ebook

The complete guide to real estate sales

pipedrive

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When it comes to real estate sales, process is king. Real estate agents rely heavily on repeat business, but a disorganized process can often lead to missed opportunities. Therefore, every interaction is valuable to an agent's success.

Real estate agents need to:

- Prepare, stage, promote and price homes
- Conduct a comparative market analysis
- Negotiate expertly
- Close sales

CRM (customer relationship management) tools can help make processes smoother, allowing realtors to move clients through the sales funnel. They also help agents manage their correspondence, automate processes and boost relationships – all from one platform.

In this guide, we'll cover how to manage every step of your real estate sales process and how to set up your real estate CRM to support that process.

An overview of the real estate sale process

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The housing market is always changing, but there are always people looking to buy and sell properties, so you need a process to capture your share of the market.

The recent rise in home prices and mortgage interest rates has impacted housing prices. However, in 2021, a total of 6.1 million properties were bought and sold.

In 2022, 86% of recent sellers used an agent to sell their home. Nearly as many (85%) said they would use their agent again or recommend them to others.

This tells us that realtors are still important in today's housing market. Having an effective and efficient real estate sales process will help you guide clients through the selling process with ease, increasing the chances of them coming back.

In this chapter, we'll look at the real estate process from listing to selling by showing you how to prepare your listings, decide on prices and negotiate sales.

Setting up your listing

Setting up your sales listing is easier if you break it down into three stages:

1. Preparation
2. Staging
3. Promotion

Ask for information such as:

- The customer's financial expectations
- Records like tax, title and insurance
- Any important information about the property or customer's financials that you might not yet know

Preparation

Start by asking sellers about their property, why they're selling and what they want to get out of the experience.

Not only will getting to know your seller strengthen your relationship, but you'll learn when they expect to sell their property. Find out as much as possible about the seller in this first meeting.

Avoid any surprises at the end of the sale by asking the seller direct questions or looking up the address online. For example, if the property has a claim on it, the seller will need to settle this before a buyer can secure the property. Similarly, find out if there are title disputes that the seller hasn't disclosed.

Once the seller's title, tax and insurance paperwork checks out and you've resolved any outstanding issues, you can get the property on the market.

Staging

The best way to get a property ready for sale is to encourage the sellers to stage it properly. “Staging” a home means temporarily furnishing or decorating it to make it more attractive to buyers.

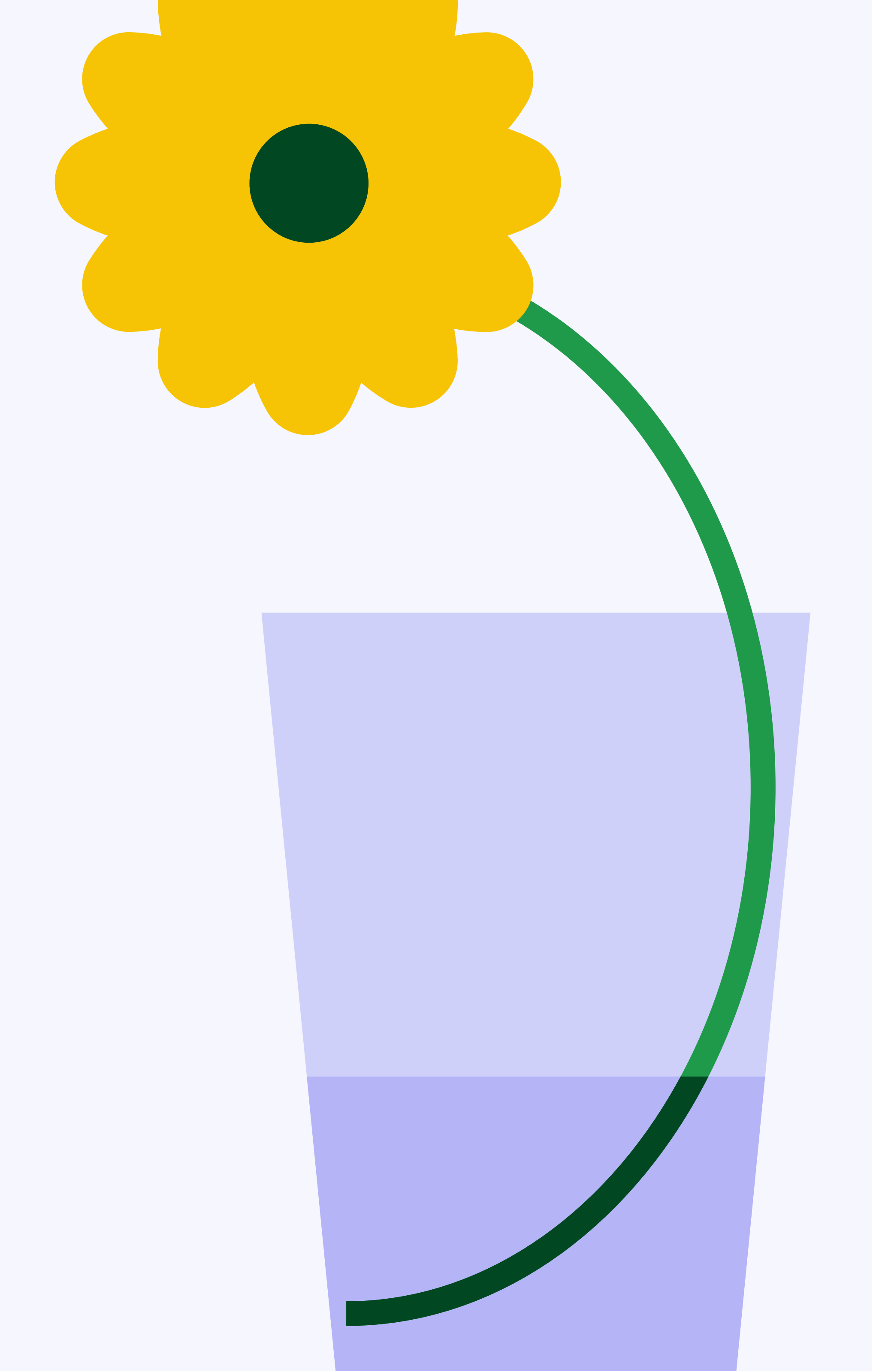
Staging makes it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as their future home and helps sell it faster.

82% of realtors say that staging makes it easier for buyers to visualize the property as their own

23% of agents say that staging raises the value of a home by between 1% and 5%

On average, staged homes spend 33% to 50% less time on the market than non-staged homes, which is good news for the seller.

The longer their home sits on the market, the longer they need to keep paying their carrying costs.



Promotion

Focus on digital sales channels to promote properties. A tried-and-tested approach is using a multiple listing service (MLS).

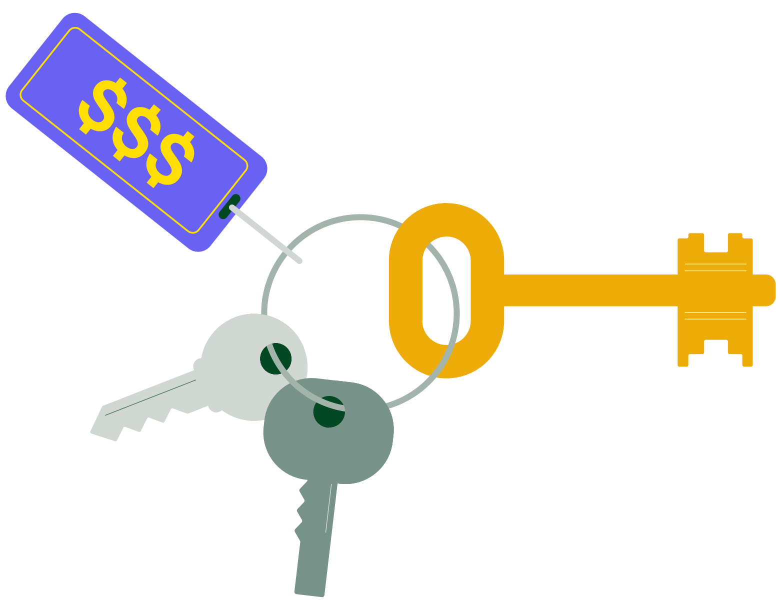
Use an MLS as a foundation for your promotion plan. Plugging the property on your agency's website will be your next move before moving on to using social media to spread the word.

Here's a basic checklist of promotional activity for each property:

- **Local multiple listing service (MLS)**
- **Landing page on your real estate agency's website** complete with staging photos, your contact information and a call-to-action (i.e., book a viewing)
- **Social media sites** including, but not limited to, your agency's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn accounts
- **A custom post on your agency's blog promoting the property** complete with a rundown of the property's top features and fittings, staging photos, your contact information and a call-to-action (i.e., book a viewing)
- **Traditional mailouts:** These can be a hard copy of the landing page you've built for the property. Traditional mailers can be used to entice buyers who don't use the internet.

Pricing a seller's home

Pricing is one of the most important parts of the real estate process. Instead of pricing a home based on how much the seller wants for it, without taking into account the actual value of the home (which violates the code of ethics), price each property using your experience and understanding of the market. Let's look at some of the consequences that may occur when a property isn't priced correctly.



When a home is priced too low:

- Your seller loses out on money
- Potential buyers may interpret this as a sign that there are issues with the property
- It can impact the level of interest in the property

When a home is priced too high:

- It will put off buyers who can't afford it
- The public will be deterred if the price is significantly higher than similar homes nearby
- Your seller may need to drastically reduce the price to get showings

How to conduct a foolproof comparative market analysis

The only way to settle on the right price for a property is to perform a comparative market analysis. A comparative market analysis is an estimate of a home's price and is used to help sellers set the listing price.

There are many things to consider when conducting a comparative market analysis on a seller's property.

Start with the obvious aspects:

- The price of similar recently-sold properties in the same neighborhood
- Any improvements or upgrades the seller has made to the property
- Features that command more money at an auction, like a swimming pool or a large backyard
- The price per square foot of other homes on the market
- Current market conditions – is it a steady market with a balanced ratio of buyers to sellers?

To get an accurate price for your seller, dig deeper than just the basics – looking at other listings in the area should be your first step.

Break these down into four areas:

- Active listings
- Pending listings
- Sold listings
- Withdrawn listings

Remember, you'll only be able to build a report for your seller once you've conducted all the necessary research into a property.

Setting up an open house

During the open house, it's your mission to seek out potential buyers interested in the property. You'll learn more about how to effectively generate buyers later.

Have a notepad on hand and write down anything buyers mention about their:

- Partner
- Interest in a sport
- Children or pets
- Ideal property location
- Favorite thing about the seller's property

This will help you gauge how likely they are to become a serious buyer and give you the info you need to follow up with them more meaningfully.

Following up with potential buyers to set up private viewings

Get in touch with any potential buyers you contacted during the open house and send them a customized invite for a private viewing using the information collected.

Arranging private viewings allows potential buyers to:

- Picture themselves living in the home without a crowd
- Feel valued and that, as an agent, you've made the extra effort to show them around
- Ask any questions they've thought of since the open house
- Feel more comfortable with the idea of putting money down because trust is being built in a more intimate setting

Negotiating the sale

Your goal here is to get both parties to agree on a property's price and terms without rushing anybody.

In an ideal world, prospects would simply agree to pay the asking price. However, if there are several buyers interested in your seller's property, you'll need to compare the offers and negotiate the best sale for your seller. Consider:

- Whether a prospective buyer has agreed to pay the requested price
- If the potential buyer has passed financing pre-approvals
- What date they've requested as an occupancy or closing date
- If the potential buyer has provided a list of items they want taken care of before they agree to the deal (repairs, pest inspection, etc.)

Before considering potential buyers, you need to make sure they're qualified:

1. **Qualify the potential buyer:** Ensure your buyer is pre-approved for a mortgage. It's only during the pre-approval phase that a buyer's credit report, employment and income will be verified.
2. **Accompany your seller to the home appraisal:** An appraiser doesn't know the property like you or your seller does. It's crucial you're there to answer any questions they have and clarify anything they're unsure about.

Closing the sale

The final step involves:

- Conducting a final inspection
- Handling final negotiations
- Providing the buyer with the necessary paperwork
- Taking the property off the market

The process typically follows the below steps.

Schedule a final inspection: Real estate laws require that you (as the agent) and your client (the seller) provide the buyer with full disclosure about anything that's faulty at the property. If your seller doesn't comply, they'll be liable for any defect, so make sure you keep the buyer in the loop.

Handle the final negotiation for your seller: It's up to you as a real estate agent to handle the final negotiation after the property inspection. Usually, the buyer will have their own agent who you'll be negotiating with, but you could be dealing with the buyer directly.

Sign the papers and hand over any necessary documents: The next part of the process is signing the purchase agreement. A foolproof purchase agreement will outline any payments and credits owed to your seller or due from the buyer.

Make sure you include a breakdown of all costs in the purchase agreement. This includes title and tax searches, adjustments (if they were necessary) and prepaid taxes.

The buyer's agent will draw up a formal contract. Take the time to explain everything to your seller and review it with them before they sign it on their end.

Take the property off the market: Once all of the documents are handed over and all the paperwork is signed, the very last step for you as a real estate agent is to remove the property from the market. Take it down from the MLS, your website and stop any paid ads you've been running.

The deal is done! 🎉

Setting up your real estate CRM system

Setting up your real estate CRM system

A real estate CRM is a realtor's secret weapon when closing deals. It's a tool that allows top-performing realtors to stay organized, move tenants and prospective buyers down their sales funnel and, most importantly, close sales on properties.

If you're a real estate agent still using manual processes like spreadsheets and acrylic boards to stay on top of tasks, you could lose thousands of dollars in potential revenue.

Pipedrive is the perfect CRM tool for real estate agents looking for a solution to help with lead management and reporting.

What is a real estate CRM?

CRMs allow you to interact with leads, prospects and current customers from a single platform. They keep all the information about customers on file (buying history, communication, email trails, etc.) so realtors can keep on top of relationships, improve customer retention and build their bottom line.

Think about your daily tasks as a realtor: you juggle meetings, property proposals, emails, payments and open houses – the list is endless. CRM systems are built to collect all the data you need, which helps you manage customer relationships and analyze overall performance.

Agents who learn to harness the power of real estate CRM solutions can expand their network and sphere of influence dramatically and, along with it, their conversions.

Why use a real estate CRM?

Realtors that use a CRM are more productive than those who don't. This is because CRMs help realtors manage daily activities, automate processes, more quickly complete tasks, eliminate errors and send the correct communications to the right people at the right time.

For example, a good CRM platform will help:

- Agents juggling lots of information at once
- Clients and landlords who want immediate responses to their queries
- Agents who are on the go and need a cloud-based software solution
- Agents wanting to keep in contact with former clients to boost relationships
- Agents who need to quickly identify what is and isn't working without laboring over spreadsheets

CRM software can help real estate managers keep track of where they're at with people they interact with on a day-to-day basis. To maximize your relationships, you have to stay in touch with people. Regular check-ins keep you on customers' radars and increase your chances of future repeat business.

12% of buyers return to a realtor they've used in the past

38% of buyers use an agent that was referred to them

You need the right information, at the right time, at your fingertips.

Source: https://www.nar.realtor/sites/default/files/documents/2022-highlights-from-the-profile-of-home-buyers-and-sellers-report-11-03-2022_0.pdf

What are the benefits of using a real estate CRM?

Many realtors turn to CRM software to help boost company growth and for the features it offers.

A good CRM helps improve efficiency and organization with features like:

1. **Smarter reporting:** With so many sales variables like commissions and selling fees, keeping costs in check can be a nightmare. CRMs are ideal for smarter reporting in these areas. The software automatically creates clear, precise reports and dashboards that make this information easy to comprehend.

2. **Easy segmenting:** Segmenting your prospects into different audiences helps you create tailored content that resonates with your target audience. You can choose whether you want to segment a prospect by their budget, their timeline or even their zip code.

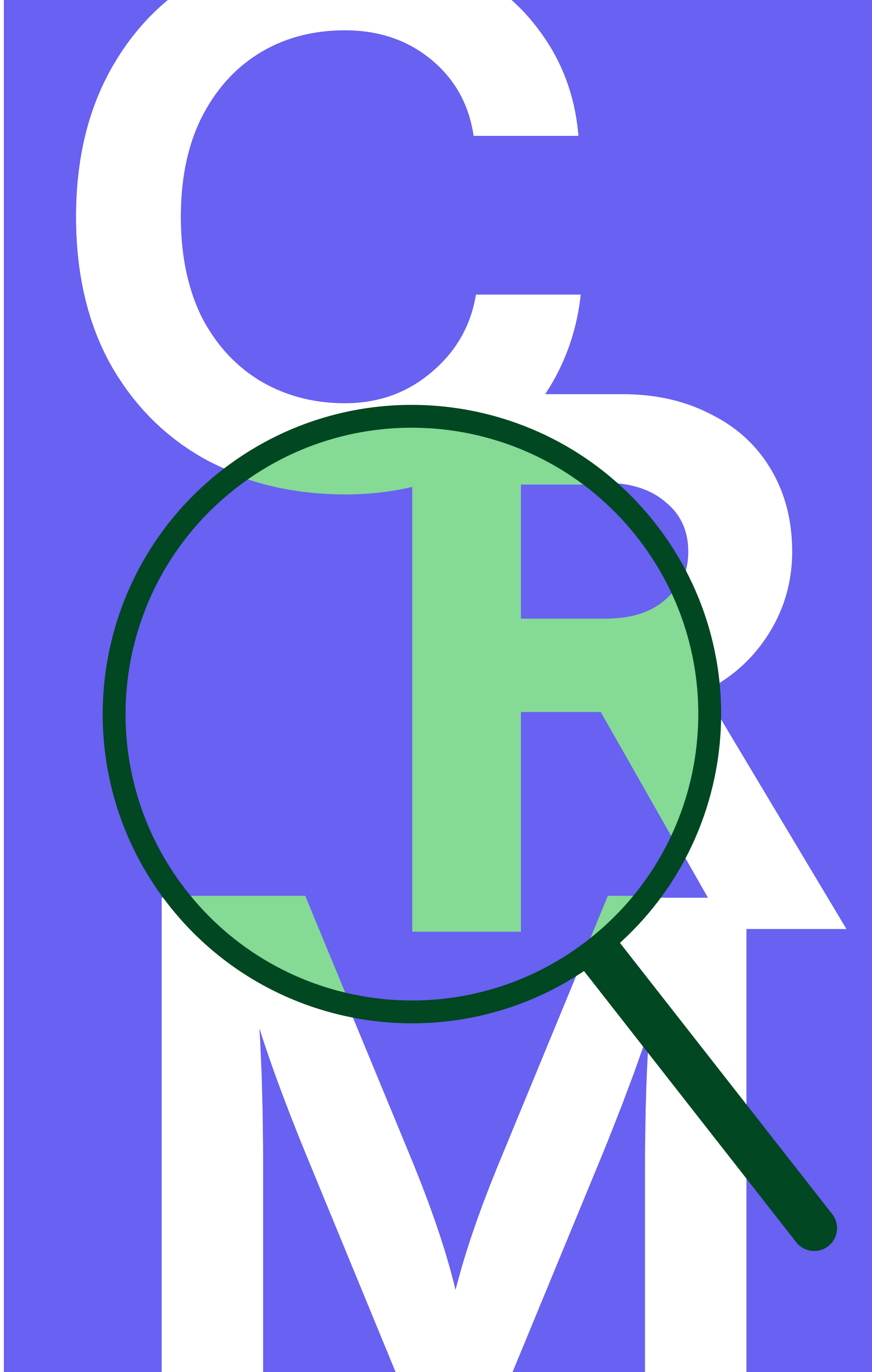
3. **Automated follow-up:** Although following up with potential house buyers or tenants is important, it takes up a chunk of any realtor's day. A good CRM will allow you to automate your follow-up emails using pre-made templates, so you can keep your own tone and style.

How do I choose the best real estate CRM?

In real estate, every minute matters. The last thing you have time for is wrestling with technology. You need a CRM (like Pipedrive) to help you organize all aspects of the real estate sales process, including contact management and lead tracking.

When selecting a CRM, look for a tool that:

- **Is easy to use.** With viewings to organize and hundreds of thousands of dollars on the line, you want a system that lets you get up and running right away with no learning curve.
- **Includes built-in marketing tools.** Choose a platform that has automated marketing workflows to cut down on your administrative tasks. Things like triggered follow-up emails and drip campaigns keep marketing running smoothly.
- **Allows you to go mobile.** Real estate agents are often on the go, so having instant access to the platform from their mobile devices ensures they never miss a beat.
- **Integrates with your existing tools.** Make the most of your existing technology and software by choosing a CRM that easily integrates with the tools you use daily.



Case study: How Pipedrive helped Featherstone & Co. become a premium home seller

Will Featherstone, founder of Baltimore-based Featherstone & Co., has helped hundreds of homeowners navigate the home-selling process.

Featherstone realized he was losing thousands of dollars in potential business using a manual workflow (spreadsheets and a DIY pipeline board) to follow leads.

The company began using Pipedrive's automation and reporting features to:

- Send customized drip email campaigns using email templates
- Keep track of the team's new leads, tasks due, contact percentage and time to action

After implementing Pipedrive's CRM, Featherstone's team consistently ranked first or second in the Maryland and Washington DC region for number of closed deals, volume of real estate transactions and total USD value.

"This one system helped streamline, automate and organize my growing database," says Featherstone.

When selecting a CRM for your real estate business, select a tool that's easiest to work with without compromising on the level of automation and quality of task management it delivers.

How to manage everyday real estate tasks

How to manage everyday real estate tasks

Think of effective task management as a virtual to-do list and a personal assistant rolled into one.

Let's dive into why real estate task management is so important and how it can benefit you in your own agency.

Typical real estate tasks to automate and manage

While there isn't such thing as a typical day in real estate, there are multiple activities an agent has to stay on top of. Many tasks focus on bringing money into your agency; others are simply a matter of basic administration.

Administrative tasks that every realtor must handle include:

- Data entry
- Building up and managing client databases
- Setting up meetings, open houses and appraisals with prospects
- Completing, submitting and filing real estate documents, agreements and lease records
- Building weekly, monthly and quarterly budgets for the real estate agency
- Researching and compiling comparative market analysis reports for prospect's properties
- Responding to emails and phone calls
- Updating the agency's websites and social media profiles

Managing administrative tasks is only one part of a real estate agent's job. To stay in business, realtors must also actively prospect and find new clients. This includes a series of activities.

Here's how a real estate sales funnel might look:

1. **Plan:** Create engaging branded content marketing and blast it to defined targets across several digital channels to draw potential customers to your brand.
2. **Reach:** Use SEO, blogs, social networks and the local community to cast a wider net and generate interest.
3. **Act:** Create regular content (i.e., blog posts, social media posts, targeted emails) and actively promote your website to stay relevant and build trust with qualified leads and prospects.
4. **Engage:** Capitalize on interest by starting a conversation and building trust.
5. **Convert:** Continue to build loyalty with intentional follow-ups that deepen the relationship – eventually leading toward a sale.

Your leads will also likely come from traditional channels such as word-of-mouth, business associates and recommendations from other prospects.

If you start seeing a constant flow of new leads from all your hard work, the best way to manage them is to automate as much of the process as possible.

For example, if a buyer or seller clicks "find out more" on your webpage, you can set this up to trigger an automatic email with helpful information. Or, if they click "subscribe to newsletter" they automatically subscribe to your pre-scheduled newsletter.

Pipedrive's automation tools can help realtors cut down on manual admin with lead qualification, follow-up communications and workflow automation.

The benefits of real estate task management

The benefits of real estate task management go beyond just saving time. Staying organized can relieve stress and increase productivity among your peers and employees (if you run the agency yourself).

It’s easy to get stressed if you’re juggling data entry, lead generation and scheduling open houses on several platforms. Bringing all your required tasks onto one platform like Pipedrive and managing them effectively can make your role as a realtor far more organized.

Generate and nurture new leads: Having a system to follow up with a lead promptly can make or break a deal. Realtors must nurture leads into prospects quickly and provide them with an end-to-end sales experience.

Handle meetings and tours: Regular meetings allow realtors to share their new listings, update other agents on price reductions and discuss buyer needs. They’ll also help your agency’s realtors line up buyers and sellers.

Organize mundane tasks: Using a task management tool helps you manage tiring admin tasks like data input. Plus, since many tools work on the cloud, you’ll be able to stay on top of things even when you’re out of the office.

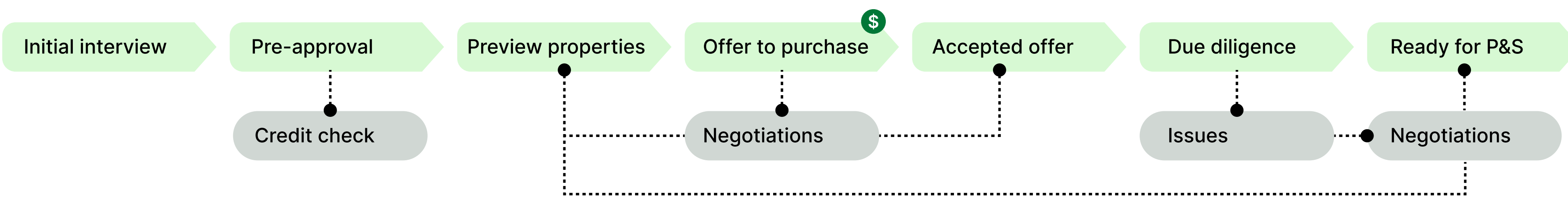
Keep your accreditation in check: While it’s not on everybody’s daily task list, realtors are required to maintain education credits to keep an active license. Many realtors who want to climb the ranks in their office must study additional certifications to improve their industry credentials and marketability.

A typical task management setup

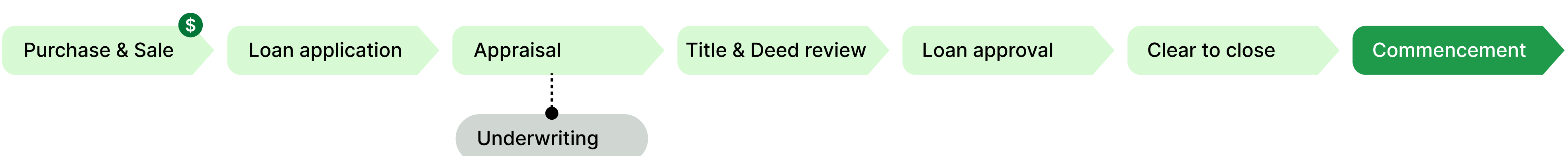
Setting up a task management system will depend on your agency model, but each real estate purchase or sale follows roughly the same formula.

Clients must be pre-approved, and you'll need to promote the property and close the deal. Split up into two phases, the search and purchase phases of buying a property look like this:

The search phase



The purchase phase



Taking into account everything you need to handle to close a sale, a task management setup might follow these steps:

1. Preparing a sales listing

- Staging
- Promotion

2. Set initial meeting and walkthrough with client

3. Conduct comparative market analysis

4. Organize property viewing

- Open house
- Private viewings

5. Qualify the buyer

6. Conduct home appraisal

7. Schedule final inspection

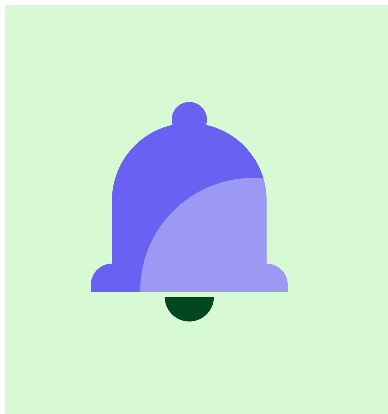
8. Final negotiations

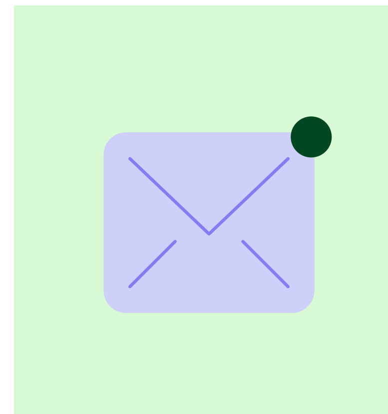
9. Prepare paperwork

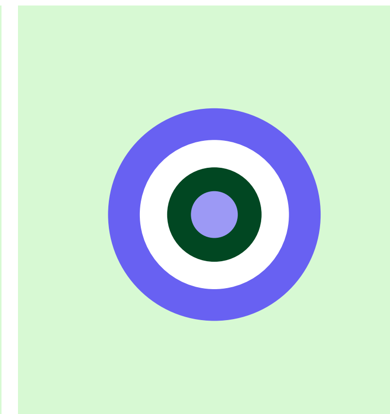
- Property deed
- Collect any property/tax bills from seller for new buyer
- Collect certificate of insurance/plot plans
- Sign purchase agreement

10. Remove listing from website and social media

On the other hand, a task management system set up to build an online funnel will look completely different:







1 Create a landing page for the property

2 Create a popup to encourage leads to subscribe to your agency’s newsletter

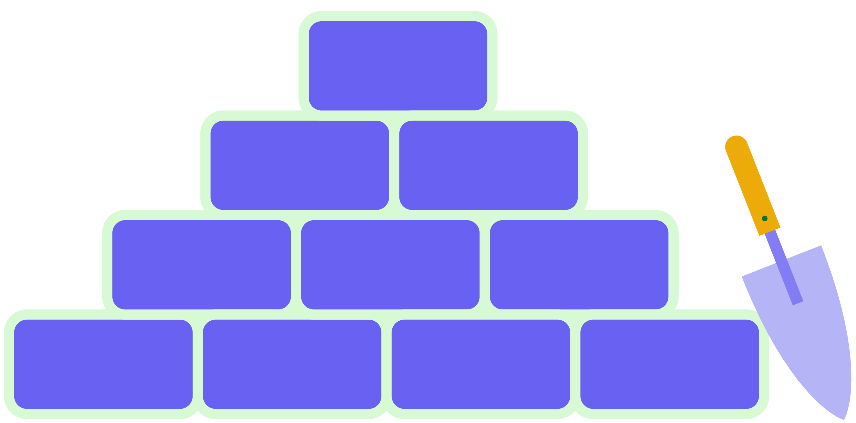
3 Create a newsletter to send to that specific segment of leads

4 When a lead engages with the landing page, automate an email to be sent to the necessary member of the agency involved in the sale

5 Create a remarketing campaign for the property on Facebook for people that have interacted with the landing page

Setting up a property sale from scratch

Adding a property to your CRM requires some initial work but will save you time later. If you spend time setting up each property from scratch before you start selling, you'll be able to nurture leads and make faster sales.

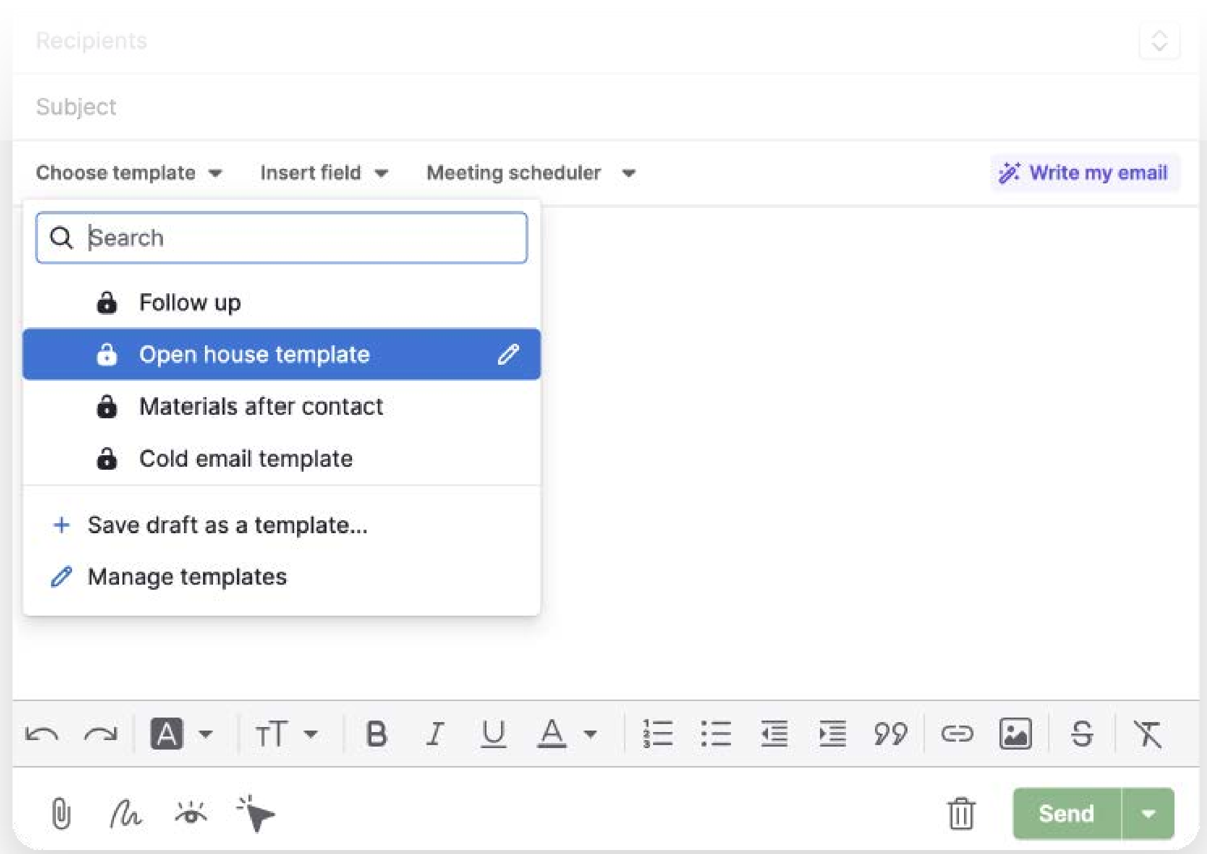


Let's go through the process step by step:

1. Add the seller as a client on your CRM
2. Create a custom form by entering details like by which point your client wants their house sold
3. Build your online sales funnel via a custom web form to pull lead data into your CRM
4. Set up alerts for whenever a lead makes contact and fills in your web form
5. Create automated follow-ups to these leads or follow up manually if you prefer
6. Add any documents to the property deal in your dashboard to keep them all in one place. This will help with comparative market analysis when you're ready
7. Organize any files from your seller, such as copies of property deeds and tax bills, in the same place. This will make the sale more organized when the deal is ready to close

Use task management to take the pain out of open houses. The sales funnel you built earlier will make task management much easier.

Leads collected automatically will be segmented into the property deal inside your CRM. To send out invites, click the property you're selling, click the list and send out invites to the open house using a pre-built template:

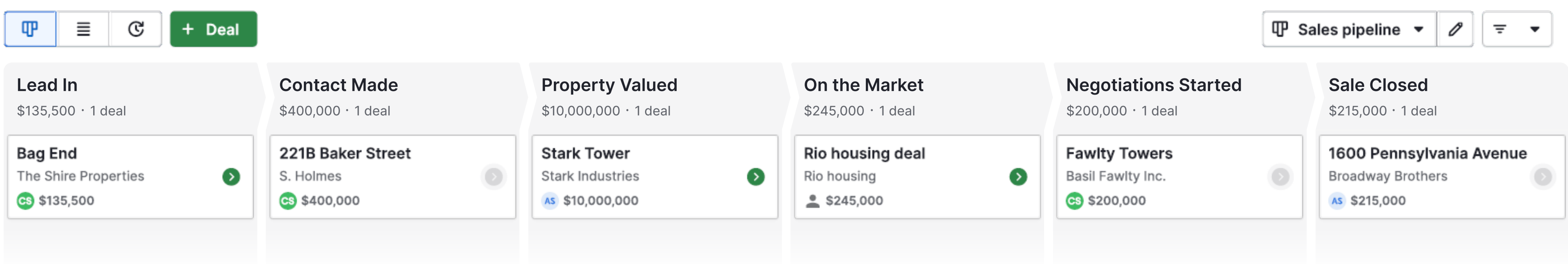


Close your deals strong and stay on track

Final inspections and negotiations are crucial parts of closing a property deal. Having a visual overview of where a deal is at in your pipeline and what tasks you need to complete before you can sign off on it can help you stay on track:

If your agency uses a purchase agreement template, you can set your CRM or task management system to add it to a deal when it reaches a certain point, such as the “After-sale paperwork” stage above.

As you can see, effective task management requires clever planning and the technology to automate repetitive tasks. Start by mapping out your processes, then use technology to automate as much as possible.



Generating real estate prospects

Generating real estate prospects

Prospecting in the world of real estate means getting creative. Door knocking, creative social media campaigns and content are all viable methods of sharpening your real estate prospecting chops for great results.

First, though, you need a prospecting plan. In this chapter, you'll discover several prospecting techniques that you can experiment with right away.

Make prospecting part of your realtor routine

The only way a realtor can become adept at prospecting is to prioritize it on their daily and weekly calendar.

Your lead generation strategy should always be a priority for your time. After all, neglecting it can lead to an empty pipeline and bottom line. This is why being organized and having a prospecting plan is crucial to survival.

How your prospecting calendar looks will depend on the prospecting activity you plan on doing, but you should start by building the calendar itself:

STEP 1: Create a calendar and add in any task that's related to a prospecting task. For example, if you plan to generate leads by advertising on Facebook, add any task that's required to get the campaign off the ground.

STEP 2: Make sure your prospecting efforts are consistent. A good rule of thumb is to dedicate time every day. Allocate a block of time or make sure you reach a threshold (for example, 20 hours per week).

STEP 3: Finally, stick to your plan. A consistent approach to prospecting leads is the only way to fill your funnel. In time, you'll be able to perform tasks faster.

With your prospecting activity scheduled, let's fill that calendar up with some of our favorite real estate prospecting efforts.

Follow up on every lead

Successful realtors follow up relentlessly. Without consistent follow-ups, you're leaving money on the table.

Successfully engaging with a prospect rarely happens on the first attempt. You may need to make up to six calls (over several weeks) to make contact with a lead.

45%

Realtors have a 45% higher probability of making contact on the sixth call attempt than on the first.

Keep meticulous notes. Make a record of anything and everything you learn about a prospect. It could be useful later.

If a lead mentions a spouse, a job or a favorite sports team, keeping this information on file will give you an edge over other realtors when making contact.

Following up with every lead can be tiresome. To do it effectively, you need to automate the process. A real estate CRM takes the heavy lifting out of this task.

Let's say you meet several prospects at an open house. You take notes, and a few mention that they're in the market to buy a new property.

Once you're back in the office, you must add these prospects to your CRM database as new leads and set up your CRM to automatically follow up with them via email or text.

Source: https://rehrealestate.com/9-ways-to-massively-improve-your-lead-follow-up-results/

Nurture past clients

Selling a home doesn't mean the end of a relationship. In fact, with more than **90% of clients** willing to use the same realtor for future deals, past clients can become your agency's bread and butter.

The average homeowner in the US will sell their home and move into another every **ten years**.

Nurture past clients like any other lead in your funnel. Because you've already got to know them, you should have a wealth of information to keep your communications ongoing.

Reach out to them to wish them a happy birthday or when their favorite sports team wins a trophy. This is the power of storing granular data on your prospects.

By keeping in touch after you sell a home, you're more likely to be the realtor they turn to next time. They're also more likely to recommend you within their network.

Build prospecting campaigns on Facebook

Facebook is a good platform for selling property and many realtors are already using it to prospect for leads.

The majority of realtors (57%) use social media apps on their smartphones daily to quickly and easily answer questions from prospective buyers, connect with other real estate professionals and post listing-related updates. Facebook takes the top spot, with 90% using the app to build and maintain relationships with clients.

Take advantage of this popular platform by running effective ads targeted to your preferred audience. Here's how:

You can run an ad on Facebook and have it show to specific ages, genders and those in a certain geographical area. This is ideal when targeting audiences for a property in a specific area.

You can also make your ads much more specific. Facebook targeting allows you to filter people by annual income, whether they've ever owned a house before and even whether their behavior indicates they're likely to move soon.

To start your own Facebook ads campaigns, create a profile on Facebook Ads Manager and link it to your agency's Facebook page. Once you've linked your Facebook page, you can create an advertising campaign.

Your target audience for a property will vary based on the selling price, location and target market. However, a general starting list for your detailed targeting could include:

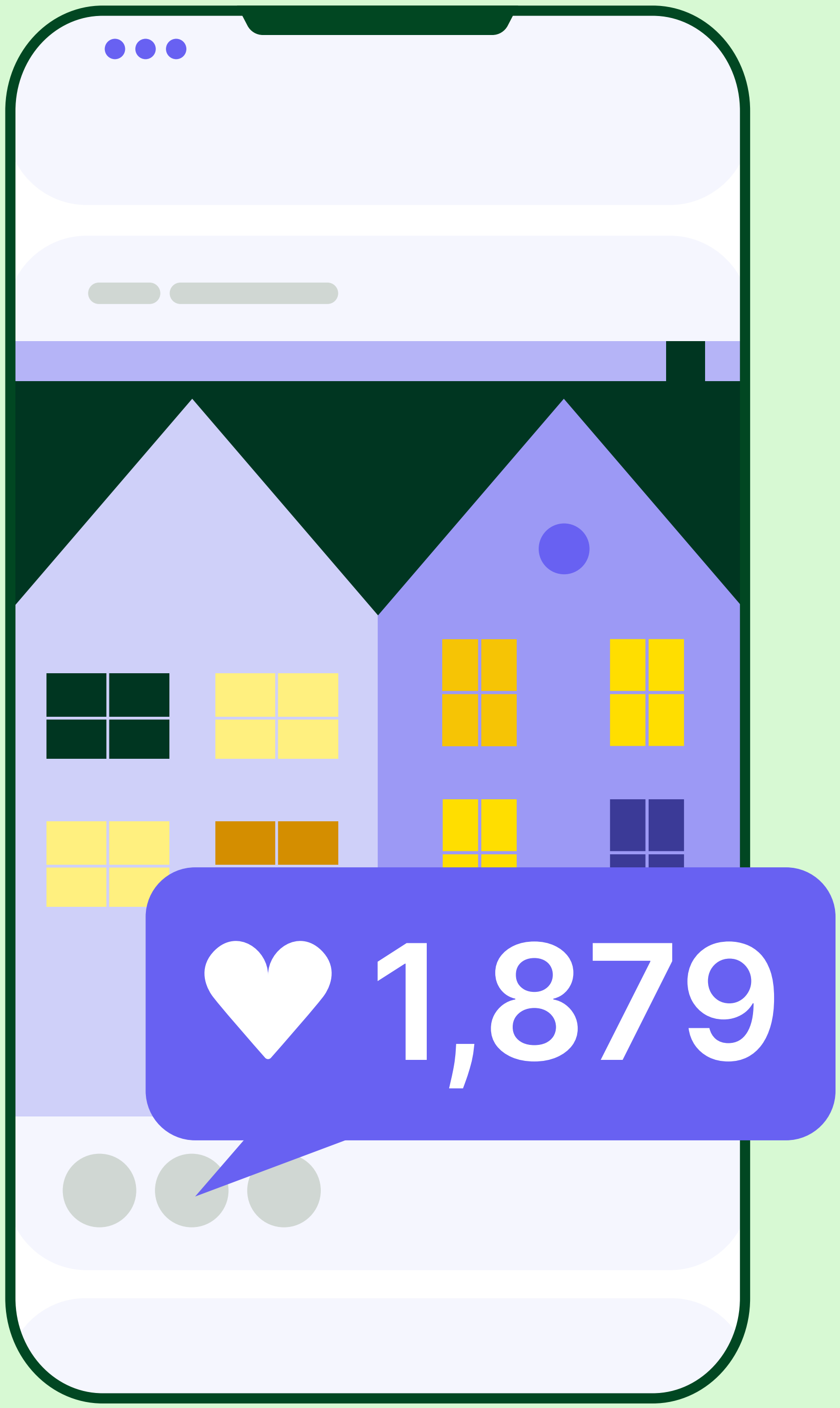
- First-time home buyer behavior
- Annual income
- "Likely-to-move" behavior
- If they've interacted with real estate pages like Trulia or Zillow
- Home-buying-interest behavior (buying a house, starter home, first-time buyer, etc.)
- If the home is near a school or has a certain number of bedrooms, you might want to target families

Getting Meta ads right can require time and effort, but by setting aside time to learn and master it, you'll add a powerful tool to your prospecting arsenal.

Target millennials across social media platforms

For real estate marketers, millennials represent a major portion of the housing market. There are more first-time homebuyers in their thirties (millennials) than older generations. The best way to target this demographic online is to meet them where they are. Facebook isn't as popular among this generation.

50% of millennials use social media platforms every day. YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat are three of the most popular apps among millennials, so you may want to diversify your real estate marketing efforts.



Create value-driven content

If you're pursuing a career as a real estate agent, it helps to select a niche in the market, whether that's first-time buyers or multi-unit properties, and **become an expert**.

Then, think about making informative and value-driven how-to video marketing or publishing regular blog posts to share your knowledge and build your brand.

Content marketing tactics for new real estate agents include:

- Blog posts
- Social media memes
- How-to videos
- Behind-the-scenes tips

Content efforts are cumulative, which means every piece of content you produce to build your personal real estate brand builds on all the others. Be consistent with your tone, look and message and use analytics to track which content **gets the best results**.

Get involved in your community

Successful real estate agents have a passion for the community in which they live. It helps enormously to know the area well.

Because people prefer to buy from people they like and already know, one of your key sales activities as a new agent is getting to know a lot of people.

Connecting with your community in a meaningful way to naturally grow your network of contacts and referrals is a crucial sales activity. **It's also a great way to live.**

Conclusion

Generating leads in real estate is a different ball game to other industries. You need to be out there hustling, getting to know your community and making it known that you're a part of it.

Managing your real estate processes and tasks isn't easy. You've only got so much time in your day and sometimes it can seem impossible to get everything done. This is why adding a real estate CRM into your agency's tech stack can be a game changer.

Make the most of your workday with automations
With a CRM like Pipedrive, you can automate much of the sales process and free up your day to hustle, mix with the locals and get your name known in your area.

Try Pipedrive for free.

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Want to learn more about how Pipedrive works?

Try Pipedrive for free for 14 days and see how we can help your business grow