



Marketing Tips That Work From The Pros Who Use Them

For dedicated real estate professionals, the goal is to build a pipeline; a referral-based business that yields a steady stream of prospects. But as we settle into daily routines, it's easy to stop thinking out of the box and forget some of the tried-and-true marketing strategies others use with success.

For Bill Frohriep, a top performer with Century 21 Town and Country in Troy, Mich., whose career spans nearly 50 years, the pipeline begins with marketing himself and a firm belief that everyone is a prospect.

"You need to be a confirmed collector of contact information," Frohriep said. "Get as many names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers you can from everyone you meet. When you call, make it friendly and positive. It's okay for people to say no. But keep them in your database and check in again, maybe every three or four months. I keep it casual, no pressure, so they get to feel comfortable with me. If I can do that, referrals will come - and so will sales and listings."

Jennifer Branchini, a top producer with Better Homes & Gardens Tri-Valley Realty in Pleasanton, Calif., said her marketing success is based on nurturing the business she has cultivated for more than 20 years.

"In this era of all things technology, a personal, handwritten, delivered-by-mail note can go a long way," she said. "My business coach trained me to write five to 10 notes every week. It makes a great difference when it comes to maintaining relationships."

Now assume your reaching out has been successful. How do you market your listings?

"Don't skimp on pictures and videos," said career agent Barbara Pugh with Coldwell Banker Seacoast Advantage in Wilmington, N.C. "In my experience, great photos are a sure-fire way to showcase a home's best features."

Pugh engages a photographer to ensure her listings stand out.

"I may want great stills, video walk-throughs - maybe a drone video," she said. "I don't stage every house, but I may move some things around to give us the best views and angles."

Pugh keeps the cost of photography proportionate with the listing. While costs vary from market to market, she typically pays \$150 to \$200 to photograph a home listed for under \$300,000, and recently paid over \$1,000 for dramatic drone videos and a detailed video walk-through of a \$1 million dollar listing.

"The whole idea is to make every home look special," Pugh said.

If pictures tell the visual story, descriptions are important, noted team leader Jennifer Ames, of the Ames Group, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Chicago. "The right words can make your listing stand out from the crowd," she said.

Whether it's location, an unusually large master suite, or some other unique feature, you need to find that special something that will appeal to a specific group of buyers, Ames maintains.

"You need to ask yourself, 'why should anybody care about this listing?' she said. "And who will it appeal to - and then get it front of those buyers with the perfect word picture, whether in print, on Facebook, or elsewhere."