

MENU

Melanie



## 99 lead sources for real estate agents (and a bus bench ain't one)

The ultimate lead source guide for real estate agents

BY NICO HOHMAN

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Even if you aren't a fan of their music, you've probably heard of Jay-Z and his uber-famous wife Beyoncé. Why? Because they've been killin' it in the music biz (and beyond) since the '90s.

Topping list after list, they've been called artists; they've been called tycoons; they've been called moguls. And at a combined net worth of [over \\$1 billion](#), they've definitely been called rich.

multiple clothing lines (just to name a few of their side hustles).

In real estate, the key to success is to make sure you're getting leads, and just like Jay and Bey, you don't want to put all your eggs in one basket. In honor of this business-savvy couple, I've come up with 99 lead sources to help you drum up some business — and a bus bench ain't one.

The leads in this list are broken down into 16 different categories. I've gone into detail about a lot of lead sources, but let's start with the first 99.



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## I got 99 lead sources and a bus bench ain't one

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## Real estate agents and property managers

The best way to look at other real estate agents is not as your competition but as your co-workers. And as your co-workers, they can be the best source for leads.

Nearly every transaction requires at least two different agents, one on each side. Plus, no one agent could handle every single transaction. There are plenty of chances to work together.

Treat other real estate agents as if you are doing them a favor versus trying to steal business from them. In the end, you both end up getting more leads.

### Former or retired agents ([referral](#) method)

Every year, nearly a third of current real estate agents leave the industry. Create incentive programs for those retired or former real estate agents with referral fees.

Let's say a stay-at-home dad decides he no longer wants to work as a part-time real estate agent, but he decides to keep his license active just in case. He didn't make a lot of sales, but he does have a decent network of connections.

What happens to these connections when that agent decides to move on? Where are the people in that network going to get their real estate advice?

Take time to create a relationship with other real estate agents. That way when the time comes for them to leave or retire, you'll be able to step in.

Tell the retiring agent that you will take care of their existing and future leads. All the retiring agent has to do is give his or her blessing to their community to let you handle their real estate needs.

Then, when the time comes, all you have to do is send a referral fee to the retiring agent.

### Former or retired agents ([lump sum](#) method)

Let's say this stay-at-home dad real estate agent decides he wants to move on from real estate, and not keep his license any longer.

While you still have a good relationship with this agent, you can't give him a referral fee anymore.

Instead, tell him you are going to buy his "book of business."

Have the retiring agent give you a full and complete list of all the people in his network. Have that retiring agent tell his network that you are now their go-to source for real estate.

## Broker's agents

Sometimes you have a lead that you just can't work with. Or, sometimes there's another agent in your office who has a lead that he or she just can't work with.

Get to know every agent in your office. Find out what their strengths and weaknesses are. Find out which type of leads they want to work with the most.

Then, if there's ever a time when you can't work with a lead, but you know another agent in your office could, send a referral his or her way.

## In-network agents

In-network agents are real estate agents who work in the same neighborhoods as you do.

The best way to work with in-network agents is through your listing presentation.

When you are giving a [listing presentation](#) to a potential [seller](#), give your recommendation to at least two other real estate agents in your area who could also list this seller's home.

You may be wondering why you would do this. I'll give you three reasons:

- It shows that you have done your research. Not only do you know the seller's house and the homes in the neighborhood, but you also know who the players in the industry are too.
- It shows that you have confidence in your skills. If you are willing to have the sellers compare you and your listing presentation to other agents' presentations, you must strongly believe in your strategies.
- It gives you an opportunity to earn *some* commission on a listing, even if you didn't get that listing. If you inform those in-network agents that you gave their contact information to a potential seller, you can earn a referral fee should they get that listing.

## Out-of-network agents

A real estate agent who does not work within your work radius is considered an out-of-network real estate agent.

Do you live in Sarasota, Florida, and find a lot of your leads are moving from Pittsburgh? Start making connections with the agents in Pittsburgh. Create brochures, blog posts and videos exclusively for those Pittsburgh agents about the benefits of Sarasota (and working with you).

Are you well-connected with a technology company in Salt Lake City and you know that it will be moving employees to Chicago? Make some connections with the agents in Chicago and tell them you have leads coming their way.

## Property managers

Property managers work with both landlords and tenants on a daily basis, helping tenants rent new properties and deal with maintenance issues while helping the landlord maintain a constant cash flow for his or her investment property.

Property managers are dealing with people who are very much interested in real estate.

While landlords are currently content to lease their property, and while tenants are content to rent, this may not always be the case. Tenants become buyers and landlords become sellers.

As a full-time real estate sales associate, this is where you come in to save the day.

Working with a property manager should be considered a two-way street. While the property manager can certainly help you obtain buyer and seller clients, so should you be concerned with helping the property manager obtain landlord and tenant clients.

## Commercial real estate agents

Every real estate agent has a specialty. Some real estate agents choose to work on the commercial side instead of the residential side.

Inevitably, someone will ask a commercial agent for help buying or selling a home. And on the flip side, someone will most likely ask you for advice on buying or selling a building.

Although you both could theoretically handle each other's job, it's best to leave these things to the experts.

Create a referral partnership with commercial real estate agents in your network to best serve you and your new leads.

## Broker-generated leads

Does your **broker** provide you with leads?

Here's an important tip to keep in mind when working these leads: If you don't use them, you'll lose them.

If your broker has sent you five potential leads in the last six weeks, and you failed to make a connection with any of them, your broker might start questioning your ability to work with the leads he or she gives you.

Instead, give it your best effort when working the leads that come from your broker if you want those lead sources to continue coming in the future.

## Relocation firms

That's the idea behind relocation firms. They take people who already have to move — most likely via a job transfer — and get them in touch with a real estate agent to handle the move.

While sometimes they can charge steep fees, they are well worth the price for helping you sort and pre-qualify your leads.

## Real estate industry professionals

### Mortgage lenders

Mortgage professionals, especially those working for independent mortgage brokers, have the same incentive on a transaction as real estate agents do.

They don't get paid unless the real estate agent gets paid.

Teaming with a mortgage broker (or two) can be a great way to get consistent, steady leads. Better yet, the mortgage broker often is sending you pre-qualified leads, making the lead even more serious.

The mortgage professional is doing his job by getting the lead pre-qualified for you. You can do your job by closing on a home. It's a win-win for both parties.

Plus, in most markets, mortgage brokers can pay up to 50 percent of your advertising fees if you include them on your campaigns.

### Title agents

Like mortgage professionals, title agents don't get paid unless a deal closes.

It's a good idea to have great relationships with title companies so you can have an excellent team around your transaction.

Plus, title agents can connect you to potential leads as well. Just be sure to follow all of the rules and regulations regarding kickbacks and referral fees.

### Home inspectors and home warranty representatives

Building relationships with anyone involved in the home sale process can be lucrative in the long run.

### Realtor organizations: National, state and local

If you are a member of the [National Association of Realtors \(NAR\)](#), you should also be a member at your state and local level.

Each association has countless ways to get involved and make a difference in the battle to protect the rights of real estate professionals and property rights of homeowners.

## **Apartment complexes**

For most people, renting a unit in an apartment complex is not their long-term living solution. Many, if not most, tenants are using the apartment complex as a stopping point along the way to purchasing real property.

This means you have a large quantity of leads in a relatively small place.

Introduce yourself to the application coordinators of the apartment complex. Bring them breakfast or pizza, and get to know them better.

Then, see if you can set up events inside the apartment complex to promote yourself and the complex.

This provides an added benefit to the current tenants (assuming you bring some drinks and food to the event).

It also benefits the apartment complex if you're spreading the word about your events to those interested in real estate.

## **Construction professionals**

### **Custom homebuilders**

You can probably name a lot of the larger, national homebuilders, but can you name some smaller, local ones?

Get to know these contractors. Introduce yourself and learn about their companies. See what types of homes they can build.

Oftentimes, builders can give you referral or finder's fees for sending clients their way.

### **Tract homebuilders**

These homebuilding companies are typically your larger, regional and national homebuilders that can build upwards of 10,000 homes or more per year.

Almost always, these builders have incentive programs for real estate agents for bringing them a qualified buyer. These programs can be a commission bonus or even double-sided commission for one agent.

As a listing agent, you can still work with builders too.

If a potential buyer approaches a builder first, but can only buy a new construction home after they sell their own home, the builder is out of luck.

So the builder will refer those potential homebuyers to an agent who can list and sell their home before they buy the new construction.

upgrades and improvements. They will reach out to remodeling contractors to get the job done.

If you are well-connected with some of the best remodelers in town, not only is that a good resource for you to give to your existing clients, but it can also be a way for you to generate new leads.

### **Vendors and suppliers**

Did you know that there are specialty stores just for paint? Or that there are companies that manufacture and sell only doors and windows?

Make some connections with these specialty hardware stores.

Like connecting with the remodelers, vendors and suppliers can feed you leads. If sellers are making upgrades to their house, they will probably mention something to the store clerks or service representatives to get some insights or good deals.

Then, make the connection a two-way street. Host events at your local hardware store and refer your existing clients to these places.

It shows that you care about your local economy — and that you know some things about home remodeling too.

### **Interior designers**

### **Architects**

When someone wants to build a brand new or custom home, the first thing he'll need to do is design the home.

A lot of times, buyers will know what they want their home to look like, but they won't always know where to build their home.

That's where you come in. Make connections with architects and be their guide on the local real estate market.

If you can team with the architect while the lead is still designing the home, you can share insights on some specific home sites that will make the design even better.

## **Community involvement**

### **Little League teams**

Most kids between the ages of 5 and 14 have played some sort of organized tee-ball, baseball or softball.

And what do all of these teams need? Uniforms!

get a framed picture of the whole team with your sponsorship info on it to give to all of the players' families.

Every single family is going to take one of those framed pictures home with them. What are they going to see every time they see their son or daughter in their Little League uniform? Your company name and logo!

### **Dance troupes**

### **Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts**

### **Church groups**

Looking for a faithful, dedicated crowd to spread your message of truth? (Truth about the real estate market, that is.)

Look no further than church groups.

Virtually every church or synagogue or temple or mosque will have specific groups within them for their disciples. Everything from Bible studies to addiction recovery programs to child care services can be part of a church's mission.

If you are already going to these places, make your worshiping part of your business planning too.

### **School volunteers**

Whether this is the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), a moms' club or a dads' club, every school has some sort of connection point for the parents.

If your child is already going to school, make it a point to stand out in the parents group.

One of the top three reasons people move is because of family life. What better way to connect with growing families than at schools?

### **Nonprofits and charities**

At my brokerage, we heavily involve nonprofits and charities into our business plan for getting leads specifically through our *Learn. Work. Give.* program and through our referral tithe.

Our *Learn. Work. Give.* program allows our teammates to visit a local nonprofit or charity at least once a quarter. Then, after learning about that group, we spend some time working and volunteering for that group. Finally, we give of our treasures and resources to these organizations too.

The *Learn. Work. Give.* program builds bonds with these nonprofits and shows our dedication to our local communities.

income to our referring partner's nonprofit of choice.

Since we cannot give monetary referrals to unlicensed individuals who refer someone to us, Hohman Homes instead will give 10 percent of the income generated from the referral to the nonprofit of their choosing.

And the best part is, we make the donation in the name of the person who gave us the referral so they can get all of the credit!

## Databases

### Lost leads

In some instances, leads will not work out right away.

Leads are typically considered "lost" once you have established contact with them but they stop communicating with you. Or when leads indicate they are not willing to buy or sell just yet.

Instead of forgetting about them forever, put these lost leads into a drip campaign to lightly stay in touch with them. Then, when the time comes for them to go into real estate, you'll be at the top of their mind.

Just be sure you don't spend too much time on lost leads. Too much work for not enough return is what causes several real estate agents to become frustrated with their job and leave the industry altogether.

### Farming

Farming is an all-encompassing advertising campaign to a specific neighborhood.

It is sometimes referred to as geographic farming as a real estate agent picks a specific geographic area — typically a neighborhood, but it can be as broad as an entire ZIP code.

Farming consists of an agent sending multiple letters, flyers, emails, gifts and so on to homeowners in a neighborhood in the hopes of getting their business.

This method can certainly produce several leads, but there are a few key points to note before you begin your own farming routine.

First, it will take at least four to six months of consistent advertising before your farming campaign starts to have an effect. This means that you will have to be willing to spend money and wait patiently for leads to come in.

Next, you need to pick the right neighborhood. Specifically, the neighborhood needs to have a high turnover rate. That is, the ratio of homeowners who move every year to the amount of homes in the neighborhood needs to be high for your efforts to be efficient.

estate transaction without asking them directly.

With expired listings, we have the exact opposite problem.

Instead of waiting for a property to expire and going directly after the homeowner — like tens and perhaps hundreds of other agents will do — take a different approach.

Target current listing agents for expired listings.

If you know most listing agreements are for six months, find currently active properties that have been on the market for almost six months.

Then, reach out directly to the listing agent and find out if the seller wants to re-list with the current agent. If so, thank the agent and move on.

If the seller doesn't want to re-list with the current listing agent, say that you will list the property and provide a referral fee for the introduction.

This scenario is a win for all parties because you get a new listing; the old listing agent gets a referral fee and looks like a hero for suggesting a better plan to their clients; and the sellers don't have to endure countless phone calls from harassing agents looking for a new listing.

## **For Sale by Owner**

### **Local newspapers**

In your local edition of the Business Journal weekly newspapers, they publish a list called "People on the Move." This list encompasses everyone who just got a new job, a promotion, was placed on a board of directors or received some sort of industry recognition.

One of the top three reasons people move is because of a new job. With this "People on the Move" database, you have a treasure trove of data on the very people you are trying to work with.

Send a letter or an email congratulating these new employees on their new job, and let them know you'd be happy to help them with any of their real estate needs.

### **Government agencies**

### **Auction forums**

You have all seen those shows on HGTV where people bid on foreclosure auctions on the steps of the county courthouse.

While that looks great for TV, the process is much simpler in real life.

To best use this data, look through the listings of foreclosure auctions from three, four, five and six months ago. Look at the winners of the closed auctions.

If the winner of those auctions wasn't the original owner of the property or the bank, the new winner is more than likely an investor.

These investors have just two thoughts on their mind: either to fix up the property and sell it as quickly as possible or to rent the property.

As a real estate agent looking for more lead sources, reach out to these investors and tell them that you know how the fix-and-flip model works. Show them you can be their exclusive listing agent for their new investments.

## Business professionals

### Professional recruiters

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, [approximately 19 percent of people that relocate more than 50 miles from their current house each year do so because of a new job](#). That translates to roughly six million people looking for a new house every year because of a new job.

Recruiters and headhunters are the ones responsible for filling those new jobs.

Recruiters can be employed by organizations who are looking for qualified individuals, or they can be retained by individuals who are looking to find a new job.

But recruiters aren't responsible just for finding a new job for someone. They are responsible for selling the whole package that comes with a new career.

Recruiters who can line up the right job opening for their client along with the right city, the right company vibe, the right lifestyle and so on demonstrate significant value.

And because recruiters' main focus is on the job openings, they will be happy to outsource the lifestyle part of the career switch to real estate agents.

Make connections with as many headhunters and recruiters as you can, and you'll find the leads coming in hand over fist.

### Divorce attorney

When a couple gets divorced, there can be a lot that goes into the separation, especially if the couple has been together for a long time and shares many assets together. One of those assets is usually the family home.

It is the divorce attorney's job to split the assets between the two divorcing parties.

the divorce attorney will look to the services of a real estate agent to get this job done.

### **Estate attorney**

Estate attorneys have a similar responsibility to that of a divorce attorney. Instead of a couple divorcing, someone has passed away and the assets either need to be sold or distributed to other parties.

If real estate is one of those assets that need to be sold or distributed, the estate attorney will look to the services of a real estate agent to get the job done.

### **Financial advisers**

Individuals who work in the financial services sector can be excellent sources of leads for real estate professionals. Why? Simply put, real estate purchases can require a significant amount of capital. And financial advisers know who has access to that amount of capital.

The financial adviser's role is to guide his or her clients toward making the most fundamentally sound decisions with their money. Oftentimes, that decision is to invest in real estate.

Financial advisers who refer their clients to an excellent real estate agent are doing a great service. Make connections with these professionals; they can be a lucrative lead source.

### **Investors**

#### **New businesses**

According to the Small Business Administration, [there are approximately 28 million small businesses](#) across the country, and nearly one million new business are started every year.

With new development and growth in their companies, these businesses will certainly be in need of real estate services.

Look through your local county's business tax roll to find a list of all of the new businesses that have started up and let them know how you can help their business (through your commercial real estate agent referral sources) and how you can help their employees find new homes.

### **Wedding planners**

According to the Census Bureau, [2.1 million people get married every year](#). And of those couples, nearly half of them will begin to live together after getting married.

That's nearly a million people every year looking for a new housing situation. Granted, not all of them will be buying a home, but certainly *some* of them will be.

But how do you know when someone is going to get married in the first place? Easy. Get connected with wedding planners.

## **Economic development corporations**

It is the job of a local economic development corporation (EDC) to attract new businesses to its city. These organizations showcase all the benefits that a city has to offer large corporations.

A part of those benefits includes living conditions for not only the executives of the company, but also every employee.

Partnering with local EDCs gets you on the ground floor with large companies, sharing your knowledge about the local real estate market.

Plus, if a company *does* relocate its headquarters to your town, you'll have a vast source of leads to pull from.

## **Sports/celebrity agents**

You don't have to live in Hollywood or New York City to be a successful sports or celebrity agent representing actors or athletes. You'll find most of them in those two cities, but these professionals live and work all over the country.

Agents represent actors and athletes, musicians and artists from the A-listers to the D-listers. And the thing all these stars have in common is that they have lots of money and move quite a bit.

Consider a professional athlete, who can get traded five or more times in their professional career. They may have one family home in the town they grew up in, but more than likely they also have a *pied-à-terre* wherever they are currently working.

Get connected with these agents and you'll be able to help these big names find big homes.

## **Members of the armed forces**

Those Americans that serve us and fight for our freedoms deserve all the respect and credit they can get for their efforts, not least of which is their constant re-assignment to other bases around the country and around the world.

Get [connected with local military bases](#) to find out when and where service members are moving to and from.

(And as an added perk, [NAR offers specific certificates for working with members of the military](#). Consider getting training in this area to better serve your leads.)

## **Human resource managers**

Like recruiters and headhunters, human resource managers are going to know who is going to be hired and when they are going to be moving.

consider new housing when they lose their jobs.

Connect with human resource managers and let them know you can help their employees, whether they are coming or going.

## Mailing campaigns

### **Just listed, just sold and just bought**

These three lead sources — just listed, just sold and just bought — are three specific mailing campaigns, each with a different purpose.

The just listed campaign should occur within a week of when your new listings become active. This mailer — either a letter or postcard — is mailed to those within the same neighborhood, street or community of the property that you just listed letting them know about the new home for sale (and how you could help them sell their home).

The campaign should contain the property you are listing, its address, its price, a few key stats about the home, plenty of pictures and your contact information.

The other two campaigns are very similar; the only difference is the branding between selling and buying a property.

You can do this mailing campaign in conjunction with or in addition to your farming lead generation activities.

## Personal connections

### **Repeat clients**

Of all the various sources of leads, the number one best source of leads is that of your repeat client base.

Your repeat clients are those that have successfully completed a transaction with you, and (hopefully) are very happy with you and your services.

These clients should be so happy that they not only want to use your services again, but they also want to refer you to people in their circle of influence.

The best part about leaning on your repeat clients for new leads is that the acquisition cost for these clients is almost none. You already spent your time and money on them during their first transaction with you. Any additional transaction you can get from a repeat client is virtually free marketing.

### **Referrals (moving buddies)**

small gift instead.

Anytime an unlicensed person sends you a lead, be sure to thank them. Send them a thank you card for trusting you to handle their referral. And send them a little token of appreciation — something like a \$20 gift card to Amazon.

We call these unlicensed people who send us referrals our “moving buddies.” We aim to thank them any way that we can.

### **Sphere of influence**

When you begin your career as a real estate agent, your sphere of influence is the first place you should start to begin sourcing for leads.

Your sphere of influence is the group of people that you know and that knows you back. This could be your friends, your family members, your former co-workers, former or current classmates, softball teammates and so on.

Anyone that you have updated contact information for is now someone in your sphere of influence.

As you start out in the real estate industry, it is more difficult to get a stranger to know, like and trust you enough to want to work with you.

But the people in your sphere of influence already know, like and trust you. You just have to tell them you are here to help them with their real estate needs.

## **Lead-generating websites**

The internet is the most wonderful creation for the modern professional business.

Period.

Every industry can benefit from using the internet. The real estate industry is no exception.

There are thousands of websites that help buyers, renters and sellers of real estate gather information and resources on their upcoming transaction.

And whenever you have a large collection of the population looking for information on housing, you can bet it is a good place for real estate agents to source some leads.

### **Zillow**

The best way think of Zillow is like a 21st-century newspaper. It gathers and showcases data about your local housing market, including information about current homes for sale, local school districts — and the best real estate agents, too.

The only difference between Zillow and an old-school newspaper is that it does all this for every neighborhood, all in one place online.

## Realtor.com

Similar to Zillow, realtor.com can also be thought of as an online newspaper for real estate. What separates realtor.com from Zillow and the other online portals is that NAR has some control over the content delivered on that site.

This means that, in theory, realtor.com should be much more in favor of the real estate agent than the consumer visiting the website.

## GoldenKey (formerly known as SoloPro)

GoldenKey is a company that looks to connect potential homebuyers and sellers with real estate agents on an as-needed basis only.

Are you a potential homebuyer who has already seen the inside of a home but isn't sure how to write up a contract? Or are you a potential seller who knows how to work the closing process but doesn't know how to price the home?

GoldenKey can help by pairing consumers with real estate professionals looking to charter their individual services.

If you need some practice with a particular skill set within your tool bag of real estate tricks or if you are looking to make some quick cash for your services, look to the leads that GoldenKey can provide.

## Craigslist

One of the first and most ubiquitous online marketplaces, Craigslist still garners millions of eyeballs every month. Most importantly, it breaks down its marketplace into local neighborhoods, which helps you specifically target potential leads.

Use Craigslist to grow your database of leads. Although you may not get lots of clients directly attributable to Craigslist, you will most certainly be able to add leads to your marketing campaigns.

The more people that know about your services, the more likely people will want to use you.

## Online

### Email marketing

Email marketing is the single best type of mass advertising for one simple reason: it is completely free.

What other way can you directly target as many people as you want for absolutely nothing? How much would it cost you to reach 5,000 people if you had to send them a

Email marketing is free for you — and it is also free for everyone else in the world.

Just look at your own inbox. How many emails are you getting on a daily basis? How much of that email do we simply throw away or call junk? Probably a lot of it. (I receive nearly 11 times as many emails as I send out.)

Your goal with your email marketing campaign is to target it to a specific group of people (the people who already know, like and trust you and want to get the information you send them) and send them useful and pertinent information on a fairly regular basis.

## **Website**

In the early days of the internet, each real estate brokerage and real estate agent clamored to get their website up and running with the latest and greatest search features, internet data exchanges and virtual listing portals.

Nowadays, consumers don't flock to brokers' websites to look for homes. They have Zillow and realtor.com for those tasks.

Today, your website has a different purpose.

Instead of aiming to advertise every home on the market like an MLS, your website should be a place to showcase you, your brokerage and how you can best help your leads.

Future clients are not going to your website to find homes for sale. Potential leads are not using your site to research the neighborhood or the school districts. The lead-generating websites mentioned previously will do all of this for them.

Your website should be your online **business card**. No more, no less. Business cards with too much detail, colors, pictures and information can overwhelm a potential lead. Keep it smart, simple and useful.

## **Blog**

Blogging is an excellent way to attract lead sources both through online and offline connections.

Blogging can help with your online relevance. The more often you provide high-quality, original content, the higher your site will appear in search results online.

Think about the websites you visit most often. Why do you go there? Do they have the same pages every single day, or are they adding more and more new and original content?

Think of your blog as a way of providing great content for your potential leads.

Then, after you have some experience writing, submit your articles to news sources. The more your articles and blog posts appear in credible sources (like Inman!) the more authority you develop for yourself and your brand.

## Google Adwords

Want to get on the first page of Google? If you aren't constantly providing high-quality content, the best way to get there is to pay to be there.

The best part about using Google Adwords is that you can specifically tailor your ad message, your advertising budget and on which pages your ads will appear.

This customization allows you to track exactly where your leads come from and how effectively you're spending your advertising dollars.

## Social media

There are several hundred different social media websites and apps available for you to use. Each offers several different ways for you to interact with other people.

You probably already know about each social media platform, so I will tell you one specific way to use each one that you probably aren't using to your fullest potential.

But first I want to mention one general theme about all social media networks.

Think of social media like a real life party.

No one wants to hang out with the person in the middle of the room screaming about government and religion. And no one wants to hang out with the loner in the corner who is just playing with the cat.

The best party guest is the one who brings a bottle of wine, thanks the host, tells a few jokes and gets along with the other party guests.

Treat social media like that party and you'll start to see a difference in the potential leads you can draw from social media platforms.

## Facebook

A great feature within Facebook is Messenger. Messenger is the app and service that allows you to privately and directly chat with other people.

You can use Messenger for your business to attract leads by creating a chat bot.

A chat bot is free and easy to set up. Just give it some parameters to answer questions as well as some standard answers to common questions, and now your business can respond to potential leads whenever they are online.

## Twitter

If you are on any social media platform, you know what a hashtag is. But did you know that you can use the hashtag for lead generation and not just as

Do you like to list waterfront property in Seattle? Search #house, #seattle, #waterfront and any combination of these hashtags to see who is talking online about these topics. Then, introduce yourself to these people and make a connection.

## **LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is my personal favorite social media networking site. It allows professionals to connect with other professionals.

The key word here is “professional.”

LinkedIn is not a place to upload pictures of your cats, share fake news stories or post videos of your cousin’s wedding.

Use LinkedIn as another place to share your professional thoughts on the real estate industry. Specifically, use the long-form post options.

Write a professional blog post, and then share it on LinkedIn. Every single one of your connections will automatically get a notification that you published a post. Then, share that post into some relevant groups too.

## **Instagram**

## **Pinterest**

## **YouTube and Vimeo**

Videos, videos, videos. That’s what leads want to see these days.

Videos attract more eyeballs than pictures and blog posts. Plus, videos are shared more often than pictures and blog posts.

The great thing about YouTube is that you can simply record yourself using your cell phone and upload it to the website or app for free. Talk about your local neighborhood, a new small business or give an amusing virtual tour.

If you are looking for higher quality and more professional (and sometimes more expensive) video services, look to Vimeo. It is similar to YouTube, except only certain, credible people can upload videos. And these videos are professionally put together.

However you incorporate video into your marketing efforts, do it often!

## **Live video**

Whether you prefer the short-lived video options that [Snapchat](#) and [Instagram Stories](#) offer or you like the longer-term use of [YouTube](#) and [Facebook Live](#) content, agents are touting the advantages of [video](#) constantly.

of apps.

If you aren't down with video, now is the time to [figure it out](#).

## Li.st

Li.st is a fantastic app that allows its users to create unique lists about any topic they want.

Do you want to share your top 11 books you read this year? Or how about the eight best gifts to give your client at the closing table? Or how about the 27 coolest features in a new home?

Use the Li.st app to create beautiful lists, using text, gifs and videos to showcase the lighter side of you and your business.

## Print advertising

### Magazines/journals

When sourcing for leads in magazines and journals, you have two different routes that can help you advertise.

The first is the traditional advertising model, where you simply place an ad in the magazine and hope readers and subscribers will contact you directly from the ad.

The other is to produce branded content for the magazine.

Branded content is similar to an actual article written in the magazine, only this time it is sponsored and produced by the advertiser.

### Newspapers

### Church bulletins

Want to spread your message of truth and salvation in the real estate market? Look no further than the back pages of the weekly church bulletins.

Advertising your services in this publication serves two great functions.

- It can attract leads with similar beliefs as you.
- It allows you to support the financial mission of your church.

### Neighborhood profiles

### Programs and playbills

Most cities have a performing arts center. Whether they feature local productions or nationally recognized Broadway shows, the theater is a great place to source for leads.

Advertise your services in the performing arts program or a specific playbill. While the audience is waiting to see the show, you can put on a show in your ad.

### **Press releases**

Most news agencies get hundreds, if not thousands, of press releases a day. And most of these press releases feature fluffy news coverage about positive things going on with a company or institution.

The goal with creating a press release to get attention for your real estate business is to have an excellent story.

Share a press release about how you have helped 10 disabled military veteran families find homes in a specific neighborhood. Share a press release on how every time you sell a home you deliver a pizza and beer to your clients on moving day.

News agencies will write an article based on your press release if it features unique and interesting stories. Do that, and you can garner lots of leads from your press features.

## **Mass media**

### **Radio**

In the Tampa Bay market, where my brokerage is headquartered, there are several local real estate agents who have their own radio show broadcasted over the local radio waves.

Some of these shows are daily, others are weekly. Some are on AM dials, others are on FM dials. Some shows talk exclusively about real estate, others highlight local businesses and events happening throughout town.

Whatever the show's format, these agents are getting their names and their message across the airwaves to as many leads as they can.

### **Podcasting**

Do you have a microphone and an internet connection? Congratulations! You have everything you need to set up a podcast.

What's a podcast? A podcast is an online streaming auditory — and sometimes visual — program about virtually any topic.

Anyone can create and distribute a podcast. Some podcasts have hundreds of thousands, even millions, of downloads per episode.

Most likely you won't have hundreds of thousands of downloads per episode with your first podcast, but consider it another medium to attract leads to your real estate services.

The best part is that your podcast doesn't even have to be about real estate.

## TV

### Billboards

#### Gas station pumps

Pumping gas can be one of the most boring tasks. It is made even more boring because you can't even look at your phone while you're pumping gas.

(Yes, your cell phone can cause the gas pump to explode. No, I'm not speaking from experience.)

Fortunately, some gas stations have figured out a solution to our woes by installing TV screens into the gas pumps.

Typically, these TVs run 30-second to 2-minute clips about sports, pop culture, and news. And in between these clips, they have advertising opportunities.

While it may only be for a few minutes to get the attention of someone at the gas pump, getting in front of local leads is a fantastic touch.

For an added bonus, find a gas station with gas station TV in your farming area to create an all-encompassing ad campaign.

### Guerrilla marketing

A guerrilla marketing campaign can be described as a one-off, unique and oftentimes clever advertising effort.

Think of a group of a hundred people walking through the middle of Times Square and simultaneously breaking into a song and dance routine and then walking away once the routine is done like nothing happened.

Or, imagine if you planted a thousand plastic, pink flamingoes in the front yard of your client's house and each flamingo had your company logo on it.

These are all examples of out-of-the-box guerrilla marketing campaigns.

### Taxi cabs and moving vans

### Sports team sponsorships

Sponsoring a sports team is a great way to create awareness of you and your real estate brand.

Plus, the sponsorship level may cost less than you think, and you can get some pretty exclusive leads from the sponsorship.

In my home market of Tampa, a real estate agent has sponsored the Tampa Bay Lightning and another agent has sponsored the Tampa Bay Rays. Both sponsorships branded that

## Continuing education

### Classes and seminars

There are countless **first-time homebuyers** and sellers out there. And all of them don't know what they don't know about real estate. That's where you come in!

Partner with some other real estate professionals — like mortgage reps, insurance agents, home inspections and more — to put on a class or seminar for first-time homebuyers and sellers.

An event like this, with as little “selling” and as much education as possible will go a long way for you when it comes time for these leads to look for their first real estate agent.

### Trade shows and conferences

Trade shows and conferences are the ultimate networking destinations. Their purpose is to educate the attendees and connect them with other attendees.

One of the best ways to utilize a trade show is to set up a booth in the expo hall. This allows everyone at the trade show or conference to see you several times, in print, online — and in person, too.

The best part about being a real estate agent is that there really isn't a trade show or conference where you wouldn't be able to find leads. Everyone needs a place to live.

## Active selling

### Absentee owners

An absentee owner is an owner who is not currently living in the property, nor do they have active tenants living in the property. For any number of reasons, these absentee owners are not maximizing the highest and best use of their property.

As a real estate agent searching for leads, reach out to these absentee owners. Let them know that this is a great time and a great market for them to make some money if they sold their homes with you.

Or, if they aren't interested in selling, partner with a property manager and have them get a tenant in their properties so they can at least make some income.

Then, when the absentee owner *does* want to sell the home, the property manager will put you and the owner back in touch.

### Unattended leads

That means by the time a family is getting ready to move into their next house, the real estate agent that had been serving them is probably no longer in business.

(Even more telling, for the homeowner who is looking to sell their property, only 60 percent of them will use the same real estate agent from their previous transaction if the agent is still in business.)

I call these homeowners “unattended” leads.

It means that they no longer have any connection to a real estate agent who could help them buy or sell a home. This is where you come in.

Search through your local MLS to find homes that sold three, four, five, six and seven years ago. Then find out if the agents who bought and sold that property are still in business.

If they aren't practicing real estate any more, you have just discovered an unattended lead.

### **Cold calling**

### **Appreciation events**

Everyone likes to go to parties. They especially like to go to parties that are in their honor.

That's exactly what your appreciation events should feel like.

You should be hosting a party at least once a year, and you should be inviting all of your best clients, most promising leads and your best vendors and suppliers, too. Invite them to the party to show them how much you appreciate their business and their services.

A little appreciation goes a long way.

### **Renters**

Over the past five years, the homeownership rate has gone down and the number of renters has risen. While some people in the real estate industry may see this as a threat, you should be looking at this as an opportunity.

As a real estate agent, you have the ability to work with buyers and sellers of real estate as much as we do renters and landlords. Yet, you might not think of working with renters as a worthwhile lead source.

I am here to tell you that not only are you missing out a growing portion of Americans, but you are also leaving a significant amount of money on the table.

What other lead sourcing method can directly pay you for your efforts?

I like to work with renters for two particular reasons.

The first one is simple: Renters take less time to close the sales cycle, there are fewer hurdles to jump through and your productivity rate is significantly better when dealing with

excellent “try-out” period for you and your potential client.

Let’s say you are showing a renter some properties. You are prompt in your follow up with your potential client, you set up some showings, you help the tenant with the application process, and you provide some good feedback throughout the move-in process.

When it comes time for that renter to purchase a home — hopefully within the next one to two years — who do you think they are going to choose as a real estate agent? You have given them every reason to choose you in their upcoming real estate search because you have already shown them how well you can work.

So the next time you are asked to place a tenant, and you think that you aren’t going to get paid a lot of money, think again. Think in terms of current productivity and future pipeline value.

### **Networking events**

The networking event is the single most effective way to leverage yourself and your marketing skills as a real estate agent.

You have the opportunity to share your story directly with those that may or may not know you. Who is a better representative of your real estate brand than you?

The key to making any networking event a success is to make a real connection with other people. Find some sort of common ground with other people, and learn what their needs and wants are first before you share your own story.

The best networking events are like an exercise routine. It’s the ones that you go to, prepare for and get involved with that give you the best results.

### **Networking groups**

From now on, think that every event that you go is a networking event. Whether it is a co-ed kickball game, a high school reunion, a business after hours or an industry trade conference, everything that you do from now on is a networking event.

As a real estate agent sourcing for leads, you should always have your business cards handy. It is very easy for people to have conversations about real estate. Everybody thinks they know everything about real estate, and everybody has a real estate story.

When someone tells their story, just hand them your business card and start a connection.

Some great examples of networking groups include chambers of commerce, Business Networking International (BNI) and many more.

### **Social organizations**

## Alumni associations

### Professional organizations

Examples of these organizations include the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Urban Land Institute (ULI), Real Estate Investment Council (REIC), the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM) and many more.

## Passive selling

Passive selling is the opposite of active selling. With active selling, you are leading the charge to find new leads. Using passive selling methods means that you are hoping the leads will come to you.

### Floor Duty 2.0

The traditional “floor duty” lead generation activity required a real estate professional to be physically present at their broker’s office. The idea is that a lead will see a real estate office, walk inside and ask a real estate agent for help.

This type of lead generation was more important prior to the internet age, and there aren’t many ways to utilize this method of lead sourcing unless your physical office location is in a heavily trafficked area.

In the internet age, real estate agents don’t need an office space, and consumers don’t need to go to real estate offices to get information about the real estate market.

By utilizing “floor duty 2.0,” you are taking your office to where the people are.

Think of a Panera Bread, or a Starbucks or any other local coffee shop or cafe that has wi-fi access. Open up your laptop and put a table-top sign on the table that says “Ask Me About Real Estate” or “Realtor on Duty.”

If potential leads aren’t coming to your office, make your office come to them.

### Farmer’s markets

One of the best ways to get in front of a bunch of people in a walkable environment is a farmer’s market.

People who go to farmer’s markets are passionate about their local neighborhood and are looking to support local businesses and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Partner with a vendor at a farmer’s market or get a booth yourself. Then, share information about your local neighborhood. Tell shoppers about neighborhoods that have community gardens or that have HOAs that allow them to grow a garden in their own backyard.

### Name badges

Wear your name badge the next time you go to the grocery store and see how many leads come up to you and ask about real estate.

### **Open houses**

### **For sale signs**

### **Bandit signs**

Bandit signs are those plastic or cardboard signs you see on the side of the road by stop signs and traffic signals.

The best way to utilize bandit signs is by placing them near new construction communities.

Have a few bandit signs along the road right before the entrance to the new construction community saying “Building a home? Get a Realtor!” Have either your phone number or website on the signs, too.

More often than not, potential buyers of new construction homes are going to the builders without representation from an agent. Having your name and contact information right there for buyers to see can be an excellent source for leads.’

## **Summing it all up**

Remember: Prospecting for leads is the single most important function of a real estate agent. Your leads can come from anywhere, but make sure your prospecting efforts are smart and responsible.

If you need some help on where to start sourcing for leads, use this list as your go-to guide.

*Nico Hohman is the broker-owner at [Hohman Homes Real Estate Brokerage & New Home Consultants](#) in Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla. Connect with him on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).*

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Great Article, love looking through everything. Even after 17 years in the business I have lots to learn, many more avenues of lead sources to review and engage with. I try and not spread myself too thin and stay very focused, but love your list. Thanks for the writeup

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