, extents, executions, claims, and demands whatsoever, in law, admiralty or equity, which against the RELEASEE, the RELEASOR and the RELEASOR'S heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns ever had, now have or hereafter can, shall or may, have for, upon or by reason of any matter, cause or thing whatsoever from the beginning of the world to the day of the date of this RELEASE solely in connection with the home inspection services performed by abc inspections arising out of that certain home inspection dated date of inspection.

Whenever the text hereof requires, the use of singular number shall include the appropriate plural number as the text of the within instrument may require. This RELEASE may not be changed orally.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the RELEASOR has executed this RELEASE on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2003.  
(For a Corporation) By: \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
(For an individual) \_\_\_\_\_ (SEAL)

WITNESS: \_\_\_\_\_ (SEAL)  
Both Releasor and Releasee will sign, in the form required (corporation or individual)



## Ohio State Chapter Designs its Own Logo

Other local NACHI Chapters are currently designing their own logo as well.

## Welcome Aerotech

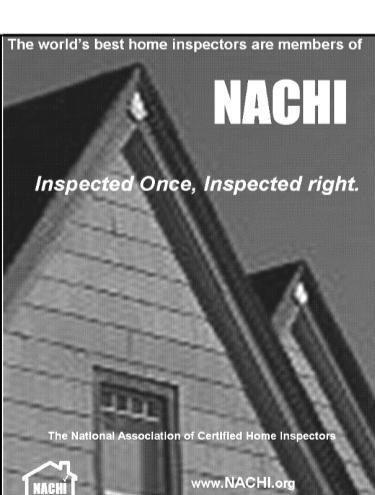
NACHI is honored to welcome industry leader Michael P. Buettner, Director of Aerotech P&K Laboratories to NACHI. Aerotech is a publicly traded laboratory serving home inspectors.

Mr. Buettner joined NACHI as a fellow member in March and Aerotech will be an exhibitor at NACHI's Convention in February, 2006 (see page 1.)

Welcome Michael!

## Brochures Promoting NACHI Members

Brochures promoting NACHI members are being sent to real estate professionals throughout North America.



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Brochures promoting NACHI members are being sent to real estate professionals throughout North America.

## NACHI's Colorado Chapter Launches More Websites

NACHI's Colorado Chapter recently launched 23 more websites designed to get their members more inspection business:

[www.coinspection.org](http://www.coinspection.org)  
[www.coinspections.com](http://www.coinspections.com)  
[www.coinspections.org](http://www.coinspections.org)  
[www.coinspector.com](http://www.coinspector.com)  
[www.coinspector.org](http://www.coinspector.org)  
[www.coinspectors.com](http://www.coinspectors.com)  
[www.coinspectors.org](http://www.coinspectors.org)  
[www.coloradoinspections.org](http://www.coloradoinspections.org)  
[www.coloradoinspector.com](http://www.coloradoinspector.com)  
[www.rockymountainhi.org](http://www.rockymountainhi.org)  
[www.rockymountaininspection.com](http://www.rockymountaininspection.com)  
[www.rockymountaininspection.org](http://www.rockymountaininspection.org)  
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[www.rockymountaininspectors.com](http://www.rockymountaininspectors.com)  
[www.rockymountaininspectors.org](http://www.rockymountaininspectors.org)  
[www.rockymountainhi.net](http://www.rockymountainhi.net)  
[www.cohomeinspector.org](http://www.cohomeinspector.org)  
[www.co-home-inspector.org](http://www.co-home-inspector.org)

## Ancillary Inspection Marketing Campaign

NACHI is now aggressively marketing members by target marketing the ancillary inspections they offer. The first phase of this marketing campaign has already launched with a new website [www.InspectorLocator.com](http://www.InspectorLocator.com) which allows a potential customer to choose and find the NACHI members that offer such inspections as:

- WDO/Inspects
- Mold
- Radon
- Septic
- Water Quality
- Lead
- Stucco/EIFS
- Pre-Listing
- Commercial
- New Construction
- Log Homes
- Energy Loss
- General Home Inspections

REMINDER: Members MUST add the services the offer to their profiles at: [www.nachi.org/ancillary-services.htm](http://www.nachi.org/ancillary-services.htm) Members can update the list of services they offer whenever they like.

NACHI is moving from being merely a *home inspector* trade association to an *inspector* trade association.

[www.InspectorLocator.com](http://www.InspectorLocator.com)

## A NACHI Site for every Resolution

In an effort to make NACHI chapter web sites available and viewable to all, NACHI recently announced multi-resolution chapter web sites. No longer will chapter members have to scroll from left to right to see the whole page - simply select your screen resolution at the top of the navigation menu to view the site in a size just right for your screen.

Colorado's new chapter web site is the first to demonstrate this new technology. Check it out at:

[www.rockymountainhi.org](http://www.rockymountainhi.org)

## Ohio Proposing NACHI Friendly Home Inspector Licensing

Ohio recently proposed licensing home inspectors with Senate Bill 207 which is very NACHI friendly:

1. No mention of any trade association (No association bias).

2. No specific mention of weak NHIE leaving the door open for NACHI's superior Certified Master Inspector Exam:

*"Approve an examination for licensure that is accepted by a national association of home inspectors or national associations of home inspectors the board recognizes;"*

3. Reciprocity for the future:

*"Establish procedures and requirements for reciprocity of a person licensed or certified in another state;"*

4. No specific state contract so that NACHI members can use their own superior NACHI contract: [www.nachi.org/newagreement.htm](http://www.nachi.org/newagreement.htm)

5. A death to scumbag NAHI clause (NAHI permits the bribing of REALTORS and permits its members to offer to correct defects found on an inspection):

*"Establish a code of ethics for persons licensed and registered under this chapter. The code shall specify guidelines for acting honestly and in good faith toward a client and avoiding conflicts of interest."*

6. Plenty of time to meet requirements.

NACHI is working to make sure all Ohio NACHI members get their license.

## Top 10 Home Problems CD Sent to Illinois Realtors

Will Decker, of Decker Home Services and Vice-President of NACHI Chicago, made and presented the *Top 10 Home Problems CD* at the recent Illinois REALTOR Convention. Will has offered this informative PowerPoint CD to any NACHI member to personalize and distribute to local REALTORS.

"We'll be making more of these presentations so that NACHI can offer them to its members through the website," said Will Decker, VP of NACHI's Chicago Chapter. "I see it as just another benefit of membership. I see winter as a great time for other inspectors out there to create their own. A rising tide floats all boats."

There was such a great response at the Illinois REALTOR Convention, Will had to go home and make more!

## Ask the Attorney

NACHI's General Counsel Joe Ferry recently set up Question-Answer email address for members: [legal@nachi.org](mailto:legal@nachi.org)

## Search Engine Optimization Expert Joins NACHI

First home inspection trade association in the world to have on-staff S.E.O. expert.

NACHI is pleased to announce that we have hired renowned search engine optimization (SEO) expert and technology guru, Roberta Dulay, as our new Director of eServices.

Roberta will be working on search engine optimization and special technology projects. Her first job is to create individual message board discussion forums for every NACHI chapter in the US and Canada. Roberta will also be available to assist chapter leaders and individual members with technical questions like how to edit their web sites and how to get better search engine rankings.

"Roberta has worked with NACHI for over a year now as an in-house subcontractor and has done an excellent job creating chapter web sites and providing NACHI members with SEO and web site services. Everyone at NACHI is excited to welcome her on board," said NACHI's Nick Gromicko.

Roberta has over 9 years of Internet marketing & programming experience, and a substantial background in marketing communications as well, including an MBA in Marketing Management from the University of Southern California. Her experience includes e-commerce programming and traditional marketing management in the real estate and high tech industries.

Roberta's company will continue to provide NACHI members with affordable, content-rich home inspection web sites on a contract basis. See [www.homeinspectionwebsite.com](http://www.homeinspectionwebsite.com) for more information. NACHI is also in negotiations to purchase Roberta's company outright and roll it into NACHI's membership services department.

Roberta can be reached at the NACHI offices in Colorado or via email at [roberta.dulay@nachi.org](mailto:roberta.dulay@nachi.org)

## Log Homes

NACHI recently released disclaimer language to use when inspecting log homes. For more information visit [www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org)

## Mold Waiver

Many home inspectors create potential problems for themselves because the client does not understand what the inspection will cover. For this reason, NACHI encourages inspectors to always have the client sign the NACHI Agreement (between inspector and client) that specifies what the inspector is going to do.

Mold causes health problems. So if the inspector finds notices mold or moisture or if the inspector learns that mold mitigation has taken place in the past and the client doesn't want to order mold testing, the inspector might consider having the client sign a separate waiver of mold testing.

Visit [www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org) to download a sample mold waiver.

## Radon Waiver

Many home inspectors create potential problems for themselves because the client does not understand what the inspection will cover. For this reason, NACHI attorney Mark Cohen encourages inspectors to always have the client sign the NACHI Agreement (between inspector and client) that specifies what the inspector is going to do.

Radon gas kills. So if the inspection is in a high radon area or if the inspector discovers a radon mitigation system during the inspection and the client doesn't want to order radon testing, the inspector might consider having the client sign a separate waiver of radon testing.

Visit [www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org) to download a sample radon waiver.

## Citizen Information Center

NACHI recently launched a Citizen Information Center with articles for home buyers, sellers, owners, real estate professionals and inspectors.

You can copy each article onto paper and keep them on your inspection truck. You should attach your business card to each article. On inspections where these issues arise you can include these articles in your report, give them to your client, and give them to the REALTOR. You could even leave related ones for the seller to find. Every seller is likely a local buyer and every inspection you perform is a marketing opportunity.

Each condensed article was developed using government, public-domain literature and NACHI's own words, so members don't have to worry about copyright infringement. Members can feel free to use and reprint them. The center contains articles on such consumer-related interests as:

- Asbestos
- Building a home
- Child safety
- Choosing the right inspector
- Electrical safety
- Electromagnetic fields
- Elderly safety
- Energy conservation
- Foundation insulation
- Hazards
- Homebuyer mistakes
- Home insurance
- Indoor air
- Lead
- Log homes
- Manufactured homes
- Mold
- Plumbing
- Pollutants in the home
- Pool safety
- Private water wells
- Radon gas
- Rehab a home
- Roofs
- Seller's inspection
- Septic systems
- Settlement costs
- Stucco
- Tips to speed up your inspection
- Termites
- Water damage
- Water quality
- What matters on an inspection
- Wildlife

[www.nachi.org/info.htm](http://www.nachi.org/info.htm)

## Roadside Signs

NACHI members across America are installing temporary roadside signs advertising their companies while they perform each inspection. For more information about this marketing idea and to see a picture of it in action visit:

[www.nachi.org](http://www.nachi.org)

## Madrid Spain

NACHI and InterNACHI are pleased to welcome member Pedro Villora of Madrid Spain. Mr. Villora flew from Madrid, Spain and took a home inspection course from NACHI trainer/member Mary Kolf Ayuso. Mary teaches NACHI inspection courses at Florida Community Colleges and runs our Puerto Rican NACHI Chapter. Welcome aboard Pedro!

## NACHI's Message Board Goes Wild-

NACHI, host of the home inspection industry's message board, is proud to announce that we have reached four significant milestones recently. At the time this issue went to print:

- NACHI's message board topped the 175,000th post mark.
- NACHI's message board topped the 10,500th registered user mark.
- NACHI's message board topped the 137,000 unique visits/month mark.
- NACHI's message board topped the 275 average number of posts/day mark.

NACHI's message board is much larger and much more active than all inspection-related message boards combined.

## NACHI Members to Marry in May

NACHI members Jessica Sandin and Antonio Medina will marry on May 21st of 2006.

Jessica runs the NACHI South Florida Chapter out of Miami and the NACHI Promo.

Antonio is our Director of International Relations and translated much of NACHI's site into Spanish.

Congratulations!

## Puerto Rico

NACHI Puerto Rico will have its first meeting in January of 2006.

We are going to be starting with approximately over 100 members that are already interested and will be registering in our organization on that first meeting.

This chapter will focus on education. Anyone interested in inspection courses, seminars and educational options in Puerto Rico should contact

Juan & Mary Ayuso  
NACHI Puerto Rico  
(787) 690-0512 or (787) 690-0514.

We are renaming earth...  
planet NACHI