

## 5 TIPS FOR CONNECTING WITH BUYERS AND SELLERS

Over the last few months, there has been a lot of talk about how times are changing when it comes to marketing and connecting with today's buyers and sellers. Here are some questions that have been brought to me and I thought I would share the answers with you.

### Q. In today's market, what do you feel is critical when connecting with today's consumer?

**A.** You really need to get into their shoes...their mindset. There's a book out there titled, *Stop Acting Like a Seller and Start Thinking Like a Buyer: Improve Sales Effectiveness by Helping Customers Buy*. The book, written by Jerry Acuff, explains to us how we have to prove that we understand the buyer's needs and how to show a buyer that by working with us they are going to save time.

For example, take using an MLS search tool in your website. You can't just have a single property search generically placed in the home search section of your site. Buyers want to know what is for sale in a specific area (close to their work, their school and at the same time in their price range). The more your website is about them and the less it is about you, the better.

### Q. What are some ways that social media outlets can be used as a viable marketing strategy?

**A.** Recently I had a Realtor say to me they had heard in a class that websites were a thing of the past and social media would replace Web marketing. That is totally misunderstood. A website is an important tool to use in your business for lead generation. At the same time, using social media gives you an opportunity to build your brand and your reputation by building a bridge between connectivity and credibility. This allows people to see you as more than just a real estate professional by presenting you as a three-dimensional professional and connecting you to a broader pool of consumers.

### Q. What do you suggest when creating a fan page or discussion board on Facebook?

**A.** When developing a fan page or a discussion board for Facebook, create one specifically about your market like "Seattle Real Estate Buzz." This fan page will be where people will want to go to find out about the things happening in their area. The neat thing? You will be the one who is perceived as the expert

bringing the informational resources together.

*PS. I can't tell you how many agents are using their profile for real estate and don't include their Web address! Don't forget the basics!*

### Q. Can social media help with search engine optimization (SEO)?

**A.** Not necessarily. It's more of a marketing channel to get people to your site after viewing your profile with your website info included. However, if you have a fan page that does get indexed in the search engines; it will allow search engines like Google to find it.

### Q. How important do you feel it is to rank on the search engines?

**A.** I think it's a very important piece of a marketing strategy. In a recent National Association of Realtors study, only 33% of Realtors were implementing an SEO plan in their Web marketing. Wow! Imagine going on a listing presentation and explaining to sellers that 67% of real estate professionals don't feel it's important to be where the consumers are looking for them (like Google)? **RE**

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