



# Marketing Playbook

FOR REAL ESTATE AGENTS



The housing market can be a competitive landscape, so Cole Information provides real estate agents with the tools and resources to stand out.

Our 70-year history of helping businesses reach customers is backed by our recently developed Marketing Playbook specifically tailored for this industry. It features practical tips from experienced professionals on how build an effective online presence as well using mobile marketing, direct mailers and telemarketing solutions—all designed to help you gain advantage over your competition!



## CONCENTRATE ON THE OPPORTUNITIES, NOT THE CHALLENGES




The old saying goes, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

While you can't change the housing market, industry news, or the potentially dismal forecast, you can change your attitude and the way you conduct business. Create a successful work environment by focusing on the positives –both people and relationships. Also, use motivational tools–books, podcasts, social media etc–to help you re-focus, and provide discipline and inspiration–to help you become a top producer.



To get started, ask yourself:

01. What are 5-10 goals I really want to accomplish?
  02. What specific steps do I need to take to get there?
  03. What is standing in the way of my accomplishments?
  04. How can I get help to reach my goals?
  05. How can I help others reach their goals?
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# Develop a **MARKETING PLAN**

Growing your agency involves continually attracting new customers. But it's also important to retain your current ones and from time-to-time keep in touch with past clients. A solid marketing plan can help with both and truly comes down to time, money and preparation. When developing your marketing plan, spend some time and think of your ideal target audience, your direct competition, your budget and what makes you stand out from the competition.

## **01. GOALS**

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What do you want your business to accomplish?

## **02. STRATEGIES**

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How will you reach your goal?



## **03. CAMPAIGN**

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How will you use your marketing dollars wisely? Will you invest in advertising, direct mail, social media, giveaways, etc.?


## **04. TIMELINE**

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When do you plan to launch your campaign? Even if you don't follow your timeline, developing deadlines can help you reach your goal.

## **05. MEASURE**

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What was your ROI for each campaign? Was the cost worth the time, manpower etc. associated with it?

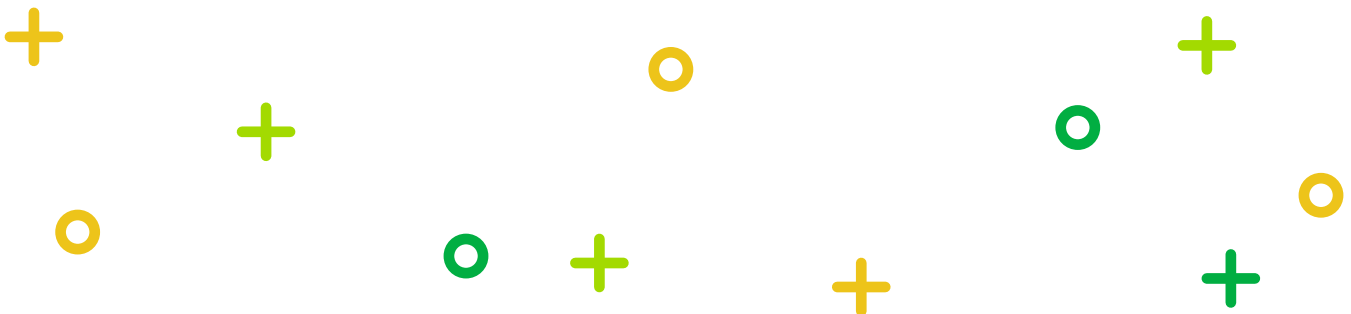


# TELEMARKETING



## Focus on the numbers for success

Prospecting is a tough but critical component for lead generation, lead follow-up, and setting high-quality appointments. To be successful, get in the right mindset and cast a wider net by expanding your geography and searching for prospects based on age, income level or home value.





## Who should you call first?

Answering that question depends really on the type of realtor you are. One obvious choice is the neighbors of your Just Listed/Just Sold properties. This group may be the most receptive to your message because they may be considering making a move themselves. You'll soon discover that's only the beginning of the various groups of people you need to speak to.

These scripting ideas are a product of our interactions with agents over the years. It's important that you take these ideas and make them your own.



## CALL THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Along with your Just Listed/Just Sold groups, here are additional people who are most likely to do business with you.

### 01. Neighbors of Just Listed/Just Sold

Establishing a relationship is key to growing your business. By reaching out to other homeowners near Just Listed/Just Sold properties, you can break down the barrier and establish trust.

"I just listed/just sold (name)'s property. He's a good customer of mine and is your neighbor. I wanted to call you to see if you were interested in buying/selling your property as well."





## 02. Expired Listings

This group of people can be beneficial to your market. At the same time, they can be unmotivated, have objections or be full of excuses. That's why it's important to treat them with a sense of urgency and have a script ready. Follow up is key to maintain the sense of urgency needed to motivate this seller.

"Hi, this is (name) with (real estate agency). I'm just calling to see when's a good time this week to talk about re-listing your home?"

"I know you've had some trouble selling your house. Let me show you what I do differently that will bring positive results and get your home sold this time. Would that be worth a little of your time?"

"Hi, I'm (name) with your local (agency name). We've been serving the (city, county, etc.) area for over (number) years! If you are thinking of buying/selling your property in the near future, I would love the opportunity to provide you with a free quote, and show you how we could get you the best price for your property."

"I currently have listed/sold (number of) homes in your area..."

## 03. Past Customers

Check in with this group to nurture the relationship and keep you top of mind. End your conversation by asking them to consider working with you in the event they, their neighbors or their friends decide to sell/buy a home.

"It's great to talk to you. Please, keep me in mind if you know of anyone who needs help buying or selling their home."





## 04. For Sale By Owner (FSBO)

For Sale By Owner (FSBO): Many times these homeowners have had bad experiences with real estate agents rather than a desire to save on commission costs. Restore their faith in what you can do for them—sell their home! It's important to establish a relationship with them and get your foot in the door. Plus, consider the facts:

- About 10% of homes sold are FSBO.<sup>1</sup>
- The most challenging thing for a FSBO is setting the right price for their home.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>source: National Association of Realtors

"I understand you've not had much luck with selling your home. Perhaps I can help. The buyers I work with want to see the homes available through agents and also those FSBO. If I have a buyer that would be interested in your home, can I send them your way and get your home sold? You'd be okay with that, right?"





## GETTING STARTED

### Overcome objections

When it comes to overcoming your prospects' objections, you have a number of effective solutions available. Rather than attempting crafty manipulation techniques, take the time to truly understand what they need and how you can best meet that demand - be flexible where necessary. Utilize your in-depth knowledge of both products and the housing market; by taking this approach you ensure success for everyone involved.

### Follow up

Whether it's because of forgetfulness, laziness or fear of appearing pushy, many people do not follow up with their prospects. Even those who do follow up do so "just to touch base." Calls should be made with purpose. State the purpose of yours. This is a great opportunity to differentiate yourself from other agencies. You care. You are different. Take the initiative.

# MARKETING SCHEDULE

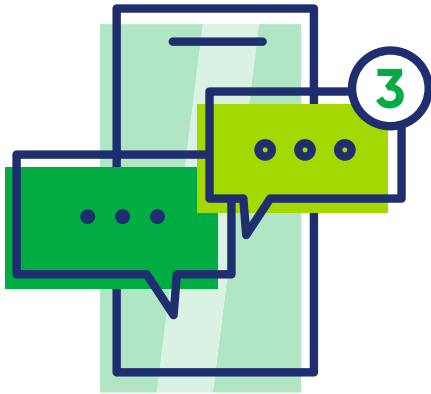
As a business owner, you're already busy with all the responsibilities that come with running an agency. Making sure your marketing plan is organized can save valuable time and energy in the long run. To get started on this front, consider creating a detailed schedule: Excel works wonders here! Plan out all advertising, and public relations activities as well as referrals, and social media initiatives for either one quarter at a time or even up to an entire year if needs be - seeing it physically written down will give you extra motivation to stick to it.

## 01. Schedule Your Phone Calls

Scheduling sales calls, or follow up calls, in advance helps avoid prospects falling through the cracks (not to mention taking the strain off your memory). For sales, make a selling schedule, or dedicate an hour each day to making sales calls. For follow ups, try updating your Outlook appointments with the next time you plan on calling your prospect as soon as you get off the phone with them. That way you won't forget.

## 02. Strategically Manage Your Time

There is a difference between being busy and being productive. Manage your time in a way that you spend it being productive. Do the things that will pay off. Determine your priorities, then manage your time accordingly. Your marketing schedule and scheduling your phone calls will help tremendously in time management.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Don't miss out on this prime real estate area

Social media platforms like Facebook now boast nearly 3 billion active users. Combined with Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn etc. there are thousands of conversations happening online. Take advantage of the power at your fingertips and leverage billions of active social media users to promote Just Listed/Just Sold properties! Build relationships with followers by posting status updates or videos; uploading pictures; creating events—whatever it takes to reach out and engage potential leads.

Don't just sell a house,

## SELL THE ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD

Cole Information provides agents a one-stop solution to quickly and easily list and sell the entire neighborhood. Our powerful tool offers you landline phone numbers of prospects in your neighborhood along with additional information about these homeowners or renters. With your paid subscription, you can access the easy-to-use online product wherever Internet access is available.

Plus, our exclusive Neighbor Search allows users to quickly and easily pinpoint homeowners of your Just Listed/Just Sold properties to grow your real estate business.



# WEB MARKETING

## 01. Nurture your website

Social media is essential to your online presence, but don't forget about managing and refreshing your brand. When was the last time you updated your website content or explored pay per click ads?

You can easily uncover ways in which consumers are finding and engaging with your business without hiring an IT specialist - take advantage of low-cost tools from Google, Yahoo and Microsoft for insights on page performance; keywords that drive traffic clicks; and consumer dwell times. Investing a little energy into understanding how customers interact with your site provides invaluable insight when it comes to maintaining relevance!



## 02. Analyze



Gone are the days when you throw money into an advertising campaign that includes radio spots or billboard signs and hope it resonates with consumers. Programs like Google Analytics and Hubspot's website grader make it relatively easy to see if your online efforts are moving the needle and gets potential consumers to on take advantage of your call-to-action.

### Monitor your online curb appeal

Scheduling sales calls, or follow-up calls, in advance helps avoid prospects falling through the cracks (not to mention taking the strain off your memory). For sales, make a selling schedule, or dedicate an hour each day to making sales calls. For follow-ups, try updating your Outlook appointments with the next time you plan on calling your prospect as soon as you get off the phone with them. That way you won't forget.

## 03. Pay Per Click

It happens whenever you search the Internet. You type a word or phrase into a search engine, hit enter and immediately "sponsored" ads of local businesses pop up below and to the right of the screen. These sponsored links or ads are known as pay per click marketing and when done correctly, can create awareness and generate leads to your website. For example, let's say you're trying to sell a home in Denver. Try Geo-based ads to get started by bidding on "Denver realtors" or "Sell my house in Denver" or similar keywords. Try it yourself at [adwords.google.com](http://adwords.google.com).



# MARKETING IN ACTION

## Social Media

- Update your Facebook Cover Photo weekly with your house of the week.
- Create open house events.
- Tweet open house events, Just Listed and Just Sold properties.
- Engage your Just Listed/ Just Sold customers to post testimonials on the great job you did buying/selling a home on their Facebook page.

## Web Marketing

- Develop a keyword strategy: Words or phrases that sum up your product/service.
- Incorporate those keywords into your website.
- SEO: Search engine optimization refers to using industry specific keywords on your website and social spaces to increase your search engine visibility.
- Monitor what's being said about your business, brand or industry. Make changes based on this valuable feedback.

## RESOURCES

- [website.grader.com](http://website.grader.com)
- [adwords.google.com](http://adwords.google.com)
- [googlekeywordtool.com](http://googlekeywordtool.com)
- [advertising.microsoft.com](http://advertising.microsoft.com)
- [google.com/analytics](http://google.com/analytics)
- [google.com/alerts](http://google.com/alerts)



# DIRECT MAIL

## Does it work?

To be successful, direct marketing needs to get the right message to the right people. By testing and tracking to find the right message, and using highly specific targeting technologies, direct marketing can grow your small business.

## Test. Measure. Repeat.

Direct marketing campaigns can be a tricky business. But rather than try to guess your way through them, why not employ the power of statistics? Track response rates when using different images, copy and offers - then send out two versions to 10% of prospects each in order to determine which one resonates most with customers. Once you've identified it, send that version on its merry way for optimal results!

## DIRECT MARKETING AVENUES



### 01. Traditional

Direct mail continues to be an effective marketing strategy that 90%<sup>1</sup> of American consumers engage with everyday. It is most effective when it's personable.

<sup>1</sup>source: Compu-mail



### 02. Digital

Capture your client's email addresses and send them eNewsletters on a regular basis to stay top of mind. Be sure to include industry news, decorating or seasonal home tips and information about the properties you just listed/just sold.





# MOBILE MARKETING



## 01. QR Codes

QR codes can be an excellent way to add online interaction to your print marketing campaign. Make it easy for people to engage with you: give them instructions on how to access the QR code:

1. Open the camera app on your phone
2. Select rear-facing camera
3. Hold your device so the QR code appears in the viewfinder
4. Follow the link

## 02. Text Messages

Another way to gain consumers' attention is through text messaging. Who doesn't send and receive texts? At only 160 characters, the open rate on text averages 98%<sup>1</sup> and many times, the short message is read within four minutes. Using SMS marketing software and a keyword that fits with your business and promotion, you can successfully implement a SMS campaign to text promotions or coupons to your customers and prospects\*.

<sup>1</sup>source: manychat.com

## 03. Mobile Friendly Website

Creating a simpler version of your website enhances the home search experience for would be clients searching for their dream home. Along with being convenient, it also lets them know you're innovative and able to meet their needs wherever they're at. Just remember to keep it simple, easy to navigate and updated with your current listing. Also be sure there's a link to your full website and a way for prospects to get in touch with you either by cell phone, email or both!

\*It is important to review all texting compliance regulations before conducting text campaigns.





# BRAND 411


## 01. Consistency



To make an impact, research reveals that your clients need to see you seven times. Ensure that all of your advertising is cohesive and in line with the identity of your brand - use a consistent tone, colors, tagline etc., so they recognize it when they come across it again.



## 02. Unforgettable




As a real estate expert, you have the ability to deliver more value to homeowners with expert knowledge. For example, create custom tip sheets on ideas for home staging or landscaping which could be especially useful. Also consider creating magnets with your contact details along with schedules of local events -something people are likely to hold onto handy in their fridge.

## 03. Call-To-Action


Give your prospects a reason to call with a certain timeframe. For example, if you inform a homeowner by postcard you just listed their neighbor's home, include in the mailer, "Call/email me to schedule an appointment to talk about selling your home by June 15." Then follow up by phone a few weeks after you sent the mailer to ensure they received it, have any questions or want to make an appointment.



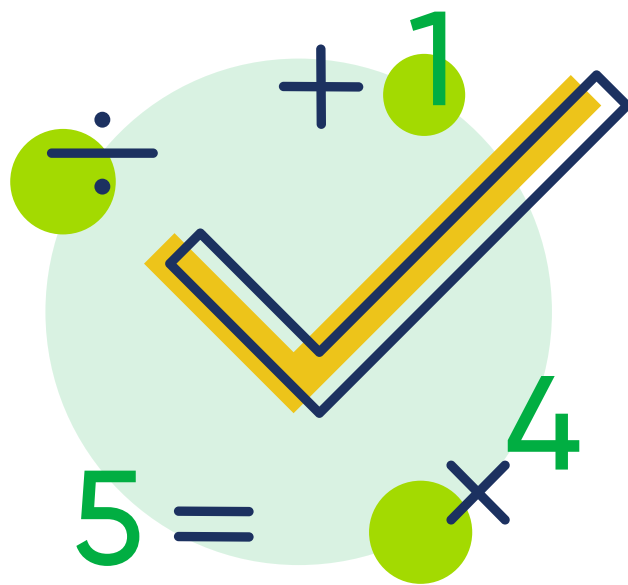
## Brand Enforcement



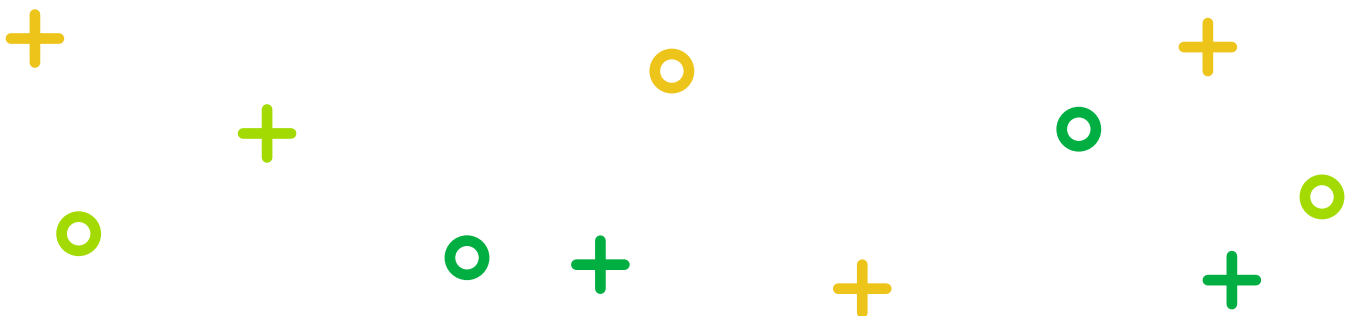
Consider naming a Brand Identity Captain or creating a Brand Manual that enforces your brand identity's consistency across multiple platforms and mediums.



# CALCULATIONS FOR SUCCESS



Tracking performance is vital in operating a business efficiently. Here are some quick calculations that will help you track your performance in order to find what works and what doesn't. Then you'll be able to do more of what works based on your own results.





## 01. Close Ratio

Close Ratio is a calculation used to determine your effectiveness in completing a sale.

It is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Close Ratio} = (\text{Number of Sales Leads} / \text{Number of Sales}) \times 100$$

For example, let's say you called 50 leads last week, and of those leads, you closed (or made) sales. That means your close ratio was:

$$(50 / 5) \times 100 = 10$$

That means the close ratio on your phone campaign was 10%. The same calculation can be made for visitors to your business, your website, etc.

## 02. Return on Investment (ROI)

ROI is an important calculation used to determine how effective an investment is.

It is calculated as follows:

$$\text{ROI} = [(\text{Revenue Generated} - \text{Initial Investment}) / \text{Initial Investment}] \times 100$$

For example, if you spent \$500 on a direct mail campaign which generated \$700 of revenue for you, it would be calculated as:

$$\text{ROI} = [(700 - 500) / 500] \times 100 = 40$$

That means your direct mail campaign had an ROI of 40%. You can use calculations such as close ratio and ROI to track and determine what activities result in higher profits for your business. After determining what results in higher profits, you can do more of that activity, and less of other, less productive activities.



### 03. Meeting Your Goals

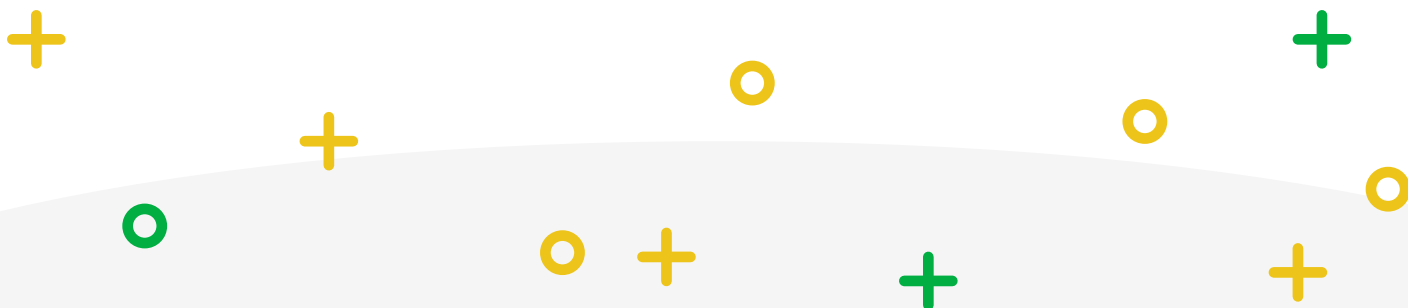
Do you get that panicked feeling towards the end of each month, wondering if you are going to meet your sales goals? Instead of wondering *if*, make a plan on *how* you are going to meet your goals. After tracking your close ratio for a few months, you will come up with a fairly reliable average for your business. You can plug that number, along with your sales goal into the following formula to calculate how many phone calls you should be making to meet your goal.

$$\# \text{ of Phone Calls} = (\text{Close Ratio} / 100) \times \text{Sales Goal}$$

For example, let's say you found your close ratio was 12%. And your goal was \$5,000 per month. Then the number of phone calls you would need to make in order to meet your goal that month would be calculated as follows:

$$\# \text{ of Phone Calls} = (12 / 100) \times 5000 = 600$$

That means, to make your sales goal for the month, you will need to make 600 phone calls throughout the course of that month. That may sound like a lot, but when broken up into bite-sized pieces each day (600 phone calls / 30 days), that's only 20 calls per day. Breaking it down will make it easier to make sure you are staying on track to meet your goals.





# Congratulations!

**YOU'VE FINISHED THE  
MARKETING PLAYBOOK FOR  
REAL ESTATE AGENTS!**

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By incorporating some of the suggestions and tips, you're on your way to taking your agency to the next level and generating more listings, more sales, and more money. Don't forget to track the impact of your subscription to Cole Reality Resource.



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COLEREALTYRESOURCE.COM

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