

# The Ultimate Guide to Becoming a Top Real Estate Agent

When you're equipped with the right tools, you have everything you need to harness your full potential.



## Great skills backed by even better tools

Top agents identify essential industry skills and dedicate their time to mastering them. Rising above the competition is about acknowledging the requirements of the job, and then complementing your skillset with the best possible tools to excel at what you do.

## In a competitive industry...

There are over 1.3 million active real estate agents in North America. Thousands more join the field each year. Compound this with growing online competition, quickly emerging technology trends, expensive lead generation and pressures to build a lucrative database. It doesn't take long to realize that becoming a top real estate agent is anything but easy, but by honing the right skills and acquiring first-class tools, you too can lead your industry.





## What will make YOU a top agent?

The way you manage your contacts.

Engage.

Follow up.

Fulfill your  
promises.

Most importantly, do all of this with your database in the perfect way, at the perfect time.

## Organization is your best friend

Real estate is a people business. To drive results, you must focus on your people. The better organized you are with your contacts, the better able you are to convert those contacts into leads, then clients, then revenues, then repeat business, then greater profits.

In order to be truly effective, your methods of organization must be intelligent, intuitive, automated and mobile. When you achieve this not only are you organized but also efficient, effective and exceptional at your job. And that's how you get *to the top*.

# Manage your Contacts

## Customer Relationship Management – it starts here

When you know your business revolves around people, your best foot forward is a simple yet powerful tool designed to help you manage those people: Customer Relationship Management (CRM). And there are excellent CRMs on the market designed specifically for real estate agents.

A good CRM not only gives you the ability to input your contact data into one cohesive place, but it also organizes that data in an intelligent way so you can make the right moves at the right time. For example, according to your CRM data, who should you call today? Or when is the move-in anniversary for that great client you served last year? Or which of your hot leads is active on social media, making this the perfect avenue to reach out?



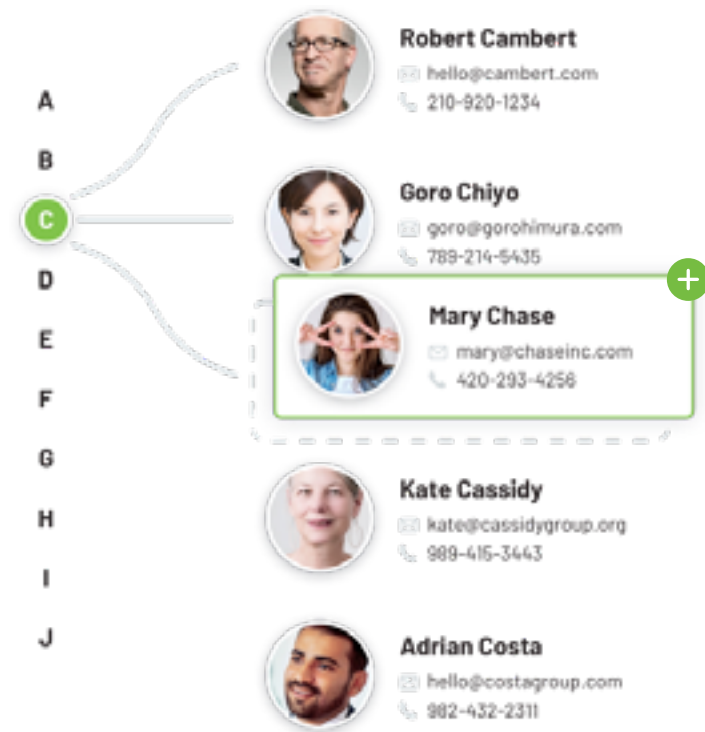


## New leads or past clients?

Real estate revolves around people and you need to communicate effectively with those people in order to be successful, but which people are more important? Is it the new, hot leads you just came in contact with today or the backburner clients you've dealt with in the past? **The answer is simple: both.** You cannot let one group take precedence over another for any extended period of time because you never know precisely which person will become your next closed deal. If executed correctly, it could be the impeccable timing of your follow up email to your brand new lead. Or it might be the "How is your new home?" message you sent an old client who then refers their cousin to you. In real estate, timing is everything. Make sure yours is on point.

### With a next generation, real estate focused CRM, you can:

- ✓ Easily input all your contact data from multiple sources
- ✓ Keep record of important and unique characteristics of each contact
- ✓ Categorize contacts into groups for fast searching
- ✓ Nurture and convert leads into clients



## A good CRM relieves you of your contact management duties

Without a CRM, you waste hours every week searching for contact information. Think of all the other far more productive, money-making activities you could be doing instead? In a business where it is your personal time and effort that will make you a top agent, you need to be thinking about everything you can do to make yourself more efficient.

# Personalize Your Communications



## Personal is always better

Today, people can sniff out your generic, template email message from a mile away. Don't do it. Take advantage of the ways in which you can personalize your texts and email messages so you're always tailoring to your contact.

In a people business, building relationships is the cornerstone to your success. And a few of the best ways to do that are to listen carefully, pick up on key pieces of information communicated to you, take note of details that matter and then set up automated reminders in your CRM to reach out.

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## Nothing is off limits if it strengthens the relationship

Your new lead mentions their daughter is getting married in two weeks. A past client told you their birthday. One of your contacts informs you of an upcoming surgery next month. Take note. Augment your client files with this information. Sometimes the key details that tell a person you're really thinking of them and you truly care, are quite personal. Don't shy away from those...embrace them, save them and use them to create a deeper connection with your contact in upcoming communications.

## How a CRM can help

There are a countless number of ways you can "get personal" with your contacts, you just need the right tool in your belt. A good CRM helps you categorize, group and segment your contacts so you know in what ways you should communicate with each. Be sure to connect with new leads differently than you connect with past clients and business colleagues. A good CRM can give you the ability to add social sharing to email blasts for a personal touch, create birthday, move-in anniversary and holiday e-cards, and easily produce video emails to talk directly to your contacts and boost open rates.

# Master Your Email Marketing

Go where the numbers are

Email marketing delivers 30 to 40 times the ROI of most other forms of web-based marketing, including social media.

With high open rates, click through rates and positive engagement numbers, think of email marketing as an integral part of your success as you climb to the top. To ensure that your emails stand out from others, create a campaign that is intuitive and automated with carefully crafted messaging, strategic timing, personalization and differentiation.







## Drip...drip...drip your way to real outcomes

A good drip email campaign has automated sets of emails that send based on specific timelines or contact behaviors. The beauty of a drip email campaign is that once it's set up you no longer need to think about it. When you have a good CRM working for you in the background, as you onboard new contacts into your CRM system, they are automatically added to your drip campaign in the correct group with its own scheduled emails. Then you can choose from prewritten emails, personalizing to each contact using their name, company information and much more.

## A newsletter with purpose

Are you under the impression that email newsletters are a thing of the past? Think again. Especially in a huge, dynamic industry that everyone is trying to understand and stay on top of so they can make their next best move, an email newsletter can work wonders. Finding the time, however, to write impactful email newsletters on a regular basis is extremely difficult in the life of a successful agent.

### Here's where a good CRM has you covered

- ✓ Unique content and on-trend topics produced for each contact group
- ✓ Fully automated, customized and fast to set up
- ✓ Branded to you

## Review, revise, repeat

Email marketing is a trial and error game. Track what you're doing and how it's working for you. Find a CRM that provides you not only with open-rates and click-through rates but also information about exactly who is opening and clicking through. Then make direct contact with these people in order to convert them from leads to clients. Remember, your own database already knows and trusts you. So when the numbers indicate genuine interest from one of your email recipients, think of how much better your chances of conversion given the fact that you've already built a relationship with them.

# Build Your Online Presence



## Having your own agent website is not an option, it's a necessity

Piggybacking onto your brokerage website simply won't do – and neither will having a dedicated page. In your industry, it's about the people. And one of the people in every single real estate transaction you're a part of, is you. Consumers are not buying into the brokerage, they're buying into you and one of the best ways you can demonstrate that you are a professional, skilled and dedicated real estate agent is by creating a solid online presence.

When the third most viewed page on a real estate agent's website is the "About" page, it's clear that consumers are interested in learning about you – so give them a chance to do just that.

## What's most important

Building a website is no easy task. As you're planning for your online presence, look for a CRM that includes a personalized real estate agent website featuring professional, high quality design, excellent content, responsiveness across all devices, automatic lead capture, integrated blog and IDX listings.

## Think about differentiation

It's one thing to have a real estate agent website but it's quite another to put in the time and effort required to make it stand out from your competition. When you create your own website, the biggest question in your mind should be:

### How am I different?

You might be unique in the types of properties you focus on. Or perhaps it's the way you work. Or maybe it's because you give your clients a special offering or added value service that others do not. Whatever it is, now is the time to define it and make sure it is clearly communicated on your agent website.

# Go Mobile

## You're on the move

You don't have a 9-to-5 desk job. On the contrary, you're on the road, working all kinds of flexible hours in the day. As a result, you can't afford to be limited to a desktop computer or even a laptop. You need a way to respond to leads and clients in between meetings. The competitiveness of the real estate industry dictates the fact that the more responsive you can be, the better your chances of landing clients.

## There's an app for that

Good CRMs have apps you can use right through your smartphone. This way, when you get pinged with a reminder that it's time to reach out to a contact, you don't need to wait hours before you're back at your computer. A well-structured CRM app makes it simple and fast to stay in touch with all your contacts no matter where you are. Make a call, draft an email, send a text, or create notes and follow-up tasks for yourself in seconds.

## Now you can text it

The open rate for text messages is close to 100%. And the text response rate is extremely high in comparison to other forms of communication. When it comes to real estate marketing, texting is the here and now. The best real estate CRMs are now offering text marketing as part of their service, giving you the ability to:

- ✓ Send personalized SMS and MMS mass texts including photos and video walkthroughs
- ✓ Receive replies right to your phone
- ✓ Set up text autoresponders to reply to new leads and existing clients instantly
- ✓ Put keywords on riders to get new leads via text messaging



To stay on top of your industry and business, it is critical that you adopt trending technologies. Text marketing can put you at the forefront of your market, showing that you are sharp, knowledgeable and current.

# Create a Strong Social Media Presence

## Not good content, great content

Writing your own unique articles or finding the most original, high quality videos online to share with your followers on social media is incredibly time consuming. And yet, what better way to capitalize on the contacts you have in all your social media outlets than to post amazing content? A good CRM helps you automate your social media engagement so this doesn't become an added task on your plate. Requiring just a few minutes of your time for setup, the right real estate CRM can help you take your social media accounts from dormant to alive again!



✓ Select what you want to share

✓ Get exclusive articles and videos from top tier publications curated for you

✓ Decide how often you want to post and at what times of day

✓ Fully automate your posts so your social media is working on your behalf



# Build Relationships

## You don't have to go it alone

An effective, and often overlooked, method to becoming a top real estate agent is the strategic formation of mutually beneficial partnerships with vendors that relate to your business. Imagine you have a strong partnership with a local vendor who wants to have a trusted real estate agent's name they can refer to their customers. Every person that vendor sends your way is a lead who didn't take up your time and money. That's significant. Return the favor and fuel the partnership by inputting your business partners' contact information into your CRM. Now you have the right contacts at your fingertips whenever you need to pass on a referral quickly.

## Who to partner with

There are a number of different businesses that connect with renters, homeowners, and potential buyers and sellers on a daily basis. Find these types of businesses in your area and start building strategic alliances. Consider mortgage brokers, insurance brokers, lawyers, lenders, interior designers, trades professionals and so many more.



## How to create the partnership

1

### Think of ways you can meet relatable vendors in your area.

Consider networking events hosted by Chambers of Commerce, Business Networking International, Rotary Club and entrepreneur associations, or even start your own.

2

### Do your due diligence.

As much as you are eager to form partnerships, be sure that you thoroughly vet the companies you're considering. You want to make sure that the services you refer to your clients are iron clad.

3

### Make a solid plan.

Before you approach potential vendors, map out exactly what you propose and make sure it is mutually beneficial. Then demonstrate precisely how the partnership will work and maintain your professionalism so your potential partner knows you're serious.

4

### Focus on the win-win.

A well thought out and aligned partnership benefits everyone. Your clients get trustworthy referrals for the services they need. Your vendor partners get new business from you. And in return, you get new business from them.



Since a good CRM helps you organize **all the different contacts** in your network, vendor partners are simply another group. And just the same as your leads and past clients, your partners should be communicated with regularly too, so you can be sure you are **maintaining** and **nurturing** the partnership. A CRM Business Directory feature lets you see all your contacts right from your dashboard for quick and easy access.

# Success is a path. Make sure you're on it.

Whether you're a new real estate agent looking for ways to effectively and profitably set up your business, or you're a seasoned realtor who wants to advance their career, be mindful of your tools. What technologies, systems and apps do you work with? What can you implement to make your life easier, faster and more productive?

## Start with a CRM

While the list of tools for real estate agents is never ending, incorporating a CRM into your business is one of the smartest moves you can make. The way you manage and connect with your contacts will be a large determining factor in how quickly you make it to the top.

## IXACT Contact is a CRM exclusive to real estate

A CRM is a great move, but a CRM tailored to real estate is even better. At IXACT Contact, we know how you work and we understand what you need to excel at your job. As time goes on, we continuously add new features designed to save you time and propel your career forward.

Here are just a few of the hundreds of ways our tool helps real estate agents make it to the top:

- ✓ Have all your contacts in one place and instantly identify your hottest leads
- ✓ Automate your emails and create drip campaigns
- ✓ Personalize all communications to build meaningful relationships with your contacts
- ✓ Have an impressive and professional agent website to capture new leads online
- ✓ Use automated and innovative text marketing to engage your contacts
- ✓ Automate your social media with top quality content curation
- ✓ Use our mobile app that lets you do everything from your phone
- ✓ Set goals, track your progress and monitor your overall performance



**Get to the top with a  
cutting-edge real estate  
CRM behind you.**

**Try IXACT Contact FREE for 60 Days**