

Keller Williams University

Lead Generation
36:12:3

Power Session 3: Marketing

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Smart Strategies to Attract Business

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Power Session 3: Marketing

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Power Session 3: Marketing

In this Power Session ...

- [1]** *Introduction*
- [2]** *Marketing for Lead Generation*
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- [5]** *Marketing Your Listing*
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- [7]** *Putting It All Together*

Notes

Introduction

Ground Rules

1. Arrive to class on time and return promptly from breaks.
2. Move quickly when you are instructed to form small groups or partner with someone to role-play.
3. Limit your side conversations.
4. Turn your cell phones and pagers to vibrate or OFF.
5. Feel free to stand and walk around if you find yourself getting tired.
6. Accept the reality of time and participation.
7. Respect the different learning styles and opinions of others.
8. Help each other learn. None of us is as smart as all of us working together to improve our skills and knowledge.
9. Consider everything we do in class confidential. What is discussed and role-played behind closed doors *stays* behind closed doors.
10. Have fun!

How You Will Learn

Learning Methods

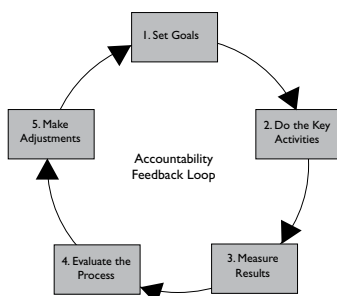
1. In this manual, you will find:
 - **Models and systems** that are tested and proven ways of accomplishing Big Goals.
 - **Exercises and discussion** that allow you to test new skills and clarify your thinking in a safe environment.
 - **Stories, lessons learned, anecdotes, and advice** from top agents who offer invaluable insights.
2. Your classroom learning experience will be enhanced by:
 - **PowerPoint slides** to help keep you on track with the topics inside the course manual.
 - **KWConnect videos** to enrich your understanding of the course material. Watch for the camera icon in your course materials.
 - **Your classmates and instructor.** Don't underestimate the value of what you can learn from your peers, who ask great questions, who share their experiences, and who participate in exercises with you.



Accountability Methods

Accountability is, in the KW experience, the most crucial part of goal achievement. To support your goal setting, we recommend you:

1. Develop a Lead Generation Action Plan. At the end of this course, you will create a plan that outlines the specific actions you will take to achieve your lead generation goals. You will also create a calendar that helps you schedule your specific activities into your daily 3 hours of lead generation time.
2. Select an accountability partner or program to help you measure, evaluate, and make adjustments to your Action Plan. Look to the following resources for an accountability relationship:



- KW MAPS Institute individual and group coaching
- Market Center Productivity Coach
- Team Leader
- ALC Members
- Peers

Where You Are Today

Exercise

Where are you today with your lead generation efforts? Get into the habit of taking accountability for your actions and your progress. Take time to share with your instructor and your peers your aha's, your challenges, and your next steps.

Directions:

1. List the lead generation activities you completed during the last 24 hours.
2. What were your aha's?
3. What were your challenges?
4. Discuss what you will do differently in the next 24 hours.

Time: 10 minutes

1. Lead Generation Activities:	Time Spent on Activity
2. My aha's from these activities:	
3. The most difficult part of these activities:	
4. What I will do differently in the next 24 hours:	

Why You Are Here

Be a Relentless Marketer

Read, underline, and share ...

Have you ever seen David Mamet's movie *Glengarry Glen Ross*? Four agents work for a troubled real estate company in 1980s Chicago. One night, the company delivers a challenge—the agents have to get as many sales as possible in one night using the company's tired, old set of leads. The person with the highest sales gets a Cadillac. The person in second place gets a set of steak knives. Everyone else gets fired.

It's a terrific film, and we won't spoil it by telling you what happens here. We would, however, like to underscore an important moral of the story, something which we firmly believe—the one who owns the leads owns the business! Mamet's agents are victims because they wait for the company to give them leads. They are passive and reactive instead of doing their own prospecting and marketing.

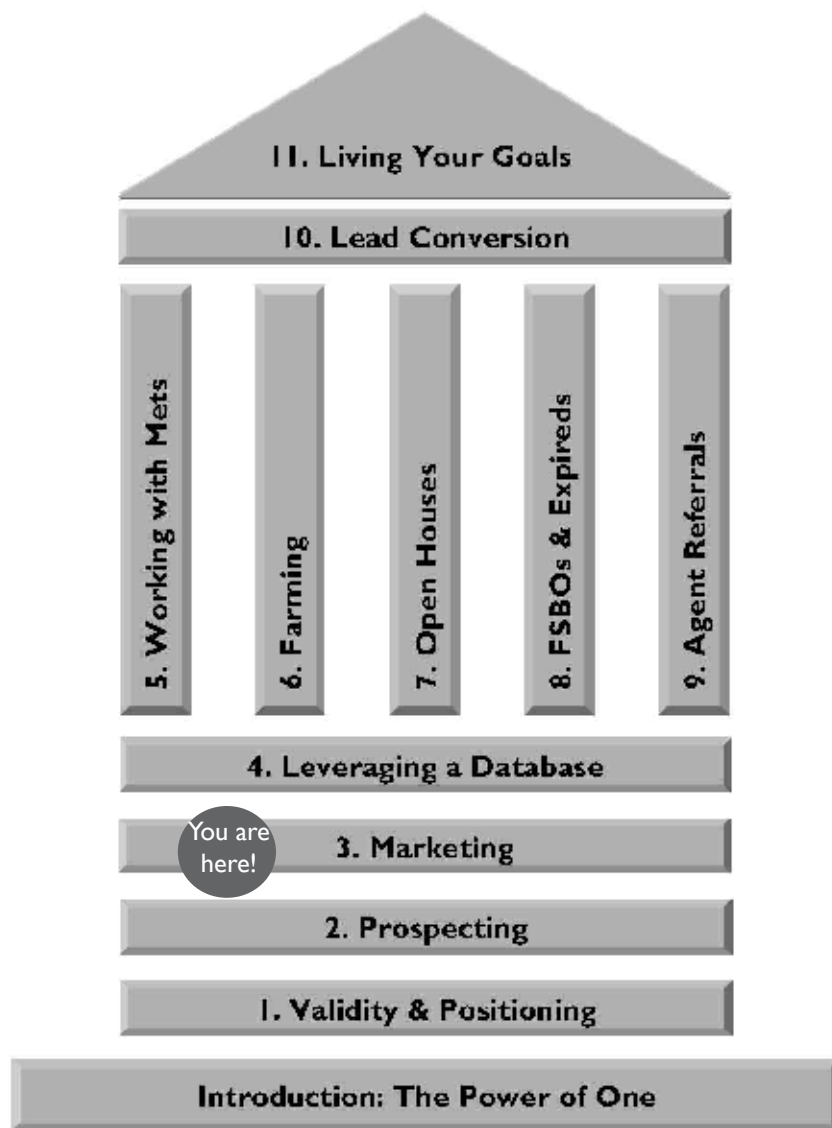
The key to success is to be alert, proactive, and empowered—to have an ongoing, dedicated lead generation program. In his KWConnect session, *10 Steps to Effective Marketing*, Todd Butzer, Regional Director from Edina, Minnesota, tells about a struggling agent who finally turned his business around. The agent said, "I had an epiphany. I realized that this business was about me promoting what I do on a relentless level. I had to go out and do this on my own."

“I realized that this business was about me promoting what I do on a relentless level.”

We discussed the main method of lead generation—prospecting—in *Power Session 2*. Now we're going to look at how you can maximize your lead generation by combining that with a purposeful and consistent marketing program.

TODD BUTZER, QUOTING A
TOP AGENT
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
EDINA, MINNESOTA

Lead Generation 36:12:3 Course Map



What Will Make This a Great Training Experience

-
-
-
-
-

Notes

Marketing for Lead Generation

Power Session 2: Prospecting talks about how prospecting and marketing work together to generate leads and to cultivate those leads. Let's review:



Prospecting and Marketing Model

Lead generation is a little bit like baking bread. There are essential ingredients for success in both lead generation and baking.

Think of your Mets and Haven't Mets as the flour—they're the basis of your business. It takes yeast to make your dough rise—that's your prospecting, which takes your potential customers and turns them into actual business. Marketing makes your prospecting more effective—it's like water, which activates the yeast. And you need a steady supply of heat—your daily habit of 3 hours—to turn the whole thing into a loaf of bread.

Without the yeast, you don't have bread, you have crackers. Without the water, you have dust. Without the heat, you have a pile of goo. You have to have marketing, prospecting, *and* the daily habit to be successful!

What Is Marketing?

“Direct mail as the main lead generation tool just isn’t cost-effective for someone getting into the business. It’s really hard for them to spend thousands of dollars every month sending out direct mail, and they can’t keep up with the big teams that are pumping it out.”

Marketing is a more passive form of lead generation—you send out a message in the hope that customers will come to you. The goal is to *attract* leads. This is different from prospecting, where you go out and personally connect with customers, either by phone or face-to-face.

Common forms of marketing include

- Direct mail
- Email
- Websites
- Signs
- Billboards
- Radio ads
- Television ads
- Magazine ads

There are three big challenges with marketing:

1. It can be expensive.
2. It’s less personal and memorable than prospecting.
3. It’s less immediate in its results.

However, marketing has a couple of key benefits:

1. It lets you leverage your time—it gets your message out for you while you work on other things.
2. It lets you reach a larger audience. You can use a mail-out or website to send your message to a much larger pool of people than you can with phone calls or door knocking.

KURT BUEHLER
THE BUEHLERS & ASSOCIATES
FLOWER MOUND, TEXAS

What Are the Benefits?

To enjoy the benefits of marketing and minimize its disadvantages, employ marketing selectively to both prime and reinforce your prospecting activities. Use a reasonably priced marketing action plan as a *supplement* to your prospecting efforts while you are in the growth phase (make sure you have enough money to market consistently, or you're likely wasting your money). Remember that while you're still on the road to 36 transactions per year, the role of marketing is to feed and support the relationships you build with your prospecting.

Truth

The role of marketing during your growth phase is to *supplement* your prospecting.

Nevertheless, at every stage of your business's life, the best and most consistent results come from doing prospecting *and* marketing. Even when you are *prospecting based*, you'll improve your results when you're *marketing enhanced*. Prospecting and marketing are powerful lead generation activities, but neither is as powerful alone as they are together.

For this reason, you have to support your lead generation plan with marketing—the two should be *synergistic*. What this means is your marketing should strengthen your prospecting in several ways:

1. Marketing gives you a reason to call (prospect).
2. Marketing provides the touch that will set you apart and makes you memorable after you've prospected.
3. Steady, consistent marketing helps you gain and retain mindshare.

1. Marketing gives you a reason to prospect

AGENT: “Hi, this is _____. Did you receive the market report I sent you? Do you have any questions about the market that I could answer for you?”

If you’ve sent someone a letter or email, it gives you a reason to call them and something to talk about during the call.

2. Marketing provides the touch that will set you apart after you’ve prospected

*Dear Mr. Ramirez,
It was a real pleasure to meet you yesterday. You asked some great questions about how our local market is different from the national market you hear about on the news. Be sure to call me next time you have real estate questions or need help buying or selling a home! I look forward to hearing from you!*

THANK YOU!

A follow-up thank-you card

Follow up your prospecting with thank-you cards, invitations, movie tickets, coffee shop gift certificates, or other small, personal gestures that reinforce your mindshare. Remember: don’t overspend! Choose items that fit your budget.

3. Steady, consistent, value-based marketing helps you keep mindshare

For example, this postcard—part of a 12 Direct or 33 Touch program by Denver's Kiker Team—gives their database information of value while reminding them of their brand and their expertise in all aspects of community life.



An informative postcard from KW's Kiker Team, Denver, Colorado

It's a Numbers Game!

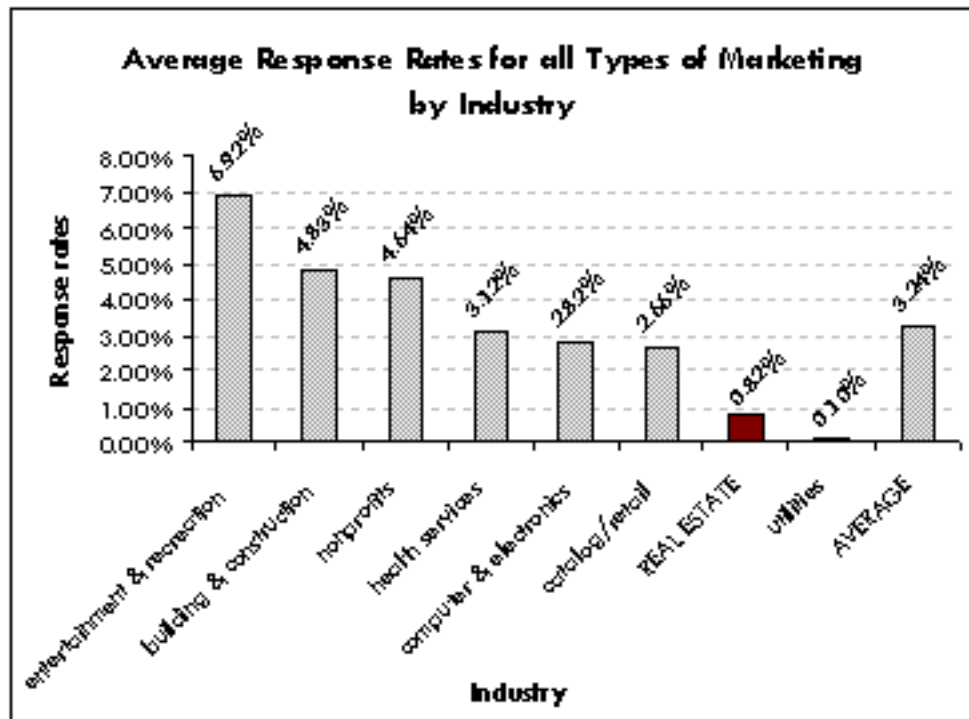
This chart, from a 2005 report by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA), shows how much response different industries get from their marketing programs.

“You can get a better response rate from your marketing if your target prospecting and marketing audiences are synergistic—if you prospect to the same people you market to.”

DAVE JENKS
COAUTHOR AND MASTER
FACULTY
KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY
INTL.
WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK

Note: A “response” is an action taken as a result of a piece of marketing: calling the company, placing an order, submitting information, answering a survey, and so forth.

While the entertainment and recreation industry enjoys a 6.92 percent response from their audience, real estate gets a 0.82 percent response. They are selling movie tickets and DVDs and we market in the hopes of attracting motivated buyers and sellers.



DMA's response rates to marketing by industry

These percentages are instructive in that they remind us that marketing, like real estate, is a numbers game. A 0.82 percent, not even one person in a hundred responds to an individual real estate marketing piece. While any response that covers your cost advertising is worthwhile, we know we can do better. According to research for *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent*, using the 12 Direct consistently over time yields a 2 percent return (50:1). In other words, you can double the industry average just by making use of the timely repetition of a marketing action plan like the 12 Direct.

So what these numbers really tell us is that we have room to improve. They show us what's possible. We can get more than 0.82 percent, if we only sharpen our skills and build our daily habit of 3 hours of lead generation. Imagine what it would mean to your business to double or triple your response rate. Implement your marketing and prospecting strategically, consistently, and repetitively, and find out!

Marketing Myths

Sometimes agents have misconceptions about marketing—limiting beliefs that prevent them from getting the full benefit from their lead generation activities. But agents who understand the truth about marketing are the ones who build successful lead generation action plans.

“You want to
‘out-touch’
everyone else.”

Myth 1

I only need to prospect OR to market to be successful.

Truth

**Successful lead generation is a combination of two things:
prospecting and marketing.**

DICK DILLINGHAM
MASTER FACULTY
AMBASSADOR
KELLER WILLIAMS
UNIVERSITY
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Often times we find something that we do well or enjoy and because we enjoy it and do it well, we do only that. So it’s easy to get stuck in a lead generation comfort zone.

The truth is that you need to use several kinds of lead generation synergistically. Ideally, the different methods you use should come from both marketing *and* prospecting. Marketing without prospecting is expensive and tends to have a weaker impact. Prospecting without marketing is time-consuming and tends to have short-term effects.

Use prospecting to create a strong, personal impression, and use marketing to prolong the effects of that impression—to cultivate the relationships you’ve begun.

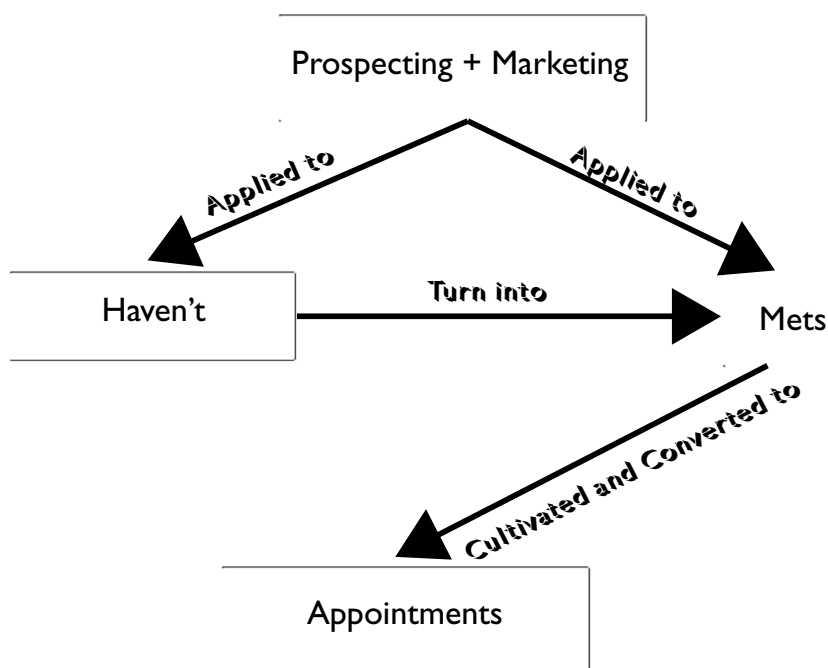
Myth 2

The purpose of prospecting and marketing is to get appointments.

Truth

**The purpose of prospecting and marketing is to get appointments
AND to increase your database of Mets.**

If your new contacts tell you they aren't thinking about moving any time soon, you aren't done with them. Even though they don't need you now, they will probably need an agent later on. If you can't convert them right away, work on converting them later.



Think about it—only about 14 percent of your database and their spheres of influence are looking to buy or sell at any given time. You want to convert those who are ready to move immediately, of course, but more importantly, you need to build relationships with everyone else in your database so that when they do need to buy or sell, they'll think of you first.

Consequently, the purpose of prospecting and marketing is to build relationships for immediate or long-term business.

See *Power Session 5: Working with Mets* for more information about building relationships with your Mets.

Myth 3

Any marketing I do builds mindshare.

Truth

If you don't market repeatedly and consistently, you are throwing your money away.

“You want to get into the mind of the prospective customer in such a way that when they need your product or service, you're the only one they think of. And it is literally owning shelf-space in their mind.”

Some agents think that if they mail out some postcards three or four times a year, they are building mindshare. They aren't. In fact, they are probably wasting their hard-earned money. Mindshare comes from systematic marketing over time. That's why we designed the 12 Direct, 33 Touch, and 8 x 8 programs that are explained later in this Power Session. Each of these programs provides the framework for consistently touching your potential customers over time.

The truth is that if you don't market consistently, you aren't really building mindshare. And when the time comes for them to buy or sell a house, they won't remember the four postcards they got from you last year—they'll remember the 33 phone calls, emails, market reports, newsletters, and value items they got from the agent up the street. As Gary Keller reminds us in *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent*, “If you aren't first or second in their mind, you probably won't get the business.”

The bottom line: sporadic marketing is pointless—marketing has to be *systematic* and *consistent* to be effective.

RUSSELL SHAW
THE RUSSELL SHAW GROUP
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Defining Your Brand

What Is Branding?

Your brand is what makes you memorable and valid to your client base and potential prospects. It's a systematic outgrowth of your own sense of validity. Your brand encompasses both you and your business. It defines the kind of professional the public perceives you to be. It's the kind of service they think you offer. As Joshua Stern, an innovative young agent who closed 81 transactions last year in Salt Lake City, Utah, observes, "Without a brand, you're just an individual. Without a brand, you're just a shoe; you're not a Nike." The 2006 National Association of Realtors statistics show that 35 percent of sellers—the largest segment—choose their agent based on reputation. In other words, the public's perception of your integrity, reliability, and effectiveness is essential to your business.

There are two ways to build reputation:

1. Through marketing your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and brand
2. Through delivering on your value proposition and customer service

We'll talk about the former in detail and trust you to deliver the latter!

Because branding is so important, smart agents are very strategic about developing and communicating their brand. They analyze their personality and way of doing business and figure out what they offer that the public wants. Then they take care that every aspect of their public face—from their clothes to their office to their scripts to their marketing materials—reinforces this identity.

And everything can be part of your brand:

- Your style of dress
- Your car
- Your use of technology
- Your website
- Your level of service and efficiency
- Your accessibility
- The area you work in
- How you stage an open house
- How many phone numbers you list on your card
- How you answer the phone
- The quality of your marketing materials
- The frequency of your direct mail-outs
- Your signs
- Your prelisting packet
- Your community involvement
- Your knowledge of the area

Branding:

“A process of establishing and managing the image, perceptions, and associations that the consumer applies to your product.”

G. ROMAN HIEBLING JR.
AND SCOTT COOPER
HOW TO WRITE A
SUCCESSFUL MARKETING
PLAN



Bruce Hardie, head of the multimillion dollar Hardie Group in Spokane, Washington, tells about how he subtly adjusted his brand early in his career. He says, “I used to go to work in a navy blue double-breasted suit in a white starched shirt and a red power tie and a nice black patent leather briefcase. And I would go out to these \$50,000 houses, where the guy had just gotten home from work. He was in a panic, still covered in grease, and I would sit down, and what I realized was that I was intimidating a lot of people whom I was trying to do business with. I said, ‘I’ve got to change my image!’ I had developed my logo, so I sent it to Land’s End and got a bunch of button-down shirts and khakis—just a more casual look. And once my image matched my target client base, my conversion rate went up.

There is no one right brand. Each market and target demographic gravitates toward different kinds of people, and each agent offers something different.

Having a clearly defined brand is crucial for developing an effective, long-term, strategic action plan, so we’re going to go through the steps of brainstorming your brand. If you already have an established brand, this is your chance to refine it and make sure that it is consistently carried through all your marketing materials.

Your USP, Style, and Brand

In order to help you create a coherent, genuine brand, we're going to use three brainstorming activities that build on your work in *Power Session 1: Building Validity and Positioning*. Remember that your brand includes your professional attributes along with your personality and individuality.

1. You'll review the USP exercise in *Power Session 1: Building Validity and Positioning* to help you develop a brand that accents your natural strengths and appeals to your clients.
2. Then you're going to describe your personal style and the demographics of your customer base to develop a Style Analysis.
3. Finally, you'll distill the information in these two exercises to develop your Brand Identity Statement, which will include your business's slogan.

Your Brand Identity Statement defines the persona that you wish to create for the public. You'll use it to guide all of your marketing and self-presentation, including your logo, photograph, and graphics. This way, you will present a coherent, compelling face to your audience.

I. Refine Your USP

Remember that your USP is a unique, memorable, and persuasive statement that expresses the true value of working with you. It's what gets your foot in the door so that you're sitting at the table. It should set you apart, allowing you to position yourself in the market.

The Value Proposition exercise in *Power Session 1: Building Validity and Positioning* asked you to brainstorm your strengths and values and then explain how those strengths and values benefit your customers. Once you named your strengths and their benefits, you chose the strongest of those statements as the basis of your USP. In the following exercise, we'll revisit your USP to use it as the foundation for your brand.

Consider Marla, for example. She got a bachelor's degree in architecture before becoming a full-time mom. Now she's taken up real estate as a second career. She's continued to follow trends in architecture over the years and thinks that her expertise in this area is her strongest selling point.

“You have to look for some way to obviously set yourself apart in the market, to build some special competencies in the market segments that you are targeting that allow you to add real value.”

LAURIE MOORE-MOORE
THE INSTITUTE FOR LUXURY
HOME MARKETING
DALLAS, TEXAS

Exercise

Refine Your USP

Directions:

Use your USP statement from *Power Session 1: Building Validity and Positioning*. Take five minutes to review and revise your statement. If you don't have your USP with you, use this time to sketch out your USP, which is a statement of your most powerful value proposition, expressed in such a way as to highlight your uniqueness.

Once the five minutes is up, break into groups of four or fewer. Share your USP with your peers and get their feedback. When you review your peers' statements, ask yourself whether they are powerful, persuasive, and unique. Consider your peers' comments and refine your USP as necessary.

Time: 15 minutes

My USP

--

2. Analyze Your Style

According to *Guerrilla Marketing*, by Jay Conrad Levinson, Americans are bombarded with around 2,700 advertisement and marketing messages *every day*. That's why, in addition to branding around your professional services, you also need to develop a brand that stands out—that has personality. Think about things that may or may not have anything to do with your business, but that make you memorable. For example,

- The Bizzy Blondes, top agents from Los Angeles, California, have leveraged an element of their founders' personal style to create a fun, memorable brand.
- Bruce Hardie combines his Australian background (his logo is a kangaroo)—something that sets him apart in the eyes (and ears!) of the public—with a down-to-earth professionalism to appeal to his target market.
- Sharon Ketko, high-producing agent from Plano, Texas, brands herself as “The Builder’s Wife” to capitalize on her connection to the construction industry.

The style you develop should take into account what your target demographic expects and wants, and especially what will make you positively memorable!

Exercise

Complete Your Style Analysis

Directions:

Brainstorm your personal style and your customers' demographics to refine what sort of brand you want to create.

Is your style ...

(circle one) Formal Business Casual Informal Other _____

(circle one) Conservative Chic Flamboyant Bohemian Other _____

Are your clients ...

(circle one) Luxury Middle Class Working Class Combination Other _____

(circle one) Retirees Families Recent College Grads Combination Other _____

(circle one) Conservative Chic Flamboyant Bohemian Other _____

(circle one) Younger Middle Aged Older

Describe how you are unique or memorable. Think about your

- background
- education
- hobbies
- appearance
- personal connections

Note: Refer to the book *Words That Sell*, by Richard Bayan, for a list of words that customers respond positively to. Here are a few to consider when positioning yourself and your business...

Willing	Experienced	Honest	Polished
Accurate	Hardworking	Patient	Successful
Aggressive	Highly motivated	Prepared	Tenacious
Articulate	Innovative	Qualified	Versatile
Dedicated	Multitalented	Resourceful	
Energetic	Organized	Skilled	

Time: 10 minutes

3. Develop a Brand Identity Statement

The final step is to combine all of this information to figure out what factors to emphasize in your brand. You will summarize this in a Brand Identity Statement that you will use as you develop your lead generation action plan.

For example, here's Marla's USP:

- You, the customer, benefit from my technical expertise as an architect—you receive an informed perspective on evaluating homes for architectural soundness, valuable advice dating older structures and identifying architectural styles, and tips on sound rehab opportunities for investors.

Here's her analysis of her style:

- My style is informal and sporty, and my target audience is a mixture of laid-back college grads and working-class and middle-class families.
- I'm unique because I'm in a jazz band and I have a degree in architecture.
- Some good words to describe me include *accurate, energetic, highly motivated, and resourceful*.

“Be true to yourself. You’ve got to analyze what you’re doing in your business. You’ve got to ask your clients specific questions. You have to do a lot of soul-searching to make your branding work.”

KEITH DE SOMER
THE DE SOMER WILLIAMS
LUXURY ESTATE TEAM
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Marla filters her USP through the elements of her style that she thinks are valuable to her business. She's looking for a brand identity that will appeal to her demographic and will genuinely represent the kind of agent she is. Once she's described her brand, she distills it into a slogan—a catchy phrase or sentence that encapsulates her unique value.

Marla's Brand Identity

USP: expertise in architecture

Why did you choose that USP?

This unique characteristic will appeal to the broadest audience and will build their confidence in my skills.

What aspects of your style will you use in your brand?

I'm going to emphasize informality and accessibility, which will appeal to my target demographic.

What is your brand's personality?

Professional but friendly, unpretentious, fun, and youthful.

What's your slogan?

"The real estate agent who *knows* houses"

Marla can use this statement to determine the kind of logo she creates, how she dresses, even how she speaks. All of these things need to reinforce her brand as a professional but informal agent with expert knowledge about architecture. Everything she does should match this persona.

Exercise

Write Your Brand Identity Statement

Directions:

Filter your USP through your style to define a brand that is

- Unique and memorable
- Responsive to your audience's needs and desires
- Compatible with your personality

Continue to refine your Brand Identity Statement outside of class—it may take a while to get it just right! But when you do, cut out this page and tape it to your office wall. Refer to it whenever you are creating a marketing action plan, decorating your office, choosing an outfit, shopping for a car ... or making any other decision that affects your brand.

Time: 20 minutes

Your Brand Identity

USP: _____

Why did you choose that USP? _____

What aspects of your style will you use in your brand?

Your brand should include qualities from your USP and your style. What is your brand's personality? _____

What is your slogan?

Notes

Marketing Your Brand

Marketing your brand is a big part of the work you do to establish your reputation in your community. It tends to attract sellers more than buyers. The other main kind of marketing you will do—marketing your listings—is about your inventory more than your company, and it tends to attract buyers.



Marketing your brand tends to attract sellers; marketing your listings tends to attract buyers.

There is some crossover in marketing: the card containing your listings helps to build your reputation as a market leader, while your newsletter probably includes some pictures and information about your current listings.

Truth

Effective marketing has a clear, focused objective.

So why think about the distinction between marketing your brand and marketing your listings? Because having a clear objective for your marketing piece allows you to tailor your material to the audience you're trying to reach.

Sellers are looking for an agent, but buyers are looking for a house!

“When you make marketing part of your daily routine of 3 hours of lead generation, your prospecting is like making warm calls. The people know who you are before you know who they are. It makes lead generation much more fun.”

BRAD KORN
THE KORN TEAM
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

Consider this: if you're in a buyer's market and are having trouble selling your homes, does it make sense to spend a lot of your resources marketing your listings on cable TV or in magazines? Why or why not?

Below are some good ways to market your brand in your community. Keep in mind that whatever approach you use will work better if your marketing stands out from your competition, is consistent, and is integrated with a strong prospecting system.

6 Methods for Marketing Your Brand	
<p>1. Community Involvement</p> <p>Sponsorships</p> <p>Charities</p> <p>Community Events</p>	<p>2. Media</p> <p>Radio</p> <p>TV</p> <p>News articles/press releases</p> <p>Print ads</p>
<p>3. Mail-outs</p> <p>Newsletters</p> <p>Just listeds/solds</p> <p>Special events cards</p> <p>Comparative Market Analyses</p> <p>Promotional items</p> <p>Community calendar</p>	<p>4. Signs</p> <p>Yard and directional signs</p> <p>Benches</p> <p>Billboards</p> <p>Grocery carts</p> <p>Moving vans</p> <p>Personal vehicles</p>
<p>5. Automated Marketing</p> <p>Voicemail</p> <p>Email</p> <p>Video email</p> <p>Fax</p>	<p>6. The Internet</p> <p>Your website</p> <p>Emergent free online services</p>

Remember, when you start a new marketing project, always start with these foundational principles we've gleaned from research with top agents.

The Big 3 Marketing Principles

- 1. Research your new marketing method** in your area. Who's already using this method? What do you like about their marketing? What doesn't work? How can you set yourself apart?
- 2. Talk to your Team Leader** or an experienced agent about how well that method works in your community, how much it usually costs, and any regulations or requirements you should know about.
- 3. Lead with revenue.** Don't spend money you haven't got on glitzy marketing. Prospect while your income is small, and slowly add marketing components as your income grows. Make sure you have enough money to complete the entire marketing action plan before you begin—incomplete plans are usually a complete waste of money.

Six Methods for Marketing Your Brand

“A huge part of my success in Fremont, California, has been a result of many years on community-based nonprofit boards. My first year with KW, I closed over 100 units, and 18 were from no-profit contacts.”

RICK GEHA
THE RICK GEHA AND COCO
LEWIS REAL ESTATE GROUP
FREMONT, CALIFORNIA

I. Community Involvement

Community involvement is a particularly rewarding way to build a reputation. It lets you benefit by helping others, helps you learn more about your community, and allows you to meet terrific prospects.

One great source of community involvement is team or group sponsorships, such as Little League or neighborhood associations. This method allows you to meet young families, a demographic that often needs to upgrade to a larger house.

Similarly, charities and community events are a wonderful way to get involved because they offer you a truly win-win deal. You are able to generate leads and work with other high-minded individuals with good hearts. You are also able to give something back to your community to help make it a better place. Do a little research to choose your charities. Figure out which ones will benefit the demographic (or geographic area) you care about, and find out more about their guidelines for sponsorship.

In return for your help, most civic groups will offer one or more of the following:

- An ad in the program guide for an event (see the “Popular Media” section in this Power Session)
- Your name or logo on the sponsors’ board near the concession stand or registration desk at an event. If you can’t use your logo or company name, be sure to put “real estate agent” after your name, as in “Theodore Collins, Real Estate Agent.”
- A sponsorship plaque
- Verbal recognition over the PA system during events
- Your name or logo on an event t-shirt. Again, be sure to include your occupation if you can’t use your company name or logo.

Community Involvement

Method	Prices	Sources of Info	Tips
Sponsorships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School groups • Sports teams 	A single-season Little League sponsorship = \$200–\$500	Search in your local Yellow Pages under “Recreation and Sports.”	<p>Try to get parents to visit your office—host a team party or awards ceremony if your space is large enough, or form a committee for publicizing group events and offer the use of your graphics software equipment.</p> <p>You need to be on the Little League board or be a coach.</p>
Charities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charities • Service Clubs 	Varies	Search in your local Yellow Pages under “Charities” or network with a chamber of commerce or religious organization.	Charities that are willing to include you in their marketing material for an event usually limit you to the name of your business or a company logo.
Social Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social events • Community Events 	Varies	Search local websites, Search engines, or your local newspaper. Check community and organization newsletters.	Brainstorm ways to collect contact information at events, such as legal waivers for any of your equipment that the public uses, newsletter offers, raffles, etc.
Business Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of commerce • Professional organizations • Business exchange groups 	Varies	Search the internet. Find a high-profile person in your area of interest and network with them—use them as a mentor and let them know what kind of organization you’re looking for.	<p>Make sure you systematically spend some time with every person in the organization: invite them to a sporting event, take them to lunch to talk about how your businesses can help each other, or stop by their office.</p> <p>Try not to get on real estate committees. Look for ones that will create a community event. Write letters to the editors. Choose committees that have high visibility and look for higher profile people.</p>
Personal Interest Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational groups • Hobby or interest groups 	Varies	Search the internet. Find a high-profile person in your area of interest and network with them—use them as a mentor and let them know what kind of organization you’re looking for.	Make sure you become part of the organization—don’t just attend; help organize. Get involved in visible activities.
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churches, temples, and other religious organizations • Political organization 	Varies	Use your personal network to find organizations that are a good fit for your deeply held convictions.	<p>Be sure you have real commitment to the organization—you have to be really engaged when you’re there.</p> <p>Step up and volunteer at an organizational or committee level. Come up with ideas to add value to the group and chair those efforts.</p>

Ron Wexler, top-selling agent from the Chicago Southland region of Illinois, has made community involvement a key part of his business strategy. His two major pieces of advice are

1. Work with groups that you genuinely care about and can bring some passion to.

“People can read your underlying intent,” Ron says. If you join just to lead generate, you probably won’t have a lot of success. Instead, try to make the most out of your work with groups you would have joined anyway.

2. Don’t spend money or time indiscriminately—look for ways to donate that give you high visibility.

If you’re going to give time or money to an organization anyway, do it in ways that will be a win-win for you as well as the group.

Ron even recommends creating a checklist of everything you need to do to get the most out of your experience when your group holds an event. After all, once you get caught up in an activity, it’s easy to lose focus. His checklist looks like this:

Checklist for a Win-win Community Event

- Personally thank the bigger sponsors.
_____ **Before** _____ **During** _____ **After**
- Be an announcer.
- Personally MC award giveaways.
- After an event, write letters to the editor of your local newspaper to thank the participants and sponsors.
- After a successful event, contact the leaders within the week and offer to be the primary sponsor next year.

Dan Nevitt, who has done \$3,820,763.00 million in transactions in the three months since he joined Keller Williams Realty in 2007, has built his entire database using a marketing plan focused on an inflatable bounce house. He remembers, “When I moved to Flower Mound, Texas, I didn’t have a sphere of influence, so there was no way for me to market to friends or family or past clients.” He knew he needed to build a database fast, so he decided to purchase an inflatable bounce house and lend it out free of charge to any group in the community holding an event.



The house has a banner with his brand, but the real flash of lead generating inspiration is Dan’s disclaimer. He has the parents sign a waiver of liability in case of accidental injury, and on the form they include their contact information. The day after the event, Dan sends out a thank-you letter introducing himself. As a result, he was able to build a database from 0 to 5,000 in one year.

“Then,” he says, “I started using the database for leverage.” He contacted vendors in his town that cater to families and got them to cosponsor his advertising. He can guarantee that their message will reach their precise target audience—families with children—and he gets help with the advertising costs and/or access to their database.

The best thing about it is that his marketing plan reflects his personal values. Dan says, “I’ve got two little girls and I’m a family man, so I want to help other families in the community. I always say to give unconditionally. It feels good. I really believe that if you can do something, do it because you can. When you get up in the morning and are brushing your teeth and looking in the mirror, if you say, ‘I am going to do the best today for my business and my family and my community,’ what more can you ask of yourself?”

2. Media Advertising

Popular media is a great way to reach a very large audience quickly. Because of the cost, some forms of popular media are not feasible for agents starting out—for these agents, less expensive methods, like newspaper ads or articles, may be the better solution. Whichever methods you decide to try, remember these six basic principles:

The 6 Principles of Working with Popular Media

1. When you are creating your piece, ask yourself, “Does the quality of this material make me look like I’m worth the fee I charge?” If you are not creative, you may consider outsourcing the creation of your material to a third-party vendor (check out the preferred vendors on the KW Intranet).
2. Be consistent. In addition to using the same standard elements of marketing in all of your pieces, be consistent with the ads you use in any given publication. What you are going for is consistent repetition to create recognition and, ultimately, mindshare with your target audience.
3. Placement is important in print media. The bigger your ad is, the better. But if you don’t have the budget for a double-page or full-page ad, you need to have your ad placed in the lower right-hand side of the right page. This is the last thing a consumer will see as they turn the page, so it is the most likely thing to stick in their memory.
4. Use IVR consistently throughout your marketing. If you are using an IVR system, make sure that any listings you advertise have your IVR number in the ad. By advertising your IVR number, consumers who call on your ads will automatically be captured and tracked by your system.
5. Track your response rate. Ask leads who call you where they heard about you, or offer an incentive if they mention the ad. Your aim is to objectively measure the effectiveness of your ads. Track the number of business results you get (number of closed deals), so you can objectively measure your return on investment (ROI) for your marketing dollars.
6. In media advertising, impressions matter. “Impressions” is the advertising term for the number of times your ad runs. Most experts agree that running eight 1/8-of-a-page ads over eight weeks is more effective than a single full-page ad.

NOTE:

Watch your cross-over. If you are advertising in one publication that hits a particular target audience, you may not want to advertise in other publications that target that same audience. By advertising in publications with different kinds of readers, you increase the number of people who are exposed to your marketing message.

On the next page are the most popular venues for marketing in popular media.

Media			
Method	Prices	Sources of Info	Tips
Newspaper and Magazine Ads	1 quarter-page newspaper ad = \$500–\$3,000.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local newspaper • Homes magazines • Real estate books • HOA/neighborhood newsletters 	
Newspaper Articles and Columns	\$0	Your take on market issues in the national media, articles in other news sources, and community news and information	Many newspapers will pay you (a very small fee) to write articles for them. You may consider waiving the fee in lieu of an ad in the newspaper. If you do this, try to get the paper to allow you to place directions to your ad at the bottom of your article (e.g., “See pg. R9 for our ad.”).
Yellow Pages	Buy as much space as you can afford—larger ads tend to attract more customers. 1 quarter-page ad = \$500–\$3,000		Put more information about your services into your Yellow Pages ad than other print ads. People tend to spend more time reading and comparing the ads in the Yellow Pages than they do reading and comparing ads in newspapers, magazines, or newsletters. Additionally, they are looking in that section of the Yellow Pages for a reason—they need a real estate agent!
Radio	1 60-second commercial = \$30–\$300	Ask the station for statistics on market size, who is listening, and when they’re listening. Use this information to determine how long your commercial should be, what time of day it should run, and how many times per month it should run.	Ensure that your telephone number and website are repeated at least twice. Whether you are recording the commercial (assuming you have a good voice for radio) or using a professional, always work off of a script. And make sure that you test your script on others before recording your ad.
Television	1 30-second commercial = \$50–\$5,000	Ask the station for statistics on market size, who is watching, and when they’re watching. Use this information to determine how long your commercial should be (when done right, even 15-second commercials can be effective), what time of day it should run, and how many times per month it should run.	Ensure that your telephone number and website address are displayed throughout the entire ad if possible. Create a script and a storyboard, and test it on others before shooting the commercial.

Note that newspaper articles and columns give you a way to reach your audience at no cost to yourself. You can also submit press releases and freelance articles whenever something important happens to your business or your marketplace. Be sure to include as many elements of your brand as possible—especially your logo, slogan, contact information, and picture.

Dane Anderson's Tips for Working with the Media:

1. Even if you do not have a specific story or event to promote, send a letter or email to local editors or reporters introducing yourself and offering to lend your expertise or input on upcoming stories pertaining to real estate.
2. Respond to recent coverage. When stories on real estate appear in your local news, follow up with the writer or reporter, complimenting them on the quality of the coverage and suggesting follow-up topics.
3. When you invite the media to an event, treat them like VIPs and follow up afterward.

From "Marketing to the Media: Enhance Your Image, Increase Your Visibility, and Catapult Your Credibility." *OutFront*, March/April 2007, v4, no. 2. p 7, 11.

Another way to get exposure in the press is to write unbranded ads in the format of an editorial, like the example below from Joshua Stern.

11 Critical Home Inspection Traps to be Aware of Weeks Before Listing Your Home For Sale

West Valley City - According to industry experts, there are over 53 physical problems that will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared, which identifies the eleven most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

Whether you own an old home or a brand new one, there are a number of things that can fall short of requirements during a home inspection. If not identified and dealt with, any of these 11 items could cost you dearly in terms of repair. That's why it's critical that you read this report before you list your home. If you wait until the building inspector flags these issues for you, you will almost certainly experience costly delays in the close of your home sale or, worse, turn

prospective buyers away altogether.

In most cases, you can make a reasonable pre-inspection yourself if you know what you're looking for, and knowing what you're looking for can help you prevent little problems from growing into costly and unmanageable ones.

To help homeowners deal with this issue before their homes are listed, a free report entitled "11 Things You Need to Know to Pass Your Home Inspection" has been compiled which explains the issues involved.

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your **FREE** copy of this report, call **1-800-448-7990** and enter **EXT#3002**. You can call any time, **24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call NOW** to learn how to ensure a home inspection doesn't cost you the sale of your home.

This report is a copy of Joshua Stern, Keller Williams Suburb City Real Estate's business development strategy based on the
 RE-ACKNOWLEDGMENT

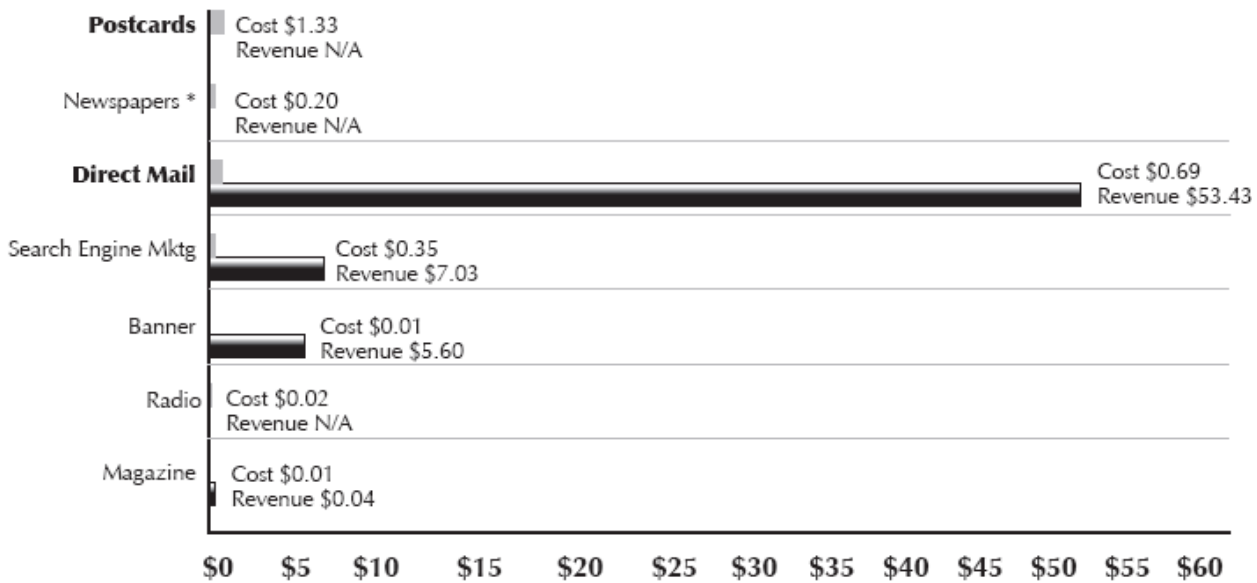
Radio and television are on the opposite end of the cost spectrum from print media. However, even with these venues, you can leverage your knowledge and your contacts in the community. For example, instead of doing a radio spot, you might offer to host a call-in talk show sponsored by allied vendors, such as title or mortgage companies.

Your allied vendors may also be willing to subsidize your television advertisement in return for mentioning their name or including their logo during the spot. Alternately, you can use the visual richness of video without the cost of broadcasting: create short videos that showcase your properties or your service.

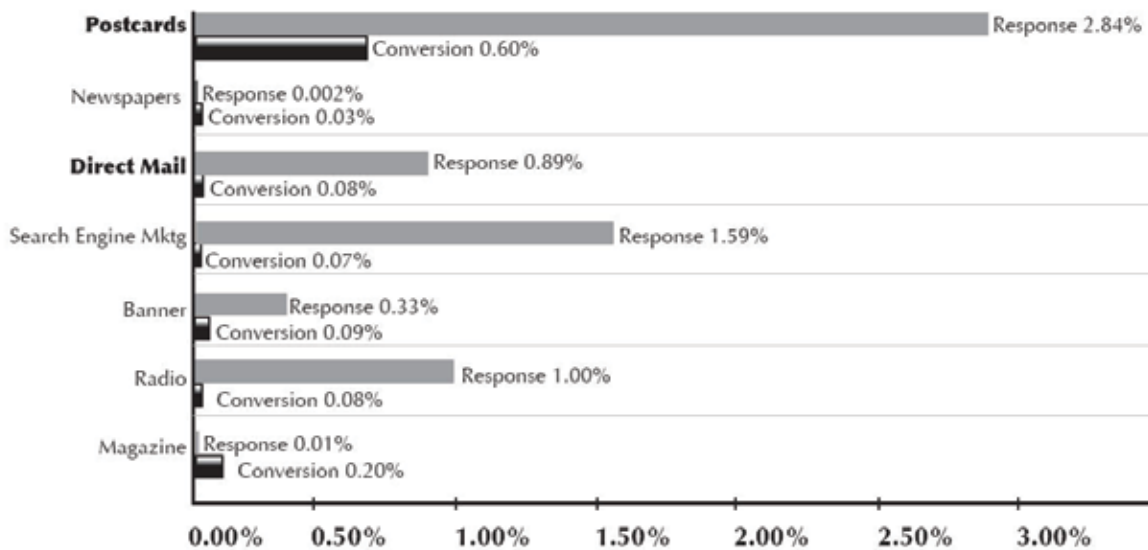
3. Mail-outs

Mail-outs are the backbone of most agents' marketing programs, and research by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) shows that mail-outs and postcards together have the highest response rate and produce more revenue than other marketing methods.

Cost and Benefit per Contact in Real Estate

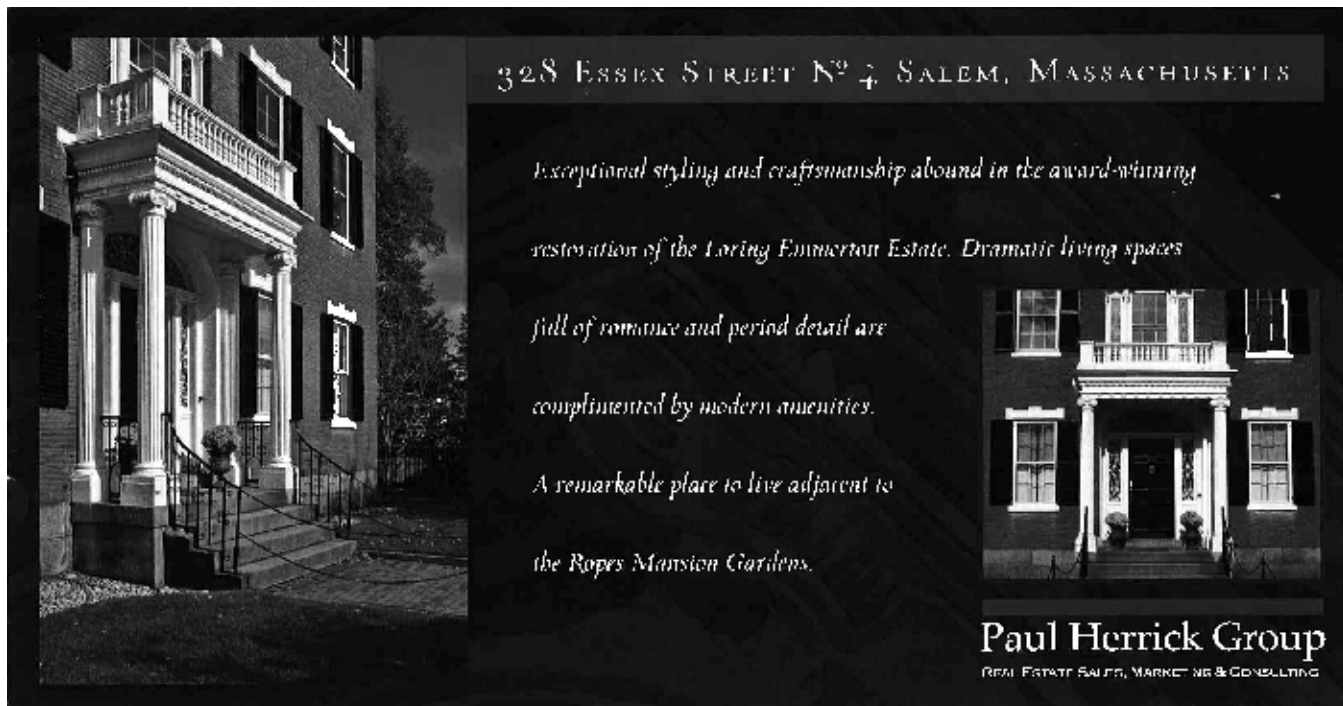


Response and Conversion Rate for Marketing Media in Real Estate



DMA research showing the high response rate and payoff of mail-outs

If you haven't been putting much effort into your marketing, consider Keith de Somer, advertising executive, and Marcus B. Williams, former CEO of a graphic web-design company, now KW real estate agents in Orlando, Florida. Their mail-outs are the backbone of their marketing strategies. Their team hires a professional photographer, designs the pieces themselves, and sends them to a marketing firm for fine-tuning. As a result of this attention to detail, his team sees a 20–25 percent return on their mail-outs—they only send out about 200 pieces at a time, but as many as a quarter of those pieces result in listings.



328 ESSEX STREET N^o 7 SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

Exceptional styling and craftsmanship abound in the award-winning restoration of the Loring Emmerton Estate. Dramatic living spaces full of romance and period detail are complimented by modern amenities.

A remarkable place to live adjacent to the Ropes Mansion Gardens.

Paul Herrick Group
REAL ESTATE SALES, MARKETING & CONSULTING

A striking, attractive marketing action plan, like this one from the Paul Herrick Group, a Keller William team in Beverly, Massachusetts, can be a very effective lead generator.

We'll go into detail on how to construct a marketing action plan in the "Marketing Systems" section of this class. For now, here are some important tips for delivering your materials.

Key Mailout Tips

1. Include an offer-response element in every piece. An offer-response appeal offers the audience something—a freebie or information or a service—if they respond to the ad. It is the most effective form of mailout. Even if the focus of your piece is something else, your marketing should include a line such as, "Call me for a current assessment of the value of your house." We will cover offer-responses in more detail later on page 78.
2. You'll get an even better response if you hand-deliver your material to your geographic farm. If you give your potential clients something they value for free, you'll engender a sense of gratitude. It's the perfect way to put prospects in a generous state of mind toward you, which means that they are more likely to be receptive to your message and to give you their business and referrals.
3. Follow up on your mail-outs. They give you an excuse to have a conversation. For example, if you've just sent out an email, you can call and ask, "Did you happen to get my newsletter? Are you interested in receiving any of the free reports listed inside?"
4. Be strategic in your use of email. Consider these factors:
 - Email is cheaper, so it can be a good way to get your message out without blowing your budget.
 - However, it's easier for people to delete your emails without ever seeing them—in fact, if their program doesn't recognize your address, your mail-outs may be automatically diverted to the trash.
 - If you send material via email too often, it will be perceived as spam, which at best will annoy your audience. At worst, they may block all mail from your address.

Mailouts			
Method	Price	Sources of Info	Tips
Letters of Introduction	1 letter = \$0.50		<p>Use a professional business letter format. Personalize the letter by using the contact's name in the salutation.</p> <p>Keep it short. The point is to communicate what you do, that you are their neighborhood specialist, and educate and ask for referrals.</p>
Newsletters	1 sheet of 8½ x 11" paper (printed on both sides; price does not include postage) = \$0.10–\$1.50	KW Intranet	<p>Writing long, drawn-out articles is only going to take time away from necessary activities. The rule with newsletters is this: give them something useful and give it to them quickly.</p> <p>Carry a digital camera wherever you go, so you are always ready to take a picture for your newsletter. Set up a file or basket, so you can easily drop in articles, graphs, and information for your newsletter.</p> <p>To reduce the cost of your newsletter, print it with black ink on a solid, light-colored paper.</p> <p>Start by publishing your newsletter four times per year. After publishing at least three issues, decide if you can increase the frequency to six times per year.</p> <p>To save time, you can buy a prefabricated newsletter, like the ones offered at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.marketconnections.com • www.tmafarmnet.com/kw • www.tpmco.com/kw • www.sharperagent.com • www.goodergroup.com/kw
Just Listed/Sold	1 postcard (does not include postage) = \$0.05–\$0.75	KW intranet or ProManage	<p>Mail to all of your specialized 8 x 8s as well as your geographic farm. You can buy postcards designed for KW agents on the intranet. Alternately, you can email an electronic postcard through the E-Cards Center on the KW Intranet.</p>
Market Reports	1 postcard = \$0.05–\$0.75	KW Intranet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum frequency = quarterly • Number of homes sold and average selling price • Number of homes on market and average list price • Average percentage of list price homes sold for • Average number of days on market • Average price per square foot • High sales

Mailouts (continued)

<p>Special Events Cards</p>		<p>KW Intranet or ProManage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birthdays • Birth of a child • College graduation • Death of a loved one • Promotion/New Job • Marriage • Anniversaries • Divorce • Seminar
<p>Promotional Items</p>			<p>Do not send out promotional items without prospecting. If you mail the items, follow up with prospecting to introduce yourself, and capitalize on the opportunity.</p> <p>Consider ease of storage, ease of mailing, and shelf life when choosing items to give.</p> <p>Don't feel that you have to outspend the competition. Offer more useful gifts, rather than more expensive ones.</p>
<p>Community Calendars</p>	<p>Professionally designed and printed, four-color calendars = \$0.60–\$3.00. Do-it-yourself 1-color calendars on colored paper = \$0.05–\$0.10 per sheet (not including postage).</p>	<p>Contact local neighborhood associations, performing arts groups, and the chamber of commerce for ideas.</p>	<p>Consider outsourcing or forming a small team of about four agents because community calendars can be time-consuming to produce. The most time-consuming part is gathering information about the events (shows, sporting events, concerts, etc.) that you will feature on your community calendar.</p>

Note that promotional items are a great way of distinguishing yourself. When you design your marketing action plan, use major events as a reason to send out freebies. Think of all the things you can celebrate by distributing promotional items:

- The changing seasons
- Holidays
- Closings
- A past customer's one-year anniversary in their new home
- The completion of road construction in your geographic farm
- Real estate-related tax forms

Where possible, try to incorporate the theme of homes or real estate into your promotional items.

Community calendars are a specialized kind of promotional material. They do a great job of positioning you as an area expert. You can also use your calendars to spread the word about events for the charities you partner with, giving them needed publicity and showing the public that you are invested in the welfare of your town.

One of the great advantages of calendars is that they can be very inexpensive, depending on the print options you choose. To really leverage your money, consider partnering with local vendors who have an interest in touching the residents in your area. You and your allied resources can share databases and split the costs to extend your reach and reduce your outlay.

4. Signs

Signs are a powerful way to build brand, as most experienced agents know. The 2006 NAR report proves that potential customers pay attention to signs: 15 percent of all home buyers found their home because of the yard sign. In fact, signs are so powerful that some agents hold open houses just to have an excuse to blanket the area with their branded directional signs.

Many of the same advantages of yard signs and directionals apply to other kinds of outdoor marketing (like billboards, branded vehicles, benches, etc.). They provide high visibility, high repetition, and they reach a lot of people.

Remember, however, that outdoor marketing can be very expensive. Dave Jenks recommends that high-dollar advertising, like billboards and grocery carts, is often most effective for achievement agents who are trying to dominate their market. Until you have the budget for high-cost marketing, focus on cheaper media for building your reputation.

When using outdoor marketing, however, there are four basic tips you need to remember:

Key Outdoor Marketing Tips

1. Proof your materials before they go to the printer AND after they've been printed. If you aren't a detail person, ask for help!
2. Your signs should always be clean and in good repair. Replace worn or broken signs.
3. Suit the message to the context:
 - In a high-end area, have a high-end billboard
 - In an artsy part of town, have a clever, funky bench ad
 - If your audience is younger, you might consider a fun, youthful branded vehicle, like a VW Beetle, a PT Cruiser, or an FJ Cruiser
4. And most important of all, **YOUR SIGNS MUST BE LEGIBLE!** People have to be able to read them in an instant and from a distance. This means you need to use a small amount of big, clear text and a very bold picture or logo.
 - Keep it simple.
 - Keep it clean and uncluttered.
 - Use your picture.

Signs			
Method	Price	Sources of Info	Tips
Yard Signs	1 yard sign = \$4 – \$15	Search Google using “real estate directional arrows” or “political signs” (which are a little less expensive) as search terms.	Always proofread your signs! Be certain that your signs, frames, and brochure boxes are clean and in good condition—never faded, dented, or dirty. Drive by your signs at the posted speed limit to ensure that they are easy to read. Post 3–5 matching directional signs in addition to your For Sale signs to guide consumers to the property. Leave the sign up in the yard as long as possible, especially after the house sells. When placing directional signs, always knock on the door and get permission—it’s the right thing to do and it’s an opportunity to prospect!
Bench Ads	1 bench = \$80–\$200 per month	Look up “Outdoor Advertising” on the Internet or in the Yellow Pages.	Get permission from the property managers to place benches on their properties. Speak with your local transit authority about placing advertising on their bus stop or rail station benches. Ensure that your benches fit with the décor (e.g., an upscale setting requires an upscale bench) and are well maintained.
Billboards	1 6-month billboard contract = \$500–\$5,000	Look up “Outdoor Advertising” on the Internet or in the Yellow Pages.	Take into account your billboard’s background (i.e., buildings, trees, amount of sky, power lines, etc.). Consider where the sun rises and sets, as having the sun in the background during certain times of the year or day will make it difficult for people to see your billboard.
Personal Vehicles	Magnetic sign = \$50+ Basic decals = \$1,500–\$5,000 Full wrap = \$3,500–\$5,000	Search the Marketing pages of the KW Intranet for a car sign vendor. Or look up “Automotive Paint” on the Internet or in the Yellow Pages.	
Moving Vans	1 new van or truck = \$25,000–\$30,000 Annual insurance = \$2,000–\$3,600 Leasing a truck = \$5,000–\$7,000 up front + ~ \$850 per month		Let organizations in your local community use your van. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It gets your van on the street and in front of consumers. • It helps build rapport between you and those organizations you lend it to, which can lead to business and referrals.

Of all the options listed on the preceding page, a moving van is obviously the most expensive. Make sure you have enough money in your marketing budget before making this kind of investment. In addition, bear in mind that there are ways to bring the costs down. For instance, consider leasing out advertising space on the back gate of the van to your preferred vendors (lenders, title companies, landscapers, local restaurants, carpet cleaners, insurance providers, etc.). The back gate can be equally divided into up to six spaces in most cases. Leasing these six spaces for advertising for \$200 each per month would offset—or in some cases completely cover—the cost of leasing your moving van.



Cynthia Nina-Soto, a KW agent in Salem, Massachusetts, offers free use of her branded moving truck to her customers. Note the simple design and clear message.

5. Automated Marketing

Automated marketing uses technology—such as voicemail messaging, email mailouts, and fax mailouts—to allow you to reach a very large audience automatically for relatively little expense. You create a single message that the technology delivers to a mass audience. Carefully constructed messages can even make those communications feel personal and individualized.

However, all automated marketing messages can be seen as a nuisance by their recipients, so with these methods it is particularly important to offer your audience information of value. Before you send an automated message to your clients, ask yourself, “What does this message contain that I would find valuable?” If you can’t easily answer that question, then don’t send the marketing.

As part of adding value, you should target each message to a particular group within your database. What a buyer might find helpful, your corporate clients may not. This is why categorizing your database into groups is so important.

Finally, be sure to refresh your content every few months. As Brad Korn, top agent and KWU Master faculty points out, it’s easy to forget what your messages say when your plan is automated—“you don’t want your voicemail saying, ‘Summer is a great time to buy’ when it’s now December!” he observes.

Automated Marketing

Method	Price	Sources of Info	Tips
Voicemail	Setup = \$0–\$250 Monthly fees = \$20–\$45 Cost per minute per call = \$.06–\$0.25	Arch Telecom	There are several different types of voice messages that you might send out through one of these systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New listings ▪ Just sold listings ▪ Seminars ▪ Community events you're sponsoring ▪ Seasonal greetings ▪ Market updates If you are purchasing a list of Haven't Met phone numbers, you can subscribe to the Federal Trade Commission's Do Not Call list for updates on who has registered. If you have a subscription, most services will scrub your contact list to remove people who have registered their numbers. Some services factor in an FTC DNC subscription into the pricing.
Email	Varies by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internet connection (cable, DSL, dial-up, etc.) ▪ Email client you purchase ▪ Database (CMS, email address book, etc.) ▪ Other factors 	For an e-card drip plan, check out the Marketing tab of the KW Intranet or use the plans in TOP PRODUCER.	Be responsive to replies to your email. If you are not at a desk where you can check email three times per day (morning, noon, and between 3:00–4:00 p.m.), then you may consider investing in a cell phone that is Web enabled and can receive emails. This allows you to send and receive emails wherever you are without losing productivity. There are also services that translate emails to a computerized voice and send it to your cell phone if you don't have a Web-enabled phone.
Fax	1 faxed page = 0–\$0.09		Some computer software allows you to upload your faxes onto computer at no cost. While the upload is free, there may be a per-minute transmission charge.

Each of these three methods has its peculiarities. The following details will help you to make the best use of automated marketing.

Voicemail

Voice message broadcasting technology allows you to send a marketing message out to a large targeted group of contacts without having to actually call all of those people yourself. The software calls your list of contacts and either leaves a message on their answering machine or voicemail or plays your message to the individual, if you so choose.

There are a number of different options depending upon how much money you are willing to invest:

Basic voice messaging – Basic voice messaging systems allow you to record a generic message in your voice that can be sent out to any or all of your contacts by phone. Some systems allow you to insert customized information into your standard message for specific groups within your broadcast list. And some systems recognize the difference between a live person and an answering machine, and can either deliver separate messages to each one or hang up when a live person answers.

Interactive voice messaging – This allows listeners to press phone buttons to select various options. They can listen to additional information about a listing or an event, leave you a voicemail of their own, or terminate the call. Additionally, this type of package allows listeners to press a button to opt out of future calls, protecting you from violating the Do Not Call regulations.

Call transfer voice messaging – This is an extension of the interactive software packages that allows contacts to press a button to be transferred to a live person—either you or a team member. The call can be transferred to your home, office, or mobile phone number.

According to internal data from Arch Telecom, a leading voice broadcast company,

- Forty percent of voice message calls go to machines
- Thirty percent of calls go to live persons
- Thirty percent of calls are “nondeliverable” (disconnected numbers, busy numbers, no pickups, etc.)

When using voice broadcasting, follow these guidelines for the best results:

Key Voice Broadcasting Tips

1. Write out your voice message before you try to record it. The voicemail should be generic enough to appeal to a wide variety of people. However, the goal is to make the recording sound like you tried to call them specifically.
2. When you record your message try to imagine that you are talking to a live person. Don't use an "announcer's voice," as that can be off-putting. Use your normal voice, be upbeat, and speak clearly.
3. Limit your message to about 10–30 seconds. And offer them something of value.
4. Many voice broadcast companies offer their own database of numbers for a geographic area and maintain those numbers against the Do Not Call list as part of the service.
5. Some systems have an automated opt-out feature as part of the listeners' options. However, if you do not use the interactive style of voice messaging, you must provide the contacts with a number that they can call to opt out as part of your recorded message.

Email

Email allows you to quickly and easily get your marketing message out to hundreds of contacts. You can even set up your emails to go out automatically at specified times throughout the year. In order to be most effective, there are a few simple rules that you should follow when eMarketing.

Remember

Don't spam!

Don't send emails to anyone who has not given you permission to do so. Spam, or unsolicited commercial email, clutters people's email inboxes and annoys them. And spam is not a trivial annoyance anymore. Several states have passed anti-spam legislation that carries fines. And if you are reported by consumers, you can be kicked off by your internet service provider.

The most important thing your email should contain is an opt-out clause. This informs your contacts that to stop receiving emails from you they should email you and tell you to remove them from your database. If a contact opts out, you *must* remove them from your email list immediately.

Note: *The Keller Williams Realty Anti-Spam Policy is posted on the KW Intranet in the E-Cards Center (Marketing tab). Please read this policy carefully. Ask your Team Leader to explain anything you do not understand.*

Build up your email contact list by giving people a reason to give you their email. Offering free reports on your website (KW Agent Websites have reports available), running contests (raffling gift certificates), and other promotions that require them to submit their contact information are good ways to accumulate email lists. Also, whenever you talk to a contact, make sure to ask if their contact information has changed and update your database.

Finally, don't send more than one email every 21 days to a recipient, unless they have specifically requested further information. Once a month is recommended.

Video Email

For a more personal touch and to really stand out, consider using video email services. According to Dave Therrien, chief technology officer at KWRI, video email is a great enhancement to the communication experience, allowing agents to have more personalized contact with their customers. For the cost of a webcam (\$25–\$200) and anywhere from \$0–\$2,000 per year for the service, you can send clients embedded video emails or video attachments to your emails. Your contacts can activate your videos with a single click to see and hear you in action.

***Note:** In some cases, it's better if the video email message is an attachment as some email providers filter embedded video messages as spam.*

Most fee-based services offer unlimited usage in exchange for the fee, meaning you can send as many video emails as you like. Popular fee-based services include HelloWorld and CoVideo. When you purchase a Logitech webcam, you get a complimentary application that allows you to send video emails for free.

Fax

Faxes remain a good way to target businesses with whom you would like to develop relocation and referral relationships. Faxes have an advantage over mail and email because they are less likely to be discarded before they are read. Some fax broadcasting companies allow you to select a targeted fax list to broadcast to. Some categories include:

- Industry
- Specific departments within a business (CEO, HR, etc.)
- Sales revenues
- City
- Zip code
- Employees
- Age range

“Now that 79 percent of consumers are using the Internet to search for properties, it has become part of the consumer's expectations. And if they're not using your site to search for properties, they'll be using someone else's.”

BRYON ELLINGTON
INTERNET LEAD
GENERATION

You can purchase fax lists from vendors. You should also build up your fax lists from your prospecting efforts. And whenever you talk to a contact, make sure to ask if their contact information has changed and update your database.

6. The Internet

The Internet is an increasingly crucial medium for lead generation. Keeping up with the changes in online technology is a constant challenge, but it is also a source of excitement and innovation.

Every agent should have an attractive, easy-to-navigate website that includes all their contact information and professional credentials. Ideally, your website should contain many more features than that, but you must at least have these pieces of information so that people whose primary method of communication is digital will be able to find you.

Remember, people come to your website for three primary reasons:

1. To look at available homes
2. To learn about their property's value
3. To learn about neighborhoods

To capitalize on these needs, adopt the following best practices when you construct your website:

Best Practices in Website Content

1. Have internet data exchange (IDX) and a drip system.
2. Include a prominent link for sellers to contact you for a CMA.
3. Provide lots of neighborhood/area information and update it frequently.

For more information on building a great website, see KWU's *Internet Lead Generation* course manual.

In addition to your main website, you can use also free Internet technologies to market your brand in creative ways. Services that get a lot of buzz include

- Blogger.com
- Craigslist.org
- Facebook.com
- Myspace.com
- Youtube.com

Remember that what makes any of these technologies work is that people are drawn to your content. This means two things:

Remember

1. You have to have content that the public wants.
2. You have to make your sites and content findable.

Good Content

Good content includes information about the community, home construction and repair, real estate investing, and the ins and outs of real estate transactions. For example, you could

- Host a blog about local real estate market conditions on blogger.com
- Post your listings for free on craigslist.org (especially starter homes for young families and recent college grads)
- Create a profile of yourself on Facebook.com or Myspace.com
- Post footage of home repair projects or a flipping project on Youtube.com

Findability

You can enhance findability by brainstorming keywords for the subject of your site. Ask yourself, “How would someone search for my site on Google?” Then use those keywords liberally in your text and your headings to make it easier for Google to find you. Enhancing your findability on Google or Yahoo! (called “search engine optimization” or “SEO”) can be a highly refined art. For more detailed information on the subject, refer to KWU’s *Internet Lead Generation*.

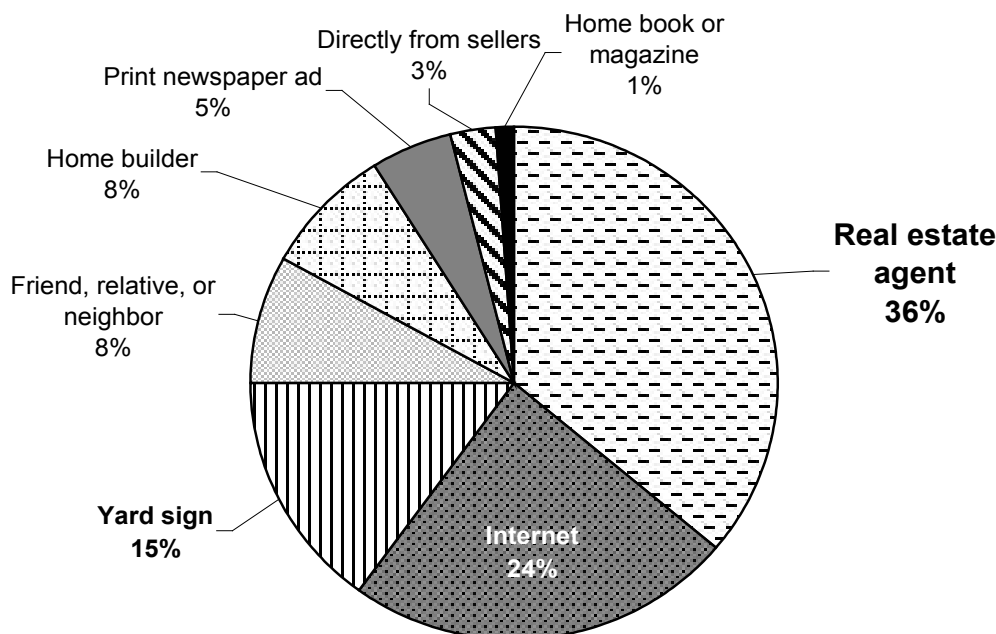
Make your content within your sites findable by putting links to your IDX, free CMAs, neighborhood information, and contact information *prominently* on your homepage. In addition, put links to these key features at the top of your navigation bars on every page of your website.

Notes

Marketing Your Listing

Remember that most of the marketing you do around your listings serves to bring you more buyers. Many of the advertising methods that customers often insist on (open houses, advertising in newspapers), have a very low rate of return for actually selling property.

How Buyers Find Their Homes (NAR 2006)



Data from the NAR 2006 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers

They do, however, boost your buyer business. In fact, the marketing you do around your inventory is the best possible advertisement for your ability to help buyers find the home of their dreams.

With this fact in mind, construct your marketing action plan for your listings in such a way as to get the best possible results for your sellers, while giving your company maximum exposure.

Remember that for selling homes, the most effective media are

1. Other agents (36 percent)
2. The Internet (24 percent)
3. Yard signs (15 percent)

However, most buyers do also consult newspapers and magazines, open houses, and other sources.

If you're not sure how to create a balanced plan that will give your listings the best possible exposure to both sellers and buyers, a good place to start is with the Basic 14-Step Marketing Plan for Listings featured in *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent*.

Basic 14-Step Marketing Plan for Listings	
Step 1	Staging and pricing strategies (for more information on staging and pricing, see KWU's upcoming course, <i>Seller Mastery</i>)
Step 2	For sale sign, rider signs, and directional signs
Step 3	Tube or box with fliers and distribution of fliers in neighborhood
Step 4	Fliers in house/home book/comment cards
Step 5	MLS
Step 6	Web listings with virtual tour (strategic placement on your site; put the IVR number for the listing in the property description field.) For more information on marketing on the Internet, see KWU's <i>Internet Lead Generation</i> .
Step 7	House featured in "marketing vehicle" (calendar, etc.)
Step 8	Open house program (for more information on open houses, see this course's <i>Power Session 7: Open Houses</i> .)
Step 9	Email/fax/voice broadcast (with your website address)
Step 10	Track showings/collect feedback
Step 11	Target marketing
Step 12	Weekly seller updates
Step 13	Property caravans
Step 14	Creative marketing ideas (10K, Cable show, etc.)
Listings, Properly Marketed, Attract Buyers!	

For a detailed discussion of marketing your listings, go to KWU's upcoming release, *Seller Mastery*. We'll cover the most effective form of marketing your listings.

Marketing to Sell

Even though the majority of the marketing you do around your listings functions to attract buyer business for you, you do need to sell your listings as quickly as possible, for the highest price possible, and with the least amount of hassle. Consequently, this section will briefly address the most effective methods for getting homes sold.

Other Agents

Your fellow agents are the most credible source of information for prospective buyers: they deal directly with your target audience, they represent qualified buyers, and like you, they would like to close quickly and painlessly.

To capitalize on this terrific marketing avenue, you need to get the word out to your fellow agents about the great value your listings offer. Some good ways to do this include

- Networking in the halls of your Market Center
- Turning your home brochures into PDF files and emailing them to other agents, including
 - a. Agents in your Market Center
 - b. The leaders in your area
 - c. Agents who you know target your area or demographic
- Holding broker open houses, peer group meetings, or networking meetings in one of your listings
- Participating in agent caravans
- Holding agent classes or seminars in your listings
- Offering a higher commission split or cash prize to the agent who brings a deal

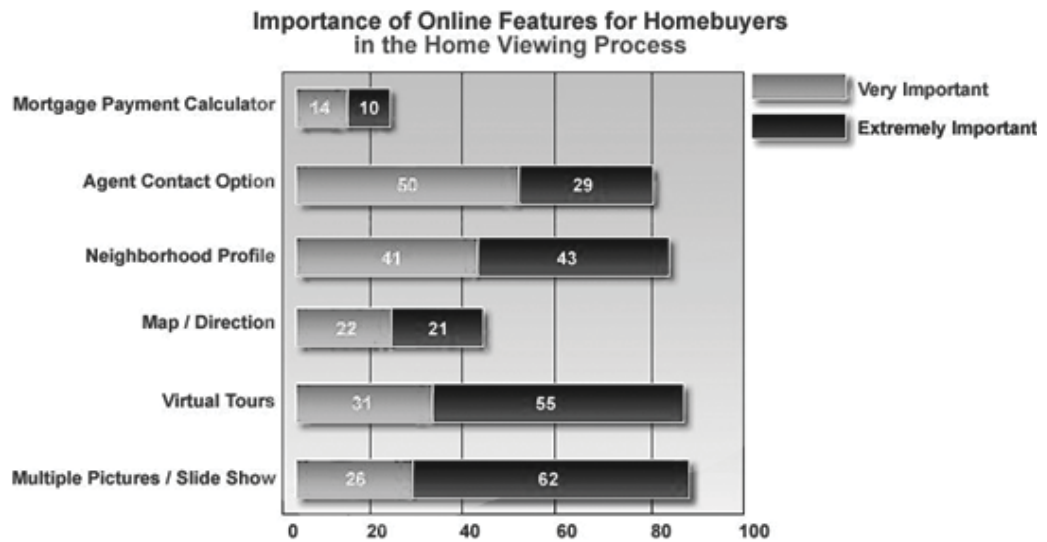
See *Power Session 9: Agent-to-Agent Referrals* for more information on fostering relationships with your fellow agents.

The Internet

Since 2001, there has been a 200 percent increase in the number of home buyers who first locate their homes online. Currently, nearly a quarter of home buyers first find the home they end up buying on the Internet. For this reason, the importance of strong Internet marketing for your listings cannot be overstated.

The most important form of online marketing is your MLS listing, which should be complete, accurate, and copiously illustrated with high-quality images. Realtor.com statistics show that browsers are 299 percent more likely to pull up the detailed listing on houses that have 6 or more images. Top agents often have a personal benchmark of 14 or more photographs per listing.

Virtual tours and videos are an especially effective way to enrich your listings. Some listing aggregators allow users to select virtual tours as a search criterion, so the listings with tours show up first. The statistics below, from the California Association of Realtors' (CAR) 2006–7 "Internet vs. Traditional Buyer" study, show the importance of pictures and virtual tours, as well as neighborhood profiles and agent contact information.



Incidentally, CAR research also shows that 92 percent of buyers who use listing aggregators find their agent that way as well. Even if your focus is selling, by making a good impression with your online listings, you can ensure that buyer business comes to you! So make sure your listings are attractive, complete, and posted in as many places as possible.

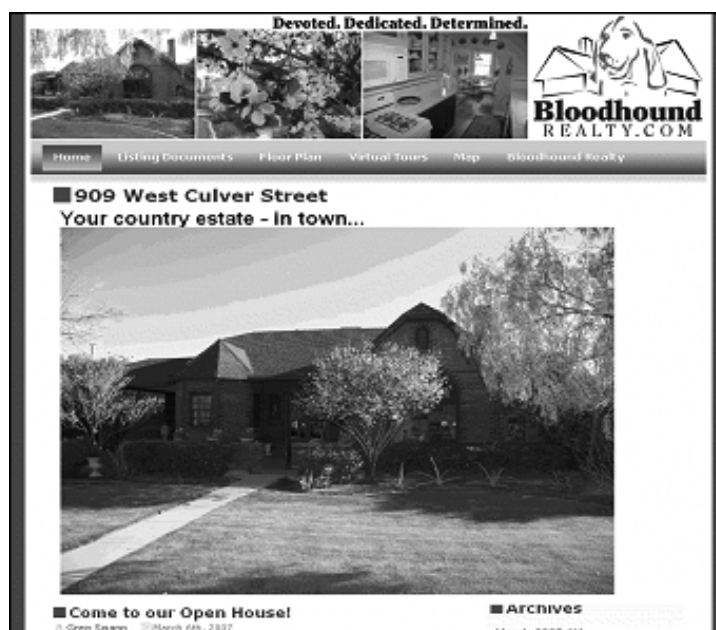
By posting your listings on the Keller Williams Listing Service and Realtor.com, your listings are automatically pushed to a number of their partners:

KWLS	Realtor.com
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GoogleBase • Trulia.com • Cyberhomes • Yuvie.com • Point2Homes.com • Geebo.com • Unique Global Estates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSN.com • AOL.com • 65 TV stations (ex. Philadelphia News) • Juno • Wall Street Journal Online • Netscape • iWon • NetZero • CompuServe • IBS • Yahoo!

In addition to your MLS listings, you can also create websites of your own to market your listings. For example, you can

- Participate in IDX (Internet Data Exchange) to give browsers access to the local MLS through your site
- Add “Featured Listings” to your homepage showcasing your best properties on different days
- Create individual websites for each of your listings, e.g., “123mainstreet.com”
- Create a blog for each individual listing, e.g., “123mainstreet.blog.com.” A cautionary note: if you create a blog, you must be careful not to disclose any information that could damage your customers’ ability to negotiate.

For a complete guide to using the Internet to market yourself and your listings, be sure to check out KWU’s *Internet Lead Generation*.



A prototype single-property blog by Greg Swann of Bloodhound Realty from Phoenix, Arizona

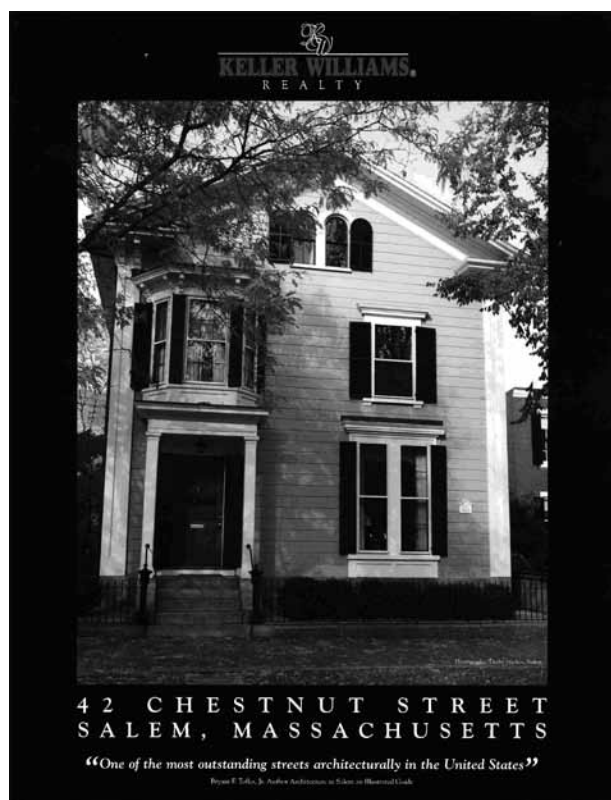
Yard Signs

Buyers still stumble across the home of their dreams while driving around. For this reason, it's essential to have a visible, legible sign in a prominent location. If your listing is on a corner lot, put a sign on each street. Make sure your sign is clean and in good repair. Keep the brochure box stocked with house fliers.

In addition, you can use sign riders to increase buyers' urgency and interest. Messages that would interest buyers include "Complete remodel," "Home warranty," and "Move-in ready." Remember that you can post a "Coming Soon!" rider for homes that will go on the market once repairs have been made.

Marketing for Buyer Business

Always maximize your marketing for listings to bring in as many buyers as possible—including those buyers who are not going to buy that listing. You want buyers to call if they are interesting in buying *a* house, not just if they are interested in buying *that* house. The simplest way to do this is to make your marketing as handsome and appealing as possible. See that the home is cleaned and staged before taking pictures or going on the MLS, and refer to the design tips in the “Systematic Marketing” section of this class to create compelling, strong marketing fliers and Just Listed and Sold postcards.



Eye-catching marketing by the Paul Herrick Group of Beverly, Massachusetts

Don't disqualify your listings

In addition to doing a good job on the marketing, be strategic about the information you reveal in your materials. When a buyer looks at a listing in a home magazine or some other marketing vehicle, they want to know:

- Is the house attractive?
- Will it fit my needs?
- Is the location right?
- Can I afford the home?

“Don't forget that your fliers should also always have other properties on the back—including investment opportunities—so that every listing advertises your other listings.”

When they examine the ads for listings, they are looking for reasons to disqualify a listing (e.g., “the house is ugly,” “the house is out of my price range,” etc.). Although having an attractive photograph and list of features is necessary to pique their interest, you may want to think twice about giving them any more information in the ad. If you list the price and the address of the home, that gives buyers who like the look and features of the home two reasons to disqualify your listing from their home search before you've had a chance to speak with them. Conversely, if you don't list the price or the area, it gives them two reasons to call you.

A good way to capture potential buyers is to market an attractive photo of the home, list the features, and provide an IVR talking-ad number that they can call to find out the price and address. Serious buyers who like the look of the house will call to listen to the recording about the home. At that point it doesn't matter if the price or location disqualifies the listing because you have already captured the lead in your IVR and can follow up with them.

Note: *On the other hand, you should provide as much information as possible on the MLS listing. By the time a buyer sees the full MLS record, they are already working with a buyer's agent—there is no point enticing them to call you, and you want them to have the information they need to make an offer as soon as they see the house.*

In addition to capturing interested buyers, you also need to follow up with them afterward. Andy Allen reminds us that this is the way to get the full value out of open houses (or, for that matter, any kind of marketing method). He says, “Keep track of the people you encounter in open houses and continue to touch base with them. You can't afford to let them get away.”

STEVE CHADER
STEVE CHADER & TEAM
MESA, ARIZONA

“But I Don’t Have Any Listings”

If you don’t have listings to market or only have a few, you may want to consider marketing Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homes, if they’re available in your area. While it is illegal for you to advertise other agents’ listings without their permission, any Realtor can market HUD homes. The great thing about advertising HUD homes is that they generally sell very quickly, so by the time that your ad hits the market, the home may already be under contract. You are then able to show the prospective buyer similar homes from the MLS.

Similarly, you can cultivate relationships with other agents who don’t have the time or resources to market their listings. You can advertise their listings for them **ONLY IF YOU GET THEIR PERMISSION**. Then interested buyers will contact you, allowing you to drum up buyer business, while also giving the listing agent’s properties more exposure.

MLSs prohibit you from advertising other agents’ listings without their permission—*make sure you have a clear, formal agreement with your fellow agents before you start marketing their inventory!*

Notes

Systematic Marketing

So far, we've discussed different methods for lead generation, but we haven't talked about how you put it all together. The first step is to have a coherent marketing action plan with a clearly defined goal. *Failure to plan is planning to fail!* Since your marketing and prospecting tactics are linked, you must plan not only what marketing activities you will do, but also how you will integrate them with your prospecting.

Start with the numbers. There are three foundational marketing plans that you should use:

- The 8 x 8
- The 33 Touch
- The 12 Direct

The 8 x 8 and the 33 Touch are generally used for “Networking”—marketing to the database of people you know or are acquainted with (your Mets).

According to *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent*, mining your Mets generally yields 2 closed deals per year for every 12 people in your Network (1 repeat and 1 referral) *if you complete your 33 Touch program*. See *Power Session 5: Working with Mets* for more information on how to build relationships with your Mets.

The 12 Direct, which uses only 12 touches per year, is best for agent-to-agent marketing and potential clients whom you don't know (your Haven't Mets).

Research for *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent* showed that working your database of people you haven't met isn't as rewarding: you get an average of 1 closed deal per 50 people in your Haven't Met database *if you complete the 12 Direct program*.

However, you only begin to achieve ratios this high after your marketing plans have been in action for eighteen to twenty-four months—that is, after the members of your database have been through one cycle of the 8 x 8 and the 33 Touch and are now into the second round of 33 Touch.

Conversion Ratios

Mets = 12 names in your database will yield
2 closed transactions (**12:2**)

Haven't Mets = 50 names in your database will yield
1 closed transaction (**50:1**)

Use these formulas to figure out how many people you need to include in your marketing plans.

For example, if you want to close **36** deals, and you want to keep your marketing expenses down, you might concentrate your efforts on your Mets. You might decide to aim for **3/4** of your deals to come from your Mets and **1/4** from your Haven't Mets.

$$36 \times 3/4 = 30 \text{ deals from Mets}$$

$$36 \times 1/4 = 6 \text{ deals from Haven't Mets}$$

Plug these numbers into their respective formulas to get the bare minimum size of your databases:

$$30 \times 6 = 180 \text{ Mets}$$

$$6 \times 50 = 300 \text{ Haven't Mets}$$

In other words, you'll need to market to at least **180** people you've met using the 8 x 8 and the 33 Touch to get **30** deals. Keep in mind that the smaller your database is, the more emphasis you need to put on prospecting. Since prospecting makes a more powerful effect, it helps to ensure the success of your marketing action plan.

To make up the remaining **6** deals from Haven't Mets, you'll need a consistent marketing program that reaches a minimum of **300** people. If you're not ready to tackle a database of that size, do more prospecting so that you can boost your Mets database and spend more of your energy and money marketing to them.

Because these numbers also vary from one market to the next and from one agent to the next, it's prudent to work from an even larger database: top-producing agents calculate the database they need to meet their goals and then work to market to a database that's *double* that size.

Once you've set your goals, you're ready to work on the details of your marketing action plan. The three key strategies below will help you make your plan a success:

Building a successful systematic marketing action plan:

3 Key Strategies

1. Target your audience
2. Be consistent and repetitive
3. Don't overthink it

3 Key Strategies

I. Target your audience

Effective marketing is focused on its audience. Ask yourself,

1. Who is my target audience? Is it a geographic farm (based on where they live) or a niche farm (based on shared interests or professional backgrounds)?

- Buyers/Sellers who earn between \$_____ and \$_____ in income.
- Buyers/Sellers who live in homes valued between \$_____ and \$_____.
- Buyers/Sellers who are between the ages of _____ and _____.
- Buyers/Sellers who want to live in _____
- Buyers/Sellers who are concerned about _____
- Up-graders
- Down-graders
- First-time home buyers
- Retirees
- Investors
- Builders
- Companies that are relocating.
- Employees who are relocating.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

2. What do these people know?
3. What is my purpose? Repeat? Referral? Reputation?
4. What would make them act on my call to action?
5. What impression do I want to create in their minds?
6. What special offer can I make?
7. What tangible guarantee of specific service can I provide?

Once you have defined your audience and purpose, use that—along with your Statement of Brand Identity (p. 29)—to determine the content and style of your marketing pieces.

2. Be consistent and repetitive

The last thing you want is people wondering, “Whatever happened to ...” or “Now that I need a real estate agent, I wish I could remember the name of that woman who used to send me those Just Listed cards.” A consistent, repetitive saturation schedule keeps you in the forefront of people’s minds so that whenever they need real estate services, they think of you!

Joshua Stern discovered the value of consistency early in his career. He remembers, “The very first year that I began in real estate, I had 160 people in my database. By the end of the year, I had done 27 transactions that were directly related to my database. So, I took 160, divided it by 27, and focused that 1 out of every 5.9 people I contacted over 33 times a year, I did business with. So I know that the people who do the 8 x 8 and the 33 Touch consistently will absolutely, positively get the results to the number.”



3. Don't overthink it

Don't spend all your time designing your marketing or, worse still, revising your marketing. Find a clear, strong message and stick with it—get it out over and over and over again.

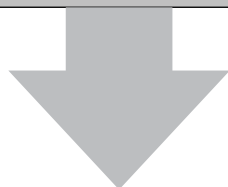
It's far better to send out lots of mid-quality marketing than to waste weeks twiddling with your design to create one brilliant piece ... that you send out once.

The 8 x 8 Plan

You're going to get a quick taste of the three main marketing action plans in the upcoming pages. The upcoming Power Sessions will offer more detail on specific aspects of these plans. See *Power Session 4: Leveraging a Powerful Contact Database* for more information on automated marketing systems. For a better understanding of the concepts underlying the different marketing plans, see *Power Session 5: Working with Mets*.

The 8 x 8 is an intensive marketing and prospecting blitz that allows you to make a very strong impression on the people you've just added to your Mets database. The heart of the 8 x 8 is that you touch your new Mets once a week for eight weeks. This allows you to establish mindshare, so that at the conclusion of the 8 x 8, your 33 Touch plan just has to maintain the dominance you've already built. Here's an example of a basic 8 x 8 action plan:

Basic 8 x 8 Plan from <i>The Millionaire Real Estate Agent</i>	
Week 1	Drop off a letter of introduction, your personal brochure, a market report, and your business card.
Week 2	Send a community calendar, current market statistics, recipe card, or an inspirational card.
Week 3	Same as Week 2, but choose a different mailing piece.
Week 4	Make a phone call: "Hello, this is <u>agent name</u> with Keller Williams Realty. Is this a good time? I won't take much of your time. How are you? Did you receive the <u>mailout</u> that I sent you? That's great. Did you have any questions? The reason I'm calling is to find out who you know that might be buying or selling a house soon."
Week 5	Send one of your free reports.
Week 6	Send a real estate investment or house maintenance tip.
Week 7	Send a refrigerator magnet, notepad, or other usable and valuable item (not a throwaway) with your name, logo, and contact information on it.
Week 8	Make another phone call: "Hello, this is <u>agent name</u> with Keller Williams Realty. Do you have a moment? I won't take much of your time. How are you? Did you receive the <u>mailout</u> that I sent you? That's great. Did you have any questions? As you can tell, I really hope that you will allow me to be your Realtor for life. Also, who do you know that might be buying or selling a house soon?"
Put the contact into your regular 33 Touch program.	





Jana Caudill stumbled onto the 8 x 8 by instinct. She knew intuitively that intensive marketing was the only way to make an impact in a competitive field. She targeted builders as clients and worked her database consistently and repetitively. She says, “I would market to them. I would drip on them. I would 8 x 8 them and I didn’t even know what 8 x 8 was, but I was doing it. And I would send them, not just letters, but cutesy little things that would get their attention, like my popcorn, which has a label on it that says, ‘Jana has popping fresh ideas for all your real estate needs.’ People would chuckle when they got it and probably thought it was a little corny, but no other agent was sending them something like that or being that persistent.” Her creative, intensive, and nonstop marketing brought her rich rewards—Jana’s now a top agent in Crown Point, Indiana, and The Jana Caudill Team closed 444 transactions in 2006.

The 33 Touch Plan

Once you have finished an 8 x 8, roll the recipients right into your 33 Touch. A 33 Touch is less intensive than the 8 x 8, but it's designed to be sufficiently persistent to give you dominant mindshare among your database.

The NAR *2006 Realtor Technology Survey* found that 99 percent of real estate agents communicate with their past customers no more often than once per month. In other words, if you are reaching your past customers with a 33 Touch, you will be beating 99 percent of agents in customer communication. That's a considerable competitive edge!

The challenge of the 33 Touch is to bring your personal charm and creativity to the campaign so that the attention you lavish on your Mets always feels warm and genuine. Here's an example of a basic 33 Touch action plan:

Basic 33 Touch from <i>The Millionaire Real Estate Agent</i>	
18 Touches	A combination of emails, mailers, letters, cards, and drop-offs, which may include your business card, a letter of introduction, your personal brochure, market reports, Just Sold and Just Listed cards, holiday cards, your personal newsletter, recipe cards, property alerts, real estate news or articles, investing news or articles, community calendars, invitations, service directories, and promotional items.
8 Touches	"Thank you" or "thinking of you" cards
3 Touches	Telephone calls (send a "Thank you" card afterward)
2 Touches	Birthday wishes (cards and, preferably, phone calls)
2 Touches	Mother's Day and Father's Day cards
33 Touches Every Year	

"The 33 Touch is great, but without at least 3 follow-up phone calls, you don't have anything that brings it all together and wraps it up. They're just getting more and more mail from you, and that mail is going to end up in the trash. The thing that brings it around is those 3 to 4 phone calls per year."

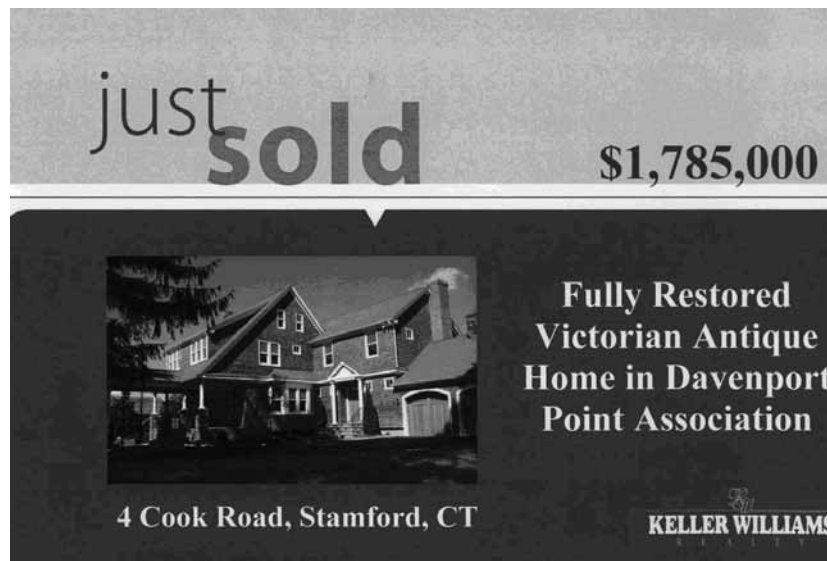
RICK GEHA
THE RICK GEHA AND COCO
LEWIS REAL ESTATE GROUP
FREMONT, CALIFORNIA

The 12 Direct Plan

The 12 Direct is a systematized method for contacting a targeted group of Haven't Mets and for marketing to other agents for referrals. It stands for twelve direct-mail pieces mailed out annually (one per month, every month).

As with the 33 Touch, the 12 Direct requires patience. Top agents find that it can take twenty-four to thirty-two months before they start realizing the 50-to-1 return noted in *The Millionaire Real Estate Agent*. You may get a faster return if you increase the frequency of your mail-outs from once a month to twice per month, but be wary of undertaking too many expenses! Marketing to Haven't Mets isn't a battle of the pocketbooks—it's a battle of patience. In general, those agents who are consistent over time will win the day.

12 Direct Mailouts	
• Newsletters	• Gardening tips
• Market updates	• Community calendars
• Recipes	• Et cetera



When you list or sell a house, you can substitute a Just Listed or Just Sold postcard into your 12 Direct or 33 Touch. If you don't want to disrupt your established mailing schedule, send the postcards in addition to your regular mail-out. This sample is by the Lorraine Leonard Team, of Stamford, Connecticut

Making It Memorable, Making It Persuasive

Some agents prefer to create their own marketing materials. Desktop publishing software, like Adobe InDesign and Microsoft Publisher, allow you to create highly professional, eye-catching, attractive marketing materials in your own office. If you have a high-quality printer, you can even print the documents yourself. If you prefer to send them out to a print shop, be sure to call first and save your documents in a format the printer can read, such as PDF.

Gene Rivers reminds us that the goal of all marketing is contact—“good design,” he says, “highlights the message to make contact.” When we asked top agents for their advice about constructing marketing materials, these twelve tips came up again and again. Below is a summary of the tips; we’ll discuss each one in detail in the following pages.

You should also check out Todd Butzer’s KWConnect video, *10 Steps to Effective Marketing* for advice on marketing design and strategy.



The Top 12 Design Tips

1. Include an offer-response in every piece.
2. Come from contribution.
3. Emphasize benefits, not features.
4. Have a consistent look and feel.
5. Have an attractive professional look.
6. Have a unique, eye-catching hook.
7. Personalize your ads and events.
8. Look for longevity.
9. Use only one focused message per piece.
10. Use testimonials.
11. Leverage the seasons.
12. Brand on both sides.

“Your marketing plan should use offers with the intent that those who respond have a need.”

DAVE JENKS
 COAUTHOR AND MASTER
 FACULTY
 KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY
 INTL.
 WHITE PLAINS, NY

I. Include an offer-response in every piece

Gary Keller likes to say that people like to respond to opportunities. Your job is to give your audience a chance to say they need your services without *saying* they need your services.

If you say, “Email me for a list of 10 ways to improve the value of your home,” most of your respondents will be people who are interested in selling their homes. Similarly, if you say, “Call me for a list of the 12 things to watch out for when you’re buying a home,” most of your responses will come from interested buyers.

Offer responses are a powerful marketing tool because they come from contribution—they offer people something they want. In addition, offer-response advertising is effective because

1. It puts you in a position where people are contacting you for help.
2. It can be a means for qualifying prospects because usually only people who are considering buying or selling a home will respond.
3. It works with strangers and repeat customers alike.

What you offer should be something that real estate customers value, something that pertains to buying or selling a home, and (ideally) something that is low cost or no cost to you. Here are two examples:

1. “Call now for your free report on your home’s value in today’s market!”
2. “Whether you are buying or selling, call now for a free real estate consultation!”

Exercise

Write a Strong Offer-response

Directions: Answer the questions below.

What’s wrong with this offer?

“Come to my open house and register to win a computer!”

What would be a better offer for an open house?

Time: 5 minutes

2. Come from contribution

People will be more receptive to your message if it has clear value to them, so don't limit your contribution to offer-response elements! Whether it's a calendar of neighborhood events, a recipe card, or a market update, don't just ask for their business—offer them something first.

That's Dan Nevitt's philosophy. He says, "I don't want to send anything that they would throw away. So every time I send something out, it has value to it; a discount at Chick-fil-A, free gym classes at Win Kids, a discount at Adventure Kids—always something of value."

3. Emphasize benefits, not features

Features are what you have to offer. However, people don't buy features; they buy benefits. Marketing is much more effective when you speak the language of benefits. What's the difference between a feature and a benefit? A benefit completes this statement: "What this means for you is _____."

For example, "I have a website that displays my listings, so buyers who come to my site will see your home." The first part of that sentence is a feature; the second part is a benefit—and that's what people appreciate.

4. Have a consistent look and feel

All of your materials in all your media should have a consistent look and feel. When your Mets receive your latest Just Listed postcard, it should activate their memory of the calendar you sent last month, the TV spot they saw two weeks before that, and the yard sign they noticed in their neighborhood last week. This cumulative effect builds your credibility with your target market and creates the impression of marketshare. If your materials are mismatched and random, you dilute the benefits of a persistent, frequent marketing campaign.



Note how these materials from the de Somer Williams Luxury Estate Team have a coherent, coordinated look.

5. Have an attractive, professional look

You only have one opportunity to make a good first impression. If your ads, signs, newsletters, and mailings do not look attractive and professional, *neither will you*. Look at other ads, signs, and newsletters (in real estate or other businesses)—what makes them appealing? Is it their simplicity? Is it effective use of white space? Is it photographs that are clear and well composed? You can learn a lot about the graphic arts by simply looking around and analyzing what others are doing.

Attractive, professional marketing plans commonly use ...

1. High-quality images. If you include a headshot, it should be the work of a professional photographer, not an outtake from the family photo album or a glamour shot.
2. A lot of white space—that is, areas without text or graphics, just a solid color. The empty space makes your content “pop.”
3. Only one or two typefaces.

Marketing
that uses
six different fonts
is confusing
AND MAKES PEOPLE'S EYES HURT!

6. Have a unique, eye-catching hook

“When you go to the mailbox, there are six or seven direct mail pieces there and six or seven of them go into the trash. You have to stand out.”

KEITH DE SOMER
THE DE SOMER WILLIAMS
LUXURY ESTATE TEAM
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Have a strong visual or capitalize on your unique identity in order to create marketing pieces that capture your audience’s attention. Courtney Yates achieves this goal by placing her ads in an unusual way. She recommends, “Do things that are a little bit off center. If you put an ad in the paper, do it on the front page of the sports section the day after a big game—just something a little bit out of the norm instead of just putting it out there in the middle of the other five million ads in the real estate section of the paper.”



This whimsical postcard from the Marketing Advantage firm asks on the flip side, “Are you truly doing all you can do to market yourself to your past clients?”

7. Personalize your ads and events

Keep in mind that people are not shopping for a real estate *company*; they are shopping for a real estate *agent*. Try to maximize the personalization of your ads by adding photos and short, relevant details. It's how you introduce yourself and let people know who you are.

“The more generic you make your marketing, the less effective it is.

Conversely, the more personal you can make it, the more effective it is,” says veteran agent Bruce Hardie. He learned about just how effective personalization can be from a shoe salesman at Nordstrom. One time when Bruce was shoe shopping, the salesman captured his name and contact info, and from that point forward he included Bruce in his touch campaign. The salesman sent him greeting cards, sale notices, and postcards of himself on vacation with his family. The salesman made such a big impression that Bruce imitated him the next time he went on vacation. Bruce pre-labeled 1,000 postcards with photos of Australia, took them with him on vacation, and mailed them from an Australian post office. His clients so loved this personal touch that when he got back in town, the phone rang off the hook!



“We made the newsletter more personable and were willing to lay ourselves out there—to show what we stand for, as far as our core values are concerned. We earned a lot of respect in their eyes, and they felt like they knew us.”

8. Look for longevity

Sending items that have “shelf life” or longevity—that people tend to keep for a long time—means that they get exposed to your marketing over and over and over. For example, John Sloan, a former broadcasting professional from Palm Springs, California, likes to send out a promotional mini-DVD instead of a postcard. He says, “People sense that there is an intrinsic value to a DVD. They don’t throw it away like they do a postcard. They may throw it in a drawer, they may not look at it right away, but at some point in time, they will.”

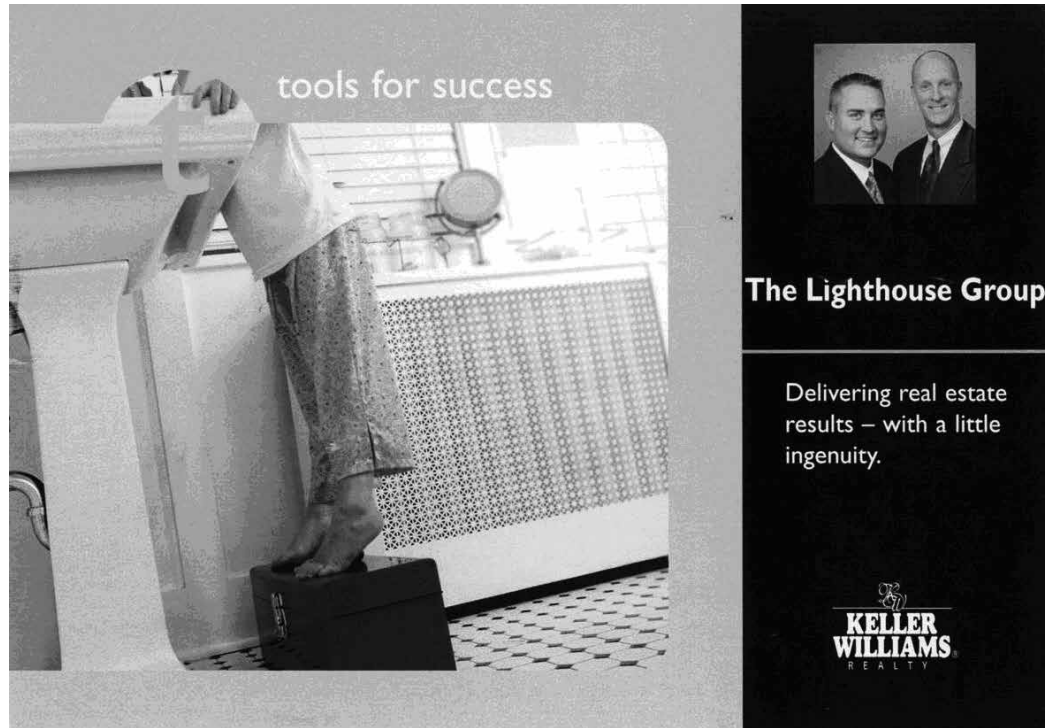
Some other examples of items with high longevity include

- An events calendar • _____
- A recipe • _____
- A pen • _____
- A magnet • _____
- A list of local tourist attractions • _____

LARRY WALL
THE WALL TEAM
SOUTHLAKE, TEXAS

9. Use only one focused message per piece

You only have seconds in which to impact your audience—if you have more than one message, your materials may be too complex for them to decipher in that brief window of opportunity on the way to the trash can. Keep your text short and memorable—it's an ad, not a Russian novel!



Note the simple message and the bold, striking design in this brand postcard from The Lighthouse Group, Phoenix, Arizona

10. Use testimonials

Some agents have gotten negative reactions to slogans and themes that are overly agent-centric (e.g., “Number One in Sales Five Years Straight”). To ensure that your marketing materials are not overly agent-centric, include testimonials from satisfied customers. Testimonials communicate your message of honesty, customer focus, and results without sounding like empty boasts. Collect them and use them!

“Our Clients Are Living Proof That Our Systems Work Better To Sell Your Home In A Shorter Period Of Time For Top Dollar And With Less Hassles.” - Aaron Armstrong

“The Armstrong Real Estate Group Selling System really works. I found a great new home and needed to sell my current home quickly. I was worried about losing the contract on my new house, but Aaron and his team did exactly what they said they would do. My home sold and closed at my price even after commissions, and I was able to move into my wonderful new home risk free.” - Hank

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armstrong
real estate group
With Keller Williams Realty Green Hills

Sample testimonial postcard from the Keller Williams’ Armstrong Real Estate Group of Nashville, Tennessee

11. Leverage the seasons

Holidays, changes in seasons, and public service announcements all give you a good excuse to touch everyone in your database—make use of them!

They are a good opportunity to add value, as well. You can send out reminders about daylight savings time changes, for example, or a schedule for the games of the local team when football season rolls around.

12. Brand on both sides

People can recognize commercial mail by its size and weight alone. If your materials aren’t branded on both sides, your audience may throw them away without having ever even seen your name. Andy Allen explains, “Since many homeowners have no interest in looking at the postcards we send them about other houses, it’s important to have your name clearly visible on both sides. This way, regardless of what side the card happens to be showing when they rifle through their mail, they see your name!”

Notes

Putting It All Together

Power Session Aha's

Your Lead Generation Action Plan

Your success in the discipline of lead generation is dependent on your daily habit of action. By focusing your actions, you will propel yourself forward to 36 transactions or more per year.

Remember

While you're still on the path to 36, you should spend the majority of your 3 hours prospecting. Your marketing activities should *supplement* your prospecting.

There are a lot of marketing activities than can go in your 3-hour lead-generation time blocks: writing thank-you notes, editing Craigslist ads, purchasing pumpkins or other promotional items, collaborating with allied resources, designing postcards, storyboarding television ads ... the possibilities are really only limited by your imagination.

And that can be a problem. It's very easy to get so sidetracked by the creative side of marketing that you never actually produce anything.

Remember that consistency and repetition are the most effective aspect of marketing—it's much more important to get *something* out there fast and often than to spend so much time refining your masterpiece that your 33 Touch becomes a 12 Touch, or your 12 Direct becomes a 4 Occasional.

And that's why it's crucial to time block. The lion's share of your marketing time needs to be spent getting things out the door. So your top marketing priority should be keeping up with the writing and mailing responsibilities of your 8 x 8, 33 Touch, and 12 Direct. Even more important than that is keeping up with the prospecting component of your action plans. Remember that it's prospecting that will really turn your business around! Be sure to schedule time for these key activities first.

Once you've scheduled that time, you can work on collaborating with your allies, designing materials, and running marketing-related errands.

Use the Action Planning Worksheet on the following page to record numbers from both your current lead generation program and your future goals. Then determine what actions you will take to "close the gap" between your current state and your goals.

These are your focused actions. When specifying them, consider:

- Adopting lead generation activities that complement each other and suit your behavioral style and interests.
- Mastering at least three reliable lead generation activities up front that you will be able to rely on in your business.
- Tracking your results with each activity and continuing to add new activities over time.

Note next to each activity how often you will conduct it—is it daily, weekly, or monthly?

Lead Generation Action Planning Worksheet

	Current as of _____	Goal by _____	Activities to "Close the Gap"
Annual GCI:			
Annual Closed Transactions:			
Annual Transactions from 8 x 8 and 33 Touch:			
Annual Buyer Side Transactions from Marketing Your Listings:			
Annual Seller Side Transactions from Nonmail-out Brand Marketing			
# of Mets in Database:			
# of Mets Added to Database (daily)			
# of Mets you have touched 33 times this year			
# of places you market your listings (websites, magazines, IVR, etc.)			
# of places you market your brand OTHER THAN mailouts			

The 3-Hour Habit

The Power of One

Focus on just one thing—lead generation.

Develop one habit—3 hours of lead generation every single workday.

Of the activities listed on your Lead Generation Action Planning Worksheet, which will you add to your calendar for this week?

By adding items to your calendar, you are time blocking. Time blocking means that you always know what your most important job is every day and that you commit to getting it done. It means that you are going to do what you must do—generate leads. You're going to call and meet people, prepare marketing materials, network, host open houses, and prepare seminars. And it means that whichever of these actions you decide to focus your efforts on, you are going to get really good at them over time.

There are just three simple rules you must follow to put the powerful daily habit to work for you. But beware that these must be adhered to and not taken lightly.

1. Time block 3 hours every workday before noon.
2. No skipping. If you must erase, then you must replace.
3. Allow no interruptions (unless they truly are emergencies).



Time on the task beats talent every time. And when you follow these three rules, you're making sure you put in the right amount of time on the right task.

Use the calendar on the following page to time block your lead generation activities. What did you learn during today's power session that you would like to incorporate into your regular lead generation program? What did you list on your Lead Generation Action Planning Worksheet that you can start doing?

This calendar is your flexible draft. Sketch out how you will handle your time here. Then, add these activities to your real calendaring system—whether it's an electronic calendar, like Microsoft Outlook, or a paper-based calendar.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening

