

# A NEW ERA FOR LEAD GENERATION

Today's real estate community is in a great transition, with companies closing doors, merging, downsizing and looking for ways to cut costs by reducing their staff and services. Across the nation, the number of active real estate agents has decreased by about 30% over the past two years. As we enter this new era of the industry, it is crucial to understand our clients' changing perceptions about the need for our services.

The general public no longer needs a real estate agent to help them find their next home. With the tremendous technological advances that have occurred over the past decade, a buyer can search for a new home on a myriad of real estate websites. Today's real estate agents are considered facilitators of the transaction process rather than the gate keepers of information they used to be.

It is important to understand that real estate transactions are generally triggered by life transitions such as marriage, divorce, a new baby, job transfer, etc. The industry has been conditioned to look for transactional opportunities that are happening on a current basis. To stay ahead of the curve, however, real estate agents are going to have to change their focus to one of awareness about upcoming transitions occurring within their client base. They will need to become more intentional and proactive with their clientele.

It is time to take a long-term approach with the agent/client relationship. The typical client doesn't remember his or her agent's name 90 days after the transaction. For this to change, it is important for agents to create a relationship based on something more substantial than a closed real estate transaction. The marketplace is now demanding that agents provide services to their clients year-round. Every agent should have a list of great people and companies they can refer to their clients, including roofers, plumbers, electricians, landscapers, etc.

Real estate agents are no longer tour guides who show homes. Agents will need to become real estate professionals who are assets to clients on many levels. And don't forget that direct mail and emails are great for delivering information, but they are poor for communication. Pick up the phone and say "hello" to your clients. You will be amazed at what happens.

You are in the people business — go out and start having fun. There are leads all around you.



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