

Affiliate Marketing Program

INTRODUCTION

“Failing to plan is planning to fail”

The Affiliate Marketing Program is designed to help you cultivate referral relationships with real estate agents. Please note that this program does not advocate or incorporate paying for these referrals. Agents are in need of great businesses that both make them look good and help complete the transaction. Agents don't expect to be paid to hand out this business, they just want their clients to have the perfect buying or selling experience, and you can be part of that.

The real estate industry constitutes 10 percent of the country's GDP. It is not the actual sale of homes that makes up this number, but all of the related business that is conducted during the sale of a home. Real estate agents help buyers and sellers make the largest financial decision of their lives, and often are asked to refer them to businesses that assist in the transaction.

The average real estate agent sells 7 to 10 homes per year. By creating relationships with real estate agents in your area this can represent a possible referral every time a home is sold.

The following marketing plan will help you design a process for cultivating and maintaining relationships with real estate agents in your community.

PART ONE

Your Unique Selling Proposition

There are many competitors in your field and agents are always looking for great companies to refer to their clients. Develop a Unique Selling Proposition related to your business and directed towards the real estate industry.

Example: *ACME photography is the most innovative photography company in Denver. We utilize high-tech photography techniques that will help you sell homes faster. We have next-day service for real estate professionals and will keep you informed throughout the photography process. We create raving fans with evangelical customer service and will make you look like a hero for referring us.*

WRITE YOUR USP HERE

KEY TALKING POINTS

1. What sets your company apart from others in your industry?
2. What promise can you provide to real estate agents?
3. Do you have a discount for real estate agents?
4. Why do you want to work for buyers and sellers of real estate (why do you want to work with real estate agents?)

TIPS

Communication: Agents want to know what is going on with their clients and how you have helped them.

Prompt Service: When agents call they often need work done on short notice due to the pressures of a real estate transaction.

Make the agent look like a hero: When an agent gives a referral and that referral treats their clients great with exceptional customer service, that makes the agent look like a hero.

PART TWO

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Keeping in touch with real estate agents is a defining factor in whether you will receive referrals. A CRM will help you organize contact information and help you keep in touch with agents on a regular basis. It will also allow you to keep notes on conversations you have with agents. If you're not currently using CRM software, look into these systems:

Podio	Salesforce.com
Zoho	Goldmine
Outlook	SugarCRM
Google Contacts	

You may already have a CRM you are using for your current client database. If you do, create a separate section for Real Estate Agents. Choosing the appropriate CRM is critical to the success of your marketing program. Make sure you choose a CRM that is easy for you to use and understand.

PART THREE

What's your goal?

A written and measurable goal will be the road map to success. In this section, determine how many referrals you want to get from agents in your area.

I want _____ referrals from real estate agents in the next 12 months. Those _____ referrals constitute \$_____ worth of new business in the next year.

Example: I want 20 referrals from real estate agents in the next 12 months. Those 20 referrals constitute \$10,000 worth of new business in the next year.

(Average revenue from one referral for example is \$500, $20 \times \$500 = \$10,000$)

PART FOUR

How many agents?

Now that you know how many referrals you want for the next 12 months from real estate agents, you need to figure out how many agents at a minimum need to be sending referrals your way.

The average agent sells 7 to 10 homes per year. Although certain business categories may differ, you should guess that there is a 30% percent chance you will get a referral from a transaction. Conservative planning will tell you that one agent will give you an average of three referrals in a year. This is a conservative estimate, if you create relationships with agents selling more homes on average per year, you can count on more referrals.

I need _____ agents sending me referrals to reach my goal of _____ referrals for the year.

Example: I need seven agents sending me referrals to reach my goal of 20 referrals for the year.

PART FIVE

It's a numbers game

We now know how many agents we need sending us referrals to reach our goals for revenue from the real estate industry. As with any other marketing plan, it is a numbers game. You will need to have ongoing contact with many agents to create the desired number of relationships you need to reach your goal.

A good rule of thumb is to cultivate relationships with five times the number of agents you need sending you referrals.

I need _____ agents sending me referrals to reach my goal of _____ referrals for the year, therefore I need to be communicating with _____ real estate agents in my community.

Example: I need seven agents sending me referrals to reach my goal of 20 referrals for the year, therefore I need to be communicating with 35 real estate agents in my community.

PART SIX

Where do I find real estate agents?

IN PERSON EVENTS

Board of Realtor events
Company events
Company meetings
Realtor conferences
Realtor charity events
Open houses
Educational events

ONLINE CONTACT INFORMATION

Realtor.com
Board of Realtor website member lookup
Company websites agent lookup
Zillow and Trulia professional pages
Google, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter

Real estate agents want to be found. Good agents have their contact information readily available on websites, company pages, and their social media profiles. They also are social by nature. They attend events, go to meetings and conferences, and naturally enjoy being asked about their profession. It is a good strategy to seek out agents both face to face and via phone, email, and social media.

TIPS FOR FINDING IN-PERSON EVENTS

- Local board of Realtor website event calendar (you will find education, meetings, and social events here)
- Local board of Realtors education director. Contact the education director and ask how you can sponsor educational and/or social events.
- Become an affiliate member of the local board of Realtors.
- Look in local paper for list of open houses. Visit agents at open houses to introduce yourself (more info in "what to say" section)
- Call local company office managers and/or managing brokers and ask what their policy is for sponsoring company meetings or events.

PART SEVEN

I'm in front of agents. Now what?

The ultimate goal is to get a real estate agent to give you their contact information so you can keep in touch with him/her on an ongoing and consistent basis. Get a business card at in-person events, and on the phone ask for a cell number and email address.

After you have their information the real work begins.

PART EIGHT

What do I say?

SAMPLE PHONE DIALOGUE

YOU: "Hi John, my name is Eric, and I own Dynamic Carpet Cleaning. I got your information from _____. I am looking to work with more real estate agents this year, and wanted to ask if you have a great carpet cleaning referral for your clients?"

AGENT: Yes, actually I do have a company I usually refer to.

YOU: That's great, being in the industry I appreciate your loyalty. I would love to send you my information in case your carpet cleaner is in Cancun when you need him, I could be second on your list! We give home buyers and sellers a 20 percent discount and usually can schedule a next-day cleaning for our real estate referrals. (Your USP)

AGENT: Sure, my email address is _____.

YOU: Thank you, John. I will send you my information and keep you up to date on any discounts or news from our company. I hope you have a great year, and call me anytime if you need me.

IF THE AGENT SAYS NO

AGENT: No, I actually don't have a good referral for carpet cleaning.

YOU: Great! I would love to send you my information so you can get ahold of me when your clients need a good carpet cleaning referral. We give home buyers and sellers a 20 percent discount and usually can schedule a next day cleaning for our real estate referrals. We keep agents posted on how the job went as well. (Your USP)

PART NINE

The 8x8 Plan

Getting an agent to say he or she would refer a client to you is just the beginning. This is where most people trying to get business from real estate agents fail.

The agent who tells you they will use your company the next time they need you is extremely busy. They are deeply engaged in the business of real estate. It helps to realize that agents are often work-

ing with multiple clients, and they are all independent contractors, which means they are working on every aspect of the business.

If you don't stay in front of real estate agents, reminding them of why they should use your company for your services, **they will forget**. An agent will use the last person in front of them or a company that is easy to get ahold of that they have used in the past, even if the service is poor.

The 8 X 8 plan is a marketing program outlining how to stay in front of real estate agents 8 times in the first 8 weeks after you get permission to email them. By staying in front of a real estate agent on a consistent basis you will create the top-of-mind awareness you need for them to start sending you referrals.

Week 1

Send a thank you email with all of your contact information and a brief summary of your USP. Explain to the agent in the email why they should refer to you.

Example: Hi John, thank you for taking my call. I look forward helping your clients with their carpet cleaning needs. We will always make you look like a hero by taking great care of your clients. If you need us we can usually schedule your clients for next day service and anyone you send our way will get a 20 percent discount. Thanks again and hope to talk soon.

Week 2

A phone call to the agent to make sure they received your email and asking them to meet for coffee. (If they sent you a message in response to your week 1 email you can just call to ask the agent to coffee to talk about business)

Example: "Hi John, It's Eric from Dynamic Carpet Cleaning, I am calling to see if we can talk about business over coffee? In case I run across one of my clients who is thinking of selling their home I would love to know more about your business.

(If the agent says no, that is OK. You still made contact and put the seed in their mind that you care about their business and you stayed in front of him/her.)

Week 3

Send agent an email with an add value piece from BreakthroughBroker.com, such as the Referral Playbook, Marketing or Business Plan, or tips/videos.

(BreakthroughBroker.com will email affiliates twice per month with ideas on what to send agents with content from the website.

Example: "Hi John, I hope your week is going well. I came across this cool marketing action plan (include a link) and thought I would send it your way. Hope it can be of some help. Have a great week."

Week 4

Send BreakthroughBroker.com newsletter via direct mail or email as an attachment. BreakthroughBroker.com creates an unbranded newsletter for real estate agents that you can brand as if you wrote it yourself.

Week 5

Social media touch. Connect with the agent via LinkedIn, a Facebook friend request, Like the agent's Facebook fan page, or follow the agent on Twitter.

Week 6

Email the agent with special news about your company. This can be a special discount for real estate agents for the month, or the announcement of large contract. News can be a company milestone, etc.

Week 7

Phone call asking for a referral! You can't get what you don't ask for.

Example: "Hi John, I hope all is well. I have some openings and was giving you a quick call to see if any of your clients needed a carpet cleaning. We are also having a special on carpet stretches this month."

Week 8

Send a second BreakthroughBroker newsletter branded as your own, either by direct mail or as an email attachment.

Utilize your CRM to keep track of this program. You can set reminders and keep track of what stage each contact is in during the 8 X 8 Program. You can also keep notes as to what was said in conversations or any email response by the agent.

What's next?

After completing the 8 X 8 with a new contact keep in touch twice per month. You can utilize your BreakthroughBroker.com newsletter as one of those touches. Mix up your other touches. Send emails, call on occasion, look to meet at events, etc.

PART 10

Referrals: The non-cold call

Ask friends, family and clients who their real estate agent is. Let them know you are interested in meeting more agents this year and if you can give their trusted agent a call. If you are a service provider, you should ask every client who they use for real estate and ask for their name and phone number. The call becomes warm and is super easy!

Example: "Hi John, my name is Eric Sachs. I am currently helping Joan Smith with her carpets and she raved about you as the best real estate agent."

John: "Of course, I remember Joan, that is great, how can I help you?"

Me: "I am interested in working with real estate agents this year and wanted to know if you have a great carpet cleaning referral?"

Make it a habit to start asking everyone who their trusted real estate contact is. It is ok to tell them why you are asking. Most people who have an agent they use will be very happy to give you their information. This is the easiest way to build up your database of agents. Once you have the information go right into the 8 X 8 program.

PART 11

Social Media Plan

Eighty percent of real estate agents visit Facebook at least once per day. The real estate industry in general is fairly tech savvy and successful agents take full advantage of social media. Below are some tips and tricks for interacting with real estate professionals via social media.

- Have complete profiles on your social sites.
 - Create a real estate agent list on Facebook (call Eric or Nathan if you need help on this)
 - Be human (share personal stories, pictures, etc.)
 - Produce valuable content (be the expert in your field)
 - Don't be a billboard (a one way street speaking about your business will get you hidden)
 - Take time to comment on what agents post, whether it is personal or professional
 - Comment on agent blogs (make comments thoughtful, not self promotion)
-

PART 12

Testimonials

Testimonials are a great way to show potential clients how you do business. Get testimonials from both the clients who were referred to you and the agent who referred them.

Simply have your client fill out a "satisfaction form" detailing their experience with you.

Send the testimonial to the agent who gave you the referral. Real estate agents need to know what happened after they sent the referral. The best way to receive ongoing business from real estate agents is to let them know how happy their clients were with you.

Get a few testimonials from the agents themselves as well. You can add these to future marketing you send to agents.

PART 13

Be the expert

Be an expert in your field. Create content and education so real estate agents will identify you as the go-to expert in your field. Companies and Realtor Associations are always looking for new classes. Create a one-hour class that pertains to your industry and seek out opportunities to teach.

Example: Local security company is creating a class on "Innovations in Home Security: What agents need to know."

Write short articles for local blogs or BreakthroughBroker.com with tips and tricks for real estate agents pertaining to your field.

Conclusion

Focusing your marketing efforts on the real estate industry in your area will eventually be a rewarding proposition. Continued communication with agents over time will pay off in ongoing business. Referrals won't immediately come pouring in; this niche market you are going after needs time to know and trust you and your services.

Feel free to call BreakthroughBroker.com President and Co-Founder Eric Sachs anytime for help on the customized marketing program. We are always happy to help grow your business by creating relationships with real estate agents.