



# Marketing an Independent Firm in An Online World

**98% of all buyers use the internet to search for homes at some point in the process**

[Source](#)



**The top 5 real estate portals /  
sites combined for over  
1,000,000,000 views in 2018**



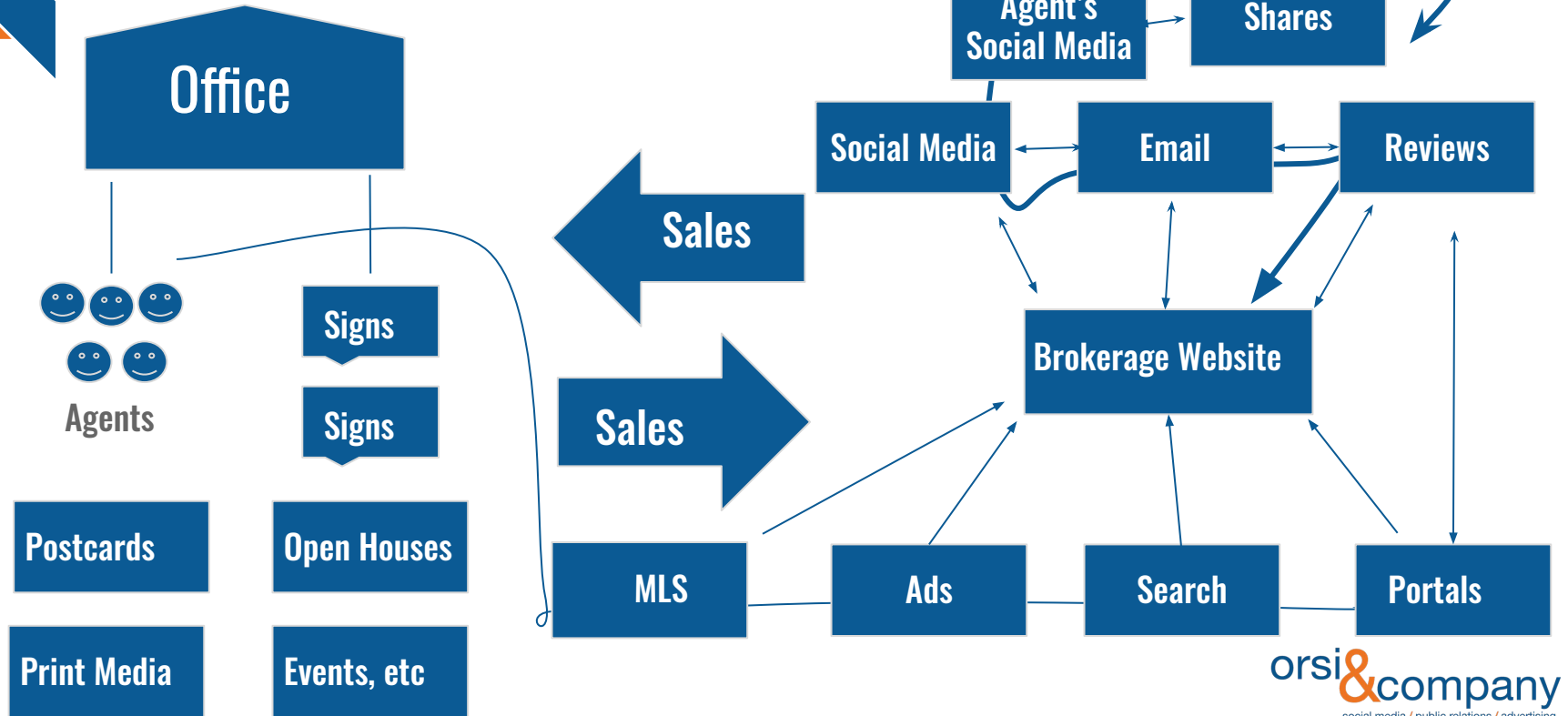
**It's not digital marketing any  
more...**



**...It's just marketing.**



# How it all works



How it all feels

?!@|\*#

%&%

Office



Agents

Signatures

Signatures

Postcards

Open Houses

Print Media

Events, etc

Call

Sales

MLS

Ads

Search

Portals

Agent's Social Media

Shares

Articles About You

Video

Social Media

Email

Reviews

Storage Website

**Here's what's actually  
happened**







# Where We're At

- **Technology has lowered the barrier to entry into the real estate market for buyers, sellers, agent and brokerages**
  - It has made a previously very organized market very chaotic
- **You can get steamrolled, or level the playing field**

# What Are Real Estate Consumers Looking For Online?

## Value of Website Features

*(Percentage Distribution Among Buyers Who Used the Internet)*

For **All Generations**, photos of the property as well as detailed information about properties for sale were cited as the most valuable aspects of a website.

**87% Found  
photos very  
useful**

**85% Found  
detailed  
information about  
properties**

**52% Found floor  
plans very useful**

**46% Found  
virtual tours very  
useful**

**42% Found real  
estate agent  
contact  
information very  
useful**

Sources: NAR Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends Report 2019 & 2018 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers

## The good news?

- **Those are all very basic functions!**



## The even better news?

- You're already checking most of those boxes by just using the basic tools provided by your MLS or REALTOR® Association





## What does this mean?

You are freed up to spend resources on tools, products and services that will drive results for your **brand** and for your **clients**.

This brings marketing back to basics, not flashy tools.

This is where you can level the playing field.

# OK, what ELSE does this mean?



**You get to focus here...  
... where size doesn't matter!**

Source

**What do the 'big guys' offer  
their agents/clients that you  
don't?**





## MOST POPULAR FEATURES USED IN A REAL ESTATE CRM SYSTEM FOR BROKERAGES

Follow-up/relationship marketing.....	92.13%
Drip marketing.....	86.52%
Follow-up reminders.....	70.79%
Calendar.....	65.17%
Automatic follow-up.....	64.04%
Lead routing.....	61.80%
Tasks and to-dos.....	60.67%
Reporting .....	58.43%
Mobile-enabled.....	57.30%

Outside lead source integration .....	42.70%
(captures leads from listing portals)	
Listing promotion.....	39.33%
CMA (comparative market analysis).....	37.08%
Team functionality .....	35.96%
(work as a team in the CRM)	
Intranet .....	35.96%
Social media integration .....	33.71%
Document storage .....	32.58%
Transaction management built-in.....	32.58%
Internal communications .....	30.34%
(chat or bulletin board)	
Vendor integration .....	22.47%
Showing set-up and tracking.....	16.85%
Coaching principles built-in.....	11.24%
Predictive analytics.....	7.87%
(Predicts who is likely to buy/sell based on data)	

[Source](#)





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# The Steak

# The Sizzle

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**Most of the tools they're  
offering, you already have**  
(or can find fairly inexpensively)





# What does this mean?

- Everyone is struggling with the same things, regardless of size. **That would be staying top of mind, generating leads and sales**
- If you execute on the basic building blocks really well, **you will succeed**
- Everyone in this business can sell a house, **not everyone can sell themselves**

**Focus your resources on selling  
your brokerage's brand before  
you sell a listing**



**Enough fluff, teach me stuff**



# Fun With Data

## First Step Taken During the Home Buying Process

(Percentage Distribution)

### All Buyers:

**44%** - Looked online for properties for sale

**17%** - Contacted a real estate agent

**11%** - Looked online for information about home buying process

**7%** - Contacted a bank or mortgage lender

**6%** - Talked with a friend or relative about home buying process

**6%** - Drove-by homes and neighborhoods

### Generational Data:

**29%** of the Silent Generation contacted a real estate agent

**14%** of Older Millennials looked online for information

**12%** of Younger Millennials talked with a friend or relative

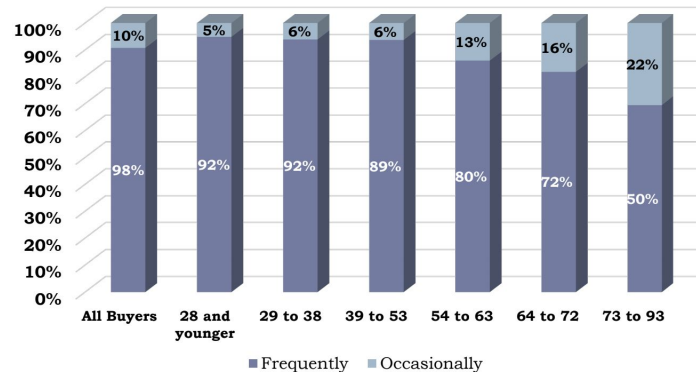
**47%** of Gen Xers looked online for properties for sale



## Use of Internet to Search for Homes

(Percentage Distribution)

A buyer's internet usage decreases with age:



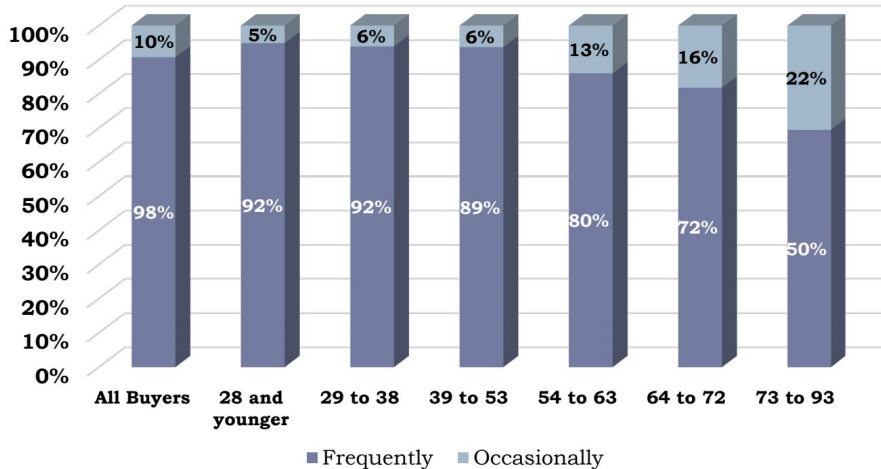
Source: NAR Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends Report 2019

# More Fun With Data

## Use of Internet to Search for Homes

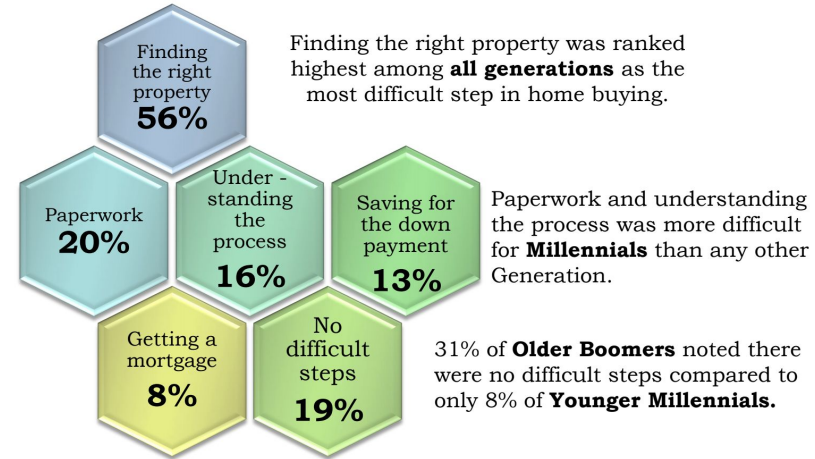
(Percentage Distribution)

A buyer's internet usage decreases with age:



## Most Difficult Steps of Home Buying Process

(Percent of Respondents)



Sources: NAR Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends Report 2018 & 2018 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers

# (Even) More Fun With Data

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orsi & company  
social media / public relations / advertising

Top 5 real estate portals / sites combined for over 1,000,000,000 views in 2018

**87% of buyers/sellers use a real estate agent**





## Back to the Data...Again

- 44% of users start their search online. 98% search online *at some point*
- We know where they're looking - the top 5 real estate search sites have over 1 billion views per year
- Competing for views with the portals is (almost) pointless.
- Yes, they sell your leads back to you, but give you exposure on a scale almost unheard of 20 years ago
- Your MLS has tools that were pure fantasy 15 years ago

**If you have a listing, it WILL be seen.**



**Your listings are out there...  
...are you?**



**Use your resources to stay top of mind, build relationships and be apparent + ready when the time to buy or sell comes**





# Building Blocks of a Successful Marketing Program

- 1) Solid branding
- 2) A current / updated website
  - a) Doesn't need to be flashy, but does need to be current + mobile friendly
- 3) Great photography
- 4) A plan
- 5) A budget
- 6) Please...a new(ish) phone and computer
  - a) Phone for the camera, computer for your sanity

**All of these are relatively  
affordable!**





# Focus on Marketing Yourself

- Homes are averaging around 43 days on market in Massachusetts
  - How many resources are you focusing on something that's only around for 43 days?
  - **It can take months, or years to get someone to those 43 days**
    - Focus more of your resources there!
- **You will be in this business 20 years or more. Market yourself!**



# Marketing Yourself in a Crowded Marketplace

- 1) Insert yourself into your target market through photography, video, content, and interacting with other local businesses
- 2) Become a part of the fabric of your real world and online community
  - a) Is a local store doing well on social media? Visit them and post about it!
  - b) Is a local event popular? Go there and post a photo!
  - c) Does your mortgage broker do well on social media? Piggy back on their success - get featured in a photo with them, get a shout out!
- 3) Post regularly and with intent
  - a) Show you are still around
  - b) Show you are still in business





# Build a Balanced Plan

- 1) You need a mix of free, paid and earned media
- 2) **Free** - What you can post to your website, email campaigns, social media that generates engagement and (ultimately) leads
- 3) **Paid** - Advertising, boosted posts, remarketing, etc
- 4) **Earned** - Public relations, mentions and shoutouts from customers, local businesses, etc.
  - a) Reviews, testimonials
  - b) The holy grail
- 5) **Spend generously on resources and tools, judiciously on ads**



# Focus Your Plan on Building Relationships

- You need to build a relationship before you get their business
- The end goal of any campaign should be to learn names, faces and **get their contact information**
- Stay on top of existing business, past business, and use that to generate new business
- Use the tools you already have - or can easily access - to harvest contact information and market to your connections



# Think like a burrito place





# You're more alike than you think

- The actual transaction is relatively short, but you spend lots of time and resources getting customers through the door
- A customer doesn't always want a burrito, but when they do, you need them to think of you first
- You want them to leave a **raving review on a website that holds way too much power**
- You want them to **tell all their friends about you**



# Stretching This Metaphor

- Only talking about your real estate expertise is like only talking about the beans or cheese, not the whole experience. Show more of you, and more of your business!
- We don't always remember the specifics, but build relationships with the people we work with
- Don't focus on marketing the transaction, focus on creating the referral and the repeat customer

# Helpful Tools and Platforms





# Facebook

- Develop a content strategy centered around providing engaging / entertaining content and useful information
  - Notice who interacts with you, and interact with them
- Make ample use of photos and links
  - Try the 'open house selfie' that is becoming prevalent in real estate world
    - Why? Because it works!
- Learn to use the **Facebook ad manager**
  - Powerful tool at a fraction of the cost of traditional ads
- Use custom audiences
  - Import your email marketing audience into Facebook
- Careful when marketing listings - Fair housing is strict



# Instagram

- Instagram is the long game
  - Build up relationships over time
  - Notice who is liking and commenting on your posts, like and comment (and follow) back on theirs
- Take good photos (remember buying a new phone?), take the time to edit them and post online
- Use Instagram stories for exciting things;
  - New listings
  - Open Houses
  - Closings
- Make sure you are set up as a business profile to use ad tools





## Instagram (Continued)

- Post on a regular schedule (applies to Facebook too)
- Highlight your **market areas**
  - Posts of signature or 'hidden' locations in your market region are just as good - if not more valuable - than listing photos
- Make sure to show a slice of life, even if it is being filtered and selective for business purposes
- Explore locations and hashtags, see what people are posting and make notes about what succeeds. Post similar things!
- Connect with other local influencers and work together on campaigns



# Unconventional Social Media Techniques

- **Create fun contests and giveaways that highlight other local businesses**
  - Share the spotlight and help both parties grow
  - Give away gift cards to local businesses, local experiences
  - Get creative!
- Cross-market to other similar audiences
  - Work with dog rescues? Do a giveaway with a pet supply store!
  - Contests / giveaways with local landmarks or institutions
  - **Make sure you are collecting contact information and adding them to your database!**



# Graphic Design Tools - Canva / Adobe Spark

- Very similar 'in-browser' graphic design tools that are easy to use and easy to master
  - Drag and drop with templates that help you punch up appearance of your posts / ads
  - Free and paid versions for both
  - **Helpful in establishing a brand look and feel**
- Just start using them!



# Email Marketing Tools

- Often overlooked!
- Lots of choices and resources - Mailchimp, Constant Contact, Campaign Monitor, Hubspot, Top Producer, built-in tools in CRM systems
- Most have automation and drip features



# Email and List Management Best Practices

- Make sure your lists are **organized and segmented**
  - Current clients (1 year or less)
  - Recent clients (13 - 18 months)
  - Past clients (18 months +)
- **Tag** and **segment** contacts on your list so you can tailor and individualize content
  - Example: Open house contacts
    - They are actively looking for a house
    - They may *also* have a house to sell
    - They self-selected into visiting *your* open house
    - Therefore, they probably want updates about your listings, market performance, etc
    - You need to get in touch with them, and *fast!*



# Email and List Management Best Practices

- Capitalize on free content from your MLS, association or subscriptions
  - Include localized market data in monthly or quarterly emails
    - Provide a little of your own analysis on top of it. Doesn't need to be overly sophisticated!
    - Run market share stats and brag about yourself!
- Insert your latest listings and sales - remind people that you're active!
- Re-use photos you have used for social media or elsewhere
- Have a sharp looking ad? Include it!



# Marketing Automation


- Most modern email platforms include **automation** or **drip** marketing features
- Set them up and tailor them to each market, then let them run in the background.
  - They are, after all, *automatic*
- **Why?** Marketing automation **vastly expands your capabilities without much more effort or budget on your part.**
  - Set **triggers** - what starts a drip or automation campaign
  - Set **frequency and duration** - when do they receive outreach?
  - **Tailor** content and needs to your market



# Marketing Automation

- Use **tagging** to build the audience for these drip campaigns
  - Past customers, leads from open house, Zillow leads, community leads, so on and so forth
- **Think** about what content each segment wants
  - Market updates - how's the Holliston market doing?
  - How are mortgage rates looking?
  - Are you sponsoring an event? Tell them!
- **Use what you know**
  - How long ago did they buy or sell with you? Is it time to move?
  - Are they just prospects or past customers?





# Even More Marketing Automation Because it is Relevant and Makes You Look Like a Marketing Expert

- Set up **date triggers**
  - Anniversary of home purchase or sale? Send an update to let them know you're thinking of them!
    - Set it once, and it will send at the appropriate time
- Set up **behavior triggers**
  - Did they click a link in your email? Did they ask for a CMA? Work it!
- **Read the email campaign reports!!!!**
  - If you included a link for a CMA in the email, and they clicked it, **you need to call them**
  - If someone is opening a lot of your emails, **call them!**



# Yes, We're Still Talking About Automation and Drip Campaigns

- Get on a consistent schedule, set up 2-3 different automations
- Send out standard emails as well
  - Quarterly market updates
  - Include your latest listings and sales
    - Watch who clicks on what
- Move contacts between your email marketing platform, CRM system, social media, MLS, etc
  - Goal is to turn contacts into customers



# Online Advertising

- Huge opportunity. Also, a huge place to waste money
- **Use multiple tools, but don't use all the tools if you don't have a massive budget**
  - Display ads
  - Native ads
  - Retargeting ads
  - Social media advertising
- Track performance and adjust creative and targeting as needed
  - Google Analytics, Facebook Pixel, Tracking Codes
- **Run for 3 months minimum to see results**

## Best advice for online advertising:

- Find a vendor you trust. Interview multiple firms and listen to their approach. **Don't trust them? Don't use them.**
- Don't let online ad firms run your social media





# Your Website

- Make sure your website is current: Responsively designed, showcases listings, makes it easy to contact your agents
- **Only buy what you need.** Don't think you'll use a full-featured CRM system? Don't buy it. Ask questions about their sales pitch. Call your colleagues that use a particular vendor, ask what they think
- Make sure you have Google Analytics and tracking pixels installed
- **Most importantly, make sure you can easily harvest leads off your website**

# Websites - What your customers are looking for

## Value of Website Features

*(Percentage Distribution Among Buyers Who Used the Internet)*

For **All Generations**, photos of the property as well as detailed information about properties for sale were cited as the most valuable aspects of a website.

**87% Found  
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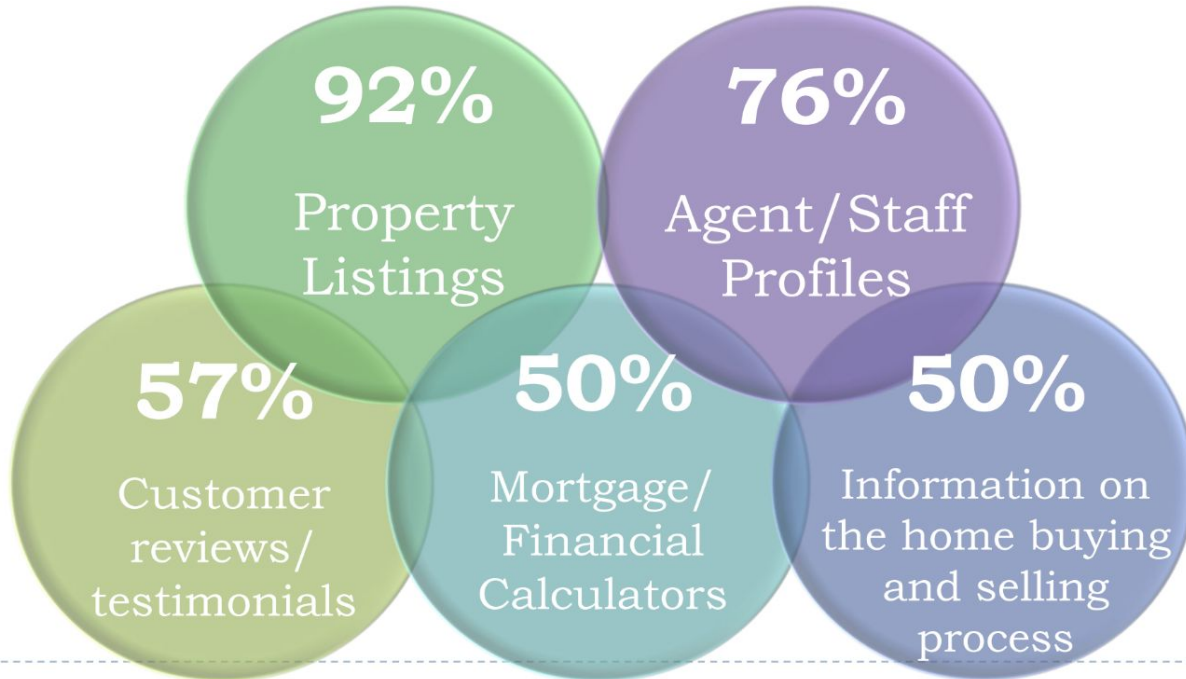
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# What do you actually need online?



Source: 2019 Profile of Real Estate Firms



# Search Marketing

- If you are going to be serious about search, **hire a trusted search expert**
  - No one can guarantee first page Google results any more
    - If they promise this, **run away**
- Ask around, hire who other successful businesses are using
- **Make sure to claim your (free) Google Business listing and keep it up to date**
  - Correct address, contact info
  - Update regularly with fresh photography, posts, etc
  - Get customer reviews and testimonials
  - Learn how to read the insights provided, and improve them



# Search Marketing

## PERFORMANCE

Views	Searches	Activity
1.39K	912	1.62K

Direct	360 (-9%)
Customers who find your listing searching for your business name or address	

Discovery	552 (+7%)
Customers who find your listing searching for a category, product, or service	

Performance over the past 28 days

## PERFORMANCE

Views	Searches	Activity
1.39K	912	1.62K

Search views	545 (0%)
--------------	----------

Maps views	842 (-3%)
------------	-----------

Performance over the past 28 days



# Reviews and Testimonials

- Use the freebies from your MLS!
  - RealSatisfied is a tremendously powerful tool
    - Consider upgrading to the paid version for more integrations and automations
  - Get in the habit of asking for reviews **immediately** after transactions
    - Share reviews to your website and to social media
  - **Use getting a review / testimonial as a trigger for a marketing automation**
  - You want people talking about you!



# Your MLS Tools

- Use the tools offered in your MLS to help improve your marketing
  - Stay on top of leads, and make sure you are moving them into a database or CRM
  - Look at listing performance
    - Use your listing performance to keep clients happy, and to sell future clients on using you (more on this later)
  - You're paying for the built in tools, use them!

# My Favorite Techniques to Make Yourself Seem Bigger Than You Actually Are



# Use Data to Validate Your Performance

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## Viewing History

<u>VOW Views</u>		<u>MLS Views</u>		<u>Pinergy IDX Views</u>	
Today:	0	Today:	3	Today:	0
Past 7 Days:	18	Past 7 Days:	29	Past 7 Days:	2
Past 30 Days:	400	Past 30 Days:	187	Past 30 Days:	5
Total:	400	Total:	187	Total:	5

---

No Social Media Shares found for this listing.

---

## Social Media Viewing History

<u>Facebook Views</u>		<u>Google Views</u>		<u>Twitter Views</u>		<u>LinkedIn Views</u>	
Today:	0	Today:	0	Today:	0	Today:	0
Past 7 Days:	0	Past 7 Days:	0	Past 7 Days:	0	Past 7 Days:	0
Past 30 Days:	0	Past 30 Days:	0	Past 30 Days:	0	Past 30 Days:	0
Total:	0	Total:	0	Total:	0	Total:	0

---



# Using Data to Validate Your Performance

- Your MLS gives you reams of data on views on your listing within the MLS, via IDX, VOW, social media shares, etc
  - Use this data to paint a picture of how your listing is performing.
  - **Find performance data from syndication portals and track that as well**
  - Present this information to your clients to validate your performance as a listing agent, and as the rationale for any desired pricing or strategy changes



# Using Data to Validate Your Performance

- Listing getting a lot of views but little action, showings or offers?
  - Backs up your desire for a price reduction
- Listing getting a lot of views and showings but few offers?
  - Marketing strategy is working, could be the condition of the listing
- Listing getting a lot of views, sells quickly and for big money?
  - Show your client anyways so they can recommend you to their friends as a tech savvy agent!



# Take Your Data to the Next Level

- Learn how to use a **data visualization tool** like **Microsoft Power BI, Infogram, and others** to present your data in an appealing visual manner
  - Helps the customer understand what you are talking about
  - Makes it easier to show performance over time
  - Most can auto update from a spreadsheet, so...
    - Start tracking your performance!
  - Free options, or low-cost subscriptions
- Or, take the super easy way out
  - Put your performance metrics in a nice looking report

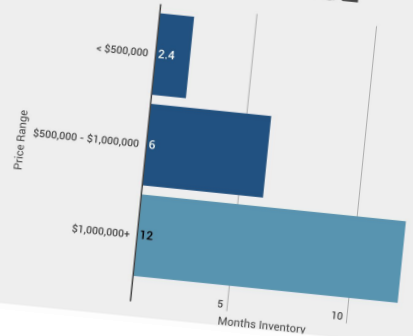




# CAPE COD HOUSING MARKET

## MONTHS INVENTORY BY PRICE

Statistics courtesy of Cape Cod & Islands Multiple Listing Service, Inc. These statistics demonstrate inventory as of March 1, 2018 for single family and condominiums and are reflective of market conditions at the time.





## 19 Debbie Court

Plymouth

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aliquam lobortis, felis vitae volutpat venenatis, leo magna finibus ipsum, id cursus ante urna sed justo. Duis quis metus nec erat ultrices vitae et felis.

### Market History

Original list price: \$389,900

Listed 9/16/2019. No price changes as of this date. Hosted five open houses, 20 showings, so on and so forth.

#### VOW VIEWS

Vow views are virtual office website views. Because of the potentially sensitive nature of this off-market data, VOW listings are not open to the general public.

#### MLS VIEWS

MLS views are views of your property within the MLS.

#### IDX VIEWS

IDX views are views of your property on IDX feeds to other real estate agent's websites

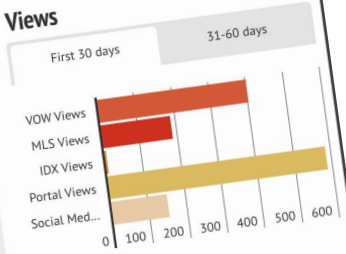
#### PORTAL VIEWS

Portal views are views of your property through major real estate portals such as Zillow, Trulia and Realtor.com

#### Social Media Views

Views of your property on social media, either from a share out of the MLS or a post

### Views




**REALTY GUILD**  
 978-314-9706  
 info.realtyguild@gmail.com

infogram

Share

Page 1 of 2



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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		First 30 days	31-60 days	61-90 days			
2	VOW Views	400	500				
3	MLS Views	167					
4	IDX Views	5					
5	Portal Views	585					
6	Social Media Views	150					



# Other Ways to Use Your Data

- Make smart use of data in Cloud CMA or other CMA tools
  - Learn how to talk about more than pricing conditions
- Once you have the data, integrate it into your listing presentation
  - My online marketing strategy is X
  - The average impressions, views, leads, are Y
  - Make it clear you know what you're talking about
    - Chances are, your competitors aren't talking about this



## Customize Your Free Tools!

- Take the time to add logos, change colors and fonts in Cloud CMA, RealSatisfied and others
  - Consider going the custom branded route. Often, get a discount for being a member of a particular MLS!
- Try other free tools
  - What's my home worth portals, etc
  - Try the free version of an email marketing platform



# Think Strategically

- Leverage your resources over the long term
- Focus on **brand recognition** and staying **top of mind**
- **Don't** focus on the glitz and glamour and flashy gadgets
  - You won't win that fight
    - Ultimately, your customers don't care
- Remember that **the customer is choosing you, not the tools**
- Stay **consistent, have a plan and execute it**



# Get Good at Relationship Marketing

- Pick an angle or a vertical and **own it**
  - Become known for something **other than just real estate**
  - Use that angle to **stay top of mind** and **build relationships**
- Develop a **brand image**
  - Do you take spectacular photos?
  - Are you involved in theater?
  - Specialize in a particular market?
  - Stay **on message**
    - You will have to experiment in the beginning



## Wade Into the World of Zapier



- **Zapier** is the secret sauce that can make you life easier and your marketing programs more efficient
  - It **builds connections between commonly used applications**
    - For example: GMail and MailChimp, Facebook and a CRM platform
    - Automates background tasks, sets triggers, and runs programs for you in the background
  - Almost fully **customizable without needing to know how to code**



Save new MailChimp subscribers to  
a Google Sheets spreadsheet



⚡ Popular Zap

Use this Zap

Add MailChimp subscribers for new  
Gmail emails [Business Gmail  
Accounts Only]



⚡ Popular Zap

Use this Zap

Create Gmail drafts from new  
Dotloop loops



Use this Zap

Create Mailchimp Subscribers from  
Zillow Contacts



Use this Zap





Send new Zillow Tech Connect contacts through Gmail



Use this Zap

Copy new Zillow Tech Connect contacts to LionDesk



Use this Zap

Subscribe new Facebook Lead Ad leads to a MailChimp list



Use this Zap

Send emails from Gmail for new Facebook Lead Ads leads



Use this Zap

⚡ Popular Zap

⚡ Popular Zap



## Why Learn This

- Zapier is the secret sauce that makes the web run smoothly
- It allows you to extend your automations beyond the programs you built them in so the **software does what you can easily forget to do**
- Allows you to use your time more efficiently
- Highly customizable
- Makes sure you don't fall behind



Dashboard → Set Up Search/Create Options

YOUR ZAP IS  OFF

### Galactic Donuts Newsletter Opt-In

**TRIGGER**

1. New Entry

**SEARCH OR CREATE**

2. Find or Create Subscriber

- MailChimp
  - Find or Create Subscriber
  - Donut Dan's MailChimp
  - Edit Options

**Search (required)**

The name or email address of the Subscriber you want to search for.

Step 1 What's your email address?

Create MailChimp Subscriber if it doesn't exist yet?

### Set up MailChimp Subscriber

**List (required)**

ized and Confused

**email (required)**

Step 1 What's your email address?

**Favorite Donuts (optional)**

Step 1 What's your favorite kind of donut?

**Signup Date (optional)**

This is a merge field. Anything besides "Text" merge fields may fail.

Step 1 Date Created

**Look Up Info to Use Later**

Search your app data on the fly and flesh out your Zaps with the results.

**Extend Your Workflows**

Add extra steps onto any Zap, and automate time-consuming tasks.

**Send Data Anywhere**

Shuttle info like names, emails, and to-dos from step to step.



## How Does This Level the Playing Field?

- Low cost (or free) way to expand your marketing program and make it hum
  - Best advice:
    - Use it to grab and send contact information to a place you will **actually use it (GMail, etc)**
    - Use it to cover the tasks you don't want to do or forget to do
      - (Adding someone to a mailing list, etc)
    - Make the experience easier for your clients



# Budgeting

- Set and spend to a budget. If you're only marketing when you think you need it, it's usually too late
- Consistently fund your marketing initiatives.
- Invest in resources. You don't have to spend a ton, but you do have to spend some



# Remember to Focus on Marketing Yourself

- Your name is often your brand, and your brand has value
- Most tools and gadgets within big CRM softwares **never get used**
- You already have access to most of the tools the big firms have
- Invest in yourself + your brand
- Market your firm on a consistent basis