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Internet Prospecting That is 16 Times More Effective Than Ordinary Methods!

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Business methods have been conceived for centuries on the subject of finding people who want to buy what we have to sell. At one end of the pricing spectrum is placing an ad on the upcoming Super Bowl TV Broadcast; at the other, free ads on Craigslist.

When it comes to selling homes, the Internet has become the prevailing method buyers use to search for them. This has resulted in more than 65% of agents having websites, 90+% of which don't bring a single buyer in the door. The costs of those websites range from FREE to tens of thousands of dollars.

Most real estate agents spend between \$60 and \$300 a month for their site. Many agents use Google pay per click to help them gain traffic, spending between \$300 and \$500 monthly on that. Many agents pay for SEO subscriptions, many pay for webmasters, designers services, IDX and more, aggregating hundreds of dollars more—each and every month. Despite all this, NAR tells us that 90% of agents are not happy with the production from their Internet marketing. Clearly, the promise of the Internet is largely undelivered.

This article, however, is not concerned with the whys or how's of that set of facts, but rather, it seeks to tell you about an emerging method of prospecting the Internet that—in one product-- is sixteen times more effective than an ordinary properly optimized website. We believe every agent needs to know about these alternatives. At least three companies now market various solutions designed to increase the number of leads agents receive from a website. Is one of them the solution for you?

The products gaining lots of attention are Compass PROLeadS™, Tiger Leads and Market Leader. Because I do not want to offend anyone, I will not compare these three alternatives directly, choosing instead to tell you about the one I know the most about: Compass PROLeadS™.

The Baseline

The goal of Internet marketing is to convert “unique visitors” (e.g., new people finding your site) into registrations and leads. That concept has largely been forgotten in most real estate sites that bombard a visitor with all sorts of information they neither need nor seek. The end result of all this unnecessary information is that even a well designed and optimized website only converts about one half of one percent of its unique visitors to sign ins. In other words, if you wanted 10 people to sign into your site monthly, you needed to have 400 unique visitors come there. That one half of one per cent is our baseline for evaluating the efficiency of Internet prospecting. We’re going to compare the new paradigms to those well performing sites, not the slaggards. When we say “16 times more effective,” we mean 16 times more effective than a site with 400 unique visitors that is properly optimized and findable on the major search engines.

The New Method

The new and vastly more effective method is based on a complete re-think of the purpose of your website; from being a provider of unlimited information to being a gatherer of the names, phone numbers and email addresses of real people who have real questions they ask you about what you sell.

It sounds simple, but it is difficult for many to accept this kind of change in what they have thought of as “normal” for Internet marketing. Additionally, this method is totally managed by marketing experts for you; you choose very little, they choose what works—based on what they know from working with hundreds (if not thousands) of real agents in the field. The product includes a

custom made branded site for you, organic SEO and paid search, calls to action, lead capture and focused targeting.

One of the solutions—Compass PROLeadS™-- includes a full money back guarantee as to the production of 100+ real leads during the subscription ('real lead' being defined as a real person's name, phone or email (or both) inquiring about something they have seen on your site or requesting more information).

The leads are SMS texted to your phone, emailed to your choice of email addresses and logged in a permanent registry available to you (and only you) in one click. Because PROLeadS™ maintains an average conversion rate of visitors to leads of 8%+, traffic can be managed to produce strong leads on as little as 100 unique visitors each month and the use of the paid search component makes that a virtual certainty—also eliminating the traditional long wait for SEO to become effective.

The result is that the user now begins receiving traffic and real leads wanting more information about what the real estate professional user sells before 30 days go by making success in selling to Internet buyers much more of a certainty.

A Razor Sharp Focus on Markets

These new sites work best when targeted extremely well. In a large city, individual neighborhoods make fine targets (Upper East Side Condos, Loop Condos, Nob Hill Homes, etc.) and in smaller markets, individual towns make the best targets. Trying to generate good leads in too broad a geographic area defeats the powerful SEO and intelligent paid search that is employed; truly, all real estate is local! Likewise, in addition to geographic targets, specialties abound and are very effective (e.g., Myrtle Beach Condos, San Antonio Foreclosures, Lehigh Valley Real Estate, Antioch Short Sales, BRAC Relocation to Quantico, Skyline Plaza, Pocono Homes for Sale, Wilmington First time Homebuyers, etc.) and are efficiently prospected by these new targeted lead sites. Because you identify the market you really want to sell to, the majority of your inquiries come from that target in a volume and a quickness that has not been possible until now.

What About Your Existing Website?

If you have a current website and you like it, keep it. It makes a great place to send clients and prospects for any kind of information they desire once they are on board with you. Chances are that it's just not very good at finding prospects for you. These new dedicated lead generation sites will outperform any ordinary website by a wide margin precisely because they do not try to compete with those heavy information websites; rather they augment them in one area—Internet prospecting. In the case of PROLeadS™ an average site outperforms the very highest performing CompassSearch sites, for example, by two to one: the best conversion rates of 4% on those CompassSearch sites cannot compete with the average conversion rate of 8% on Compass PROLeadS™ sites. Full service sites have many advantages over the PROLeadS™ sites and the others in this category, but producing leads is not one of them.

What About Costs?

They vary wildly and are best addressed by the company offering the product. Each product serves its market in its own way. It is important to be honest with the company you investigate, because you cannot handle more than a finite number of real leads properly. Remember, these are not paid leads with little if any relevance to what you sell—these are leads inquiring about precisely what you sell. Quality leads mean more work in addition to more sales. Each one must be followed up the right way.

If you tell a company you want 100 leads a month, you'll pay for that, but if you can't follow them up properly, you'll pay for that, too—in burn out, in disgusted prospects, in frustration. Then again, there are many places in this country that cannot produce hundreds of quality leads monthly. My best advice is to choose a company that knows what it is doing, limits the selling of these sites based on demographics to what each market can support and demonstrates that with a strong guarantee of performance because they will not promise you what is undeliverable or they will have to write you a check.

The Importance of Internet Marketing is Not Going to Decrease

We all know that the way people look for homes has changed to an Internet-based model. As America installs more broadband this will only increase. You should seek to gain the same percentage of your sales (80 %+) from the Internet as the percentage of buyers who find their homes on the Internet (80 %+). Ask any agent who has succeeded; they'll tell you the effort is worth it. Likewise, the effort is mandatory; we're never going back to walk-ins and the MLS book.

Over the past five years, the process of online marketing for realtors has gotten better and more effective. The managed lead site is just another step in that process. Please look into it now, rather than waking up a year from now and saying "why can't I sell to Internet buyers?" Chances are extremely high that with the right approach, you can sell to Internet buyers. Better yet, your managed site provider will find them for you and all you have to do is sell them. It's about as good as online marketing gets, today.

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