

CENTER FOR REALTOR® DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION RESOURCES



Checklists and Worksheets from the
Marketing Strategies & Lead Generation Course



WELCOME

A FEW WORDS ON THE USE OF THIS TOOLKIT

The Center for REALTOR® Development is pleased to share this toolkit filled with the best checklists, worksheets, and templates the *Marketing Strategy & Lead Generation* course has to offer. These materials are intended for your use; adapt them for your needs, rip them out of the booklet, make notes and fill them out.

These pages are just a snapshot of the knowledge, practical tools, and expert advice that you get when you take the *Marketing Strategy & Lead Generation* course.

To take the *Marketing Strategy & Lead Generation* course, visit training4re.com. The online, self-paced version of the course is coming soon—watch for it at onlinelearning.realtor.

The course also counts as an ABR® elective. To learn more about the ABR® Designation, visit rebac.net.

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CHECKLIST: ARE YOU IN SYNC WITH YOUR BROKERAGE?

Make sure you know all the rules and policies of your brokerage. Sometimes brokerages have policies that are hard to find in writing yet you're responsible for knowing. Don't rely on assumptions and make sure your brokerage isn't relying on the idea of "everybody knows that." Asking the right questions may inspire development of written policies which may benefit you and your colleagues.

ASK YOUR BROKER OR OFFICE MANAGER THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ What types of agency relationships do we offer and not offer?
- ☐ Do we have a statement of agency policy?
- ☐ What is the rationale for the company's agency policy?
- ☐ Do we have a dress code?
- ☐ Do we have policies with regard to the use of social media for business? Personal?
- ☐ Are there written policies about how we present ourselves using the brokerage marketing materials?
- ☐ What disclosures are required, when, and to whom?
- ☐ Do we have standard disclosure forms?
- ☐ Do we require exclusive representation agreements?
- ☐ Is there a maximum number of clients an agent can work with at one time?
- ☐ Is dual agency okay? Under what circumstances is it not?
- ☐ Do we offer designated agency?
- ☐ How are dual or designated agency implemented?
- ☐ How should the agent interact with the client or customer in each type of relationship?
- ☐ What procedures are in place to assure client confidentiality?

MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA

You need to make choices based on your market, the kind of business you do, your personal preferences, and, of course, your budget. Your choice of social media sites is no different. The important thing to remember when choosing a tool, app, or social media platform is to give yourself enough time to learn to use it effectively. You want to get the most value from every minute and dollar you spend.

Begin with the one site that makes the most sense for you and give it a try. (If you are not comfortable with technology, you might want to hire an assistant to help you make the most of your online presence.)

Have a Plan

It is important not to jump into the social space half-heartedly, uninterestedly, or without a solid strategy. Determine your goals, target audience, platform, and content.

SET GOALS

- ▶ Typical goals for a real estate professional might be to:
- ▶ Increase your brand awareness
- ▶ Improve your reputation
- ▶ Market specific properties
- ▶ Drive traffic to your website
- ▶ Engage with potential clients

WHICH PLATFORM IS BEST FOR YOUR TARGET MARKET?

When determining what sites you will use and how you will use them, consider your target audience. Who are they? What are they looking for? Where are they looking for information now? Before you decide where to focus your social media efforts, consider where your audience is already going online. For example, most consumers are already comfortable interacting with brands and businesses on Facebook. So, a Facebook business page might be the best way for you to communicate with prospects.

On the other hand, a commercial real estate investor might already be on Twitter, where there is a growing professional commercial real estate community. If you want to increase awareness among that group, you might want to open a Twitter account.

CREATE ENGAGING CONTENT

Once you've chosen the platform(s) you'd like to use, it's time to start thinking about your content. Consumers and other social media users will not be interested in interacting with you if all you do is post promotional content. The type, source, and frequency of your posts should support the goals that you've already established.

You might already be generating content and video that can be posted on social media. If you already have a blog, you should link to those postings from Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Do you write newsletters? White papers? FAQs? Any kind of content that you would share with a potential client is content that can be linked to or repurposed for use on social media sites. You can also post links to other sources of content. Scan your local news for business and market reports, community event listings, and other items of interest to your community and region.

The most important reason for using social media is that it is social. It allows you to engage with your leads more effectively because you interact with each other. Although posting good, relevant content will attract followers, it is the interaction that keeps them coming back and develops a sense familiarity and trust.

Most people will not interact with you without being asked. It's a rule of thumb that 80 percent of people who visit a site will be "lurkers" who read but do not participate. Your goal should be to turn lurkers into active users as much as possible, while also keeping the 20 percent of regular participants engaged.

Don't assume that because someone is lurking they aren't hearing your message and that you aren't still "top of mind." They might have to hear your message over and over again before they take the next step, but just by subscribing to your Twitter feed or following your Facebook page, they have taken an action. And you are nurturing them just by continuing to post.

Strategies to foster engagement include:

- ▶ Post frequently and schedule posts according to the times your audience is likely to be online
- ▶ Ask questions and solicit feedback. Something as simple as "What do you think?" or "Do you agree?"
- ▶ Publicly respond to posts on your wall or replies to your account. If you want people to interact with you, you have to interact with them.
- ▶ Always thank people for posting, answering your questions, and participating.
- ▶ Include photos and video. They are eye-catching and attract attention.

MANAGING YOUR BRAND ONLINE

Always be mindful of your brand across all of these platforms and systems. Each interaction, video, and profile you post should reflect your best professional self. Your reputation is everything in real estate. You are your business. Remember your digital footprint is a permanent record. You want that record to be trustworthy, reputable, and successful.

Dos & Don'ts

It's helpful, then, to keep some general rules in mind.

Dos:

- ▶ Be nice. Remember the Golden Rule.
- ▶ Be yourself. Behave online as you would in person or offline.
- ▶ Respect privacy and confidentiality.
- ▶ Give more than you take: contributing is a great way to build good will and establish yourself as an expert in your field.
- ▶ Abide by the posted rules of a particular group or channel.
- ▶ Remember selling is viewed as spam on social media.

DON'TS:

- ▶ Type in all-capital letters, it's the equivalent of shouting.
- ▶ Respond in anger.
- ▶ Engage while intoxicated.
- ▶ Forget that regulatory and ethical obligations apply online.
- ▶ Forward or copy/paste dialogue that was intended for your eyes only. For example, an email thread or private message.

Dealing with Complaints

Dealing with online complaints is one of the more frustrating aspects of an agent's job, but it is a fact of life. How you deal with negative posts is an important part of managing your online reputation. Here are a few strategies to employ:

▶ **MONITOR AND RESPOND**

Don't ignore negative comments, even if you think they are unwarranted. And if they are on social media, don't delete them, which makes you look like you are trying to hide something. Use monitoring tools to track comments so that you can respond as quickly as possible to defuse the impact.

▶ **RESPOND PUBLICLY**

Respond publicly to complaints (even if the final resolution is handled privately), so that others see that your business takes customers seriously and handles complaints professionally. If you can resolve the complaint satisfactorily, you have the opportunity to turn a vocally dissatisfied client into a vocally happy one.

▶ **ACKNOWLEDGE CONCERNS**

Writers of complaints often just want an opportunity to be heard. Thank them for posting, acknowledge their feelings, and let them know that you appreciate their concerns. Something like "Thanks so much for the feedback, we're always trying to improve" is sufficient.

► **KEEP YOUR COOL**

Avoid being defensive or argumentative in response to negative reviews. Don't hesitate to correct inaccurate information or invite additional discussion offline. The best response is factual, empathetic, and public.

► **TRY TO FIX THE PROBLEM**

If a mistake was made, admit it, apologize, and tell the individual that you want to fix the situation. Ask permission to contact them directly. Even if you resolve the complaint by phone or email, it is important to respond publicly where the complaint appeared because others will see your response. If the complainant refuses your offer, they appear unreasonable while you look professional.

One final note: Establishing your reputation should never be at the expense of another agent. Article 15 of the NAR Code of Ethics explicitly prohibits defaming another real estate professional: "REALTORS® shall not knowingly or recklessly make false or misleading statements about other real estate professionals, their businesses, or their business practices. (Amended 1/12)"

YOUR SWOT ANALYSIS

Use the SWOT template below to conduct your own initial competitive analysis.

Remember to revisit your value proposition periodically to make sure that what you're offering is still what makes you unique. Self-assessments and competitive analyses are not something you merely do once; they're integral to an evolving and growing business, constantly considering your clients' needs and wants, and to helping you assess how best to gain an advantage in your local market.

SWOT ANALYSIS	HELPFUL	HARMFUL
INTERNAL:	STRENGTHS: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	WEAKNESSES: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
EXTERNAL:	OPPORTUNITIES: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	THREATS: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
ACTIONABLE ITEMS: Two ways to capitalize on advantages: 1. _____ 2. _____ Two ways to mitigate disadvantages: 1. _____ 2. _____		

EXTENDED MARKETING PLAN TEMPLATE

Title

Marketing Plan for [COMPANY NAME] for [YEAR] to [YEAR]

Executive Summary:

Include all of your services, how long you've been in business. Introduce your team and the structure of your marketing strategy. Mention your mission statement, your objectives, and your tactics

Mission Statement:

Insert your mission statement here

Tools and Tactics:

Include your social media platforms, as well as your website and email publishing platforms. List any tool and tactic you plan to use.

Objective:

CREATE _____

AND GENERATE _____

Competitor Analysis

For each competitor, list the tools and tactics they are using, as well as the voice, tone, and delivery of their marketing.

COMPETITOR ONE:

COMPETITOR TWO:

COMPETITOR THREE:

Target/Future Client Information:

WHO ARE THEY?

WHAT PROBLEMS ARE THEY FACING?

HOW DOES OUR TEAM HELP SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS?

Month-by-Month Plan Execution:

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

Budget:

ADVERTISING METHOD	AMOUNT BUDGETED
Budget for social media:	\$
Budget for website:	\$
Budget for video:	\$
Budget for traditional advertising:	\$
TOTAL BUDGET:	\$

Measuring Success:

GOAL ONE:

- ▶ Metric to be measured: _____
- ▶ Goal: _____

GOAL TWO:

- ▶ Metric to be measured: _____
- ▶ Goal: _____

GOAL THREE:

- ▶ Metric to be measured: _____
- ▶ Goal: _____

GOAL FOUR:

- ▶ Metric to be measured: _____
- ▶ Goal: _____

GOAL FIVE:

- ▶ Metric to be measured: _____
- ▶ Goal: _____