

master the art of successful REALESTATELEAD CONVERSION

Master the Art of Successful Real Estate Lead Conversion

by Melissa Zavala

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About the Author

Melissa Zavala is an author, motivational speaker, short sale specialist, real estate broker, and technology maven. As CEO and founder of three companies (<u>Broadpoint Properties</u>, <u>Short Sale Expeditor</u>®, and <u>Transaction 911</u>), Melissa has published numerous training webinars and eBooks, and most recently, <u>The Essential Daily Planner for Real Estate Agents</u>, which is available on Amazon.com.

Melissa and her programs have been featured in various national publications, including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and the *San Diego Union Tribune*. She is a weekly columnist for *The American Genius* and was nominated for the 2011 Inman Award for Real Estate's Most Influential Leaders.

Melissa's clients range from individual independent agents to large franchise brokerage houses, all specifically seeking to increase their revenue and market share. These clients have realized increased success by utilizing Melissa's advice, training, and transaction support services.

Prior to founding Short Sale Expeditor®, Transaction 911, and Broadpoint Properties, Melissa was a broker associate for a national franchise, demonstrating excellence by working "outside of the box," closing hundreds of short sale transactions before she developed what is now known as the Short Sale Expeditor® program.

Most recently, Melissa has been able to use her teaching and organizational skills while traveling the world over—dispelling myths about the distressed property market, engaging and motivating real estate agents, and sharing her passions as a Realtor®, administrator, tech guru, and housing aficionado.

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Introduction

"Master the Art of Real Estate Lead Conversion" is an eBook designed for real estate professionals to improve lead conversion and increase sales closings. You will learn how to approach your Internet leads in a way that will dramatically increase your contact ratios. Featuring Melissa Zavala's "Rule of Eleven," sample emails and phone scripts, as well as practical information on email marketing and prospecting, this guide includes everything you need to increase your lead conversion rates and see increased success in your business.

Melissa Zavala has presented these tips and best practices in webinars and speaking engagements. You can access all Melissa's recorded webinars at www.melissazavala.com/speaking

The Rule of Eleven

As a real estate professional, you need to be on top of your game when it comes to both lead generation and lead conversion. It's one thing to be able to generate a lead, but it is another thing entirely to get that lead to the closing table.

About two decades ago, as the mother of a toddler, I was watching *Dateline* and found one of their segments particularly interesting. It was a story about how to encourage small children to increase their vegetable intake. The interviewee stated that the best way to get kids to eat more vegetables was to regularly and routinely put them on that child's plate. In fact, the interviewee recommended that a vegetable, such as spinach or brussel sprouts, be placed on a child's plate eleven times in a row.

According to the interviewee, when something unpalatable is presented eleven times in a row, the chances that it will become accepted increase significantly. That is, when you make those foods a regular part of your child's life—accepting that your child may not eat them at first—he or she will warm up to them eventually.

While most real estate professionals are a lot more palatable than brussel sprouts, I immediately identified the connection between this theory and real estate lead conversion. If you generate a buyer or seller lead and only reach out once or twice, that person may not ever have a chance to warm up to you over time. So, just like the eleven servings of broccoli, it's equally important to attempt to convert a lead by reaching out and connecting on a minimum of eleven occasions over a relatively short period of time.

Practicing what I now call the "Rule of Eleven" and following up a minimum of eleven times will give a prospective client sufficient time to warm up to the possibility of working with you on their next home purchase or sale.

Real estate coaches and consultants have all sorts of names and techniques for practicing this theory of constant and continuous communication. And while tips and tools may vary, the one thing about which all agree is that it's a lot easier to convert a lead into a ready and willing homebuyer if you doggedly and persistently follow up regularly.

Understand the Internet Lead

Two Types of Leads

There are two kinds of people with whom you will work as a buyer or seller's agent: those whom you know, and those whom you have not met yet. According to statistics reported by the National Association of REALTORS®, 90 percent of homebuyers begin their home search on the Internet—before even contacting a REALTOR®. This eBook focuses specifically on how to convert individuals who have found you or your website on the Internet—people with whom you are not yet acquainted—into homebuyers.

Because this eBook focuses on lead conversion of those that you don't yet know, the sample emails and scripts that should be used for people you already know (your circle of influence) are not included here. Keep in mind that many real estate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications contain all sorts of continuous touch programs and templates that will help you to maintain communication with your circle of influence (the people that you already know). A list of suggested CRMs can be found in the **Customer Relationship Management Platforms** section of this book.

The Long Tail Approach to Lead Generation

In his book, *The Long Tail:* Why the Future of Business Is Selling Less of More, Chris Anderson asserts that because everything in the world is now available to everyone through the Internet, retailers can be most successful when they sell a large number of unique items. The online real estate professional is not unlike the online retailer. There is a significant amount of competition to be found online and to be listed on page one of the search engine results.

Savvy real estate professionals recognize the benefits of "the long tail" and structure their Internet marketing accordingly. We all want to show up on page one of the search engines for certain search terms. And we can all agree that it is very difficult to rank on page one for terms such as Los Angeles Real Estate or Manhattan Homes for Sale. Believe it or not, it's okay if we don't show up on page one for those search terms.

Long Tails Attract Strong Leads

Generally, homebuyers that enter the phrase "Los Angeles Homes for Sale" on Google or Bing are not very far along in the decision-making process. These individuals are not ready to buy; they have not narrowed down Los Angeles to the specific neighborhoods that they like. That's why they are searching the entire city's real estate opportunities online.

Statistics show that individuals who use the search engines to search for very specific subdivisions or neighborhoods within a city are ready to buy. These individuals using specific search terms will be your hottest leads and your easiest leads to convert. If you are just beginning to develop an Internet marketing strategy, don't fret about those real estate professionals who show up on page one for city names. Focus on using smaller communities when creating your keyword strategies, and you will see increased success on search results pages and in your lead conversion.

Ready to Buy?

While the secrets to showing up on page one can fill an entire eBook, it is important to understand the "long tail" philosophy and to know that those who find you on the Internet may be ready to buy immediately or not for years. Whatever the case, when you follow up regularly, you can convert many prospective buyers into happy homeowners.

Here are some things to consider when communicating with prospective buyers that you have connected with on the Internet:

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- How far along in the buying process is the prospective homebuyer?
- Is the prospective buyer already pre-qualified for a mortgage? (if applicable)
- Does the prospective buyer know what he or she can afford to spend on a home?
- Does the prospective buyer know exactly where he or she wants to live? That is, has the prospective buyer narrowed down a city to specific communities or neighborhoods of interest?

Since we cannot control the types of prospective homebuyers that will find us online and we do not immediately know how far along the prospective homebuyer might be in the decision-making process, it is important to adjust communication accordingly.

No book can tell you how to "sense" where a prospective homebuyer is in the decision-making process. If you recognize that you do not need to go through the entire scripted process outlined in this eBook in order to be successful with a prospective homebuyer, feel free to abandon ship and go sell some property!

Learn to Act Like Sherlock Holmes

Depending upon how a lead is generated, a real estate professional might have only a limited amount of information about the prospective homebuyer. Consider yourself lucky if you have a prospective buyer's phone number. If you have a home address, you've struck gold! Most Internet leads include only a first name and an email address.

Even though you've got only a name and an email address, don't despair. That could very well be enough to convert your Internet lead into a client.

You think that you are a real estate professional? Well, right now with your Internet lead's name and email address, you need to be a detective like Sherlock Holmes. Use Google or another Internet search engine to gather additional information about this individual. Input the email address or the phone number into the search bar and see whether it generates any results. You can also attempt to search Facebook or LinkedIn to put a name with a face.

If you were lucky enough to strike gold and obtain a mailing address, then you have more homework to do. Use the public records information available to you as a REALTOR® to search the property address. Is your Internet lead an owner or a tenant at the mailing address provided?

If your lead is an owner, consider the following: Is the home currently for sale? How long has the lead resided at the property? Could this possibly be an opportunity for both a purchase and a sale? Or, if the lead is a tenant, could this individual be a first-time homebuyer?

With the information that you gleaned from your work as a detective, you can do a far better job in any communication with the prospective client. You are now armed with the most important weapon... knowledge.

Prepare Your Communication Campaign

How you manage your lead conversion communication campaign depends a great deal upon the kind and amount of information you collected about your Internet lead. For example, if you only have an email address, than you are limited to sending emails. But if you have a mobile phone number or a mailing address, you can call, text, and even send direct mail.

The next section provides sample scripts for practicing the rule of eleven—the high impact campaign for successful real estate lead conversion. That is, you will be provided with a sample recipe for success in converting Internet leads into homebuyers. The recipe includes sample emails, sample texts, and sample phone scripts and note cards. Depending upon the information provided by your lead, you may only be able to use certain bits and pieces.

When you use the scripts and follow the processes provided, your prospective buyers will "warm up" to you. And if you are lucky, they will even eat your broccoli.

When to Abandon Ship

As previously mentioned, if at any time during this campaign, you succeed in setting an appointment and showing property, you should abandon the campaign and work towards putting your client into the property of his or her choice. Please also note that the recommended timeframes are just a guide. It is your responsibility to pace each campaign in a way that you believe to appropriate for your clients and your business. This eBook is meant to be a practical guide to master real estate lead conversion. Feel free to use these tools as you deem fit.

The Daily Communication Process

1. You Receive a Lead

(Respond Immediately)

You receive an Internet lead. Perhaps it came to you from your own website. Or, maybe it came to you via Zillow, Trulia, Realtor.com or some other online real estate resource. Generally, the lead will appear in your email inbox. Now is the time to begin your communication campaign—the one that presents your "unpalatable" vegetable eleven times.

As you go through the checklist below, always remember that time is of the essence. According to the Kellogg School of Management's report on lead responses, you are one hundred times (that's 100 times) more likely to connect with an Internet lead if you respond within five minutes.

Keeping in mind that time is of the essence and keeping in mind that these are merely suggested dialogues and scripts, follow the steps below in order to convert your Internet lead into a client.

You just received contact from an Internet lead...

Did you receive a phone number? If so, contact the lead via telephone. See the Introductory Phone Script (item 1.1) for a suggested dialogue. You may also check out the information on Warm and Cold Calls later in this book. □ Did the individual answer the phone? If so, engage this prospective homebuyer in conversation around the Internet query. If you are not sure what to say, use the Lead Engagement Worksheet (item 1.2). ☐ If the individual did not answer the phone, leave a message such as the sample Introductory Voicemail Script (item 1.3). ☐ If you had a conversation with the prospective homebuyer, send a **Follow Up Email** (item 1.4) like the sample. □ No phone number? Only an email address. Send an Introductory Email Greeting (item 1.5) such as the one presented. ☐ If you have a mobile phone number, and did not speak with the lead, try sending an **Introductory Text Message** (item 1.6) like the sample (optional). If you did speak with the lead on the phone, you can send a Thank You Text Message (item 1.7) Do you have the lead's mailing address? If so, send a note card and two business

cards. You can use the suggested Sample Note Card Message (item 1.8).

item 1.1 • Introductory Phone Script

Hello LEAD NAME,1

This will only take a second. My name is NAME with COMPANY. I'm just calling to thank you for checking out my real estate website NAME THE SITE (OR SPECIFIY WHERE THE LEAD CAME FROM) and wanted to see if you had any questions about buying property in CITY OF INTEREST?

(IF YOU ARE ABLE TO ENGAGE THE LEAD IN CONVERSATION, ASK QUESTIONS FROM THE LEAD ENGAGEMENT WORKSHEET 1.2)

item 1.2 • Lead Engagement Worksheet

When you are speaking with a new client, a prospective client, or an Internet lead, listen very carefully and attempt to gather as much information as possible. The more you know, the better you can meet the needs of the buyer prospect. Use the **Lead Engagement**Worksheet on the next page to document the information you gather in your conversation.

You may want to print multiple copies and use them to document information gathered in conversations with prospective homebuyers.

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¹ Please note that capital letters are used to indicate areas when you should insert your own wording and further customize the sample scripts provided. That is, the words in capital letters are notes for you and NOT items that should be including when speaking with or writing to prospective clients.

Lead Engagement Worksheet

Date:		
Name:	Phone:	
Address:	Email:	
How did you find this property?		
what was it that you liked about this prop	erty?	
Can you tell me a little more about what yo	ou are looking for in a home?	
	# of Bedrooms # of Baths	
Location:		
Other Features / Notes:		
	ncing the home?	
Have you been pre-approved by a lender? Y/N		
Y: Who is your lender?	N: Put lead in contact with a few local lenders.	
Are you currently working with an agent?	Y/N	
Y: Have you signed a Buyer Representation Agreement with that agent?		
Do you currently own or rent?		
O: Is your home currently for sale?	R: When does your lease expire?	
Would you like to sell your home before but	uying another?	
How long have you been looking at homes	?	
How soon would you like to move?		
Why are you planning to move?		

At the end of the conversion, offer to meet the prospect to show property, introduce a lender, or provide an item of value that will help cement your relationship as the REALTOR® of choice.

item 1.3 • Introductory Voicemail Script

Hi there, LEAD NAME.

It's NAME. I'm responding to your message. If you have a second, can you please call me at YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBER?

item 1.4 • Follow Up Email

SUBJ LINE: thanks again

Hi there, LEAD NAME.

I just left you're a voicemail (OPTIONAL. USE ONLY IF YOU DID).

My name is NAME with COMPANY. Just wanted to say thanks for visiting our real estate website, NAME THE SITE (OR WHEREVER THE LEAD CAME FROM) and check in to see if you needed info on hot deals in CITY OF INTEREST?

If you have a minute, please call or text me at YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBER. Or, you can email me at this email address.

Thanks,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 1.5 • Introductory Email Greeting

SUBJ LINE: Thanks so much

Hi there, LEAD NAME.

My name is NAME with COMPANY. Just a quick thanks for visiting our real estate website, NAME THE SITE (OR WHEREVER THE LEAD CAME FROM) and wanted to see if you wanted some real estate info on hot deals in CITY OF INTEREST?

If you have a minute, you can call or text me at YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBER. You can also email me at this email address.

Thanks,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 1.6 • Introductory Text Message

Just left you a message. Please call me. —YOUR NAME

item 1.7 • Thank You Text Message

Great speaking with you. I'll be in touch with some good deals that meet your needs! -YOUR NAME

item 1.8 • Sample Note Card Message

Dear LEAD NAME:

It was great talking with you on the phone today, and (USE ONLY IF APPLICABLE) I look forward to helping you with the purchase of a home in AREA OF INTEREST (OR... ADD SOME INFO BASED ON WHAT YOU KNOW). I wanted to also give you my personal information. You can call me anytime at YOUR CELL or you can email me at YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.

I actually just heard about two awesome opportunities in CITY OF INTEREST.

When can we meet to go check them out? I'm open on ENTER YOUR

AVAILABILITY. Hope to hear from you soon!

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

2. Such a Deal

(Send 1-3 Days After Lead Was Received)

You have already completed the steps in the previous section when you received your Internet lead, but you must do more. You cannot expect that just because you left a voicemail or sent an email message, someone who does not know you is going to return your call. Within 48 hours of making your first communication attempt, follow these steps for continued communication.

- ☐ Send One for You Email (item 2.1) below.
- ☐ Use the Sherlock Holmes detective tips previously provided and send a **Facebook Message** (such as item 2.2).

item 2.1 • One for You Email

SUBJ LINE: this one is good

Hi there, LEAD NAME.

I just heard about an amazing deal in NAME OF CITY priced under NAME A PRICE. If you are interested, let me know.

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 2.2 • Facebook Message

Hi, LEAD NAME.

I just searched my contacts on Facebook and your profile showed up. (MAKE SOME INTERESTING PERSONAL CONNECTION.) You visited my site, and I thought I would put a name to the face. I hope we can touch base soon.

3. I'm Free

(Send 4-5 Days After Lead Was Received)

Some people prefer face-to-face communication and others prefer emails or text messages. Use these suggested communication strategies and scripts to attempt communication with prospective homebuyers.

- □ Send I'm Free Email (item 3.1) or Video Email (item 3.2) using bombbomb.com or other video email tools to create a video email message.
- ☐ Try to make another call and if there is no answer, leave a message using the **Voicemail Script** (item 3.3).

item 3.1 • I'm Free Email

SUBJ LINE: what time?

Hello, LEAD NAME.

Would you like to view some properties this week? What day and times work best for you? I free on STATE YOUR AVAILABILITY.

Thanks,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 3.2 • Video Email

SUBJ LINE: what time?

Hey there. I'm so happy to be able to connect with you. I love video; it gives you an opportunity to see that I am a real person and I am available to assist you with your real estate needs. I specialize in NAME YOUR SPECIALTY. In fact, I have a list of the three best deals in your area that I would love to show you. Are you free? Please call me at YOUR CELL PHONE. I look forward to hearing from you.

item 3.3 • Voicemail Script

Hello, LEAD NAME.

Someone in my office just told me about a great property that is coming on the market in the next week and I wanted to see if it fit your criteria before the rest of the general public and agents got to know about it. Please contact me as soon as possible at YOUR CELL so that I can give you more information about this amazing deal. Thanks!

4. I've Got the Goods

(Send 5-7 Days After Lead Was Received)

Research shows that when you offer a free item of value, it is easier to make a meaningful connection. Consider items of value that you could offer to clients, such as a free foreclosure list, a coupon for a complimentary home buying consultation, or even a free booklet on the home buying process. You can use the suggested email here or create your own to use as the next step in your lead conversion campaign.

☐ Send the **Free Stuff Email** (item 4.1). Don't forget to share a link to some sweet deals in your email.

item 4.1 • Free Stuff Email

SUBJ LINE: can't believe it's free

Hi there, LEAD NAME.

I just realized that I am not sure if you are from NAME OF CITY or if you are relocating?

If you live around here, I can whip up an analysis of your property's value for you.

And if you are relocating to NAME OF CITY, I'd like to send you some information about our area.

Here's a link to a few amazing deals in NAME OF CITY: (INSERT LINK). Let me know if you have any questions!

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

5. I Need You!

(Send 6-8 Days After Lead Was Received)

In order to be the best agent you can be, it is important to get honest feedback from clients. Why not test the waters by asking for feedback and sending a free item of value to your Internet lead in order to facilitate communication?

☐ Send **Please Be Honest Email** (item 5.1). Include a free item of value such as a list of local good deals or a homebuyer's eBook.

item 5.1 • Please Be Honest Email

SUBJ LINE - can you tell me this?

Hello LEAD NAME.

I want to send you exactly the types of homes that you want. Am I sending what you are looking for or do I need to make some changes?

Here is a list of the homes that have recently reduced their sale price: (INSERT LINK). My past clients have found that sellers who reduce their prices are highly motivated. If you are looking for a good deal, please check out these properties. (CHANGE THIS PARAGRAPH IF YOU ARE SENDING AN EBOOK OR OTHER FREE ITEM).

I have an opening STATE AVAILABILITY if you would like to tour some local properties.

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

6. Want Extra Info?

(Send 7-9 Days After Lead Was Received)

While it certainly is not true, the general public has the perception that hiring a real estate professional is useless. Many homebuyers do not recognize the perceived value of the agent; they believe that what they see and read on the Internet is everything they need to know in order to get into their next home. You need to make them feel that you will create a special experience for them. This next part of the campaign demonstrates what you can offer that the Internet cannot.

- ☐ Send **Get On My List Email** (item 6.1).
- ☐ Make another follow up phone call, and leave a **Voicemail** (item 3.3) if nobody answers the phone.
- ☐ If you have a mobile phone number, you may send a **Text Message** (item 6.2).

item 6.1 • Get On My List Email

SUBJ LINE - I'd like to add you to the list

Hi, LEAD NAME

Did you know that the online property sites don't tell you everything you need to know about a home? I'd love to get you the whole story on any homes that may interest you. So, can I put you on my exclusive homebuyer list? I'll send you special information about properties in AREA OF INTEREST.

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 6.2 • Text Message

Are you interested in seeing some of the properties I emailed to you? Call or text me. -YOUR NAME

7. I've Got a Property Just for You

(Send 8-11 Days After Lead Was Received)

Here's where you'll need to be a detective, just like we discussed earlier in the eBook. Using the back end of your IDX feed or the information that you have about your prospective lead's home search, send an enticing property that may be of interest.

- ☐ Send **This One Is Special Email** (item 7.1).
- ☐ If the Internet lead has continued to visit your site, research this individual's IDX activity. Try to customize the **This One Is Special Email** so that it takes the IDX search information into account.
- ☐ Search other social media platforms and send a **Direct Message** (item 7.2).

item 7.1 • This One Is Special Email

SUBJ LINE: USE A MAGNETIC SUBJECT LINE FROM THE MAGNETIC SUBJECT LINE SECTION OF THIS BOOK.

Hi, LEAD NAME.

I know of a PROPERTY TYPE that is about to come on the market and I think it will be under PRICE. I'd love to get you in there to have a look before it hits the Internet. Are you available?

Let me know.

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 7.2 • Direct Message

Hi, LEAD NAME.

I just searched my email address book on LinkedIn (CHANGE TO CORRECT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM) and your profile showed up. (MAKE AN INTERESTING PERSONAL CONNECTION.) You visited my site the other day and I wanted to let you know that I look forward to connecting with you! Here's my cell when you are ready to talk real estate.

YOUR NAME

CELL PHONE NUMBER

8. I Work With Sellers

(Send 9-12 Days After Lead Was Received)

Although you have already done a lot of research, you never know the complete story behind your Internet lead until you connect. It's possible that the individual might actually be a prospective seller and not a prospective buyer. Why not work that angle with an email such as the one presented here?

- ☐ Send **Home Value Email** (item 8.1) email.
- ☐ Make another follow up phone call, and leave **You're Busy Voicemail** (item 8.2) if nobody answers.

item 8.1 • Home Value Email

SUBJ LINE - not sure about this

Hello, LEAD NAME.

Just wanted to check in with you because I am not sure. Sometimes people look at my site because they want to compare homes on the site with their own. Is this you?

If so, I can give you a complete Broker Price Opinion and comprehensive analysis of your home's value.

If you're interested, please let me know.

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 8.2 • You're Busy Voicemail

Wanted let you know about a great deal that just landed in my lap. If you are interested, please contact me at YOUR CELL.

9. Want to Win?

(Send 10-14 Days After Lead Was Received)

Who doesn't love to win a prize? Don't you just dream of winning the lottery? Aren't you excited when your name is drawn at a raffle? This final email in the series taps into an individual's love to win a prize and gets fence sitters to contact you directly.

- ☐ Send Winner, Winner Email (item 9.1)
- ☐ Send another social media message (item 7.2) if you have more than one platform available to you, so that you locate the Internet lead on multiple platforms.
- ☐ Call once more, and leave a **One More Time Voicemail** (item 9.2) if nobody answers.

item 9.1 • Winner, Winner Email

SUBJ LINE - Winner winner

I've got this great contest going on. I will be awarding NAME GIFT to anyone that gives me the name of someone that they know who is ready to buy or sell right now. And, if they buy or sell with me, you receive NAME GIFT. Can you please let me know if you can help?

Regards,

YOUR SIGNATURE

item 9.2 • One More Time

Hi, LEAD NAME.

This is NAME with COMPANY and I've been trying to follow up with you for the last week or so. Can you please let me know if you would like me to continue sending you information about the latest deals in NAME OF CITY? You can call me at YOUR PHONE NUMBER. I hope to hear from you soon!

10. Moving Forward

You've done an amazing job attempting to communicate with the Internet lead, but it's possible that you never made contact. You know that the lead's email address is correct because you have not received an "undeliverable" message from the email service provider. So why hasn't the lead reached out to you?

Clearly, not everyone will warm up to you as quickly as you had hoped, despite the fact that you've worked your fanny off trying to make communication. Follow these instructions and never give up. One of my clients actually received an Internet lead in 2009 and finally converted that lead in 2013. It costs less than a penny per person to send an email campaign. After completing the initial communication campaign that was reviewed in the previous section, the automated email campaign is the next step in the lead conversion process.

- ☐ If you think that the lead is invalid and will never be valid at any point in the future, then cease all communication attempts at this time.
- ☐ If you believe the lead is a real person and that you may be able to convert that individual into a future homebuyer, follow the advice in the remainder of this eBook and put this prospective buyer into an email campaign. (Always be careful not to violate the CAN-SPAM Act, which you can learn more about in the Recommended Reading section of this eBook.)

Automate Your Daily Activities

Email Marketing

One of the biggest challenges of developing a lead conversion campaign and sticking to it is the sheer amount of activities that need to be coordinated at one time. Imagine that you are working with several Internet leads at different stages in the campaign, you are showing property to a few homebuyers, and you have a listing or two. Successfully coordinating these different activities can be very challenging. The good news is that busy real estate professionals have a two great resources available to them: email templates and auto responders.

Email templates are available within a number of Real Estate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) programs. If you purchase a program that has email templates, all you need to do is add any lead to a pre-written campaign, and then everything is scheduled and automated by the program itself. Because of programs like these, one Internet lead can receive up to five years worth of emails as a result of sixty seconds of your time. Another option is auto responders, which can be used in conjunction with the CRM or as a standalone email campaign.

Auto Responders

Auto responders, or automated emails, are designed to be sent in a set sequence after a user's email address is captured. Typically the end goal of an auto responder email series is to get the recipient to do something. In the case of the real estate professional, the auto responder can be used convert the recipient into a homebuyer or home seller or it can be used to keep in touch with past clients. When used effectively, auto responders offer unique benefits in that they can produce results with a limited amount of effort on your part after the initial build out of your marketing program.

What Is an Auto Responder and How Does It Work?

An auto responder is exactly what it sounds like: it is an automated sequence of emails that are triggered when a user signs up for an email list or provides an email address to you or your company. Typically, the process works like this:

1. A user submits an email address and receives a welcome email (most likely after a confirmation opt-in email) or a prospective homebuyer expresses interest in a

- property and submits a request for more information via email. At that time, the Internet lead can be manually added to your list.
- 2. Usually one day after the customer signs up for the email list and receives the welcome email, the first of a series of "auto responders" is sent.
- **3.** Following that, you can program emails to be automatically sent to the subscriber, most often with a few days between each sent email.
- **4.** If you have not been able to convert the lead with a rapid fire set of auto responders, it is a good idea to move the lead to a list of individuals that receive monthly emails offering your services or expressing non-denominational holiday wishes.

What Is the Typical Content of an Auto Responder?

While the goal of this eBook is NOT to provide you with a 4-day course on development of auto responders, know that you can create auto responder messages using information from the included scripts and sample emails. However, you will need to make sure that your information is evergreen. That is, if you plan to use auto responders, the email messages need to apply to all potential homebuyers and Internet leads; they cannot be customized by city, community, or price point.

Information on companies that offer email marketing tools and auto responders is listed in the **Email Marketing Tools** section of this eBook.

Magnetic Subject Lines

Whether you are using the suggested email messages provided in this eBook or whether you are creating your own, you must understand one other required tactic of your lead conversion campaign. That's the magnetic subject line.

Marketing professionals who study the open rates of email messages recognize that certain "sales" email messages get opened more often than others. They attribute the different open rates to the quality of the email subject line. People get so many email messages these days that they often do not open all of their email. They trash the messages that they consider spam, and you do not want your email to be placed in the trash.

In order to avoid the trash, you need to craft a magnetic subject line—something that will entice the Internet lead to open your email message. In the **Recommended Reading** section of this eBook, there is a great article listed which will show you how to write spectacular subject lines that will help to assure that your email gets opened.

(Sidebar: It is interesting to note that email messages with racy or inappropriate language in the subject line have a significantly higher open rate.)

Customer Relationship Management Platforms

Real estate is all about relationships—creating new relationships and sustaining the ones that you already have. There are all sorts of CRMs with a wide variety of add-on components. Some even include built-in homebuyer and holiday email campaigns, so that you don't even need to write emails yourself. (Note that the list below is not comprehensive list and these platforms are listed in here alphabetical order.)

- Act!
- Dotloop
- Gmail
- Ixact Contact
- Microsoft Outlook
- My Real Estate Tools
- PlanPlus Online for Real Estate
- Real Estate Client Management for Outlook
- Real Estate Success Tools
- RealFuture CRM 2.0 / Prospect Converter
- Realty Juggler
- RealtySync
- Sharper Agent
- Top Producer
- Wise Agent

Email Marketing Tools

While many of the CRMs mentioned in the previous section include email marketing as part of their system, there are some that do not. If you plan to utilize auto responders, here is a list of cross-industry email marketing tools that can help you. Some of these companies have a free plan and others offer monthly pricing plans based upon the number of subscribers you have on your list.

- Constant Contact
- GetResponse
- iContact
- Infusionsoft
- Mailchimp
- My Emma
- Vertical Response

Prospecting: Warm and Cold Calls

One of the key components to lead conversion is the cold (or warm) call. Cold calling is soliciting potential customers who were not expecting to speak with you. The term "cold" refers to the fact that you haven't laid any groundwork for your call. If you are calling prospects who have already expressed interest in your products, such as a prospect who fills out a postcard or website request for information, then it's referred to as "warm calling."

Cold calling is one of the least liked tasks in real estate. It's emotionally demanding because receiving a cold call can bring out the worst in people... so agents launching into a round of cold calls can expect verbal abuse, prospects who hang up on them, and even occasional threats. The best approach is to remind yourself that the recipient is not rejecting you; he or she is simply reacting to the situation. Just let any hostility roll off and move on to the next name on the list.

The warm calls that you make as part of your Internet lead conversion campaign can also be challenging. It takes practice to master your scripts and get comfortable making calls to people who you do not know well. In the **Recommended Reading** section of this eBook, there are some great resources listed that will help you develop stronger phone skills for your lead conversion campaign.

Recommended Reading

Clark, Brian. "10 Sure-Fire Headline Formulas That Work." Copyblogger.

Hill, Napoleon. Think and Grow Rich. Napoleon Hill Foundation, 1937.

Krogue, Ken and Kraig Kleeman. <u>The Art of Cold Calling and the Science of Contact Ratios</u>. Inside Sales.

Searcy, Tom. "How to Get People to Answer Your Call." Inc.com

Stauffer, Ron. "The CAN-SPAM Act in Plain English." Infront Webworks.

What's Next?

In real estate, there is never a dull moment. There is always something to do and something to learn. Someone is always offering a better, faster, easier, more enticing solution that guarantees you increased success.

The problem that many agents face is time. There are never enough hours in the day, weeks in the month, or months in the year to accomplish everything that you want from your real estate business.

After personally polling hundreds (perhaps thousands) of agents, I've learned that the real estate professional's biggest challenges are technology and time. I've even seen agents so frustrated with these factors that they quit selling real estate and find a traditional job working 40 hours a week.

But... the truth is that there is a better solution. It's time management. I've created three products to help agents solve their difficult time management problems.

- 1. <u>The Essential Daily Planner for Real Estate Agents: Success in 10 Minutes a Day.</u> Endorsed by Barbara Corcoran, real estate mogul and star of ABC's *Shark Tank*, this daily planner helps agents stay organized and on task amid the distractions.
- 2. Transaction 911. California real estate professionals can take advantage of the transaction coordinating, compliance services, and paperwork preparation offered by Transaction 911. Agents save hundreds of hours by outsourcing annoying tasks. With Transaction 911, agents can now focus on what they do best: list and sell property. Real estate professionals across the nation can download a FREE copy of Master the Paperless Transaction offered by Transaction 911. This eBook will show you how to leverage time and energy through the online tools resources.
- 3. Short Sale Expeditor®. Are you spending countless hours attempting to work with the short sale lenders on just one deal? Can you imagine how many deals you could put in your pipeline while someone else did this dirty work? Visit the Short Sale Expeditor® website to learn how this nationally recognized company can help you take your real estate business to the next level.

Sharing is caring. If you liked this eBook...

please share it on <u>Facebook</u>, on <u>Twitter</u>, or on <u>LinkedIn</u>.

A personal note from Melissa Zavala...

I am so grateful to you for downloading this eBook, and I sincerely hope that the information that I've shared will help you increase your success as a real estate professional. I'd like to hear from you and continue the conversation.

Here's how you can get in touch with me...

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