**Create a Real Estate Marketing Plan**

Real estate is an exciting industry because you not only have to market your business to sellers, you have to market sellers’ properties to buyers. You can simplify the process and lay the foundation for future success with a thorough marketing plan.

The following tips will help you create and execute a marketing plan for real estate professionals:

The real estate marketing planning process

Before you commit to any marketing medium, you have to identify several key variables:

What is your budget?

Who, exactly, is your target audience?

What, exactly, do you want your target audience to do?

Who are your competitors? How do they reach your audience? What opportunities are they missing?

What are your core strengths, and how do those differentiate you from your competitors?

What incentives can you offer that your competitors don’t/can’t?

Once you’ve answered these questions, you can formulate an executable marketing plan that takes advantage of key opportunities and promotes your strengths. Do the legwork to complete a robust market analysis now, and you’ll reap the benefits later.

**Real estate marketing plan execution**

Your next step is to identify the best way to position your brand to reach your target audience. Today’s marketing climate presents several opportunities, so you have to weigh the costs and benefits of each to determine which strategies both fit into your budget and have the best chance to convert. Branding is crucial in the world of real estate, so visibility is key.

To get started, try these marketing materials (\* denotes collateral that you need; the rest are materials worth considering if you have the budget for them):

Brochure\* – Your brochure should target a very specific audience. If you represent both buyers and sellers, or provide secondary services such as property management, create separate brochures for each.

Business cards\* – Literally, your calling card to success. Few businesses are as personal as real estate, primarily because you’re helping clients make what is typically their largest single lifetime purchase.

Flyers\* – Flyers are an excellent way to advertise property specs, especially as take-aways. Many real estate agents place flyers directly on their yard signs so passers-by can take them home.

Signs\* – Signs placed on properties serve a dual purpose: They advertise the listing and also brand your company. Many real estate companies like to keep “sold” signs in yards for a few weeks after a sale to demonstrate how effective their agents are.

Postcards\* – Postcards put your message directly in front of your target audience when you’re advertising a new listing. They’re also a great way to keep your company branded, because you can distribute them in neighborhoods where you’ve made recent sales to let neighbors know you can also sell their homes.

Letterhead and envelopes\* – All of your communication should be branded, and letterhead and envelopes with your logo, slogan and contact information help serve that purpose.

Listing cards – A spin on the business card, but this time to promote advertised properties. Print 1,000 listing cards to distribute liberally.

Calendars – Again, branding is important, and everyone loves a calendar. You can distribute free calendars to clients, businesses and other parties that might be interested in your services.

Greeting cards – Send greeting cards to your customers and potential clients during the holidays and/or after sales to demonstrate that you truly care.

Newsletters – A good newsletter can drum up more business than you can shake a stick at. Make sure your newsletters are distributed to likely customers.

Corporate identity package – For presentations, nothing beats a solid corporate identity package comprised of a brochure, letter, press clippings, flyer and other materials held by a pocket folder.

Newspaper/magazine advertisements – You can advertise listings locally in newspapers and magazines.

Online advertisements – You can post listings to online databases, launch your own website, and market online through local search engine optimization and pay-per-click advertisements.

Choose which marketing materials you’ll use to promote your real estate business, then hire a designer, copywriter and printer to make them a reality. Distribution is extremely important. You should have a well-defined target audience so you can put together a mailing list primed for success. Create a compelling offer. Instead of a free consultation, offer reduced closing costs, a free guide to purchasing a first home or other incentives that target your audience. With the right distribution, a great offer and the right materials, your real estate business will be positioned for profit from the start.