Print Marketing Best Practice #3: Target Your Audience

There are hundreds, thousands, or maybe more leads mulling around your city or town waiting for the right agent to come along and help them buy or sell a home. With so many real estate agents competing for their business, you’ll want to reach those leads as soon as possible.

But, in your haste to create and send these pieces out, don’t overlook one critical piece of the equation: just who are you sending your campaigns to? Taking the time to select the right audience for a particular campaign goes a long way toward generating qualified leads and helping you get the best return on your marketing investment.

Agent Sam Miller from RE/MAX Stars Realty in Howard, Ohio puts it simply. “Know your market and create a message that is specific to that market, instead of just blasting out marketing noise.”

The next time you create a print campaign (or any lead generation effort!) take the time to target your audience and be strategic about what you’re sending to whom.

When McLean, Virginia-based agent Misstie Pollard decided to invest in print marketing, she didn’t receive a single lead off her first campaign. “I believe it didn’t work because I didn’t have a targeted audience. Real estate is about connections and relationships. I had to find out who I was relating to and why,” she says.

Not sure how to get started? Here are five things to know about targeting your audience.

1. **Identify potential audiences.**

   Take a few minutes and jot down all the audiences you can think of. Start with demographic groups, like first-time homebuyers, move-up buyers/sellers, empty nesters, multi-generational families, and retirees. Next, think about your local area. Are you an expert in a specific neighborhood, subdivision, or school district? Also, identify buyers and sellers interested in particular types of homes, like single-family, condos, new construction, vacation homes, or investment properties. Of these groups, where do you think you can have the most impact? Where do you do your best work?
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2. **Develop your customer list.** Take the time to work within your database and move existing leads into specific campaigns, based on where they fit in your list of target audiences. Once you’ve done that, you may want to supplement your database with a purchased list from Market Leader. This technology is already built into your Marketing Center. Simply enter a ZIP code or address and choose the selections that match your audience.

3. **Speak to their wants and needs.** The most effective marketing campaigns anticipate a specific audience’s wants and needs and speaks to how they can be satisfied. Once you’ve chosen an audience for a piece, try to put yourself in their shoes. Do they want to know the value of their home? Information about a specific neighborhood? Access to listings? Don’t clutter your campaign with too much information—discover what they want and give it to them!

Richie Allan Naggar of Riverside, California’s Ran Right Realty goes a step further and makes sure that, in addition to the message, the voice and tone are appropriate. “Who is the target?” he asks. “Think this one through. Does [your message] invite or frighten? Is it humble or boastful? Does it ask or demand?”

4. **Set yourself apart.** While the majority of your messaging should focus on speaking to your audience’s wants and needs, don’t forget to tell them why you specifically are the right agent to help them. Perhaps you’ve sold more homes in their neighborhood than any other local agent. Maybe you’re an expert in relocation. Whatever it may be, demonstrate what sets you apart from every other agent that might be pursuing them.

5. **Evolve your strategy.** Once you find out what’s working, use what you’ve learned and apply it to new and different audiences. “I started sending out niche postcards to specific subdivisions looking for prospects,” says Anita Clark, an agent with Coldwell Banker in Warner Robins, Georgia. “Then, as my business began to flourish, I added in ‘just listed’ and ‘just sold’ postcards that targeted particular communities.”

When you take the time to hone in on a specific audience, speak to exactly what they’re looking for, and show why you’re the best choice for them, you’re sure to get the most out of your print marketing budget. And, with your Market Leader system there to help you manage your leads and create professional marketing campaigns, growing and evolving your strategy will be faster and easier than ever.