



**2014**

**REAL ESTATE**  
**BUSINESS PLAN**

Understand your business

Identify your strengths

Know where to focus

Sell more homes

Free worksheets inside!

market  **leader**<sup>®</sup>

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*featuring Jed Kolko, Chief Economist at Trulia*

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## APPENDIX

Lead Generation Checklist  
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Leads

transactions

The best  
in real estate  
are talking!

marketing

SALES!



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Buyers

Sellers

# STATE OF THE MARKET AND 2014 FORECAST

As a real estate agent, your reputation depends on your knowledge of the market and the expertise you can offer your clients. That's why, as you start to plan for how you're going to grow your business in 2014, it's important to have your finger on the pulse of the current market, and also know what to expect in the coming year.

Armed with this knowledge, you'll be equipped to wow potential clients and your

peers, all while closing more sales.

In September of 2013, Market Leader talked to Jed Kolko, Chief Economist at Trulia, about the state of the current market and where he thinks we're headed in 2014. While we don't have a crystal ball, we can offer industry-leading expertise to help you plan for success next year.

## **WILL THE MARKET CONTINUE ITS CURRENT PACE TOWARD RECOVERY?**

"We've seen that prices are still rising, inventory is still tight, and mortgage rates are still very low," Kolko says. "But, they're all moving a bit more back to long-term, pre-bubble levels."

What are those pre-bubble levels? According to the National Association of Realtors®, home sales are at their fastest pace since February 2007, when they hit 5.79 million, and they have remained above year-ago levels for the past 26 months.

**What to expect in 2014** - Expect the market to continue to pick up speed as the economy improves and more owners decide that they have built enough equity to sell their homes. "It will probably be more expensive to buy a home next year than this year, due to higher rates and higher prices," Kolko



says. "But, there will be more inventory to choose from and it will be easier to get a loan." This is good news for real estate professionals. As home prices rise, more sellers will jump into the market and less restrictive loans will allow more buyers to attain financing.

## **HOW WILL THE OVERALL ECONOMY AFFECT THE REAL ESTATE MARKET?**

While the economy and the job market continue to improve as we wrap up 2013, industry experts are looking to 2014 to be able to declare that the market has completely recovered.

**What to expect in 2014** - Kolko predicts that as banks have less demand for refinancing, they'll have more money available for new mortgages, freeing up some of the "credit crunch" of the last few years. However, interest rates are expected to rise steadily over the next year. And, Kolko cautions that there is still much uncertainty about new lending regulations that will go into effect in 2014.

## **WILL HOME PRICES CONTINUE TO RISE?**

The parts of the country that experienced the biggest price rebounds in 2013, like Las Vegas, California, and other parts of the West, are starting to see a slowdown in price gains.

**What to expect in 2014** - Sellers in areas where price gains are slowing may see the momentum shift as a good time to put their home on the market and buy a new property while interest rates remain low and the economy continues to recover. Other parts of the country that haven't yet experienced a large rebound may see it in 2014. For agents in the Northeast and the South this could bring a lot more opportunity.

## **WHAT ABOUT SELLERS IN THE MARKET?**

With inventory still tight, buyers are often finding themselves in multiple offer situations, as many would-be sellers are still waiting to cash in on increased equity.

According to a survey from Trulia and Harris Interactive conducted in June, 2013, buyers in cities that saw the fastest recoveries are worried about the competition they face with other buyers as well as the need to make a quick decision to avoid missing out on a home.

**What to expect in 2014** - Expect a move to a more balanced market, as fewer sellers remain underwater and many want to take advantage of the equity they've acquired.

## **WHAT'S GOING ON WITH FORECLOSURES AND SHORT SALES?**

"At this point, in most of the country, the foreclosure crisis is behind us," Kolko says. The only places where foreclosures still make up a large part of the market are judicial states, where foreclosure processing can take upwards of three years.

**What to expect in 2014** - "Sales volumes are increasing," Kolko says. "And not only are sales increasing, but we're seeing a shift from foreclosures and short sales to conventional sales. That's a sign of a returning market."



## IS THE NEW CONSTRUCTION MARKET RETURNING TO NORMAL?

While the existing home market is now running close to long-term normal, the new construction market remains at about half of normal levels. Why? There are few new households being formed, as young adults aren't finding the consistent employment they need to move out and live on their own. Plus, there are an above-normal number of vacant homes still around.

**What to expect in 2014** - "Until the overall economy recovers enough that more young adults get jobs, move out of their parents' house, and form households, we won't get up to normal construction levels," Kolko says.

## HOW DOES AFFORDABILITY AFFECT MY CLIENTS?

As the economy recovers, both buyers and sellers are seeing an increase in home prices. As first-time homebuyers see prices rapidly increasing, buying a home becomes less affordable. "For first-time buyers, they're watching the prices go up on the homes they want to buy, but they're no richer because they don't own a home that's also gone up in value," Kolko says.

According to the Trulia and Harris Interactive poll, 38% of potential buyers who are planning on buying in the next 12 months are worried that home prices will rise before they're ready to buy.

**What to expect in 2014** - Kolko sees a lot of potential in the move-up market, meaning people who are buying a home but also

selling a home, because they can take advantage of price increases that have already happened. Recent research from Market Leader and Hebert Research shows that almost half of today's buyers are also sellers.

## GET STARTED!

With increasing inventory, a more balanced market, and loosening credit, 2014 might just be the best opportunity you've had in years to effectively grow your business.

Now, you just need a plan to get there...



A cup of coffee sits on a saucer in the top right corner. Below it, a hand-drawn business plan diagram is visible, featuring a central circle labeled 'Business Plan' with arrows pointing to various boxes and charts. The diagram includes a line graph, a flowchart, and several text boxes with handwritten notes. A pen lies diagonally across the bottom right of the diagram.

# CREATING YOUR 2014 BUSINESS PLAN

The first step in creating your 2014 business plan is setting a Gross Commission Income goal. Decide now how much money you want to make from your real estate business in 2014. Be audacious, but realistic. If you made \$50,000 last year, aim for \$65,000 this year. Whatever the number is, write it down and hang it where you'll see it every day. After all, one of the biggest challenges in real estate is staying motivated day in and day out.

Once you have your GCI goal posted in your office, on your fridge at home, and in your car, it's time to create the plan that will help you make your goal a reality. Make it happen in four steps:

STEP 1 – MAP OUT YOUR BUSINESS MODEL

STEP 2 - UNDERSTAND YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STEP 3 - KNOW WHICH AREAS YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON

STEP 4 - START SELLING MORE HOMES!

## STEP 1:

## MAP OUT YOUR BUSINESS MODEL

As a real estate agent, you wear many hats: open house expert, marketing professional, negotiator, and savvy networker, to name a few! But, perhaps most importantly, you're a small business owner! And like any successful business owner, understanding your specific business model is vital. Once you understand all of the moving parts that help you to be successful, you'll be able to better understand the value you provide, the cost of that value, and the revenue you need to generate in order to profit.

Map out your business model using the grid on the following page.

#### A. KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Who is essential in helping you drive your business?

*(Example: Local MLS, Office Depot, print shop)*

#### B. KEY ACTIVITIES

What tasks are required for you to perform well?

*(Example: Generating leads, open houses)*

#### C. KEY TOOLS

What tools are essential to operate your business?

*(Example: Website, car, smartphone)*

#### D. VALUE PROPOSITION

Why should your target customers do business with you? What sets you apart?

#### E. KEY CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

What methods do you use to establish and maintain relationships with customers?

*(Example: Listing alerts, referral program, newsletter)*

#### F. KEY BUSINESS CHANNELS

What are all the ways in which you generate new business?

*(Example: Website, referrals, advertising)*

#### G. KEY CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

What types of consumers do you provide value for?

*(Example: Retirees, families, military)*

#### H. COST STRUCTURE

Looking at boxes A-G above, identify the yearly costs associated with each item, if any, and list them in order of most expensive to least expensive. Add them up. This is the cost of operating your business.

*(Example:  
Advertising = \$5,000  
Car = \$3,000  
Print shop = \$1,200  
Total = \$9,200)*

#### I. REVENUE STREAM

List the number of transactions you generate each year from all your key business channels, then multiply that by the average home price in your area multiplied by your commission rate. This is your revenue stream per channel. Add them together to get your Gross Commission Income.

*(Example:  
Referrals =  $2 \times (\$200,000 \times 3\%) = \$12,000$   
Website =  $4 \times (\$200,000 \times 3\%) = \$24,000$   
Total GCI = \$36,000)*



## STEP 2: UNDERSTAND YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The most successful agents are nothing if not humble. They know that in order to maintain long-term success, they must always strive to grow and improve. But, sometimes it's hard to look inward and identify one's own strengths and weaknesses. But without taking this important step, you're likely to take quite a few wrong turns and missteps along the way.

Find the fastest, most straightforward path to

success by taking an honest look at your best qualities and the ones that could benefit from a bit more polishing in 2014. Take the real estate strength tests now!

### Instructions:

Read each question and check the box if it applies to you. When you are done, add up the points next to each checked box and put them in the 'Your Total' box for each section.

LEAD GENERATION		POINTS
<input type="radio"/> I generate at least one referral each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	2	
<input type="radio"/> I receive three or more referrals each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	5	
<input type="radio"/> My website generates leads consistently each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	15	
<input type="radio"/> My broker provides me with leads – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	5	
<input type="radio"/> I generate leads from online sources (i.e. Craigslist) – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	10	
<input type="radio"/> I receive leads from third-party providers (i.e. Trulia, Zillow, Realtor.com) – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	10	
<input type="radio"/> I use print marketing to generate new leads – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	3	
<input type="radio"/> I use search engine advertising (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.) to drive consumers to my website – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	15	
<input type="radio"/> With all my lead gen activities, I add between one and 10 leads to my pipeline each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	3	
<input type="radio"/> With all my lead gen activities, I add between 11 and 20 leads to my pipeline each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	5	
<input type="radio"/> With all my lead gen activities, I add between 21 and 30 leads to my pipeline each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	10	
<input type="radio"/> With all my lead gen activities, I add more than 30 leads to my pipeline each month – — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	15	
TOTAL <input type="text"/>		

**LEAD ENGAGEMENT****POINTS**

- ☐ I respond to new leads within one hour of receiving their contact information – — — — — 10
- ☐ I send MLS listings to my leads – — — — — 5
- ☐ I provide relevant and helpful information to my active leads and clients regularly – — — — 5
- ☐ I send at least one communication per month to my expired leads and past clients – — — — 5
- ☐ Consumers can browse my website for listings, neighborhood data, and other helpful resources – — 10
- ☐ I keep all my leads and contacts in one contact management system (CRM) – — — — — 15
- ☐ I can access all my leads and marketing tools from my Smartphone – — — — — 10
- ☐ I know when leads are utilizing my website – — — — — 10
- ☐ I automate communications with leads and past clients – — — — — 10
- ☐ I receive automated alerts when new leads enter my pipeline – — — — — 10
- ☐ My website is connected to my CRM – — — — — 10

**TOTAL****MARKETING/BRANDING****POINTS**

- ☐ When I do a web search for homes in my area, my website is easily found – — — — — 10
- ☐ I send printed mailers to my targeted areas and neighborhoods – — — — — 5
- ☐ I write at least one real estate blog post per month – — — — — 5
- ☐ I post YouTube videos to promote my expertise and knowledge of the local area – — — — 5
- ☐ I connect with current and past clients on Facebook or other social media channels – — — — 10  
(LinkedIn, Google+)
- ☐ I participate in local events, community associations, and organizations – — — — — 15
- ☐ In all my marketing, I make sure to channel responders back to my website – — — — — 10

**TOTAL**

## REFERRALS

## POINTS

- ☐ I make a concerted effort to meet new people and grow my sphere of influence – — — — — 10
- ☐ I use automated emails to stay in touch with past clients – — — — — 5
- ☐ I send gentle reminders to past clients informing them of changes in their home's value – — — — — 5
- ☐ I connect with and engage past clients on social media – — — — — 5
- ☐ I send my past clients polite requests for referrals – — — — — 10
- ☐ I add all my clients to a newsletter delivered at least once per month – — — — — 15

TOTAL

# ANALYZE YOUR RESULTS

Take a look at your results in each of the major business areas and compare them with agents who are closing 10 or more transactions a year. Then, go back and identify the areas where you can make the biggest improvements, starting with the highest point value items.

## LEAD GENERATION

**Successful agent score = 50+**

Top agents make lead generation a primary focus in their daily business activities. They know that maintaining a consistent flow of leads entering their pipeline is the only way to generate more sales and future referrals.

**A.** Write your Lead Generation score here.

**B.** Subtract your total in **Box A** from 50 and write it here.

**C.** Go back to the test sheet and identify the top areas you need to improve. Write them here along with their point value.

**D.** Add up the areas you want to improve from **Box C**. It should equal or exceed **Box B**.

## LEAD ENGAGEMENT

### Successful agent score = 60+

There's no point in generating leads if you don't have a strategy to engage those leads once you've made initial contact. More than any other strategy, today's top agents are using technology to help them engage their leads quickly and effectively.

<b>A.</b> Write your Lead Engagement score here.	<b>B.</b> Subtract your total in <b>Box A</b> from 60 and write it here.	<b>C.</b> Go back to the test sheet and identify the top areas you need to improve. Write them here along with their point value.	<b>D.</b> Add up the areas you want to improve from <b>Box C</b> . It should equal or exceed <b>Box B</b> .
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## MARKETING/BRANDING

### Successful agent score = 30+

How can you sell more homes if consumers can't find you? When they do find you, how do they know that you're the best choice for them? Marketing and branding are essential, not only for generating leads, but also for making sure leads choose you and not the agent next door.

<b>A.</b> Write your Marketing/Branding score here.	<b>B.</b> Subtract your total in <b>Box A</b> from 30 and write it here.	<b>C.</b> Go back to the test sheet and identify the top areas you need to improve. Write them here along with their point value.	<b>D.</b> Add up the areas you want to improve from <b>Box C</b> . It should equal or exceed <b>Box B</b> .
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## REFERRALS

### Successful agent score = 25+

Your odds of closing a deal with a referral are much greater than your standard lead, but referrals are notoriously hard to generate. Make it easier on yourself by always being dedicated to meeting new people, maintaining and growing your social networks, and promoting your individual brand.

<b>A.</b> Write your Referrals score here.	<b>B.</b> Subtract your total in <b>Box A</b> from 25 and write it here.	<b>C.</b> Go back to the test sheet and identify the top areas you need to improve. Write them here along with their point value.	<b>D.</b> Add up the areas you want to improve from <b>Box C</b> . It should equal or exceed <b>Box B</b> .
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## STEP 3: FIND YOUR FOCUS AREAS

Revisit your results from the tests above. For each of the four major areas, list up to three tasks you can improve upon in the coming year. Then, set a reminder to revisit this list in six months and in one year check in on your progress.

FOCUS AREA	CHANGE NEEDED
LEAD GENERATION	
LEAD ENGAGEMENT	
MARKETING AND BRANDING	
REFERRALS	



Run your real estate business...  
***Anywhere!***



Your business is inherently mobile, shouldn't your office be mobile too? Learn more about Market Leader Mobile.

***Call 877-732-9153***

- Get alerted the instant you receive a lead
- Respond immediately to new leads
- Know what they are searching for
- Add them to marketing campaigns
- Keep track of your interactions with every contact

# REAL ESTATE CHECKLIST

Now that you know which areas you plan to improve upon in the coming year, use the following resources to get you started:

- ▶ Need help generating more leads? [View the Lead Generation Checklist](#)
- ▶ Need tips to improve your lead engagement? [View the Quick Guide to Communicating with Leads](#)
- ▶ Want to improve your marketing and branding? [View the Marketing Checklist](#)
- ▶ Learn how to generate more referrals. [View the Referrals Checklist](#)

## STEP 4: START SELLING MORE HOMES!

Are you feeling more optimistic about the coming year yet? You should be! By completing the 2014 Business Plan, you should have a better understanding of your business model, what it will take to meet your GCI goals, and which areas could use a little improvement. As 2014 arrives, stay motivated and focused on your goals, and you'll be making the most of the continued real estate market recovery.



# ABOUT MARKET LEADER

To thrive in the ever-changing real estate market, you need the tools to effectively generate, manage, and close more transactions than your competitors—while aligning your strategies with the way today's consumers shop for homes. Market Leader's complete lead-to-close solution is your platform for success!

Market Leader is an industry leader, providing innovative online technology and marketing solutions for real estate professionals across the United States and Canada. Since 1999, we've helped real estate professionals succeed and grow, and today serve more than 135,000 agents, brokerages, and franchises with products designed to take their businesses further.

In August 2013, Trulia, the leading real estate marketplace for consumers and real estate professionals, completed the acquisition of Market Leader.

► Learn more by visiting [www.marketleader.com](http://www.marketleader.com).

# Real Estate 101 – Checklist:

## Generating and working leads

The following are class notes taken from Market Leader's Real Estate 101 webinar series.



Make a quick list of your strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in each of the key business areas below.

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Threats	Opportunities
Lead Generation				
Marketing Branding				
Lead Engagement				
Special Niche				
Referrals				
Negotiations				
All of the Above				

## **Lead Generation**

**Understand where today's consumers are gathering their content**

### **Website vs. Online Store**

- Your site must provide all of the content that consumers are gathering online
- Helps you stop the search of the consumer and eliminate the competition

### **Must-haves for your Online Store (website)**

- Consumer focuses and not agent focused
- True IDX feed
- Updated and accurate community information
- Value proposition lead-capture tool
- Mobile technology capable
- Integration with CRM

**Diversify how you're found to make sure you are meeting all demographics**

### **Understanding the consumer timeline today**

- Phase 1 – Pre-research
- Phase 2 – Active research
- Phase 3 – Buying or selling process  
visit [www.marketleader.com/journey/](http://www.marketleader.com/journey/)

### **Taking advantage of all the major search engines**

- Google
- Yahoo
- Bing
- AOL
- Ask.com

### **Being very efficient on Craigslist**

- MUST have a consumer focused website
- Short and concise messaging
- Provide instant gratification
- Call of action is relevant content on your website
- Post listing during your peak hours

## **Working and converting YOUR leads**

**Understand the right approach to engage with more consumers**

### **Know where or how to communicate throughout this timeline**

- The closer to phase 1 you must provide Relevant Content
- The closer to phase 3 you must provide Value Proposition

### **Best practices for increasing engagement**

- What's your goal when you generate a lead?
- Get them back to your website
- What's the consumer goal when they become a lead?
- Gather content and hide behind the wall of the internet
- Stop the consumer search
- Average consumer becomes a lead 7-8 times before talking to an agent
- Must eliminate the consumer from going anywhere else to get content
- Know the role of your website
- Full real estate online store of content
- Converting leads into contacts
- Providing relevant content from your website
- Implement your 7 day plan of attack

### **The 10 behavior triggers**

- Viewed homes
- Saved homes
- Set up listing alert
- New or refined
- Request more info on listing
- Zip code/neighborhood change
- Short sale/foreclosure homes
- Condo's/townhomes – HOA
- Viewed Market Data report
- Preapproval request
- Updated phone number



# Quick Tips for Communicating with Leads

There's no point in having leads if the tactics you use to communicate with them are falling flat, or worse, scaring them away. Use the guide below to start engaging and nurturing your leads more effectively.

- ✓ Learn how to segment your leads
- ✓ Learn which channels you should use to communicate with leads
- ✓ Know how often to communicate
- ✓ Know what to communicate

## Start by segmenting your leads into different buckets:

### New Leads



### Passively Searching



### Actively Searching



### Sphere / Past Clients



A cartoon illustration of a person with a light green body and a yellow face, standing on a green field. They have their arms crossed and a thoughtful expression. Above their head is a thought bubble containing a dark green house icon. In the background, there are faint outlines of trees and houses on a green hill.

# New Leads

## Characteristics:

- Just thinking about buying
- Probably not talking with other agents
- Noticing real estate related news and info
- Seeking information from friends, family, and online

## Triggers:

- Family changes (marriage, having kids)
- Relocation
- Demographics shifts (baby boomers downsizing)

## How to approach:

- Contact them immediately, but don't sell
- Let them know you're available for questions
- Don't rush engagement, let them come to you

## Messages to use:

- Neighborhood info and comparisons
- Listings, listings, listings
- Listings must match their search criteria... which you better know!

Learn more at [www.marketleader.com/journey](http://www.marketleader.com/journey)



# Passively Searching

## Characteristics:

- Browsing listings online, but still far from buying
- Exploring what they want and what they can afford
- More likely to communicate via web & email
- Not ready to choose an agent, but need expertise

## Triggers:

- What's available?
- Can we afford what we want?
- What are my financing options?

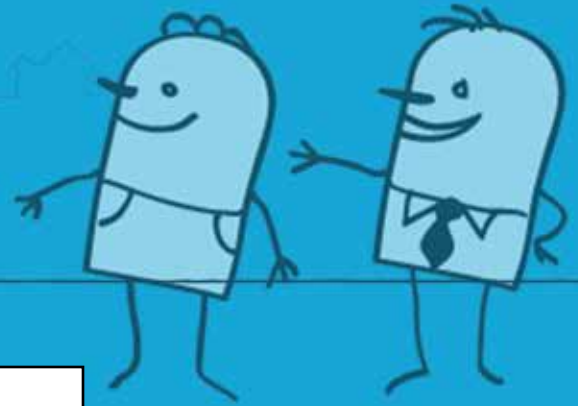
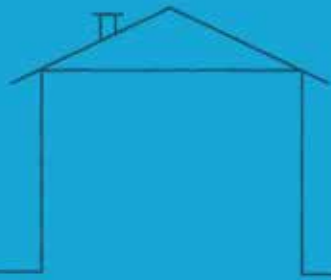
## How to approach:

- Be found online!
- Ensure your website is a source for information, not a sales or marketing pitch
- Reach out on their terms. Don't rush a meeting.
- Email with relevant information to develop trust and stay front of mind

## Messages to use:

- Listings, listings, listings
- Seem familiar?
- Keep it service, not sales!

Learn more at [www.marketleader.com/journey](http://www.marketleader.com/journey)



# Actively Searching

## Characteristics:

- Ready to tour homes in-person with an agent
- Aware of what they want and what they can afford
- Want specifics about the buying process
- Need recommendations based on experience

## What they are thinking:

- How many homes do we need to see?
- What's your level of expertise?
- What are your recommendations based on my needs?

## How to approach:

- Be available to meet in person and tour homes
- Offer recommendations based on their criteria
- Provide specifics on the home buying process
- Respond quickly

## Messages to use:

- Respond to their needs...still service, not sales
- But you can push harder in this stage
- Be flexible...use your expertise

Learn more at [www.marketleader.com/journey](http://www.marketleader.com/journey)



# Sphere and Past Clients

## Characteristics:

- Comfortable in their day-to-day
- Not thinking about real estate
- Appreciate information about their home's value
- Likely to buy again in 5 to 7 years

## What they are thinking:

- Is my home going up or down in value?
- What's going on in my local market?
- My friend is looking – who should she talk to?

## How to approach:

- Use automation tools to stay in touch
- Provide gentle reminders of their home's value and market conditions
- Connect with them on Social Media
- Ask for referrals

## Messages to use:

- Birthday cards
- Home-purchase anniversary notes
- Newsletter

Learn more at [www.marketleader.com/journey](http://www.marketleader.com/journey)



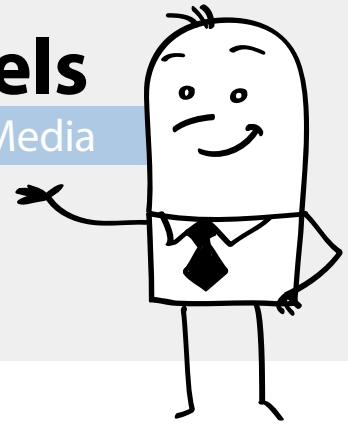
# Types of Communication Channels

Email

Phone

Print / Mail

Social Media



## Communicating by Email

The most popular and most misused channel

### Pros:

- ✓ Low-touch (also a con in certain situations)
- ✓ Just about free
- ✓ Can be automated

### Cons:

- ✓ Low-touch
- ✓ Can be very time-consuming if not automated

***Which segments should you email? All! But in different manners:***

### New Leads

- Email is great...it's low-touch, perfect for not scaring off leads that are still far away from their transaction.
- Listings, listings, listings

### Passively Searching

- Very similar to new leads... low-touch
- Build that relationship!

### Actively Searching

- Transactional emails – new recommended listings, connections with lenders, etc.
- Make sure you're responding quickly!

### Sphere/Past Clients

- Keep in touch – automate it!
- These emails can be more personalized – you have a relationship already

## Bottom Line:

Email is great for communicating with leads that aren't ready for phone calls and face-to-face meetings.



# Communicating by Phone

Before email, the phone was King!

## Pros:

- ✓ High-touch (also a con in certain situation!)
- ✓ Extremely targeted conversations

## Cons:

- ✓ Can scare prospects off

## ***Which segments should you call?***

### New Leads

- No! Now is not the time to call...you don't have that relationship yet!

### Passively Searching

- Proceed with extreme caution...follow the same rules as new leads

### Actively Searching

- Yes! You have that relationship
- Quick responses are key for this bucket – phone is great for this

### Sphere/Past Clients

- You have the relationship, but usually not the compelling event to call.
- Maybe on special occasions – home-purchase anniversary

## Bottom Line:

You've got to have the relationship with the lead to call them.

Best to use the phone for the transactional communications



# Communicating by Social Media

Everyone's doing it, but few do it well

## Pros:

- ✓ Free
- ✓ Potential large reach

## Cons:

- ✓ Done poorly, it can be a time-suck with little return
- ✓ Impossible to target these messages by segment

## Social Media Tips

Post engaging content that establishes you as the neighborhood expert. Don't post listings!

- Make use of groups and target your posts accordingly.
- Keep your profile photos clean and appropriate.
- Ask for comments / likes / shares. This will get your posts promoted so more eyes can see it.



# Communicating by Print/Mailers

## Pros:

- ✓ Harder to ignore than an email
- ✓ Highly customizable

## Cons:

- ✓ Expensive compared to digital and online marketing

## *Which segments should you send Print/Mailers?*

### New Leads

- Targeted print marketing is a great way to generate new leads
- But you don't want to build the relationship through print – use print to drive them to your website

### Passively Searching

- Too expensive to build that relationship... don't use print in this phase

### Actively Searching

- Too Slow

### Sphere/Past Clients

- Great idea...communication speed isn't the most important
- Use fun print mailers to keep in touch

## Bottom Line

Print marketing is great for lead generation, but too expensive to build relationships. Use print to drive prospects and past clients back to your website.

# Communication Frequency

Frequency can vary a bit by channel, but best to think of frequency rules by lead segments

## New leads

- Don't scare them off!
- Email them immediately when they register with you (automate) and weekly with recommended listings (automate!)

## Passively Searching

- You've got a relationship with the lead now...can up the frequency
- This is a crucial phase for determining frequency...try and straddle that fine line between not overloading prospects and pushing forward the sale

## Actively Searching

- As frequent as needed! Responding quickly is key

## Sphere/Past Clients

- Monthly. Maintain the relationship.
- When these clients start looking for another home, move them to another bucket

# Communication Content

Best to think of content via segment...and then choose the appropriate channel.

## New leads

- Welcome emails – very quickly after initial content. Introduce yourself, no selling.
- Listing alerts – based on the past search history.
- Again, no selling, only service

## Passively Searching

- Listings, listings, listings
- You've got a better idea of what they're looking for now – include some neighborhood information and comparisons
- Market conditions and changes
- As they're closer to buying, include more information on the home-buying process

## Actively Searching

- Content is geared towards finding them the right house, and then the transaction itself!

## Sphere/Past Clients

- Thank you's!
- Ask for referrals
- Keep in touch
- Home anniversary
- Changing market conditions

# SELL MORE HOMES



Engage in the customer journey,  
not just the transaction

Learn more about the home buying journey at  
[www.marketleader.com/journey](http://www.marketleader.com/journey)



Get a free demo of Market Leader - Call 1-888-820-4778



# MARKETING CHECKLIST

## BE FOUND ONLINE

### ✓ Have a website for your area, which includes

- Home listings
- Neighborhood housing market data
- Unique content about you and your neighborhood
- Lead capture technology
- CRM to follow up with leads

### ✓ Create a hyper-local blog and write interesting, useful neighborhood information posts. Unique, well-written blog posts with a local angle can be SEO gold! Consider posting

- Videos
  - Interview local experts
  - Community Tours
  - Preview hot new listings
- Unique stories
  - History of the area
  - Great places to eat, drink, and visit in your local area
  - Interesting residents
- Plenty of photos
  - Restaurants or merchants
  - Interesting local architecture
  - Historic homes
  - Local sports teams



- Local resources
  - Utility and cable company information
  - Bus or transit information
  - Libraries, parks, or recreational facilities
  - Map of schools
- Neighborhood housing market info
  - Monthly snapshot report with valuable content for residents and potential residents

✓ **Connect with past and current clients through social media**

✓ **Create a neighborhood Facebook page**

✓ **Link your favorite social media sites back to your website, including**

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Google+

**BE FOUND OFFLINE**

✓ **Send targeted mailers with your website as the call-to-action. Try sending**

- Just-listed and just-sold postcards
- Neighborhood market reports
- A neighborhood newsletter that covers local events, school events, restaurant reviews, and other hyper-local content

✓ **Be part of your neighborhood community**

- Join the neighborhood gym
- Join the Chamber of Commerce and promote your neighborhood expertise at mixers and other events
- Sponsor a neighborhood youth sports team, put your logo on display, and attend the games
- Hold homebuyer seminars in the neighborhood
- Join the local PTA
- Take a different local business owner to lunch each week
- Attend HOA meetings if your neighborhood is in a managed community
- Host monthly happy hours at the local tavern
- Take part in block parties or area festivals

# REFERRALS

## CHECKLIST

What's the best way to get more referrals? Be the kind of agent deserving of rave reviews by providing great customer service.

### ✓ Provide excellent service to all your clients

- Respond promptly to phone calls and emails
- Find out and use the client's preferred method of contact
- Be a resource for your clients by educating them on the home buying or selling process
  - Be a glossary--help them understand important real estate terms
  - Walk them through the paperwork
  - Introduce them to all of the people involved in their transaction
- Listen to your clients

Once you have provided them with excellent customer service, make sure you have the tools to stay in top of mind.

### ✓ Have a CRM database

### ✓ Make sure all your contacts in your CRM (including past, current, and sphere of influence contacts)

### ✓ Stay in touch with past clients with drip campaigns, like

- Newsletters
- Local market information updates

- Birthday, anniversary, new baby, and other greetings

### More ideas to stay top of mind...

### ✓ Friend/follow current and past clients on social media

### ✓ Host an annual event for past clients

### ✓ Build relationships with industry colleagues

- Title and escrow company representatives
- Lenders
- General contractors, plumbers, electricians
- Home inspectors

### Now that you've laid the groundwork, ask for referrals!

### ✓ Don't be pushy or make your contact uncomfortable

### ✓ Considering offering a reward for referrals

### Keep those referrals coming

### ✓ Show appreciation to those who have sent you referrals

- Take them out for a thank you lunch
- Send a hand-written thank you card
- Deliver a gift basket