

Where Successful Agents Get New Client Leads



There's no end to the tips and techniques offered to real estate agents when it comes to new client listings. Here's some inside advice from a few experts in the field. The problem is there are so many strategies to getting new clients, an agent can find themselves continually chasing the latest guaranteed hack and never achieve the results they truly want. According to successful brokers, team leaders and real estate coaches, a well-strategized long-term plan wins almost every time over the latest short-term trick when attracting new client leads.

1. Create Multiple Sources

Rule No. 1: Do not rely on a single source to bring leads. Successful agents cultivate leads from many sources.

Anthony Askowitz, the award-winning broker/owner and team leader of South Florida's RE/MAX Advance Realty, identifies seven basic areas that should serve as lead sources for real estate agents: spheres of influence, geographic farming, professional networking, internet leads, yard signs, open houses and social media.

Askowitz says that if an agent is nurturing leads from multiple sources, they'll have a more consistent flow of business and won't experience the sudden drop-off in deals that can occur in real estate's slower months, usually around October through February.

2. Spheres of Influence

An agent's "sphere of influence" is basically everyone they know or, defined more narrowly, everyone the agent trusts and can vouch for their work ethic and competency. This group may overlap somewhat with contacts on social media, but the agent should collect these people's contact information in a CRM to update them frequently with relevant information that will keep the agent's name top of mind.

Anthony West, an agent with Moffitt Realty in Kansas

City, KS, suggests becoming a connecting point for your sphere of influence by inviting them to social activities you host and sending them acknowledgements of significant events, such as the anniversary of their closing date.

3. Geographic Farming

In this case, an agent commits to a neighborhood or other geographic zone in a community and serves as "the agent" for that targeted area. Long Beach, CA-based Realtor and real estate coach Eileen Rivera has seen her business multiply several times over using this tactic. She says this approach requires an "all-in" approach and recommends being constantly present in the community, extremely knowledgeable about every aspect of the neighborhood and showing genuine care for it. Like a farmer, the agent requires patience, because there are many months between planting the "seeds" and reaping the "harvest."

4. Cross-Marketing/Networking

When agents give and receive recommendations from professionals in businesses that people are likely to use in conjunction with a home sale, they're likely to see a lift in leads. That's the concept behind this cross-marketing approach in which everyone from house painters to attorneys, moving companies to lenders and mortgage brokers network.



By building relationships with all types of real estate-relevant businesses, an agent is in a better position to become the first person these third-party providers think of when their clients mention they're thinking of buying or selling a home. Additionally, clients appreciate when a business owner can recommend another trusted professional to fill a need. Once the lead becomes a transaction, dotloop agents can repay the referral by simply using the Trusted Service Providers section of the transaction management platform, which easily connects the client with the service providers the agent trusts and uses the most.

5. Internet Leads

With the majority of clients beginning their house hunting online, the Internet is not surprising a primary source of leads. There are two types of leads to cultivate. The first is organic, in which clients find the agent's website through a search or a link. It's critical that an agent have a website with unique, SEO-rich useful content to surface in a local search. Cookie-cutter templates with no point of differentiation from the competition get lost in the digital noise. On the other hand, a blog in which the agent posts interesting, useful content and demonstrates a thorough knowledge of their individual area of focus will help drive clicks to your site and calls to your phone. Unfortunately, many agents give up on this phase of content creation before seeing any real results.

The second kind of Internet lead is paid search, in which the agent's contact information appears on home search results, like Facebook ads or the Zillow Premier Agent program. A Premier Agent profile allows the agent to engage with millions of home shoppers in geo-targeted areas on the largest online real estate network. Plus, dotloop account holders can now create loops directly from the PA App and easily request post-close reviews for posting on their PA Profiles, among other benefits.

6. Yard Signs

This simple form of marketing is still an effective tactic. A prominent sign doesn't just make it easier for people driving by to see the home is for sale; it also advertises the listing agent. The more signs that potential clients see for a particular agent, the more they're likely to view the agent as the local authority. This makes the consistent use of yard signs an important part of a geo-farming strategy.

7. Open Houses

With this approach, the listing agent plans a period of several hours when anyone can drop by to tour a home that's been listed. With the Internet now the predominant method for looking at properties, an open house is less important when it comes to generating offers. Some agents even believe they're a waste of time.

However, real estate coach Tom Ferry is convinced that, if done correctly, an open house can harvest all of the listing potential in a neighborhood. Ferry acknowledges that just putting up a few signs and hoping prospects will show up will most likely result in failure. He suggests making the open house an exciting neighborhood event by, for instance, creating a party atmosphere with a preview lunch for all the neighbors in the 1½ hour before the official open house begins.

To drive attendance, he recommends that the listing agent go door to door, handing out flyers and personally inviting the neighbors two days before the event. The agent should also invite everyone in their sphere of influence (using their CRM). Paid promotion on Facebook will also help target the agent's desired customer base. And finally, he recommends erecting dozens of signs, directing people to the event—as many as local laws allow.



8. Social Media

Having an interesting and engaging presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and the other social networking platforms can pay huge dividends—but only if the agent is willing to invest months of consistent posting before seeing any return. Many agents make the mistake of not having a narrowly defined social media mission statement, which determines exactly what they'll post and when. Additionally, it's tempting to treat social media like Craigslist, where the agent simply posts their latest listing along with their dated headshot.

Agents who successfully use social media to generate leads don't worry about vanity metrics like total followers (many may be out of area) or likes, but, instead, focus on building a local audience through posts that are always educational, entertaining or show their personality. Remember: People will not follow or engage with someone who seems to be continually selling to them.

Videos also should comprise a big part of an agent's social media output. An expensive production isn't necessary when a basic, selfie video exploring a topic of interest can easily wow them. For example, an agent might make a video of the top 5 pizza places in the neighborhood, and then ask the owners to promote the video on their social channels.

Short-Term Tactics

In addition to working their long-term lead sources, agents can use marketing activities that are designed to bring in new listing leads in the short term.

For example, if an agent has a buyer who would like to purchase in a specific neighborhood or subdivision, the agent writes a brief, informal letter of introduction,

which will be sent to a hundred or so homeowners in the area. The letter should briefly introduce the agent, describe the client's struggle to find a home in that area and ask if the homeowner has considered selling. Print it on plain paper and sign in ink to personalize. Then, acquire a list of homeowners to target and hand-address with plain envelopes and first-class stamps.

Tom Ferry suggests using a similar tactic to target a neighborhood using business cards. In this case, the agent hand-writes, "Call me about your house" on a note card, sticks it on the back of a business card and tucks it where the homeowner will find it when they open their front door.

While these techniques should be used sparingly, they have proven to bring in immediate leads in many cases.

Follow-Up Quickly. Cultivate for the Long-Term.

For every incoming lead, the agent should respond as quickly as possible. Clients are expecting to hear back immediately. Remember, even if a potential client isn't ready to take action immediately, every lead has the potential to be the next listing.



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