How the Program Works

It’s no major secret; building strong relationships is one of the most effective ways to increase your real estate business. Although creating relationships comes easily for most sales professionals, growing them to a level that creates an ongoing stream of revenue is seemingly more challenging. Staying in touch on a consistent basis with all of your lead sources takes time, energy, and dollars.

The Success Marketing Program was designed to help you simplify the process of building relationships, and develop a strong communications strategy.

Most agents fail or struggle with their marketing because they do not have an effective plan or system to consistently and effectively stay in touch with their prospects and clients. Without a plan, your marketing will be unorganized and will lack a proper theme or purpose. It’s time to take your business to the next level. In this book you’ll work through the basic marketing fundamentals - how often you should stay in touch, what message you want to convey, how you will deliver that message, and how you will measure your success.

The Success Marketing Program was designed to be an easy to follow, step-by-step guide for real estate agents of all experience levels. You will learn how to communicate with your prospects and clients, how to offer each customer or prospect a unique value, and how to ultimately turn your prospecting and follow-up into revenue generating activities.

- Brian Wildermuth
Vice President of Strategic Account Development
Market Leader, Inc.
The Success Marketing Program
is a 5 Step Process

Step 1: Building Your Plan
a. Setting Annual Goals
   i. 3 steps to successful goal setting
   ii. Revenue Goal Worksheet
b. Setting a Budget
   i. Spending like a professional
   ii. Revenue goals
   iii. Your marketing budget

Step 2: Personal Branding & Differentiation
a. Personal Positioning
b. Verbal Expression
c. Visual Expression: Utilizing the strengths of your brand

Step 3: Define and Organize Your Audience
a. Diversify your lead sources
b. Lead source profiles
   i. Sphere of Influence
   ii. Web Leads
   iii. Farm Leads
c. Targeted (niche) & specialization markets
d. Demographic Profiles
e. Organize your database for success
   i. Collect the right data
   ii. Group your contacts
f. What to Send
   i. Which marketing materials to send out
   ii. How to distribute them
   iii. Calls to Action
   iv. Frequency of contact

Step 4: Tracking Your Results
a. How do I know what’s working?
   b. Review and adjust

Step 5: Feeding Your Database

Setting Annual Goals

What separates top performers from their competition in any walk of life – in business, in sales, in sports? Talent and ability play their parts, but in order to reach the top, experts of all professions regularly set goals and lay out a specific plan to achieve them. No matter what kind of natural sales agent you are, knowing what you want to achieve and how you plan to achieve it is essential to your success.

To build a marketing plan, you’ll need to know how much money you plan to spend. To know how much money you plan to spend, you’ll need to know how much money you want to make and how you plan to make it.

3 Steps to successful goal setting:

- Write your goals down and share them with a mentor or coach.
- Make your goals specific – Use numbers where possible. Take time to build specific steps or tasks that will allow you to achieve your goals.
- Include completion dates where appropriate.
Setting a Budget

Setting a marketing budget can be a painful task, especially if you’ve spent money on marketing in the past and its ineffective (or non-existent) results have left a bad taste in your mouth.

Without any sort of budget – which is typical in this industry – you’ll see real estate agents doing all sorts of crazy things. Some agents spend money as they get it. Some spend it haphazardly when the mood strikes them. Others spend nothing at all.

“Shotgun” style marketers often have wildly unrealistic expectations. You can’t expect consistent results from inconsistent marketing.

Spending Like a Professional

Can you imagine trying to run a business like Starbucks® or even a McDonalds® franchise without a marketing budget? Of course not. Businesses of all shapes and sizes create an annual plan and work from a budget or some sort of budget formula (i.e. a percentage of their revenue). Why would you behave differently than any other kind of business? Regardless of your relationship with a brokerage, you need to act as if you own and operate your own business.

If you want to be in the top 10% of agents who do 90% of all real estate business, you will have to spend a portion of your revenue on marketing expenses. In surveys of agents throughout the United States, the average marketing spend is 15% of an agent’s annual gross revenue/commission.

Most top producing agents spend 40-50% of that on brochures, flyers, and direct mail postcards. The remaining budget allotment goes to advertising, internet promotions and hi-tech marketing tools.

Revenue Goal Worksheet

Use this worksheet to develop your personal transaction and revenue goals for the coming year. Don’t just breeze through it. Really take the time to put the numbers down. The goals that you set here will determine nearly every decision you make in your marketing plan.

Income Goal for this year: $________

Determine the number of transactions necessary to achieve your goal

Average Sales Price \times Commission \% = $Average Revenue/Transaction

$Income Goal \div $Avg Revenue per Transaction = Number of Transactions Needed

Lead Sources

Determine the percentage of your business that came from repeat & referral business, traditional prospecting, and web prospecting last year.

Set Goals

Determine the percentage of your business that you would like to have from repeat and referral business, traditional prospecting, and web prospecting this year.

Calculate the number of transactions you’ll need to meet your goals this year.

Keep in mind that repeat & referral business is an extremely cost effective way to win new business.

Unless 40% of your business was obtained last year through repeat and referral business you should set a goal to increase that percentage this year.
STEP 1   BUILDING YOUR PLAN

Who will you be sharing your goals with?

How much are you prepared to spend?

The focus of this workbook is to get you to create a plan for finding new business. I encourage you to set up a comprehensive budget of all of your marketing expenses, including advertising, listing marketing, and annual or recurring subscription expenses. For the purposes of creating a communications plan however, you’ll need to know how much you’re going to spend on marketing to lead sources.

I would suggest that you allocate at least 8% of your expected annual revenue to lead generating marketing activities such as direct mail marketing, e-mail marketing, and web prospecting.

Your Marketing Budget

# of transactions needed to meet your revenue goal × % of Repeat & Referral Transactions = # of Repeat & Referral Transactions needed this year

$ Annual Marketing Allocation ÷ 12 MONTHS = Monthly Allocation

Meaningful connections lead to more sales. It’s that simple. SharperAgent doesn’t just offer tools and templates. As marketing specialists it’s our job to make your marketing appear seamless, without a huge effort or expense on your part. We offer expertise and insight into methods of developing long-term relationships with your most prominent prospects.

Now printed through Shutterfly®, our vibrant, targeted marketing materials are sure to help you touch consumers and make a connection to build the sales you’ve been looking for.

If you’ve never ordered print from us before you have a 25% discount* waiting for you! Just enter Promo Code FIRST25 at checkout in your SharperAgent Account.

*30 item minimum order applies, not valid with any other offers or discounts.
Step 2

Personal Branding & Differentiation

Now it's time to consider what your marketing will look like. After completing this section, you will know how to offer a unique, clear and consistent value to all of your customers and ensure that every marketing piece you send has a strong, consistent look and tone.

A personal branding strategy will help you ensure that your marketing pieces not only get noticed but get results as well.

An overall personal brand has 4 key components:
- Personal Positioning or USP (Unique Selling Proposition)
- Verbal Expression
- Visual Expression
- Brand Experience

Personal Positioning

Do you offer great service? Oh, really? So do I. So does every Tom, Dick, and Harry in this business. If you are a real estate professional it’s time to move beyond the simplistic and ineffective positioning conventions that plague our industry.

When you are done with this section, you will be able to clearly state how you differentiate yourself from your competition. It is a difficult process to complete and I would encourage you to share your work with family and friends who know you best.

Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

A Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is simply a statement of why clients should choose to do business with you rather than one of your competitors.

It is imperative that you develop your own USP and use it throughout your marketing communications. Why?
- It requires you to identify your key features and benefits as well as your competitors
- Developing a USP helps you focus on your customers’ needs and wants
- The USP will become the cornerstone of your branding – the more you differentiate, the stronger your brand will be.

A few notes:
A positioning statement is not necessarily meant to be final copy. Your statement is a “behind the scenes” guideline that will help make your marketing more consistent and impactful. This is not the time to be shy! Share your ideas on your USP with someone who is a good writer and who knows you well. His or her input can be invaluable.

Your differentiation should be something your customers want or need, for example:
- Customer Need: Clients want to sell their house fast – and without losing money.
- USP: “Our 20 Step Marketing System sells your house in less than 45 days at full market value — guaranteed or we will buy your home.”

Also, remember to be flexible. Real estate is a dynamic field. Don’t be afraid to update and re-fresh your positioning statement from time to time. If you’ve been using consistent branding for a number of years, be sure to remember that you have strengthened and added valuable skills over the years. Take a moment to consider:
- How have you grown as a real estate agent?
- What would your clients say about you today?
- How has your competition changed?
**Unique Selling Proposition Worksheet**

I am a/an ________________________________

(how do you define yourself?)

who provides ________________________________

(list of key services and benefits)

to ________________________________

(define your target audience)

who desire ________________________________

(particular needs/pains)

Unlike ________________________________

or ________________________________

(define your competition)

I am much better/more unique/different than my competition because I offer ________________________________

(how are you different?)

---

**Tip:** Think specifics and differentiation at every step!

*For example:*

Is BMW™ a car?

NO. It's the Ultimate Driving Machine.

---

**Taglines**

A tagline is a phrase or sentence consistently associated with your name, brand, service, and logo. Look at your completed USP and think about what your differentiated skills offer consumers. A good tagline is a promise that you can keep.

**Workspace:**

Here’s some space for you to jot down ideas on what your tagline should be. Remember, be succinct and include something that differentiates yourself from your competition.

---

**My Tagline:**

______________________________

---

**Tagline Checklist:**

- Is it less than 10 words?
- Does it connect emotionally with your audience?
- Does it positively match your image?
- Is it memorable, brief, & to the point?
- Is it unique to your market place?
- Does it capture your brand’s essence?
- Is it specific enough?
- (Don’t be afraid to use pronouns like you & your)
- Does it imply an audience benefit?
- Is it fresh, but not too trendy?

---

Take a look at an example of a weak tagline from a law professional:

ALLISON SMYTH

Helping individuals, families, and business control their affairs, protect their families and preserve their assets through effective, prompt and reasonable legal services, including wills, trusts, powers of attorney, living wills, probate and estate administration, buy sell agreements, asset protection, elder law, nursing home, Medicaid planning...

How can we transform this into a good, workable tagline?

“I’ll protect your family as if they were my own.”
Visual Expression: Utilizing the strength of your Brand

If you have a relationship with a brokerage you should rely on the standard they have developed. A brand's colors and logos have been painstakingly crafted to reflect a positive image, and you should strive to associate yourself with that image as closely as possible. Ask your office manager or broker about your brokerage's brand standards and request to see any information they might have on how to present yourself as an agent of that company. You'll most likely find invaluable tips on logo positioning, color choices, and the use of appropriate imagery.

Update your head shot

Do you have a few hours to kill? Looking for a good laugh? Scanning through a roster of real estate agent pictures is always an amusing activity. The consumer doesn’t care about how cute your dog is or that you like vintage sports cars. Consumers care about their needs and their wants and their likes. Don’t send out marketing that is more about you than your audience.

Get a professional head shot. Wear a suit or a business casual top. Make sure your photo is current.

Touch Points

Look over all the places your brand should be present and make sure everything is consistent and professional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Notepads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forms</td>
<td>Magnets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone message</td>
<td>Farm Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office phone message</td>
<td>Sphere Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Cards</td>
<td>Web Marketing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Define and Organize Your Audience

You've differentiated yourself from competition. Now let's get a better understanding of who your clients are.

Who should you market to?
Are you going to put all your eggs in one basket, or are you going to spread yourself too thin? If you don’t take the time to define and develop a few lead sources, those are the options you face. I recommend focusing on three or four categories of leads and creating a communication plan for each lead source.

With one target market, you risk leaving yourself vulnerable to higher peaks and valleys as market conditions fluctuate. For example, if you focus solely on your farm area, but your area’s turnover rate is reduced due to economic conditions, your sales will be pulled down along with the area. With too many targets, you will stretch your marketing dollars too thinly. You will not have enough visibility in any market place to yield positive results.

“When I started out in real estate I decided that would try and talk to anyone who would give me a few minutes of their time. I networked with my wife’s friends, I tried to drum up business at neighborhood parties, and I really pushed hard on colleagues I knew from my old job as an airline pilot. I even went the extra mile and held events with various multi-level marketing groups like Pampered Chef so I could meet more lead sources.”

I've found that the biggest mistake real estate professionals make is focusing on only one or two sources of leads. Being able to cultivate numerous sources through persistence and hard work will bring in a steady stream of referrals for years to come.”

Michael Kozlowski
Broker Associate/Owner, Prestige Real Estate Group
www.team-koz.com

Lead Source Profiles

Sphere of Influence
This category includes past clients, family, friends, social groups and associations you belong to, neighbors, past acquaintances, friends of your spouse and those referred to you by anyone in this category.

Over 66% of all transactions last year occurred as a result of a sphere of influence connection with an agent. This lead source is one of the most powerful sources of potential clients for any real estate professional. If you are new to the business, your first sale will likely come from someone in this category.

Farm Leads
1. Traditional Geographic Farm – Defined by an area (subdivision, street boundaries, zip code, etc.)
2. Demographic Farm – A segmented group that is defined by the potential home buyer or seller type (first time homebuyer, move up buyer, empty nesters, single professional females, etc.)
3. Niche/Target Farm – For buyers or sellers with special needs or desires (mountain estates, waterfront properties, luxury homes, and condos/town homes)

Are there any specialized/niche markets you’re interested in targeting for the first time this year?

List your expected lead sources for this year:
1. ____________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________

Warning:
Don’t fall into the temptation of chasing after the latest and greatest lead source. A healthy mix of sphere marketing, web lead acquisition, and traditional geographic or niche market farming will yield greater results, or at a minimum, a more steady flow of leads. Would you listen to a broker who suggested you put all your savings into this “great new company that’s sure to make a killing”? Look at your marketing strategy like it’s an investment strategy. If you’re willing to diversify your risks and get back to basics, you’re sure to succeed in any type of market.

Targeted (Niche) & Specialization Markets

First time homebuyers
Expired listings
For sale by owner
Moving up
Seniors
Renters
Families
Waterfront properties
Luxury homes
Golf course/Country Club
homes and neighborhoods
Condominiums/Town homes
Second homes
Ranch/Farms
Vacant land
Investment properties
Mountain properties
Neighborhood specialist
Internet marketing specialist
Buyer representative
## Demographic Profiles

### First Time Homebuyers:
First time homebuyers are in a unique position in the current real estate market because they are not constrained by the necessity to dispose of their current residence. With financial incentives from federal and state programs, you’ll continue to see an increase in the proportion of home sales made by this demographic. According the National Association of Realtors® 2008 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers, the median age of a first time homebuyer is 30 years old with a median income of $60,600.

First time home buyers are looking for timely, accurate information on the current real estate market, but also appreciate working with a professional who can explain and clarify all the steps of the home buying process. Demonstrate your expertise by including them in the process and acting as a coach.

### Move-Up Buyers
Whether they’re looking for something larger to accommodate a growing family or are looking for a home that better fits their lifestyle, move up buyers are looking to find a home with specific features and amenities. To connect with them effectively, your messages should focus on how you will be able to help them find exactly what they’re looking for.

A wide range of consumers will fall into this category. It is important that your messaging tries to connect with their desired need as much as possible. You’ll be able to develop a valuable business relationship with them by listening carefully to their wants and desires. Start big with your messaging – you’re ready for a change - and change it to fit their needs as you learn more and more about what they’re looking for.

### Investment Buyers
Investment Buyers will generally be more informed about real estate than typical consumers, though in some cases you’ll have to invest a lot of time in educating them about a particular market or opportunity.

The tone and message in your marketing pieces to Investment buyers should be that you are a good partner in completing a transaction accurately and in a timely fashion. You might also want to message strongly around your ability to negotiate the best price, particularly in your call to action.

### Adult Couple – No Kids
Consumers falling into this demographic will generally make decisions on their living arrangements based on their lifestyle demands or interests. You can target your message and make a lasting connection by getting to know their pursuits and sending them pieces that are relevant to those activities or hobbies.

Remember that if you’re sending pieces that are not necessarily relevant to homeownership every time to these contacts, you should balance your plan with real estate specific pieces. Balance your plan and make sure that your personal connection is tempered by a professional presentation of your expertise.

### Families with Young Children
(Or Children on the Way)
Space, schools, safety – There are lots of issues that will dominate the needs of families with young children. If they are living in a home that suits their needs, connect and build a relationship with these contacts by sending relevant information on property upkeep, easy, effective investments and improvements that will help their property value rise, and of course, information that addresses parenthood. If they need different accommodations to suit the needs of their growing family, you should send stronger, more prospecting oriented marketing pieces and ensure them that you can help them find a home that gives them what they need, while fitting into their budget as well.

### Empty Nesters / Retirees
As Baby Boomers move into retirement in the coming years, we’ll see a uptick in the number of consumers looking to downsize from their current home. Retirement offers a lot of opportunity for Empty Nesters and when prospecting to these consumers it’s important to stress that you can help them realize their aspirations for retirement years.

Remember that particularly with Boomers and new retirees, the way that you connect with your contact or prospect matters. E-mail marketing will be less effective than with other demographics, so rely on traditional marketing mediums such as direct mail for the most efficient impact. See the section on delivery methods for more discussion on this.

Interest marketing, such as sending a baseball schedule or a card on local Farmer’s Markets will help you develop a more intimate connection with sphere of influence contacts that fall into this demographic, but make sure that you balance any non real estate related communications with a market focused piece.
**Organize Your Database for Success**

Here’s a small test for you. Say I have a house that’s perfect for a family with the following demographics:

- Couple with ages between 35-50
- Family with 3 children or less
- Current home is smaller than 2,500 sq. ft.
- Expressed an interest in living within 15 miles of the city
- Has lived in their current home for more than 2 years

How quickly can you find someone in your database that matches that profile?

To stay on top of hot opportunities, you need to be able to find this information quickly and efficiently. Don’t get stuck wasting time trying to mine your database by hand. With an electronic database, you should be able to find this information within minutes.

**Collect the Right Data**

To send the kind of sophisticated marketing communications that today’s savvy consumers are expecting, it’s imperative that you maintain critical information related to your clients demographics as well as their wants in needs in your contact manager.

Keep important yet simple information such as the names of their children in your records and make sure that information can be recalled easily. More personal identifications, such as their hobbies and interests are also quite valuable for you in the long term.

**Grouping Your Contacts**

A structured customer list is essential to creating effective messaging. There are multiple ways of organizing the contacts in your database. Below is a 4 step process to help you organize your database and make sure that it stays that way.

**Step 1:** Sort your contacts by the kind of lead they are.
**Step 2:** Sort your contacts by their most relevant demographic profile.
**Step 3:** Create interest groups for highly specialized communications
**Step 4:** Maintain a consistent process to grow your database

**Examples of Contact Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Personal Information</th>
<th>Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Birthday</td>
<td>Biking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Phone</td>
<td>Wedding Anniversary Date</td>
<td>Boating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Phone</td>
<td>Children (Names &amp; Ages)</td>
<td>Camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Phone</td>
<td>Referred By</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>Home Purchase Date</td>
<td>Crafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Current Loan Amount</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Current Interest Rate</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Current House Size (Sq. ft.)</td>
<td>Golf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Preferred Neighborhood</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip</td>
<td>(Location or description)</td>
<td>Hunting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Site</td>
<td></td>
<td>Skating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples of Contact Groups**

- Skiing
- Tennis
- Technology
- Snowboarding
- Sports
- Music
- Theatre

---

*By collecting personal information on your clients you’re setting yourself for easy, pain free routes to consistently communicate with them and stay in touch.* If you’re able – take things a step further and be sure to note how your clients prefer to be contacted – e-mail, direct mail, or by phone. Every piece of information you collect should be geared towards making your communications with that person simpler and more relevant.
What to Send

The more you know about your audience, the easier it will be to select an appropriate marketing piece. In this section, we'll review at a high level the kind of messages that you'll want to send to typical lead sources and ownership/demographic profiles. This is by no means meant to be an inclusive study, but rather a survey that will help you get started.

You'll also learn about how to select an appropriate medium (i.e. e-mail, direct mail, etc.) for your communication piece, and how frequently you should touch or contact your sphere of influence or prospects. You'll also develop a few Call to Actions to include on every marketing piece you send out, so you can make sure your communication have impact. I've suggested a few pieces that you can send out so you'll have real examples to use when building a plan.

Marketing is Good. Targeted Marketing is Better.
Targeted communication, while more difficult to set up, will give you a greater return on your marketing investment and will also serve to enhance your personal brand. The more relevant the message, the more likely you are to make a connection with a consumer. Effective marketing in real estate is ALL about sending the right message to the right people at the right time so they'll select you when it comes time to buy or sell real estate.

Your Goal: Look Like the Trusted Advisor
All of your communication pieces should be aimed at setting the idea within the mind of consumers that you are a competent, Trusted Advisor. Consumers will make a service choice for you over your competition if they see you as the one person they can turn to for an expert opinion on their real estate questions.

Being a Trusted Advisor is possible during any portion of the typical Home Ownership Cycle. You just need to be mindful of the kind of information that is valuable during each portion of the life-cycle.

Prospects Looking to Buy or Sell
Consumers who are actively looking for a new home value information such as:
1. An expert assessment of the current real estate market
2. A refresher (or introduction for first time buyers) on the home buying and selling process including best financing options
3. Area or neighborhood information tailored to their stated preferences or desires. Targeted, relevant information for an active or warm prospect's expressed desires or needs is vital to making a meaningful connection.

Here are a few examples of pre-designed communications and campaigns that are available in SharperAgent for you to market to consumers who are actively looking to buy or sell a new home. Remember to consider your prospects stated desires as well as their demographic profile when you select a campaign.

Pre Built Campaigns:
• Move Up
• First Time Homebuyer
• Rent vs. Buy
• Single Professional Female
• Investor
• Why Choose Me?

Sample Seller Campaign:
Market Snapshot Flyer
Why Choose Me Postcard - Integrity
Are Your Moving Expenses Tax Deductible? - Postcard
Testimonial Flyer
Why Choose Me Postcard – Expertise
Free CMA Postcard

Sample Buyer Campaign:
Tax benefit newsletter
Credit Report Flyer
Debt to Income Flyer or Postcard
Benefits of a pre-approval Postcard
Loan Programs Explained Newsletter
Down Payment Strategies Newsletter
Home Buying and Selling Process:

From a service prospective, it’s essential that you communicate consistently with your clients before, during and after the sale. Most functional communications about the sale will occur via phone, fax or text emails and will not be subject to the same kind of considerations a marketing communication piece should be subject to.

Consumers who are in the process of buying or selling their home value information such as:

1. Information about the home buying and selling process. (Be mindful about the consumer's past experience and knowledge level.)
2. Tips and tricks on how to make their home seem more appealing and have greater value to potential buyers
3. Financial information about some of the tax benefits and costs that they can expect after their sale and/or purchase is complete.
4. Simple property improvements that can help them increase the value of their home.

Homeowners (Sphere of Influence)

The key to marketing to your sphere of influence is keeping your name top of mind. Remind them that you are a trusted advisor from now and will be even more so when it is time for them to buy or sell real estate.

Be mindful of your contacts demographic or homeownership profile when you create a marketing plan for your sphere of influence.

The kind of information homeowners value is:

1. Market updates – information on what’s selling in their area or within a larger market
2. Home care and home maintenance tips and ideas – especially home improvement projects that would add value to their home
3. Lifestyle pieces that demonstrate your understanding of their wants and needs like tips on going green or information on the best local golf courses

Homeowners (Prospecting)

When you are sending out marketing pieces to prospects, it’s important to keep in mind that you need to establish yourself as a real estate expert first. Your communications should be as professional as possible. If you can purchase a targeted list and therefore have some idea of the wants and aspirations of your prospects you can target your message and be much more effective.

1. Homeowners from your farm or the web value information that is:
2. Real estate relevant and targeted if possible
3. Demonstrative of your expertise and knowledge of the market and/or the home buying and selling process
4. Is motivating. Be sure to give the consumer a reason to call or connect with you.

Home Buying and Selling Process:

During this period, you have a great opportunity to educate your clients in a professional manner about the real estate market and homeownership. Doing so will help set you apart from your competition, set you up for a referral down the road, and will help you begin a long term valuable relationship with your current client.

Sellers:
- Staging Campaign
- Hiring a Mover (Postcard)
- Packing Tips (Postcard)
- Are My Moving Expenses Tax Deductible? (Postcard)
- What is Title Insurance? (Newsletter)

Buyers:
- Credit Report (Flyer)
- Debt to Income (Flyer or Postcard)
- Benefits of a pre-approval (Postcard)
- Closing Costs (Postcard)
- Real Estate Investing (Newsletter)
- Down Payment Strategies (Newsletter)
- What is Title Insurance? (Newsletter)

Here are a few examples of pre-designed communications and campaigns that are available in SharperAgent for you to market to your current clients who are actively buying or selling a home:

- Newsletter Campaign (monthly or quarterly)
- Home Care/Maintenance Postcards
- Interior Design Postcards
- Going Green Postcards
- Purchase Anniversary Postcards
- Seasonal Reminders Postcards
- Market Update Flyers (quarterly)
- Hand written (greeting cards) referral requests
- Holiday Greeting Cards
- Birthday Cards

Here are a few examples of pieces that are available within SharperAgent:

- Geographic Farms:
- Why Choose Me Postcard Series
- Benefits of Working with a Professional Real Estate Agent
- Market Snapshot Flyers (Quarterly)
- Sample campaign
- Market snapshot flyer
- Why Choose Me Postcard
- Are Your moving expenses tax deductible
- Add green to your home’s value postcard
- Free CMA postcard (semi-annual)
Call to Action

Every marketing piece you send out needs to give your contact a reason to get in touch with you. You need to include a call to action on all communications. It is absolutely critical to creating the right leads and for getting a return on your marketing investment.

All too often agents send postcards and newsletters, place advertisements, promote their website and pass out flyers that do not have a specific call to action. Now more than ever, every dollar you spend in marketing is precious and needs to produce a result (short and long term). Therefore, you need to make sure you let the recipients of your marketing know what you expect them to do and what they will get in return.

Here are a few examples. In the space below, create 5-10 of your own.

- Visit my website at xyz.com today to find your next dream home. Don’t forget to register for the free market analysis.
- Call me today for a FREE copy of our guide to buying distressed properties or visit our website to download it today.
- Call me today or visit my website at xyz.com to get your FREE copy of What Now?
- Need room? Call me today and get “Buying the Best House for your Money” FREE!

How to Distribute Your Message

After you’ve selected your message and made sure that it had an appropriate call to action, you need to decide how to get it to your contact or prospect.

Know Your Message

Additionally, it’s important to consider the type of marketing message you are sending and what the purpose of the send is. For example, if you are sending information regarding a transaction in process, it is perfectly acceptable and advisable to use e-mail to send you message; however, when distributing a prospecting message to your geographic farm, direct mail or a personal visit are recommended.

Know Your Audience

Keep in mind that different generations have different expectations and preferences when it comes to how they receive communications. For example, the Generation Y consumer is fairly self-sufficient and seeks out information on the web, in blogs, and via text messaging while the X Generation is all about e-mail. A hand written note goes a long way with a Baby Boomer or Civic.

Workspace:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sphere/Repeat and Referral Marketing:</th>
<th>E-mail for most monthly communication, occasional direct mail (market snapshots, personal notes, holiday cards)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospecting:</td>
<td>Direct mail in almost all cases except when a prospect gives you permission to use e-mail (which is typical with leads obtained online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional:</td>
<td>E-mail in almost all cases as direct mail may not be timely enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Promotion:</td>
<td>Direct mail for just listed/sold/open house announcements and e-mail for internet leads and inquiries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When possible, you should strive to reach your consumers through multiple mediums rather than relying on just one. Your local cable company, for example, doesn’t just put up TV ads, billboard, and send direct mailers because they’re not sure which one works. They know that in order to really reach consumers, you need to reach them in as many medias as possible. If you can combine e-mail marketing with direct mail marketing, you’re efforts are sure to have a greater impact.
**Frequency of Contact**

**Consistency is key.** Keep that in mind when you finalize your plan for the number of touches you are going to make when marketing this year.

The frequency with which you communicate your message is equally as important as what you say in your message. Why? Because your target audience is more likely to remember you when it comes time to buy or sell a home if they have seen your name more frequently (this is why effective companies that advertise on TV and/or the radio run multiple commercials per day as opposed to one every few weeks).

A prominent real estate expert once did a study of the marketing habits of top producing real estate agents. He found that agents who communicated once per month for a year with their farm area were able to produce 1 new transaction for every 50 people that they stayed in front of. More strikingly, agents who consistently communicated more than 30 times per year with their sphere of influence (friends, family, neighbors, past clients) through a combination of e-mail, direct mail, personal visits, and phone calls were likely to yield 2 new transactions for every 12 people they stayed in touch with.

Fortunately, additional studies show that far fewer touches are required to produce the same results, so long as the message and materials being sent have relevancy for the intended audience. Below are our frequency recommendations and the results you might expect from them.*

**Sphere of Influence: Consistent contact can yield significant results.**

18 value driven and relevant touches per year will result in 2 sales for every 12 people in your “Sphere of Influence” database.

**Target market and/or geographic farm**

12 value driven and relevant touches per year will result in 1 sale for every 50 people in these groups.

**Web Leads**

6 value driven and relevant touches after they contact you. Move web leads into an aggressive prospecting campaign after you determine their needs and wants. Others who didn’t show as much interest can be put on a monthly newsletter campaign until they become more active prospects.

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**Tracking Your Results**

Ask any advertising agency or consulting firm and they’ll explain to you that marketing is an inexact science that requires at least some trial and error testing. In order to discover what kinds of campaigns work best for a given industry or company, marketers need to experiment with multiple variables and use their results to find the right mix. Big national companies, for example, might try 10 iterations of a direct marketing campaign in order to discover which variation produces the best results.

This basic fact – that in order to find something that works, you’ll have to try a few things that don’t – means that successful marketers treat campaign expenses as an investment rather than a simple expense.

**Like any investment, you’ll need to:**

- Have patience and balance your “portfolio” with items that will pay off in the short term with others that will produce sustainable, long-term returns
- Develop a system of metrics to quantitatively and periodically measure and assess your campaign’s success
- Keep abreast of ever-changing patterns in consumer needs and behaviors so you can adjust your efforts based on prevailing market conditions

**Marketing then becomes a three step process:**

1. Try a few different campaigns with different variables
2. Determine what’s working
3. Expand on what’s working and tweak as necessary
**How Do I Know What’s Working?**

Keeping a centralized and consistent record of your sales history as well as your marketing spends is essential to evaluating your success. Just like contact management, there isn’t one great way or process that will help you to do it. You’ll need to pick something, and stick to it.

To make these calculations you’ll need to keep accurate records of:

1. Prospect and client contacts *(Ask consumers why they reached out to you)*
2. Campaign costs *(This includes money you spend on marketing tools/software, printing costs, postage costs, & other related expenses)*
3. Net gain per transaction

**Schedule an appointment in your calendar that occurs at least bi-weekly.** Update your central record book with all marketing and sales activities. To know what data you need to collect, you’ll need to first consider what performance measurements you’d like to know.

- **Response Rates**
- **Cost per Response**
- **Cost per Transaction**
- **Return on Investment**

**Review and Adjust**

**Complete a review of your marketing campaigns on a Quarterly basis.**

When you take a chance to look at the hard numbers and evaluate your campaigns, be sure to compare the results of all of the different things that you’re trying. Obviously you can’t expect the same kind of results from a farm prospecting campaign as you could for a targeted prospecting campaign or a sphere marketing campaign. However, if one campaign is working really well and another not at all, you can try and borrow elements from your successful campaign to improve results. This might be offering a stronger call to action or making a time-limited offer to drive more immediate responses.

Just keep in mind, tweaking is a constant necessity for marketers and the more you know about your current efforts, the easier it will be to make decisions about changes and improvements. Don’t take a risk on your investment by neglecting to learn as much as you can about what does and does not work for you and your market.

**Feeding Your Database**

Keeping a house plant healthy is simple enough. It requires regular and timely maintenance like watering, fertilizing, and pruning. Your contact database should be treated with the same kind of care – nurture it and it will serve you well.

Keep your database current by adding new prospects and clients and removing old contacts that are no longer useful. Don’t settle for the bare minimum. Commit to keeping more detailed records about your clients including relevant demographic data and information on their communication preferences.

**Make feeding your database a SCHEDULED PRIORITY.** Depending on your needs, this may be a daily, weekly, or bi-weekly activity but it must be done consistently. Don’t allow your hard work building relationships be thrown away by neglecting the most simple step in the process, collecting and recording data.

**Make the following steps a part of your routine to ensure the health of your database:**

1. Create a reoccurring appointment in your calendar and commit to keeping on track with it, no excuses!
2. Enter your contacts information into your electronic database and make note of pieces of vital information that are missing. Call or e-mail your contact that week to obtain the missing information and complete their record.
3. Add each contact into at least one group or interest so that they can be easily added to future campaigns depending.