

Marketing Tips for REALTORS

26. Give your buyers a clipboard.

Sounds simple, right, but who else is doing it? I imagine very few other agents, if any. On that clip board attach a number of critique sheets - one for each home they're going to see with you. Ask them to complete the simple form (don't make it complicated - What did you like? What didn't you like? Distinguishing features?" This way you're helping the buyers think about each home specifically as they walk through and you come away with a sense of how they feel about each one: instant feedback and a clipboard to write on.

25. Brochure boxes.

Time tested, the use of a brochure box outside your listing is a great way to get information about the home to interested parties. But now you're thinking you have to go out there all the time to be sure the box is full of data sheets; no, you don't. Give the seller a stack of the forms and ask them to make sure it stays full. After all, they've got a stake in getting their home sold AND, more importantly, they'll see whether the flyers are moving or not. So when you make your weekly follow up call to them, you can ask "How well are the flyers moving?" If they repeatedly, week after week, indicate "not so well", they are already set up for a price change!

24. Prepare a flyer - 10 reasons to invest in McHenry County (or your town of expertise perhaps).

Many people are moving from another nearby County but they still may not know what we have to offer. Highlight the festivals, ski jump, conservation land, tree farms, and more. Perhaps highlight the availability of equestrian activities and the Fox River or open space in the western part of the County. Give them 10 reasons but don't call it "Top Ten" or they may think this is all we have to offer!

23. Attend educational classes.

Okay, what does this have to do with marketing? Everything! Ask some of your REALTOR® peers who have completed designation courses like GRI (Graduate of the REALTOR(r) Institute) or ABR (Accredited Buyer's Representative) and I bet they'll tell you they learned a lot about marketing and how to more efficiently work with their clients. Statistics prove that agents who have earned designations also earn significantly more money. There's a reason for that!!!

22. Ask for extra copy of the HUD 1 statement at closing. Heck, get two extras!

Immediately after each closing go to the office and place a letter dated January 18 of the next year in an envelope with the HUD1. Label it for the buyers and one for the sellers, regardless of which side of the transaction you're on! Then, wait until January 18 to mail them out. All you'll need to do at that time is add postage. Of course, the letter says how glad you were to have worked with them and how, through the moving process, they may have misplaced their copy, so here's another for tax purposes. Of course, highlight that one of the great advantages to owning a home is the mortgage interest deduction they receive by being a homeowner! You're a hero and just made another awesome contact with your past clients.

21. Personalize housewarming gifts.

Of course, it's great to give home improvement store gift cards. Who can't use that, right? But it doesn't last. Once they spend it, you're out of their thoughts and they likely won't remember what you gave them if they ever think of you again anyway! So give them something memorable: a custom framed photo of their new home, a hand painted Christmas ornament with a picture of their new home, or even a cutting board with a picture of their home. The key here, and don't miss this, is to NOT put your name on it. No offense but it devalues the item. Give them the great gift, let them hang it on their wall in a very prominent place - because you know they will! And when they have friends, family and neighbors over, everyone will ask where they got the picture from. And guess what? They'll mention you BY NAME! My REALTOR(r) Joe Smith gave it to us! It doesn't get much better than that!

20. Host a client event party.

Fishing tournament, boating excursion, pig roast, horse ride, golf outing, picnic, cookout, movie night at the local theatre, the list goes on and on. Every year host the event. Change it up if you like to keep it

fresh but host something. You will get referrals out of it. People will want to come and they will automatically begin bringing names of other people who wished their real estate agent was so awesome. It will become a profitable venture as well as be a lot of fun.

19. Homebuyer seminars.

Target rental properties where their monthly payments could afford a home. Host a panel of industry experts: attorney, mortgage provider, home inspector, and yourself. If you're going to be on the panel, then have someone else moderate. The big thing is timing of the event. February is the best month. The Super Bowl is over (renters probably went to someone else's house and we're thinking "we should buy a home"), their tax refund is being processed and will be arriving soon (down payment), and everyone has got cabin fever. February!

18. \$.01 stamps.

The next time the post office raises rates, go buy a couple hundred \$.01 or \$.02 stamps (whatever they rate increased by). Tear off 20 for each past client and mail them out with a letter reminding them the rates have increased and "here's a few to get you by until you can get to the post office yourself". What a great service and awesome client follow up.

17. Host a house warming party.

60 days after closing go over to visit your clients. In their excitement of showing you their home tell them you want to host a housewarming party for them in 30 days. Invite their friends and be sure to invite their neighbors! Without a doubt the neighbors will be impressed and when they decide to sell, and few will probably already be thinking about it, they'll want to call you! Be sure to have plenty of business cards with you.

16. Cookie tin.

This is great! After closing send a tin of cookies to your client's office as a thank you. Yes, to their office!!! Of course, they'll share them with their co-workers and guess who they'll be talking about. You!!! Everyone will ask where they came from and your name is top of conversation. Who else is doing this? Right, no one. Stand out in the crowd. There are websites that will do this for you or you can drop it by their office as well. The Cub Scouts sell popcorn tins and everyone knows the Girl Scouts have some awesome cookies that would also work.

15. Two different business cards.

One with the red dress or blue suit and one with the white dress or green suit. Why do this? Well, you work with buyers and sellers right? Those should be two different messages. A card with buyer info (hold a For Sale sign) and one for sellers (hold a Sold sign). Customize the back of your card with data for these types of clients. Maybe how many homes you've sold (seller card) or from which countries you've represented buyers (buyer card). You don't use the same presentation for buyers you would for sellers so why one business card?

14. Oops Bucket.

Find out in casual conversation at closing when your clients will be moving in or over at the house. Then stop by a few hours later when you know they'll still be there. Bring them an "oops bucket" complete with a roll of paper towels, plastic ware, toilet paper, a box of donuts or a pizza perhaps, sports drink, maybe a bag of ice, a paint brush or two? Be creative but make it items they likely ran out of or forgot to bring with that trip. You'll be a hero!

13. Have the home re-keyed!

"We have no idea how many keys may be floating out there. Heck, your neighbors may have one. So I'm going to have the house professionally rekeyed for you today." (Day of closing). Ask them how many copies of the key they need so you can tell the locksmith, who will give them to you. Find out their kids' favorite sports team and have keys made with those logos on them! Do you think your clients will remember that! Oh, yes, and your clients will talk about it and every time they see the logo key; they'll remember you!

12. Prestige license plates.

Want to stand out? Try getting a plate like: AHOME4U, RUMOVIN, NOFSBO, PIKRIK, THANKU, SMILE, REALTOR, REAGENT, MOVWME, IMOVNU. Try adding the REALTOR license plate frames to really send the message home. Yes, McHCAR sells those!

11. Personalized Open House Signs.

Don't just use the office's Open House signs. Get your own. Why? The office's are likely all dinged up from everyone using them! Your signs should look new and sharp and say "Come see this home!" Of course, add your name to the signs so people see you're the one doing the business! And while you're at it, ask the neighbors to all park on the street the day of your open house so it looks like there is a ton of activity! Trickery, maybe, but it's sure a lot of fun.

10. Sponsor a Little League Team. Their parents need homes and the kids will, too! Get the same team each year or follow the same coach. But don't stop there. Sponsor the after season pizza party and be there. Ask at the beginning of the season if you can bring the snacks a couple of times and get signed up. Be visible. Don't just rely on your name on the back of the jerseys.

9. REALTOR Logo on your Checks.

So simple and yet so few do it. Sure, it costs a few dollars more but everyone will know what you do and you'll get a few leads a year out of just paying your bills! How cool. Of course, don't bounce the check!!!

8. Hand wax your signs.

Yes, this is serious. Why hand wax them? So they shine and so stuff won't stick to them. All the crud in your trunk loves to adhere themselves to signs. A well waxed sign will allow you to wipe junk off of them. Keep your image clean and these signs are a projection of you!

7. Order signs that have reflective lettering.

Today, of course, most signs do have decent visibility but most of them are not reflective. You want your image to jump off that sign. In winter months this is especially important with the limited light we have. So keep your signs shoveled (visible) and let the information shine!

6. Open House invites.

Don't just put out the signs. Go further. Personally deliver 20 cards that morning. 5 to the left of your Open House, 5 to the right and 10 across the street. First of all, you get to meet some of the neighbors, BONUS, and introduce yourself. Now, here's the twist: don't sit an Open House for 3 hours. Sit it for one hour. Watch the flurry of activity! Why do agents sit open on weekends during the football games? Try hosting a one hour open on a weeknight after work from 5:30 to 6:30 perhaps. Send the sellers out for pizza on you! Be sure to get the sign up in the yard the week of the event "Open House Thursday 5:30 to 6:50 p.m."

5. Custom Calendar.

If you're into sending calendars then try sending a good one. Have a custom calendar of the area made. Include photos of sunrises over the lake, animals in the Fox River, fog lifting over McHenry's corn fields, etc. By making it a custom calendar it will get longevity. In the slew of calendars we all get each January, yours will stand out and have a chance at being used, not pitched. Go ahead put your name on it!

4. Order NAR's Relocation report.

This free report (used to cost \$50) identifies which Counties in the nation have the most people moving to McHenry and which Counties our sellers are moving to. Perhaps you can find a trend or identify which business is relocating here and market to them! Remember that "10 Great Things about McHenry County" flyer we talk about months ago??? Use it.

3. Send to sphere: