



# FARM

The Real Estate Agent's Ultimate  
Guide to Farming Neighborhoods

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# CHAPTER 1

## SELECTING YOUR FARM

*"By implementing these real estate farming methods in multiple neighborhoods I was able to quickly increase my annual sales volume from \$0 to \$10 million in the first 2 years of my career."*

—**Jillian Bos**, Luxury Home Specialist & REALTOR® Magazine 30 Under 30 Finalist

Stop us if you've heard this before. It's an old cliché. The one about real estate's three most important things.

"Location. Location. Location."

Ever heard that one? Chances are you have, only in a different context. The context of buying and selling property.

This is not, however, the only context for location in real estate. Location is also important to REALTORS® from a marketing standpoint.

In real estate marketing, location means which geographic areas you'll market to. And, in our discussion of farming, it means which area(s) you'll farm.

So, where will you farm?

Answering that is your next step in becoming a real estate "farmer". You need to determine where exactly to focus your farming efforts. What neighborhood(s) or community/communities will you steadily market to?

To make your decision, you could subscribe to a theory of high turnover. This theory, common among many agents, is that the ideal neighborhood



**Where to farm?**

is one with a high turnover. "Turnover" means home sales. So a neighborhood where more homes are selling is seemingly a place where agents will have ample opportunities to get business.

More home sales/turnover could very well mean greater opportunity. Yet it could also mean less. For the fact that there have been a lot of sales may indicate that everyone has settled and there won't be any more. Just as the stock market can have a "bull" period, so too could a neighborhood. Perhaps the turnover data reflects that. If so, it could be a mistake to base your decision on such figures.

In place of high turnover, you might base your decision of where to farm on an alternate theory. A theory of low turnover. You'd look for where there haven't been many sales. Your rationale would be that areas with less sales mean people may be ready to move. If that were the case, you could step in as a REALTOR® - through farming - and "harvest" a bevy of opportunities right as they came to fruition.

Then again, you could be wrong. If so, and you deliberately selected a place with low turnover; you'd be doing yourself a major disservice. Handicapping your business through a decision which appeared "smart" now.

This same argument can be made for the high turnover theory too. It's no better because there's always the chance you could be wrong - to disastrous results.

Both theories are therefore unsuitable for you the aspiring farmer. The reason is that each carries the inherent risk of being "a good idea at the time".

Rather than take such risks, we won't subscribe to either theory exclusively. Our approach to farming doesn't try to time the market. That's essentially what you're doing with either of the two theories. Trying to time a market - so you either get in while the market is booming or get in just before the boom commences.

Instead of choosing a location based on careful timing, let's make this easier. Select your farm simply on the basis of where you receive a listing.

This approach makes sense based on what we said in the last chapter. Recall our point about not rushing the sale. You don't want to rush the sale because having a home on the market gives you a plausible reason to talk about your real estate services.

Under this same logic, getting a listing therefore allows you to begin farming a neighborhood. You can start farming because the listing gives you a legitimate reason to be marketing. People in the neighborhood where you have a listing will be less likely to see your efforts as spam. They'll have a clear sense of why you're contacting them.

And contact them you must. Again and again, through a multitude of different methods. The more you can do this, the better. For each effort increases the sense among neighborhood residents of how hard you're working. In time, they'll come to regard you as a tireless champion of anyone in the neighborhood looking to sell their home.

Residents will arrive at this perception after seeing all the ways you market your listing. With just a single listing, you can begin to plant this idea in their minds. One listing in a neighborhood could very well be what it takes to get started there, as a farmer.

This is why we recommend choosing your farm based on wherever you get a listing. It's easier than trying to time markets. There's also the chance that you'll be able to get a buyer for your listing. If you do get a buyer that provides another thing to talk about with neighborhood residents. Another reason for you to plausibly be in the neighborhood, as a farmer.

To understand how this works, here's an example. It's a way to farm a given neighborhood if you have a client who buys a house there. For the purposes of this book, let's call that fictional neighborhood "Willow Glen Estates".

When your client (the buyer) moves in, you have an opportunity to start farming. This opportunity begins as you hand them the keys to their new home. During that interaction, say the following to your client:

"Thank you so much for choosing me as your agent to buy this home. I absolutely love this neighborhood and I'd love to make this neighborhood the focus of my real estate practice. So would you mind if I ask you a favor to help me with that?"

I'd like to put a sign in your yard with a "SOLD" rider on it for a couple of weeks that not only informs your neighbors that I'm the one that helped sell the home, but that also lets them know that this home did sell and that they have a new neighbor. Many homes don't sell at all, so people don't know whether the home sold or that they have new neighbors. This gives them closure. Would you allow me to do that?"

See what you're doing? With that simple script, you've taken the first strides toward establishing your marketing presence in the neighborhood.

Most likely, the buyer will allow you to put your sign up. Provided they do, you'll now have a way to be visible to neighborhood residents. From there, you can proceed with a wide array of farming techniques.

**The moment  
it all begins**



Before we get to those techniques, let's briefly recap where we've been. So far, our discussion has laid the groundwork. We've introduced the concept of farming, explained what it is, and covered farming's principles like consistency and the "game of touches".

We've also examined how to select a neighborhood (your farm). In doing so, we saw that getting a listing is a great means for that.

Along with listings, we looked at how you can choose a location by following a buyer into their new neighborhood. Here, you'd use the buyer's purchase as a springboard for farming.

Those two methods - listings and following buyers - aren't the only ways to select a neighborhood. Agents can also work with FSBO's or contact expired listings to break into new communities. We'll be discussing these two techniques in more detail in their own dedicated chapters later. For now, just know that they are one more means by which you can select a neighborhood or "break into it".

Having laid the groundwork, we're now ready to dive into farming. In the chapters ahead, you'll learn ten of the best strategies for real estate farming. These strategies will be explained in depth so you'll know exactly how to apply them to your own business.

Plus, to further assist you, we'll also be going over specific farming scripts. The scripts can be copied nearly verbatim in your day-to-day efforts. That means you won't learn a farming method, but be at a loss for what to say. What to say and how to farm will both be quite clear to you by the end of this book.

Without further ado, let's continue onward. Turning in the next chapter to the first of our real estate farming strategies.

Question	Choices	Answer
Agents choose their geographic farm based on the all these strategies EXCEPT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An area with a high turnover rate</li> <li>2. An area with a low turnover rate, therefore lower competition</li> <li>3. An area where they've recently gotten a listing</li> <li>4. An area with a high number of REO properties</li> </ol>	4. An area with a high number of REO properties
Strategically marketing a home you've sold to a buyer is powerful in a farm because all of these EXCEPT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It's proven evidence that you helped successfully sold the home</li> <li>2. You've rid the neighborhood of a competitor's advocate</li> <li>3. It creates an opportunity to introduce buyer and yourself to new neighbors</li> <li>4. You're able to post your "SOLD" rider on sign, for added advertising</li> </ol>	2. You've rid the neighborhood of a competitor's advocate
Two possible groups of potential clients in a farm are also ----- & -----	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The elderly, financially irresponsible homeowners</li> <li>2. FSBO's, Expired listings</li> <li>3. Vacant land, Bank-owned homes</li> <li>4. The Sharks, the Jets</li> </ol>	2. FSBO's, Expired listings

# CHAPTER 2

## “JUST LISTED” AND “JUST SOLD” FLYERS

*“Just Listed and Just Sold marketing provides neighbors evidence of my success in getting homes sold. It gives them confidence that I will do the same for them.”*

–**Ken Hoover**, \$18 million in annual sales volume with 75 homes sold per year

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Roll up your sleeves. It's time to start farming. As promised, here's the first real estate farming strategy - just listed and just sold flyers.

This strategy is perhaps the most common form of real estate farming. The reason for that stems from its simplicity and effectiveness. Like its name suggests, this first strategy involves flyers for properties that are “just listed” and “just sold”. These flyers are distributed to those in a neighborhood (i.e. your farm).

Once distributed, flyers show neighborhood residents that you're actively working. In the case of “just listed” flyers, residents see the properties you're working to sell. They also see how you're marketing those properties.

Then, in the case of “just sold” flyers, residents see your success. The flyers indicate to them that you were indeed able to sell a home. And not just any home either. The same home that appeared earlier on the “just listed” flyers.

Seeing this second flyer, neighborhood residents can have no doubt on whether your methods work. Those who also saw the “just listed” flyer, now have the equivalent of “before” and “after” pictures. A “before” picture, with the “just listed” flyer - when you were beginning to work your REALTOR® magic. And then an “after” picture, with the “just sold” flyer - proving that you get results.

Curious what these flyers look like? We've provided examples of “Just Listed” and “Just Sold” flyers on the next few pages.

# JILLIAN BOS

*Keller Williams Realty*



**OFFERED AT \$1,395,000**

5 BD / 5.75 BA

4800 sq ft

JILLIAN@KW.COM | 559.623.2195 | BRE 01805244 | BROKER 01841795



**A "Just Listed" flyer - The front side**

**OFFERED AT \$1,395,000 5 BD / 5.75 BA 4800 SQ FT**

**4724WModoc.com**

*Must see to believe this extraordinary home in gated 'La Valencia'! Situated on over 1/2 acre, this magnificent home has it ALL. Enter and be amazed by the sky high ceilings, large windows, and custom millwork. Great room with fireplace, built in entertainment center, & rich wood beams. Chef's dream kitchen complete with large center island, breakfast counter, porcelain farmhouse sink, professional grade Jenn Air 48 refrig + freezer, 48 Jenn Air range & warming drawer. 2 Bosch dishwashers. Custom cabinetry with every amenity imaginable. Formal dining room with built in buffet. Charming breakfast nook with built in cabinet. Luxurious master suite with fireplace. Master bath features jacuzzi tub for 2, walk in shower, & dream closet. 4 additional spacious bedrooms. Bonus room with endless possibilities. Massive covered patio with outdoor kitchen. 4 car attached garage. Must see to believe! **CALL TO ARRANGE YOUR PRIVATE SHOWING TODAY!***



**A "Just Listed" flyer - the back side**

## A "Just Sold" flyer - the front side



COMMITMENT BEYOND COMPARE  
VISALIA, CALIFORNIA

4724WMODOC.COM

*Luxurious new construction in gated 'La Valencia'!*

6710WDAMSEN.COM

*Beautiful, former model home in NW Visalia.*




This is not intended as solicitation if your home is currently listed with another broker. JILLIAN@KW.COM | JILLIANBOS.COM 

## A "Just Sold" flyer - the back side

# JILLIAN BOS

*Keller Williams Realty*

**At THE JILLIAN BOS TEAM,**

our mission is to create a much different brand of real estate services - one that exceeds expectations and delivers results and exceptional service at a level never seen before in the industry.



*It was an absolute pleasure working with you and your team. We were "wow-ed" by your professionalism and attention to presentation and detail throughout the entire experience. Thank you! - ANOTHER HAPPY SELLER*

CALL US AT 559.623.2195 | 400 E. MAIN STREET SUITE 110 VISALIA, CA 93291 | BRE 01805244 | BROKER 01841795

Ideally, residents will see both of your flyers. Yet even if a resident misses one, you still win. The reason is that the flyers promote you as a REALTOR®. They're almost like business cards.

Almost.

Except that the flyers exist in a different context than business cards. Unlike business cards, your flyers aren't, in theory, about you the REALTOR®. Instead, your flyers are about the property you're selling. It just happens that you're the agent selling the property. So for that reason, your name and other personal details must be on the flyer. Otherwise people won't be able to inquire about the property.

See how this works? We're using the flyers as a vehicle. A natural way to touch those in our farm. Touching first in the context of a hardworking agent, with the "just listed" flyer. And then touching again, as a successful agent with the "just sold" flyer.

Those two flyers aren't the end of the story, however. Just as the sales process has many parts, so too can you have many different flyers. Your options for this include: open house flyers, "coming soon" flyers, "price reduced" flyers, "under contract" flyers, and "sale pending" flyers.

That's a lot of flyers, isn't it? And all from a single listing.

To simplify all of those types of flyers, here's one approach you could take. Initially, before the home was listed, you'd start with a "coming soon" flyer. This flyer plants your REALTOR® "flag" in the mental soil of neighborhood residents. Residents begin to think about the property and you, the one who will be listing it.

Next, with the listing of the property, you'd send out the "just listed" flyer. Residents now see the property is "up for grabs" and that you're out there working hard to sell it.

In selling the property, it's only logical for there to be open houses. So, in the spirit of informing residents, it's equally logical for you to send out "open house" flyers.

Open houses usually lead to sales, making it natural for you to send three additional flyers. One would be the "sale pending" flyer, after

the offer on the property has been accepted. Another would be the "under contract" flyer, once all contingencies on the sale have been lifted. Then, at the end of it all, you'd have the "just sold" flyer. This final flyer would conclude the flyer marketing campaign, demonstrating its success to residents in a natural, unobtrusive way.

For the flyering approach above, you'd send out a total of six flyers. That means you'd be making six touches to all the people in the neighborhood. Three of those touches ("coming soon", "just listed", and open house) show how you market a house. Then the other three ("sale pending", "under contract", and "just sold") show you get results.

Six touches is great, but why stop there? You can keep going, making additional touches by delivering the flyers to those in your farm in other ways.

Deliver your flyers by mail, for example, and they essentially become mailers. Your flyers can also be hand-delivered to every doorstep in the neighborhood.

Hand-delivery may sound cumbersome, but it's far easier than you might imagine. Think about hand-delivery for our fictional neighborhood of Willow Glen Estates. We could easily hire an eager teenager do this. The teen would probably take about an hour to put the flyer on every doorstep in Willow Glen Estates. The result? Delivery to two-hundred houses at a cost well below U.S. postage.

Not that we wouldn't also be using the mail. For like we said, you want as many touches as possible. Hand-delivery of the flyers should therefore be coordinated with mail delivery too. Together, these two forms of delivery for the six flyer types gives you twelve different touches.

Twelve touches is definitely commendable. But again, why stop there? After all, we just saw that it's possible to get more touches by adding more forms of delivery. Why not pursue this idea further?

It's like how a video can be posted on YouTube and then delivered through additional channels like email and Facebook. The same goes for our flyers. Our core content in the flyers may change very little, but the way the content is delivered does. This change in delivery causes the outreach to feel different, as new forms of touch.

So far with our flyers, we've discussed delivering their core content by mail and by hand. Let's now add telephone calls and emails to the mix. Telephone calls let you literally speak to neighborhood residents about the content of each flyer. Emails, for their part, accomplish the same albeit in written form.

Like hand-delivery, making calls and sending emails may sound like an arduous task. You may be OK with the "doing" part - that is, getting on the phone and writing emails. But just think of how tedious and time-consuming it'll be to search, one-by-one, for correct phone numbers and email addresses. In a neighborhood like Willow Glen Estates, you'd have to track down the correct contact information for two-hundred residents.

Who's got time for that?

Not you. But there are people willing and able to do it. An example is our coaching company (Icenhower Coaching & Consulting). We help our coaching clients obtain the emails and phone numbers for a majority of residents in the specific neighborhoods where they live and work. Apart from us, there are other real estate information and lead source companies too. Any of them can also provide agents with the desired information. That information could even include residents' mobile phone numbers, as these are now readily available.

Regardless of how you get them, phone numbers and email addresses will vastly expand your farming abilities. This is because you can now deliver the same content to every resident in the neighborhood through four different channels (mailers, flyers, emails, and phone calls). With six touches per channel, in the flyering campaign we described, this translates to twenty-four touches. Twenty-four opportunities to enter the minds of those in your neighborhood. All from just one listing. And all before your "for sale" sign has to come down.

In discussing the various touches, let's spend a moment covering telephone calls. Calling is an important part of farming, but you might not know what to say on each call. If so, you'll appreciate the two scripts we've provided below. One script will help you with calls when you're marketing a property that's "just listed". The other script is useful when you're marketing at the "just sold" and "sale pending" stages.

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## Phone Script #1: "Just listed"

"Hi, I'm John Smith with ABC Realty, and we just put your neighbor's home on 123 Main Street up for sale. Did you notice that it was now on the market?"

[Wait for a response and proceed with:]

"Great! On the John Smith Real Estate Team we do everything we can to get homes sold, and we know that the ultimate purchaser of a home is often a friend, family member or acquaintance of someone that already lives in the same neighborhood. So do you know anyone looking to buy or sell a home in the near future?"

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## Phone Script #2: "Just Sold" or "Sale Pending"

"Hi, I'm John Smith with ABC Realty, and I'm proud to say that we just sold your neighbor's home over on 123 Main Street. But we have a new problem. We generated so much interest in marketing the home that we had several interested home buyers that also want to live in your neighborhood. So we are now reaching out to all of the neighbors to see if you know anyone else looking to sell their home in the near future?"

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How do those scripts sound? Ready to use them in your farming efforts? When you do, be sure to emphasize how you're actively marketing the given property. Everyone you talk to (all the neighbors) should understand that you're doing much more than merely listing the home for sale. Most people believe this is most of what a REALTOR® does. To dispel that incorrect notion, make sure you explain all of your marketing efforts. You want people to be clear on how hard you're working.

As you explain this, the people you talk with will respect your work. It's probably the first time they've seen a REALTOR® work so hard on just one property. Your efforts are bound to make a strong impression. Neighbors will see you in a positive light and wonder what additional stuff you're doing. They may also view other agents (or even their own) less favorably and wonder why these agents aren't working as hard as you.

Another point on the phone calls - be sure you explain to neighbors why you're contacting them. Neighbors should know that you're actively looking for buyers of the listed property. They should then understand that the eventual buyer of a home is often the friend, family member, or acquaintance of someone who already lives in the neighborhood. Thus, it makes perfect sense for you as the listing agent to be contacting people in the neighborhood.

Your explanation here puts the entire phone call in proper context. Once explained, neighbors won't view the call as unwarranted. They'll be clear on why you called and they may be more inclined to talk.

Neighbors aren't the only ones who should know why you're calling. Make sure the purpose of the call is clear to you too.

Remember that the point of calling, along with your 3 other forms of marketing - emails, mailers, and flyers - is to get another listing. You're seeking another listing by the time the sign for your current listing comes down. This is because once the sign comes down, you don't have a lot to talk about. You can no longer engage in an array of different conversations about the listing. Conversations, for example, about the property's "just listed" or "under contract" status.

Those opportunities for speaking with your farm won't be available after your property's "for sale" sign has come down. Understand this in your phone calls, letting it guide both the calls and other farming efforts.

At the same time, recognize that the game doesn't end when your sign comes down. You may not have the opportunities we've described. But you don't have to figuratively shut up and stop talking with your farm.

What else can you say, if you don't have a listing? As it turns out, there are plenty of things you can talk about beyond a listing. In the next chapter, we'll be covering those topics. Read on to learn what you say when you farm without a listing.

Question	Choices	Answer
Two models that are foundation pieces in your farming efforts are titled:	A. "Meet your Expert" and "Community Events" B. "Just Listed" and "Just Sold" C. "Free CMA" and "20 Tips before you Move" D. None of the above	B."Just Listed" and "Just Sold"
Impactful flyers in establishing mindshare in a farm focus more on ----- than -----	1. Failures of previous agent, success of your marketing 2. Performance and marketing of a listing, agent profiles 3. Steak, sizzle 4. Hyperlocal Statistics, national statistics	2. Performance and marketing of a listing, agent profiles
Flyers, phone calls, content delivery, and direct mail are overkill, where flyers alone will suffice. True or false?		False.

# CHAPTER 3

## SEASONAL CONTENT AND MARKET UPDATES

*"Distributing updated neighborhood sales activity reports gives residents something of value that they appreciate. Everyone wants to know what their neighbors' homes are selling for since it impacts the values of their own homes."*

**-Aimee Paine,** Increased production 287% by farming multiple neighborhoods at once

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When was the last time you got a box of candy or a thoughtful holiday card in the mail? Not from a friend or family member. But from a mere acquaintance or even a total stranger. Candy, a card, or some other item - given with ZERO obligation. A gift given for its own sake.

If you're like most people, this has probably never happened to you. Or if it has, you can probably count the number of times on one hand - with only a few fingers on that hand.

Which is to say, it's a rarity of rarities. An event as likely as the worst team in your favorite sports league winning the championship. Not to say the team can't win, or the selfless gift can't arrive. But come on, those kind of things just don't happen, right?

We can't speak for the sports team. But we can speak on gifts. And our point in this discussion is that gifts with "no strings", whether from strangers or even mere acquaintances, are so rare as to be virtually non-existent. Therefore, if we should somehow receive a gift of this nature - we're unlikely to forget it. Instead, we're bound to remember both the gift and its sender.

As a REALTOR®, the people in your farm are no different. When it comes to receiving gifts they're equally likely to remember the item and who sent it. Since, as noted, this kind of true generosity just doesn't happen.

Why not use this to your advantage? Capitalizing on the power of gifts for their own sake. Using this approach to build top of mind awareness with those in your target market.

What we're suggesting is that you mail various items as gifts, with no "strings attached". Add this approach into your farming efforts. Not only will you build tremendous mental "stickiness", but you'll also have something just as important. You'll have more topics to talk about with those in your market. More topics than just your listing.

Consider how significant that is. It matters in the context of the last chapter, where we discussed the end of a listing. We described how the end of a listing marks the end of many opportunities to talk with neighborhood residents. In the previous chapter's example, we'd lose twenty-four different touches when our listing was over. We'd also have seemingly nothing to talk about with neighborhood residents. No reason to contact them in a natural, spam-free manner.

Our new approach eliminates this problem. We may become "list-less" (not having any listings) but our farming efforts won't be rendered "list-less". Nor will neighborhood residents become "listless" in response to our efforts. As they receive gifts from us, residents will be more responsive than ever.

Now, a word of caution on our terminology here. We keep referring to "gifts", but don't get hung up on that word. We've described what you send as "gifts" to indicate the benevolent nature of your giving. The idea that you're coming from a place of value and expecting nothing immediately in return. All the same, you don't have to only give gift-like items or cards. You can be quite flexible in terms of what is given, and also when it is given.

In fact, "gifts" may actually be too narrow a term for describing your efforts. It may be better for you to think of them in a broader sense as "seasonal content". This is the perspective of many experienced real estate farmers.

These farmers make regular use of seasonal content, viewing it as excellent "farming filler". They send the "filler" out regularly for holidays and other important times of the year.

No matter when it's sent, "farming filler" is nearly always appreciated. Those who celebrate Christmas, for example, will appreciate receiving a Christmas card. Most people can't get too many. They'll often put the card across a mantle or mount it elsewhere.

Apart from Christmas cards, there's a multitude of other occasions for sending seasonal content to residents of a neighborhood. These occasions and possible content include the following:

- New Year's - A "Happy New Year" flyer, a calendar, or (if close to New Year's Eve) a party hat and a streamer
- President's Day - A stamp or even a penny attached to a flyer/mailer
- Valentine's Day - A card or candy
- St. Patrick's Day - A "lucky" clover
- Easter - An Easter card or Easter-themed sweets
- Mother's Day - A card or a recipe
- Father's Day - A car wash coupon
- Fourth of July - A mini plastic flag that residents can post in their yard, with your business card attached
- Halloween - A small bag of Halloween-themed candy
- Thanksgiving - A copy of a popular prayer or dinner toast; or a schedule of city service hours during the holiday season
- Christmas - Mistletoe, recipes, candy canes, Christmas cards



*An example of seasonal content  
for Halloween*



*An example of seasonal  
content for New Year's*

Beyond these official holidays, you can also send “filler” content at other times. A few of those times include the back-to-school period, setting clocks forward/back, and federal holidays.

In these other occasions, a flyer with helpful information will endear you to neighborhood residents. The flyer will provide genuinely helpful information while also showing you care enough about residents to even send it.

Speaking of sending, you don't just have to use the mail. You can also have seasonal flyers or other items hand-delivered by a teenager in the neighborhood. You might use email as well, to send seasonal content. Email would work great with cards, coupons, and recipes.

Then there's the telephone. Don't forget that one. Simply calling residents on the phone to remind them about daylight savings time can be tremendously effective. After all, who does that? Friends and family maybe. But like gifts, the gesture is practically never made selflessly by a mere acquaintance or stranger. It just doesn't happen.

Until you do it.

Now, with all this talk about seasonal content, you might think it's the only approach when you lack a listing. The only thing you can talk to neighborhood residents about.

Such a view is blatantly wrong. Make sure you don't only do seasonal content. We've covered it at length in this chapter to illustrate all the ways you could use it. And we've also worked to convey just how warmly seasonal content can be received. How much of an impact it can make in the eyes of residents, giving you unbelievable mind-share with them.

Still, for all its merits, seasonal content doesn't relate to real estate. Nor does it show a client how hard we work to sell a home. On these two accounts, seasonal content essentially fails. It does nothing to bolster our specific image as a REALTOR®.

To satisfy this second aim too, we'll make use of market updates. Examples of market updates are shown on the next page page.

# A real life example of a market update



# Another example of a market update


BONAVENTURE

Neighborhood Market Update

Status	Street	Beds/Baths	Sq. Footage	Price
ACTIVE	E. Harvard	4/3	3714	\$720,000
ACTIVE	E. Hillcrest	4/3.5	3428	\$569,000
PENDING	E. Vassar	4/3	3607	\$490,000
SOLD	E. Harvard	LOT	18083	\$149,600
SOLD	E. Harvard	LOT	27067	\$165,000
ACTIVE	E. Harvard	LOT	16676	\$170,000

*The purchase or sale of real estate is often the largest transaction of a person's life... I would love the opportunity to earn your trust.*

Jillian Bos is a graduate from Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. Post graduation, she pursued a career in product development while studying to become a REALTOR at UCLA. Jillian started her career in real estate at Sotheby's International Realty in Brentwood, specializing in the Westwood, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, and Brentwood neighborhoods. After 9 years in Southern California, Jillian moved "home" to Visalia and got married in 2010. Jillian and her husband were both born and raised in Visalia, so returning home was an exciting move as they are happy to be surrounded by family and old friends.



Jillian Bos - REALTOR®

Your Bonaventure Neighborhood Expert

Cell: 555-733-4979    Jillian@JillianBos.com

Market updates consist of information that agents provide to prospective clients, pertaining to the value of the prospect's home. As information goes, this particular information is among the most valuable that an agent can give.

People find the information valuable because it helps them determine how much their home is worth. Normally, finding a home's value can be difficult. This is because despite seeing moving trucks and other visible activity, most people don't know the result of the sale. They don't know, for example, what the home they saw has sold for, or if it even was sold.

So prevalent is this issue, this lack of clarity, that it's actually a major frustration among homeowners everywhere. Homeowners want to know about homes in their area which have sold, and they get frustrated that no one will tell them.

Until you do it.

And not just once either. Make market updates a regular part of your farming efforts. Provide the updates frequently, sending them at routine intervals to residents of your farm. Your updates could definitely be delivered to residents on a monthly basis. At the very least, you need to be providing them quarterly.

With market updates, avoid the trap of only sending the updates when you lack listings. Naturally, market updates are perfect for those times. Since the updates, like seasonal content, give you plenty of fodder for communicating with your farm. But farming is about consistency, and as part of farming, market updates need to be sent consistently.

When sending your updates, you might use mail, email, or have them personally delivered in a flyer. Any of those methods are fine. But once again, using all three methods at once is even better. Remember, it's a game of touches.

For the update itself, you can provide listings of all homes actively for sale, all homes under contract, and all homes that did sell. This information together is referred to as a "CMA" (comparative market analysis). It's all available to you the agent in your local MLS (multiple listings service) database.

Take the information, prepare your market updates, and get them out. As you do, you'll further your efforts in farming and acquire ever-increasing mind-share.

That does it for our discussion of both market updates and seasonal content. Up next, we'll be diving into another powerful strategy for farming. This particular strategy is excellent at conveying how hard you work as a REALTOR®. It shows just what lengths you'll go to in order to help your clients sell their home. For the strategy and some great scripts to accompany it, check out the next chapter.

Question	Choices	Answer
Once a listing sells in your farm area, a campaign of _____ is recommended to keep "top-of-mind"	A. Seasonal content B. Updates on market changes C. Community events D. A combination of A, B, and C E. Glamor shots of the agent, either on the roof of a home, or back-to-back with an affiliate	D. A combination of A, B, and C
The key to market update delivery is _____ rather than _____	1. High quality, high quantity 2. Consistency, sparsely 3. Low cost, high ROI 4. Personal delivery, direct mail	2. Consistency, sparsely

# CHAPTER 4 CALLS TO NEIGHBORS

*"There is no more effective way to show how hard I work to get homes in a neighborhood sold than be picking up the phone and calling the neighbors directly."*

**—Karen Hadley**, 64 homes sold per year

"Who does that?"

Remember this question from the last chapter? We asked it while discussing how you can deliver seasonal content by phone. Our point was that calling with seasonal content puts you light-years ahead of your competition. You stand out dramatically to prospects because your competitors aren't using the phone - or even thinking of using it - to deliver seasonal content.

Don't limit yourself to just seasonal content either. There are many other ways you can use the telephone to stand out.

In this chapter, we'll be covering a few of those ways. Our discussion here will highlight those specific ways, in the context of a single, overall strategy. The strategy being our third for farming - making calls to neighbors.

With calling, it's worth remembering that there are companies who'll save you from the "grunt work" of getting phone numbers. Those companies can provide you with both landlines and cell phone numbers for residents in any given neighborhood.



Once you have phone numbers, you can begin making your calls to neighbors. A great way to start is with any properties you've just listed or just sold. Properties like that are perfect because they show everyone how hard you're working to sell the given home. You come across as a "go-getter". Someone who's so driven to help their clients that they'll call everyone in the neighborhood to find a buyer. It's a powerful statement to make. One that's bound to impress nearly everyone you call. Because again..."Who does that?"

You do it. And to aid in your efforts, we've got a few scripts. Those scripts were originally provided in Chapter 2. For the sake of convenience, we've included them again here. That way you don't need to flip back and forth between separate chapters as you make your calls to neighbors.

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## Phone Script: "Just listed"

"Hi, I'm John Smith with ABC Realty, and we just put your neighbor's home on 123 Main Street up for sale. Did you notice that it was now on the market?"

[Wait for a response and proceed with:]

"Great! On the John Smith Real Estate Team we do everything we can to get homes sold, and we know that the ultimate purchaser of a home is often a friend, family member or acquaintance of someone that already lives in the same neighborhood. So do you know anyone looking to buy or sell a home in the near future?"

---

With this first script (above), it's essential that residents of a neighborhood understand your purpose. They must know that you're making the call to provide a higher level of customer service to your client, whose home is for sale.

You can also employ this approach when making the second set of calls to neighbors. These latter calls are for properties which are either "just sold" or "sale pending". As with "just listed", the goal is to frame your discussion in terms of customer service. In doing so, you'll stand out as a "Super Agent" - working hard to represent your active buyers.

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## Phone Script: "Just Sold" or "Sale Pending"

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"Hi, I'm John Smith with ABC Realty, and I'm proud to say that we just sold your neighbor's home over on 123 Main Street. But we have a new problem. We generated so much interest in marketing the home that we had several interested home buyers that also want to live in your neighborhood. So we are now reaching out to all of the neighbors to see if you know anyone else looking to sell their home in the near future?"

---

Can you feel the power in this second script? It comes from the fact that we're showing our marketing activities work. And not only do the activities work, but they generate a huge response. The kind of response which, as the script points out, has led to "a new problem". We're now in trouble - in a good way - because we have buyers who are looking for more listings.

Wait, is that right? Do we as agents actually have buyers in need of listings? Yes and No. It really depends on how "We" is defined. Generally speaking, "We" means a lot of agents. These could be agents who cooperate together in your local association of REALTORS®, agents in your office/brokerage, or everyone in your personal real estate team.

By defining it in these ways, "we" becomes a very powerful tool in your scripts. It allows you to engage in farming by calling neighbors, regardless of whether you personally have a buyer looking for a home. For it's very likely that some agent in your area has a home they're trying to market.

Also, recognize that real estate agents always need more listings. Accordingly, home owners always want to list their homes with agents who have buyers looking to buy. So if you make your calls from this standpoint, there's a natural reason for the calls - one that's in line with the prospect's own preferences.

A final word on the "just sold" or "sale pending" script. Ideally, it will lead to the person you speak with providing a name or even multiple names of people looking to sell their home in the near future. This outcome represents the best case scenario. If everything goes right.

But, as you probably know, not everything will go right on your calls. Instead, it's possible that you'll eventually get a person on the phone who doesn't know or can't think of anyone interested in selling their home in the near future.

When this happens, it's not the end of the world. Nor does it have to be the end of that particular person, as someone you're in touch with. If they're willing to stay on the phone, you can work to set an appointment with this person. The appointment will involve meeting them at their home to provide a free market evaluation of what the person's home would sell for in the current market.

To help you secure the appointment on your call, we've provided a useful script. That script is our "Follow-up for Neighbors" and it appears below.

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## Phone Script: "Follow-up for Neighbors"

"It is my intent to specialize and focus my practice in this neighborhood. So I'm providing all of the homeowners with a complimentary value of \$500 with the hope that they might consider interviewing me when and if they ever decide to sell their home in the future. You see, an appraiser would typically charge you around \$500 to appraise your home, and I'm attempting to help you alleviate that cost to determine what your home would be worth in this market. Would that be of benefit to you?"

[If they are interested, proceed:]

"I'd be more than happy to take a brief look through your home to give you a quick value with absolutely no obligation on your part. I also wouldn't want you to straighten up your home just for me. I'm a REALTOR® and we're very used to viewing homes before they're ready to show. I assure you it won't affect the value at all."

---

At the close of this script, the person you're addressing may still be interested. If so, you can arrange with them to either preview their home on the spot or to set another date and time for previewing the home with them in the future. In both cases, make sure you obtain the person's contact information. Having their information allows you to include the contact in your client database management system.

You can then stay in touch with them. And over a long enough period, who knows? With enough touches, this new contact could become or refer your next client.

Touches. There's that term again. It's important enough to mention over and over like the proverbial broken record. Touches are just that important. Since the more of them you make, the more mind-share (i.e. top of mind awareness) you gain, in the minds of those on your farm.

Let's keep the "game of touches" going by proceeding to the next chapter. Up next, we'll touch on a farming strategy that involves touching in the most literal sense.

Question	Choices	Answer
Contacting members in a farm by phone, to market a listing, is a crucial strategy because it conveys:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prowess over your ability to acquire phone numbers</li><li>2. Your hard work ethic, and willingness to do what it takes</li><li>3. You've got a lot of free time and curiosity</li><li>4. None of the above</li></ol>	2. Your hard work ethic, and willingness to do what it takes
With different changes in a listing status as a topic of conversation, you're able to frame your discussion in terms of -----	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Speed of the market</li><li>B. Your customer service</li><li>C. Bragging about your success</li><li>D. All of the above</li></ol>	b. Your customer service
Once your listing sells, another effective strategy to contact neighbors revolves around	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Relaying fixes the previous seller made, they might consider</li><li>2. Finding a possible home for buyers still interested in the area</li><li>3. Sharing appraisal opinion of the home's REAL market value</li><li>4. All of the above.</li></ol>	2. Finding a possible home for buyers still interested in the area

# CHAPTER 5 DOOR KNOCKING

*"Door-knocking has been a key to branding myself with residents and becoming known as their neighborhood real estate expert. There is no more effective way to start farming in a new neighborhood than getting belly to belly with the homeowners."*

– **Apple Corial**, \$10 million in annual sales volume with 41 homes sold per year

Popcorn. A tasty snack? Or the key to real estate success?

As it turns out, popcorn can be both. It can taste great while also helping REALTORS® to succeed.

Popcorn and real estate probably aren't things you'd expect to go together. Not in the same way, for example, as popcorn and movies. But there's definitely a connection.

The connection lies in our next strategy for real estate farming. A strategy of door knocking. This is the strategy we alluded to at the close of the last chapter. The one which involved touches in the most literal sense. Door knocking is all about touches because you're literally touching the door to knock on it. You're probably touching neighbors too, to shake their hands.



What's involved with door knocking? It's simple. You walk door-to-door in a neighborhood, meeting residents. Each time you meet someone, you then talk about the listing and potentially invite the resident to an open house (if you have one planned).

Your door knocking efforts come from the knowledge that the ultimate purchaser of a home is often the friend, family member, or acquaintance of someone who already lives in the neighborhood. So by reaching out to residents, you're planting valuable "seeds" that may grow into a sale.

Also, when door knocking about an open house, think about what you're doing. You're inviting everyone in the neighborhood to the open house. With these invitations, it's like you're inviting a large group of real estate agents to attend.

Consider how this works in Willow Glen Estates, our example neighborhood. Willow Glen Estates has two-hundred members who we can invite to our open house. That means we'll be knocking on two-hundred doors and inviting those who answer to the event.

Isn't that a lot of work? Maybe, yet consider what you accomplish. With all two-hundred members of Willow Glen Estates coming to the open house, it's like you're getting two-hundred agents to show up.

Think that's going to make a big impression on your "farm"? Think it's going to show people that your marketing efforts work? You bet it will.

Having a crowded open house will set exactly the right impression. It'll show neighbors that yes, your marketing does work - to overwhelmingly successful effect. Seeing this, neighbors will be impressed and your reputation as a REALTOR® will grow stronger.

How do you get people to attend the open house? You can start with door knocking. Though a traditional activity, it's ultimately one of the best for meeting residents, building face-to-face relationships, and driving them to your event.

Open houses and door knocking are fine, but what about the popcorn? We started this chapter after all, talking about popcorn. Where does that fit in?

Popcorn enters the picture as a gift for when you go door knocking. Like your seasonal gifts, popcorn will be appreciated by those you give it to. Those seasonal gifts, by the way, should not be discounted as effective parts of any door knocking campaign. Any of them will work great when delivered to the doors of neighborhood residents.

Popcorn, though, has a unique advantage over the gifts. Unlike the others, popcorn isn't connected to any holiday. It's not, for example, like there's a "St. Popcorn's Day". You can therefore give the food out at any time of the year. Perhaps using a silly play on words too. Something *corny* like "just *popping* by".

Regardless of how silly you get, or what you bring - make sure to get out there and knock on doors. You'll be amazed at the results from an activity which seems so simple. People will figuratively (and literally) "eat up" your efforts. They'll be astounded at how hard you're working and respect you.

Door knocking gets you respect. No question. Still, the respect comes at a considerable cost. Your time.

When door knocking, you'll likely "pay" more of your time than with any other farming strategy. We can see this, for example, comparing the time cost for door knocking with that of another strategy like flyering.

In a given hour, you can expect to knock on about twenty-five doors and only talk to five to six people. Those results are well below the results of a flyer walker. A person delivering flyers can deliver almost two-hundred flyers in the same hour.

Two-hundred or twenty-five? Seems like a no-brainer which strategy is more effective. Until you consider the strategies from a quality standpoint. The flyer walker may beat you on quantity, yet you beat them on quality. Your "slow and steady" approach with door knocking actively touches, engages, and builds rapport with residents. So while you reach less people than with flyers, you build a far stronger connection with each person you do reach. Residents are not just reading about you on a piece of paper that was left on their door. No, they're meeting you and seeing that you're a real person. The kind of person dedicated enough to go door-to-door.

On dedication, remember that it's important to show others how hard you work to sell properties. We've harped on this point because it's vital to any farming strategy. The harder residents see you working, the more they'll respect you and view you as more than just another REALTOR®. You'll stand out, as a true professional who has a deeper commitment to their work and their clients' success than anyone else.

In this light, going door-to-door makes even more sense. It's a perfect illustration of your work ethic. You don't have to say "I work hard". Your actions with door knocking speak far louder.

Another point on door knocking is that we're not just doing it around an open house. Hopefully that's clear. Open houses are excellent occasions for door knocking. But understand that they're not the only time or reason to go out and knock.

You can door knock to inform neighbors about new listings in the neighborhood and to look for new listings for buyers that "We" generate after our listings sell. In these two cases, you'd follow the same telephone scripts from our chapter on "Just Listed and Just Sold" marketing.

Understand as well that door knocking is about providing value. Make sure you're clearly giving something of value to the residents you meet. A great way to do that is by offering residents a free home evaluation. This evaluation will show a resident what their home is worth.

Along with the evaluation, you can provide additional value through market updates and a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA). Put those items on flyers and you can then give the flyers to each resident.

Flyers are great, but you can't just hand them out and walk away. You still need to talk. To help with that, we've provided a useful script below. Refer to it whenever you go door knocking.

---

## Script: Door knocking

"I'm not sure if you've ever read these market updates I send to you regularly. But I wanted to hand you this flyer, so you can see what homes of your neighbors have sold for. Are these of any help to you?"

My purpose is to use these to help you see what your home is worth. For example, you can see that two-bedroom, two-bathroom homes typically sell for \$250,000. How big is your home?

Well, we want to make sure we're comparing apples to apples. You see different homes have different amenities. And I'd be more than happy to take a brief look at your home whenever it's convenient to be able to let you know what your home would be worth at this point in time. Would that be of any value to you at all?"

---

Follow the script above and you'll be on track for a successful interaction with each resident you meet. The script works because, as we've said, it comes from a place of value and contribution. You're working to help residents and they're bound to appreciate it. Plus, the fact that you're doing this face-to-face sets you apart from other REALTORS®. For these reasons, make sure door knocking is part of your farming efforts. As a strategy, you'll find that it can't be beat - even if door knocking means beating a door.

Going on, we'll now address another strategy for farming. This is far more involved than the others we've seen. It's also a strategy many REALTORS® either don't think of or else they purposely avoid it. Yet our next strategy might be the best one of all. Is it? See for yourself.

Question	Choices	Answer
Door-knocking neighbors is justified, as top agents realize:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. No one picks up their phone anymore.</li> <li>B. The condition of a home's entrance indicates the quality and craftsmanship of an investment</li> <li>C. The ultimate purchaser of a home is often the friend, family member, or acquaintance of someone who already lives in the neighborhood</li> <li>D. Fuel is expensive in this economy, and swimsuit season is right around the corner.</li> </ul>	c. The ultimate purchaser of a home is often the friend, family member, or acquaintance of someone who already lives in the neighborhood
Inviting neighbors to an open house provides the chance for them to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Witness your process in action</li> <li>2. Find out if you've got competition in the area</li> <li>3. Make use of overstocked marketing supplies</li> <li>4. Get a peek inside their home, in hopes to pair them with an all cash buyer</li> </ul>	1. Witness your process in action
Making the effort to proactively meet neighbors face-to-face, because rather than read about your work ethic, they can experience it. True or false?		True

# CHAPTER 6

## FSBOS

*"I love reaching out to FSBO and Expired sellers since I know that they really want to sell their homes and are no longer attached to their original listing prices. I feel like I'm really helping them when I call."*

**—Brad Baldwin**, 125 homes sold per year

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FSBOs. As a real estate agent, you're undoubtedly familiar with them. They're the people with supposedly no interest in your services. A FSBO seller claims they don't want your help. They'd rather sell the home by themselves.

Knowing this, you might assume it's a waste of time to contact FSBOs. After all, FSBO sellers have made it quite clear that they're not using a REALTOR®. What good can come of you contacting them? Aren't you just setting yourself up for an inevitable "No"?

Maybe. But not always. Especially if you play the "game of touches", as we're advising throughout this book.

Now, with FSBOs, our emphasis on touching doesn't mean calling the sellers relentlessly. You should NEVER view this as trying to wear them down. The goal is NOT to make the FSBO seller hire you just so you'll stop pestering them.

Instead, you should touch FSBOs just as you would anyone else in your farm. Consistently staying in touch with the sellers over time. Consistently adding value on each touch. And consistently showing how hard you work to sell homes in their neighborhood.

That's how you "beat" a FSBO. Only you don't actually beat them. Instead, if the seller does ultimately hire you as their listings agent - they do so willing. There's no sense of being pressured into anything. The seller comes to you of their own accord.

When this happens, it's usually because the FSBO seller is frustrated. Not at you. But rather at their own inability to sell the home. Selling their home has turned out to be much harder than they imagined.

Plus, in many cases, the FSBO seller has either “tried everything” or hasn’t tried much, on account of their schedule and other priorities.

Unable to sell their home, the FSBO seller seeks help. When they do, you’re likely to be the first REALTOR® they think of. The seller will have you in mind, as a result of your farming efforts. They may, for example, have gotten a steady stream of flyers from you. These flyers show them you’re able to sell homes successfully - especially in the cases of the “Under Contract”, “Sale Pending”, and “Just Sold” flyers. Your flyers also show the FSBO seller just how hard you’re working. Harder, in fact, than they are. Considering your work ethic and results; the seller therefore comes to you.

In this example, understand the importance of flyers. The FSBO seller changed their mind as a result of being exposed to you through your flyers. Had they never seen the flyers, the seller might never have thought of you. They might still have known you existed. Yet you would not have occupied the same, overwhelming amount of mind-share. Your name would not be a dominant part of the seller’s thoughts - in general and on real estate specifically. Only through consistent flying were you able to achieve the kind of top-of-mind awareness that caused the FSBO seller’s change of heart.

Flyers may have made the difference in this example, but they aren’t the only way to effectively touch FSBOs. You can touch FSBOs through any of the other methods we’ve covered in this book. That means for example that door knocking and calling neighbors will both work. Ideally, you’ll combine these methods with flyers. This ensures you’re touching FSBOs in the most ways possible.



As you touch FSBOs, focus on helping them. One way to do this is by providing them with home values and all the other information necessary for selling a home. That way the seller will be empowered to make their own sale.

You could also lend a hand by letting the FSBO seller know in advance when you're having an open house. With advance notice, they can do an open house too and piggyback off traffic you have.

In a third instance, you could help the seller by previewing their property. Taking a look at their home would give you the knowledge necessary to refer buyers later on.

Get the picture? In all of these cases, we're providing the FSBO seller with genuine help. We do things for them, instead of doing things to them. Note the difference. It's essential to approach FSBOs like this. Otherwise we can't engage sellers through the repeated and continued contact on which any farming success depends.

How are you feeling about FSBOs? You, personally, as a real estate agent?

By this point, you may be eager to market to FSBOs in your farm area. If not, hopefully you're at least open to trying them.

Keep an open mind on FSBOs and you'll see why they should be your prime target as a geographic farmer. FSBO sellers are worth targeting because they aren't represented by an agent and currently still want to sell their home. Also as previously mentioned, FSBOs provide the opportunity to start a farm by obtaining the listing and using it to immediately begin touching neighbors.

To help you in your efforts contacting FSBO sellers, we've provided a script below. Use this script to contact a seller and get a listings appointment. With the appointment, you'll then get into the seller's house and have a chance to talk with them personally.

---

## Script: FSBO Phone Call

"Hello, I'm calling about the home for sale. Is this \_\_\_\_\_? Hi, this is (AGENT NAME) with (REAL ESTATE COMPANY) and I noticed that you have your home for sale and you're selling it yourself, is that correct?

I'm calling because I've helped a lot of For Sale By Owners sell their homes, and I decided to give you a call to see how things are going for you?

When you do sell this home, where will you be moving to?

In a perfect world, by when do you want to get there?

I'm curious, is having to pay a commission the main reason why you decided to sell the home yourself instead of using a real estate agent?

If I show you how I can sell your home and actually net you more money than trying to sell it yourself, even after paying my commission, would it be something you're interested in hearing about?

[If YES ...]

I have an opening at 4:00 today or 3:00 tomorrow, which would be better for you?

[If NO, continue with the script ...]

I understand, if you believed an agent could do that you would've hired one already, right? But if you could net more money by listing your home for sale with me, rather than try to sell it on your own, you'd probably list your home with me wouldn't you?

That's exactly why we need to meet. I have an opening at 4:00 today or 3:00 tomorrow, which would be better for you?

[If you can't overcome their objections to meeting in person, ask for their mobile number and email address to follow up weekly and continue with ...]

I tell you what, I will contact you with any new home sale activity that may impact the appraised value of your home. In the meantime, if you have any questions or if there is anything that I can help you with, please give me a call at (555) 799-2345. I'll be happy to assist you in any way that I can!"

---

Using the script above, you can hopefully obtain the listing appointment with the FSBO seller. Once you do, you'll have an opportunity to go inside their house. Use your opportunity to tour the house, so you're knowledgeable in case you meet a buyer later. And of course, make sure your appointment includes a discussion on the possibility of listing the home with an agent.

For that discussion, it's important to clearly communicate the benefits of listing with an agent. Those benefits probably aren't apparent to a seller. The seller is just trying to save money on paying a commission. So it's imperative that we communicate the benefits to them. And we do it by asking a very important first question -

"What are you doing to market your home to real estate agents?"

We ask this initial question because most home sellers don't understand how important that activity is. They think their home should just be marketed to home buyers who drive down the road. Most sellers think people will simply pull over and want to buy their home, in the same way as buying a bag of oranges from a street vendor.

Successful agents, however, know this isn't the case. So we continue, following that first question with the script below:

---

## **Script: Benefits of Listing With An Agent**

"The reason I asked that question is because statistics show, over the last several decades, nine out of ten buyers use a real estate agent to represent them when they buy a home. And when a home buyer comes to me or any other agent to help them find a home to buy, we look on our MLS for all the homes that fit the specific criteria that they are looking for. Then we choose to see a select amount of homes that can fit in their schedule.

More often than not, we don't look at more than five homes before the average buyer finds a home to make an offer on. So if you are not actively marketing your home for sale to real estate agents, you are just marketing your home to the general public - which is only about one out of every ten buyers. Which is therefore missing out on ninety percent of the home buying population.

So you are effectively reducing your buyer pool dramatically. Which is the reason that the average FSBO home price is typically twenty percent lower than the average price of homes sold by real estate agents.

So even though you may be saving around three percent on a commission, you stand to give up twenty percent on the ultimate sales price of your home."

---

The script above shows that using a REALTOR® helps increase proceeds of the sale of a home. Although this will be important to a FSBO seller, it's NOT the only thing on their minds. They have other concerns too, which you must address.

Consider, for instance, the fatigue and wariness FSBO sellers may have toward prospective buyers. Sellers could be sick of having people call to inquire about the home and then either show up late to see it, or flake entirely.

FSBO sellers will probably be tired of people like you too. In other words, they're probably tired of agents calling and wanting to list the home. Being an agent yourself, you've definitely got to deal with this feeling.

Additionally, you'll want to address the seller's annoyance that no one wants their home at the price they themselves paid for it.

All of these feelings will be swirling in the FSBO seller's mind. Their feelings make the seller increasingly motivated to sell their home in the shortest amount of time with the least amount of hassle.

Notice how we say "increasingly". This is why you need to systematically stay in contact with the FSBO seller. Systematic contact enables you to be in their minds as the motivation to sell quickly and without hassle increases. And as it does, you'll become an ever more appealing option.

Knowing the FSBO seller's desire to sell quickly, it's important to confirm the fact that real estate agents are able to sell homes much faster. Explain to the seller that this is because of the increased exposure you provide to other agents.

Explain as well that real estate agents are more motivated to show homes that are listed with an agent than with a FSBO seller. This is because agents know that homes listed with another agent will pay them a predetermined amount of commission. Agents also know the seller will have licensed representation that knows industry standards and state licensing laws. Having this representation ensures the sale will be a smooth transaction with an increased likelihood of closing successfully.

Then there's the issue of time. Agents typically have a limited amount of time to show properties to prospective buyers. Pressed for time, they must reduce and limit the number of homes they can sell to clients. Most often, FSBO homes are the first homes removed from that list of possibles.

Buyers are another issue. Make sure FSBO sellers understand how buyers behave. You should explain to the seller that buyers have been disciplined to make offers on FSBO homes. A buyer will see a FSBO home and instantly know the seller is saving on the commission. The buyer instinctively doesn't want the seller to save these proceeds. So the buyer will negotiate harder to obtain value themselves. They'll do it with the same mentality as a buyer of foreclosed property. The result is that any savings on agent commissions are passed on to the buyer and never realized by the FSBO seller.

Negotiation may be an issue FSBO sellers have never considered. To help them see it clearly, here's a script with an analogy in it that you can use:

---

## Script: The Watch Analogy

"Selling a FSBO is like selling watch at a garage sale. If you bought the watch at a garage sale, would you expect to pay full price for it? No. You'd expect to pay, for example, \$25.

If however, you went to a watch store downtown, you might see the same watch sold new for \$500. But at that watch store, you'd be more likely to be OK with paying the asking price of \$500.

The same goes for home prices. A home listed with a REALTOR® is much more likely to sell for a price close to the listed asking

price. However, homes sold by FSBO sellers are expected to sell at tremendous discounts to buyers since it's perceived that the FSBO seller is saving on the commission and marketing, and needs to sell their home at a discount and quickly."

---

Like the analogy? It's bound to help you when talking with FSBO sellers. Depending on the seller, this simple analogy could even be the very thing that moves them to listing with you. You really never know, especially where FSBOs are concerned.

What you do know, with FSBOs and real estate in general, is that success comes through a process of consistency. A "game of touches". With farming and the strategies we've been covering thus far.

In our next chapter, we'll examine another supposedly "no good" prospect. A member of your farm who you might assume - at first glance - was a waste of time to contact.

Yet assumptions are often wrong. Very wrong. And in the next chapter, we'll see how questioning your assumptions about a type of real estate prospect can lead you to a major breakthrough.

Question	Choices	Answer
For Sale By Owner clients in a geographic farm will have evidence of your higher level of marketing because:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. You'll tell them</li> <li>B. They'll have received your campaign of Just Listed/Just Sold/Sale pending flyers</li> <li>C. Your For Sale Sign, complete with home profile flyers</li> <li>D. Lack of traffic at their own listing</li> </ul>	B. They'll have received your campaign of Just Listed/Just Sold/Sale pending flyers
Three tactics to partner with a FSBO mentioned in this chapter include all EXCEPT:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing reports of market information, and systems to prep a home for sale</li> <li>2. Alerting them to an upcoming open house, with invitation to piggyback on the traffic with their own open house</li> <li>3. Previewing their property with the intent of learning more to share with potential buyers for their home</li> <li>4. Listing homes sold in the area, highlighting that they've "missed the boat" already a number of times</li> </ul>	4. Listing homes sold in the area, highlighting that they've "missed the boat" already a number of times
It's suggested that FBSO's sometimes underestimate the following factors as unrepresented sellers in the market:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Commissions attract agents, who bring buyers</li> <li>B. Availability to show reduces chances to sell</li> <li>C. Buyers are savvy to listing prices including commissions, and therefore may offer less</li> <li>D. All of the above</li> </ul>	D. All of the above

# CHAPTER 7 EXPIRED LISTINGS

*"Brian Icenhower's farming system was a catalyst in increasing my annual sales volume from \$5 million to \$21.5 in just three years. I now have 8 neighborhood farms that produce dependable and predictable business and am looking to add more!"*

**–Amber Rothermel**, \$21.5 million in annual sales volume

In the last chapter, we did some myth busting. We shattered the belief that FSBOs are a waste of your time and not worth contacting. Let's continue on and bust another myth.

The myth of the expired listing.

Like FSBOs, expired listings may seem like "lost causes". In fact, you might assume it makes even less sense to contact expired's since these listings are not even on the market any longer. FSBOs, pointless as they appeared, at least had that going for them. Expired listings, though, are off-market and essentially "dead".

Dead? Or just in a coma?

Often, it's the latter. Expired listings frequently prove they're merely in a coma. So they're capable of "waking up". When this happens, the listings rise from their slumber, like the fairy-tale character "Sleeping Beauty". Then, like the prince who awakened "Sleeping Beauty"; you the REALTOR® have a beautiful prospect on your hands.

This kind of "fairy-tale ending" is only possible, however, if you change your view of expired listings. Rather than write them off, you must view expired's as major opportunities. Recognize that an expired listing can allow you to break into a farm for the first time. Or if you're already in a farm, an expired listing makes a great addition to your collection.

***Time's up for the seller, or is it?***



Get the listing and you get another opportunity to show those on your farm how hard you're working.

Expired listings also have the advantage of being "grab-and-go". This advantage comes from the fact that the listing has already been on the market. So all of the necessary work to get it "market-ready" has already been done. The property is already in condition to be sold and the seller is used to having their home for sale. You can therefore step in and have a listing on the market in no time. For this reason, there's really no quicker way to obtain listings and clients than with expired listings.

Expired listings are fast. Faster perhaps than even FSBOs. Not that FSBOs aren't important. Frankly, expired's and FSBOs should both be on your radar. Each represents a set of sellers who actively want to sell their homes right now yet are having difficulty doing so.

This difficulty compels us to treat expired's and FSBOs differently. We don't just stay in touch with them, as we would with other members of our farm. Instead, we reach out and touch more actively, recognizing that expired's and FSBOs need our help right now.

We saw how this touching was done with FSBOs. The key there was to keep touching in helpful ways, over time, until the FSBO seller relented (in a good way) and sought our help. FSBO farming was thus a kind of "slow boil". (Just without any "boiler room" or high-pressure tactics!)

Expired listings don't work that way. As we've said, expired listings are fast. One minute they appear "dead", the next you've got a live listing. You must therefore be prepared to jump on an expired listing as soon as you can. The easiest way to do this is to set up a free search in your MLS database online. Your search can be set to find new listings each day in your neighborhood that show up as expired. Then every morning, first thing, you can log on the MLS and check the results of your daily search.

Reviewing the results, you'll see new listings that have come up as expired. You can then find the phone numbers for the sellers of these expired listings with relative ease, online or with the help of various lead sourcing companies.

With their phone numbers, you'll be able to contact the sellers of newly expired listings. Feel free to contact them, knowing that you're not breaking any rules. Instead, most REALTOR® associations regard it as perfectly acceptable for an agent to contact the seller of an expired listing the moment the property's status changes to "expired" in the MLS database.

Once you see this change, a figurative alarm bell should begin ringing in your head. You should feel an urgent desire to call the seller ASAP and attempt to secure a listing appointment with them. Not only that, you should also arrange to have a pre-listing packet dropped off at the property and even door-knock the property by the end of that same day, if needed.

Why so serious? Simple. A listing gives us a reason to talk with residents of our farm. A far better reason than with "farming filler". To talk about a listing, however, we must have one. And expired's give us a listing fast.

Getting an expired listing begins by picking up the phone and calling. When you do, you can expect a high conversion ratio. It's the highest conversion ratio, in fact, for time spent to generate a listing.

The ratio is high because you're not making cold calls. Everyone you call still typically wants to sell their home. For that reason, an experienced prospector will, on average, only need to speak to twenty or twenty-five sellers of expired listings before they obtain a listing appointment.

You can expect similar numbers when you call. Plus, the calls you make will be quick too. You'll fly through them because you're not calling people you already know just to stay in touch. Instead, you're approaching everyone you call for a clearly defined purpose. You want to talk about their listing. That's it. Once you've discussed the listing, the call can promptly end. You can move on, with all necessary speed, and contact the next expired listing. Rapidly working through your list of expired's.

As you make your calls, you should be prepared for rejection. It's the reality of prospecting for expired listings.

Consider again the numbers we mentioned, on conversion ratios. We said you'd only need to talk to twenty or twenty-five sellers before

securing a listing appointment. Think about what this means. Assuming it only takes twenty calls (the lower number in our range), you can expect nineteen calls ending in rejection. Those nineteen conversations will contain people who flat out reject you over the phone. This won't make you feel very good after a while. And you'll soon realize that prospecting for expired listings is not for the weak-hearted.

But oh, if you can keep going. If you can just persist through the rejections. Then you'll eventually beat this "numbers game" and get a listing appointment.

Successful agents know this. It's the reason they continue milling through all the "NO"s. They keep calling till eventually finding one golden nugget - a person who says yes, they do want help marketing and selling their home.

To help you find more people who say yes, it's often best to search through the property status history on the MLS for the neighborhood. This way you can identify any homes that were "expired", "withdrawn", or "canceled" in the past year or two to see if these owners still want to sell.

The person you ultimately find who's a "yes" on selling may then end up being a great client. That's an added benefit of prospecting for expired listings. This "yes-man" or "yes-woman" often makes a good client because they've already tested the market with another agent. By the time you arrive, the expired seller lacks their optimism on the home's original price. The seller knows they need to be realistic about their pricing, since buyers have proven unwilling to pay the original price.

In addition, an expired seller will be tired of testing the market and having prospective buyers and REALTORS® tramping through their house to look at it. Sick of it all, the seller will be willing to make the necessary improvements to their home. They'll gladly do what you advise, if it means an end to the "ordeal" of selling their home.

Expired sellers can also make great clients because they're often in major denial. Unable to sell their home, many sellers will place the blame squarely on the shoulders of the previous agent. The seller will regard the previous agent and the agent's lack of communication as the reason their home didn't sell. It'll be easier for them to blame the last agent than to accept any personal responsibility.

Whenever this blame game goes on, it works to your benefit. The seller will be ready for a change and regard you as vastly superior to the last agent. You'll arrive on the scene, appearing in the seller's eyes like a knight in shining armor. They'll view you as the one who can rescue them from the "mess" created by their last REALTOR®.

Cleaning up the apparent "mess" gives you an excellent opportunity - one that's particularly useful when geographic farming. Your opportunity comes from the fact that everyone in the area where the expired listing exists has seen how the last agent marketed the home. Neighbors will then see your sign go up in the yard and often at a more reasonable price than before.

Under your guidance, the home now sells. This shows neighbors that you know how to sell homes in their community, faster and more effectively than other agents. Your efforts stand out from those of the listing's previous agent, forming a clear "before" and "after" picture.

View expired listings in this light, as opportunities to prove yourself, and the game changes. You'll see these listings correctly, as the gold nuggets they are. And you'll waste no time in pursuing them.

To help you do that, we've included some powerful scripts. These scripts will work anywhere, even if you move to a new city where you know no one. That's another benefit, by the way, of expired listings. They allow you to sell real estate, no matter the location. Expired listings free you from location-based requirements, like having roots in a community or having a large database. Neither of those is needed to get a listing. All you need is a willingness to persist and some great scripts. We can't give you the willingness. But we can give you the scripts.

First up, is a phone script. Use the script, in any of its three versions, when a seller answers the phone.

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## Expired Listing Script #1: When They Answer

Version #1: "Hi, I'm looking for \_\_\_\_\_. This is John Smith with ABC Realty, and I'm calling because, as I'm sure you've figured out, your home has come up as an expired listing. So I'm calling to see when you plan on hiring the right agent to sell your home?"

Version #2: "Hi, I'm John Smith with ABC Realty, and I'm calling about the house that was listed in the multiple listing service that expired, and I wanted to interview for the job of getting your home back on the market and sold. I'd like to show you the techniques I use to get my listings sold."

Version #3: "Hi this is John Smith with ABC Realty, and I noticed that your listing on 123 Pepperwood Court is no longer active. I wanted to see if you are going to take this opportunity to interview a different agent. If so, I'd love to share my marketing methods for getting homes sold quickly."

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Next is a script for leaving voice messages. Any of this script's three versions will help you whenever your call to a seller hits voice-mail.

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## Expired Listing Script #2: For Leaving Voice Messages

Version #1: "I'm calling about your home for sale. My number is 555-123-4567."

Version #2: "Hi this is John Smith and I'm calling about the house you had listed in the multiple listing service, and I'd like to talk to you about the house. Would you please call me back as soon as possible? Call me at 555-123-4567."

Version #3: " Hello this John Smith with ABC Realty and I'm calling about your listing that is no longer on the market. If you are interested in taking this opportunity to interview a different agent, call me at 555-123-4567."

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Finally, here's a script for overcoming objections. This script will work wonders when you call a seller about their property and they insist that, "we're not putting it back on the market."

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## Expired Listings Script #3: Overcoming Objections

### **OBJECTION: "We're Not Putting it Back on the Market"**

1. "Really? Well if it sold, where were you moving to?"
2. "How soon do you want to be there?"
3. "What do you think stopped it from selling?"
4. "If I were to present you with a strong offer to purchase your home, would you still be willing to at least take a look at it?"
5. "Well that's exactly what I would like to talk to you about. What would be the best time for me to quickly drop by, 4:00 today or tomorrow?"

### **OBJECTION: "Waiting for the market to get better"**

1. "Well I understand, this market has been challenging for some. Just out of curiosity, if you did sell, where were you moving to?"
2. "What's important to you about moving there?"
3. "You see, I specialize in selling houses that didn't sell the first time around. Many homes don't sell the first time they're on the market, and it just takes a different approach to get them sold. If I could show you a way to make that happen, would you be interested?"
4. "Great! Would 4:00 PM today or tomorrow work for you?"

### **OBJECTION: "I'm going to re-list with the same agent"**

1. "I understand. It makes sense that you might feel obliged to allow your last agent another chance to sell your home. But what do you think they will do differently this time that they didn't do the last time?"
2. "Do you think that you're at least owed the opportunity to interview other agents to see what they can do differently to get homes sold at this time?"
3. "Well that's all I would like to do . . . apply for the job to get your home sold quickly and for the highest price possible. Would 4:00 PM today or tomorrow work for you?"

### **OBJECTION: "I'm going to sell it myself" (FSBO)**

1. "After what you have been through I can certainly understand. What do you think went wrong the first time you had it up for sale?"
2. "Well I can certainly understand the need to make a change. But are you sure that you want to keep your home out of the multiple listing service when about 90% of all buyers use an agent to purchase homes?"
3. "You see, marketing homes to both the general public AND to other agents are crucial to getting homes sold quickly for the highest price possible. And many great houses don't sell the first time around. So don't you think it's at least worth 15 minutes to learn what I do differently to get homes sold before you make your decision?"

### **OBJECTION: "I've already found a different agent"**

1. "I see, have you already filled out paperwork with them?" [If so, thank them and wish them good luck. If not, then continue with the script . . .]
2. "Great. You know even the best houses don't sell the first time around. In fact, I specialize in selling homes that didn't sell the first time. Would you mind telling me what your next agent is planning on doing differently this time?"
3. "I see. Do you think you owe it to yourself to interview multiple agents for the job to ensure that the home sells for the highest price possible . . . at the very least for another opinion on your home's listing price?"
4. "It shouldn't take up too much of your time and I'd be happy to swing by at your convenience. Would 3:00 or 4:00 PM today be good for you?"

We're now at the end of expired listings. But it's only the end, in the context of this book. You should continue to focus on expired listings. Continue to hold them in high regard, as another of the essential strategies in your farming arsenal.

We'll keep building that arsenal of strategies in our next chapter. Coming up, you'll learn a strategy for speaking with more prospective buyers in an hour, than you might otherwise speak to in a week.

Question	Choices	Answer
Targeting expired listings is recommended for all these reasons EXCEPT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They're generally still prepared to hit the market</li> <li>2. They're confrontational at every step, and negotiation skills will be built or honed</li> <li>3. They've shown their willingness to work with and compensate agents</li> <li>4. They've experienced the consequence of being overpriced</li> </ol>	2. They're confrontational at every step, and negotiation skills will be built or honed
Successfully marketing and selling a previously expired listing showcases your abilities in the following areas:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Pricing to sell</li> <li>B. Effective Marketing</li> <li>C. Both A and B</li> <li>D. Selling the "low hanging fruit" easy sales</li> </ol>	C. Both A and B
Top agents prepare for "We're going to wait for the market to get better","We're going to relist with the same agent", and "We've decided to stay here", known as:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excuses</li> <li>2. Conditions</li> <li>3. Trial Closes</li> <li>4. Objections</li> </ol>	4. Objections
Open houses allow for you to connect with neighbors, potential buyers, and other traffic in a -----	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. confined space</li> <li>2. condensed amount of time</li> <li>3. Quid pro quo atmosphere</li> <li>4. house</li> </ol>	2.condensed amount of time

<p>To entice those that live around a listing to visit, a strategy that's successful is to:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Deliver Flyers to Local Businesses</li> <li>B. Market a Neighbor's Open House</li> <li>C. Wave passers by in from the front stoop</li> <li>D. Put out "FREE CMA's INSIDE" Sandwich board</li> </ul>	<p>B. Market a Neighbor's Open House</p>
<p>Because time is of the essence, it's recommended to book open houses:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For 6-8 hours in length for the first three weeks</li> <li>2. At the listing appointment</li> <li>3. In the morning, to leave time for more appointments in the afternoon</li> <li>4. None of the above</li> </ul>	<p>2. At the listing appointment</p>
<p>Holding open houses during the negotiation of offers is a powerful way to create urgency with potential buyers. True or false?</p>		<p>True</p>

<p>Sign placement during open houses can differ with a farming mentality, because ----- .</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Signs are more spread out to direct potential buyers rather than alert neighbors</li> <li>2. Signs are placed more densely to alert neighbors, rather than direct potential buyers</li> <li>3. Signs are placed closer to the event, since there's already a sign in the yard</li> <li>4. Signs are placed earlier in day, to get the best places in case there are other open houses.</li> </ol>	<p>2. Signs are placed more densely to alert neighbors, rather than direct potential buyers</p>
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# CHAPTER 8 OPEN HOUSES

*"We treat open houses like our showcase to display all of our marketing efforts to neighborhood residents. It's often better than door-knocking since they come to you. Plus, people thinking about selling their homes soon love to start looking at open houses to size up the competition ahead of time."*

**–Jillian Bos**, Luxury Home Specialist & REALTOR® Magazine 30  
Under 30 Finalist

Salt and pepper. Sleep and beds. Travel and tickets. Some things just naturally go together. The same holds for real estate farming. If you're going to farm successfully, you simply must hold open houses. They're a crucial part of any top real estate farmer's marketing plan.



*The sign of a real estate farmer*

Why open houses? For one thing, there's the face-to-face contact these events provide. Remember how we teased a strategy that you could use to speak with more prospective buyers in an hour, than in a week? This is the strategy. With an open house, you'll connect face-to-face with more neighbors than ever.

Imagine knocking on twenty-five doors in an hour and only talking to five to six people. Those were our stats for door knocking, back in Chapter 5. Now imagine being able to talk to fifteen or sixteen people in that same hour. This is the magic of an open house. Open houses bring the farm to you, eliminating any need to individually seek out its residents. With your target audience assembled, you can focus your energies more effectively on building rapport, obtaining residents' contact information, and talking about the listing.

As you focus your energies with the open house, it's like you're figuratively hitting the gas pedal on the number of client conversions. You're bound to connect with more interested buyers than otherwise, and convert more of them into clients.

This is particularly true when you hold open houses on multiple days. Having the property open for more days further increases your contact with prospective buyers and often allows you to begin showing properties to more buyers.

There's also the demonstration component. In other words, open houses let you demonstrate to neighbors what you the farmer do to market a home in their neighborhood. Not only that, you get to show your marketing methods are superior to those of other agents in the same neighborhood.

Other agents aren't as effective because they lack the same farming mindset as you. Such agents regard open houses, for example, as purely a means of attracting buyers, getting the homes sold, or attracting buyers to look for other properties.

These purposes are not inherently wrong. A real estate farmer just prefers to think bigger. The farmer normally holds an open house as a prelude. It's seen as the beginning, rather than the end.

In doing so, the farmer focuses on getting listings. Toward this aim, they'll use an open house to stay in contact with neighbors while evidencing how hard they're working.

Contact with the neighbors matters because, as any successful farmer knows, the purchaser of a home is often the friend, family member, or acquaintance of someone who already lives in the neighborhood.

And, on our point about working hard - nothing proves you work hard like a big open house. A event so big in fact that neighbors would have to be blind, deaf, and dumb together not to notice. There's simply no way not to know you have a large open house going on. Not as people stream to and from the property. And the street around the house sits crowded with cars.

This is precisely the result you want from your open house(s). Since again, it's proof that unlike other agents, you take your work deadly seriously and you get results.

To achieve results like a massive open house, farmers will promote open houses heavily before the open house date. You can do this through having flyers hand-delivered to all the neighbors. Leave the flyers on their doorsteps and be sure each flyer clearly advertises your open house's date(s) and time(s). Each flyer should also clearly communicate to neighbors that they're welcome to attend. A bit of encouragement to attend goes a long way and will definitely increase traffic to your open house.

As another suggestion for your marketing materials, if you're sending them within the neighborhood refer to your event as a "Neighbor's Open House". This frames the event as being one which is all-inclusive and held for the community's benefit.

Make sure your materials are incredibly transparent too, on your reason for marketing the open house so aggressively. Neighbors should know that they're being contacted about the open house because of our knowledge that the ultimate purchaser of a home is often connected in some way to a current resident of the community.

This may sound obvious to you, and by this point in the book you might be sick of hearing it. But just as we emphasize the "game of touches"; so too must we emphasize the connection between existing residents and a home's ultimate buyer. We emphasize it here and you must do the same in your flyers. So that residents know why you're actively inviting them to the open house.

Along with flyers, you can also market your open house by using autodialers. With an autodialer, you'll be able to automatically call the neighborhood's entire telephone database. Autodialers often have

An example of an open house mailer



a feature that lets you create a prerecorded message and leave it whenever you hit a neighbor's voicemail. Your message can advertise the open house, encourage "neighbors welcome", and explain why neighbors are encouraged to attend.

Door knocking makes another great method for marketing open houses. If you took that approach, you'd individually knock on the doors of homes in the neighborhood, in the week before the open house. You could then ensure your success with a carefully-crafted script or dialogue.

Here are a few scripts to help you. We've found these scripts to be effective for promoting open houses, both with door knocking and telephone calls.

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## Script - Promoting Your Open House & Evidencing Your Marketing Efforts

"Hi, I'm John Smith with ABC Realty. We have your neighbor's home at 123 Main Street up for sale and we are holding a special open house on Saturday from 11:00am to 3:00pm. Since we know that the ultimate

purchaser of a home is often a friend, family member or acquaintance of someone that already lives in the same neighborhood, we are inviting the entire neighborhood to come by to take a look. So if you happen to know or meet someone looking to move into your community, this is a great way for you to hand-pick your own neighbors! Do you think you can swing by?"

[Wait for response and proceed with . . .]

[Ask for Business Referrals]

[If Yes]: "Great! And since we are doing everything we can to get your neighbor's home sold, I promised my seller that I'd ask: Do you know anyone looking to buy or sell a home in the area?"

[If No]: "No problem, I totally understand. And since we are doing everything we can to get your neighbor's home sold, I promised my seller that I'd ask: Do you know anyone looking to buy or sell a home in the near future?"

[Ask for a Pre-Listing Appointment]

[Possible Follow Up Question]: "And by the way, it's my intent to specialize & focus my practice in this neighborhood. So I'm providing all of the homeowners a complimentary value of \$500 with the hope that they might consider interviewing me when and if they ever decide to sell their home in the future. You see, an appraiser would typically charge you around \$500 to appraise your home, and I'm attempting to help you alleviate that cost to determine what your home would be worth in this market. Would knowing your home's current value be of any benefit to you?"

[If they are hesitant or otherwise object, proceed with . . .]

[Objection Handler] "I see, and I want to assure you that there would be absolutely no obligation on your part. Again, this is a courtesy service that I am providing to all your neighbors with the hope that if you decided to sell 5, 10 or 20 years down the road, you would consider interviewing me for the job. I would also never want you to straighten up your home just for me. I'm a REALTOR® and we're very used to viewing homes long before they're ready to show. I assure

you it won't affect the value at all, and I'll be in and out in minutes. How does that sound?"

[If they are interested proceed with . . .]

[If Yes]: "Great! Would 3:00 or 5:00 tomorrow work better for you?"

[Also be sure to obtain all of their contact information so that you can add them to your client database management system to stay in touch with them over time.]

[If No]: "No problem, consider this a standing offer, so feel free to contact me if you are ever curious about your home's current value. In the meantime, can I count on you to let me know if you bump into anyone looking to move into the area so that we can get your neighbor's home sold?"

[Wait for a response] "Great! I truly appreciate your time and help."

---

In marketing your open house, make sure you keep an open mind on possible tactics. There's a wealth of other approaches you can work in too. You can, for instance, use newspaper ads, if you've seen that they're still viable channels for promoting open houses. There are online strategies as well, like listing the open house in your local MLS and on other sites like Zillow and Trulia.

As long as you're on the computer posting to websites - why not do some email marketing? Send an email with the very same marketing content for the open house to your entire sphere of influence. This way everyone you know is made aware of the event, and just as importantly, how hard you the agent are working to get homes sold. An email will convey your hard work, as will multiple touches about the open house through all of the other marketing channels.

In order to have an opportunity for all the touches, be sure you set aside adequate time before the open house date. You want enough time to work in all the various touching methods, without having to skip anything or do a half-hearted job.

Having enough time should not however cause you to prolong the open

house date. If anything, you should work to get the event scheduled as soon as possible. Try to set the first open house date during the actual listing appointment with a seller. Get it set at the moment in that appointment when the listing agreement is also signed.

This is especially important if you work in a fast market - one in which homes sell quickly. You don't want to have a home sell and go under contract before you ever have a chance to hold your open house. If that happens, you'll be deprived of all the touches to residents that the open house would otherwise allow.

Time really is of the essence when scheduling an open house. This is why it's crucial to set one or two open house during your initial listing consultation. Preferably, those open house can be held over the next one or two weekends.

Another point on open houses- you can still hold them even if a home goes under contract beforehand. Notice that we're talking about "under contract" as opposed to "sold". "Sold", as we indicated, deprives you of all the open house opportunities. Having a property "under contract" doesn't and you're still free to hold the events.

To get your open house scheduled, in the listing consultation appointment, here's a useful script. It's particularly good for explaining why open houses are held during the initial part of the listing period.

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## Script - Scheduling An Open House

"We often find that the vast majority of homes that sell at a price close to our listing price sell within the first few weeks of putting the home up for sale in the market.

Accordingly, we have great success when we generate multiple offers from different buyers at the same time. More often than not, this occurs within the first couple weeks of putting a home up for sale. This is why we market so hard through mail, flyers, telephone calls, and open houses. Right at the time of listing.

We have also seen success at generating prices above or at the asking price when we can create multiple offer situations. Further, if

your home does go under contract or at least generate an offer prior to holding the open house - nothing is more effective at keeping the buyer honest than holding an open house as scheduled previously.

For example, if we are negotiating back and forth with different offers - it often takes many days if not a week. If, during this process, we hold a pre-scheduled open house at the home, we can create extreme urgency with the potential buyer that's in negotiations with us.

When a home is under contract or at least being negotiated, buyers drive by the home to show it to friends and family members - as their future home. And there is nothing worse than seeing people walk through it who may steal it away. This strikes fear in the buyer and puts it in favor of you the seller.

Further, in situations where an offer has already been negotiated and accepted, holding pre-set open houses helps show buyers that other people are interested in the home. This way when it comes time to inspect and negotiate improvements in the home, later in the transaction process; the buyer will be less picky.

Which once again, strengthens the buying and negotiating power of you, the seller"

---

Our script above shows the seller in an actual listing presentation, how much harder you the farming agent works. You're such a hard worker that you continue to represent your client's best interests, even after their home is under contract. You take nothing for granted and you're willing to hold extra open houses, even after a home has essentially been sold.

All of your efforts support both your client's best interests and your own - namely how hard you work, your desire to build rapport with neighbors, and the ongoing quest for more listings.

See the beauty in this? Your customer service is aligned with your lead generation. activities. Therefore, you the farming agent will work harder to provide better customer service for your client, since it leads to more business for you. It's truly a win-win situation for everyone involved.

Many agents don't recognize this, though. It could be because they're

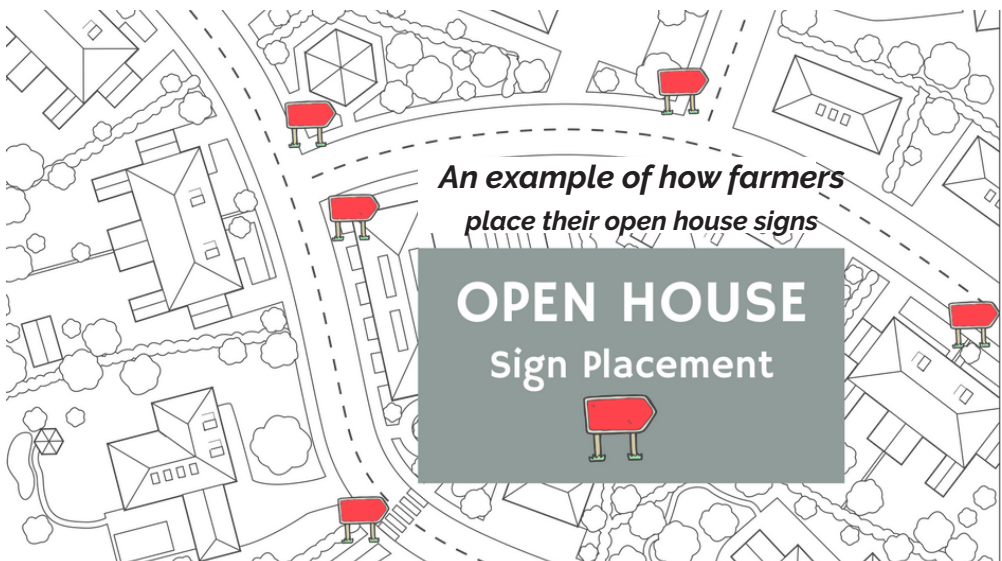
stuck in the old way of thinking about open houses. Farming agents differ in their alignment of service with lead gen.

Agents who “farm” differ too on the way they use open house signs. Traditional agents believe they’re holding the open house to find buyers. So the traditional agent places signs for the event on major thorough-fares outside the neighborhood. They do this in the hope of luring people into the neighborhood to see the open house.

Think it works? Hardly. This traditional method largely fails because it doesn’t attract new buyers to the home that weren’t already attempting to find it anyway. The signs only help people find the house that were already coming to look at it.

Farmers take an altogether different track when using signs for their open houses. A real estate farmer’s signs aren’t just for those already coming to the event. The farmer targets the neighbors of the open house as well. Their aim is to make neighbors aware of the listing that they have open. This way an open house generates more listings and, simultaneously, attracts buyers for the home.

Toward these ends, a farmer places their open house signs within the neighborhood. This way every member of the neighborhood will know that the house is open. Indeed, no neighbor leaving or entering the neighborhood can miss the fact that the house is open by that agent.



Whether a resident is going to church or driving their kid to soccer practice; they'll see the house is open with the agent's name. All open house signs must therefore display an agent's name in large print. By putting their name prominently on the sign, the agent is able to build name recognition. Naturally, the sign will say "Open House" too. Yet these words will be in smaller print. It's far more important for the sign to focus on the agent themselves. The idea is that neighbors will associate the agent's name with someone who is once again working hard.

Here's what it looks like when done right...



This association only increases in intensity, the more times neighbors see an agent's open house signs. For this reason, agents who farm often have eight to ten "open house" signs placed within a given neighborhood, in heavily-trafficked spots.

In thinking about visibility, let's circle back to our point on cars outside the open house. We mentioned earlier that having cars parked out in front of the open house is important. Cars matter because in an open house, the more cars you have, the more you get.

The sight of cars outside the open house attracts cars because it signals a safe, no-pressure environment. Neighbors and passer-by feel much more welcome at such an open house. They know the high turnout makes it possible to walk through the house, seeing the property on their terms. There won't be any pressure from the agent either, because he/she is distracted with all the other visitors.

Understanding how visitors think, you should do everything possible to increase the number of cars parked outside your open house. Your friends and family members can help in this, parking their cars at your open house.

It's also important not to park your car in the driveway at the open house. Park it outside the house, so as to cause more cars to stop and park.

You can add to the number of parked cars by having a mortgage loan officer attend your open house as well. This gets you one more car in front of the house. A mortgage loan officer can be equally useful to help pre-qualify prospective buyers looking at the home. The officer can sit with the prospective buyers, at the open house, and find the price they might qualify for.

As for you, the agent holding the open house, be sure to have a computer on hand. The computer can be a laptop you own. Or you can get permission to use the property owner's computer.

If you do need permission to use the owner's personal computer, explain to them the following. You need their computer to, "access the multiple listings service database to justify home pricing through comparable sales in the neighborhood and the surrounding area."

In addition to price justification, a computer lets you show prospective buyers other properties. You can show the buyers other properties in case they're not interested in the one you have open. And you can create an auto search in the MLS for prospective buyers. This search would be created from the buyer's criteria desired for a home. Then whenever the search generated homes which met the buyer's requirements, those homes could be emailed to the buyer.

Your open house must also have a guest list for visitors to sign. The open house guest list should always ask for a neighbor's name, physical address, telephone number, and email address. Make sure the guest list is placed somewhere in the center of the home, a place where you'll be primarily located.

A guest list gives you complete contact information for each neighbor as they come through the home. As you might expect, this information enables you to send open house attendees marketing material for

properties in the future. The guest list therefore makes a great way to build your database in a given neighborhood.

Guest lists help you, but what's in it for the visitor? Why would they willingly give out personal information - especially if they're wanting to see the house without feeling any pressure?

These are important questions. Ones that often prevent agents from getting open house visitors to fill out the guest list. Fortunately, we can overcome the obstacles here through a few time-tested scripts. The scripts are as follows:

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## Open House Script #1 - "Security"

"Please sign in for security purposes. I need to keep a record of everyone that comes through the house."

[Hold the paper open house flyer for the property as they complete the guest list, and then provide it to them once they are done.]

### Open House Guest List Script #2 - "Insurance"

"Please sign in for insurance purposes. I have to keep a log of every guest that walks through the home."

[Hold the paper open house flyer for the property as they complete the guest list, and then provide it to them once they are done.]

---

Security? Insurance? Neither is an exaggeration. Understand that, sadly, open houses have been the cause of many burglaries.

The way it works is simple. A thief posing as a prospective buyer goes into the open house and unlocks a small window that the agent will not remember or be able to check. The thief then leaves the home, waits till the event is over, and then returns to break in. You can cut down on this risk by requiring people to sign their name. Even if you get fake names, a guest list at least helps to deter would-be burglars from attempting a robbery.

As for insurance, it's a real concern too. This is because damage or personal injury could occur during the open house. If anything unfortunate did happen, it could potentially render a real estate company responsible for damages. Accidents are of such concern that many broker's owners insurance policies/questionnaires ask whether the agents are required to use open house guest lists.

With all this talk about insurance and security, don't lose sight of another reason for guest lists. Our reason to use them, as real estate farmers. From a farming standpoint, guest lists build your database. Keep that in mind, even amid the other reasons.

Nonetheless, you're ultimately seeking more than just a "pile of names". You want conversions. People who become your clients and listings too.

To help with conversion-based goals, here are two sets of powerful scripts.

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## Open House Script Set #1 - For Buyers you're trying to convert

### 1. Essential Exploratory Open House Questions:

- "Have you gone to many open Houses?"
- "Have you been looking around a lot?"
- "Do you live around here?"
- "Is there an area that you are particularly interested in?"
- "What price range are you looking at?"
- "Do you currently own a home?"
- "Are you currently working with an agent?"
- "What is your time frame for making a decision?"

### 2. Follow-up Script for Potential Buyers:

- A. "You know, trying to find a house looking at open houses is very difficult. Only a very small percentage of homes are open at any given time, so what you're looking at is just the tip of the iceberg."

B. Then follow by suggesting one of the following:

- I. Use CMA to suggest setting appointments to show other homes for sale in the area; and/or
- II. Use computer to access MLS online to select homes that fit their criteria and set appointments to show all of them in one day/time; and/or
- III. Use computer to access MLS online to get contact information & start them on client auto-prospecting; and/or
- IV. Set an appointment at the office to meet.

### Open House Script Set #2 - When a Neighbor Comes In the Door

For this second set of scripts, be sure you have a stack of open house property flyers on-hand. You'll be handing them out to visitors of the open house.

Handing the flyers out provides visitors with information about the house and gives them your contact information. The flyer also provides visitors with material to give later on, to a friend, family, member or acquaintance who might be interested in the home.

The flyer you hand out should always contain market updates or a comparative market analysis (CMA). These items would go on the reverse side of the flyer. Having either provides you, the agent holding the open house, with a reference point for an important dialogue with neighbors.

It's this dialogue on which we base the second set of scripts. Here's how it looks -

Follow-up script & dialogue for neighbors/sellers. Start discussions and get feedback on your flyers and CMA:

- A. "If you don't mind, it would greatly help me if I could get some marketing feedback from you. Did you happen to see the flyer I created for this home with the Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) on the back?"
- B. "Great! I'm curious if this was of any benefit to you. You see, I was

attempting to show you the sizes and prices of other homes in the area so that you could use the neighborhood's average price per square foot to get a rough idea of what your house is worth in this market. Do you happen to know the square footage of your home?"

- C. "Terrific! Thank you. Now often times your home will have different amenities and features than the houses listed on the CMA, which can significantly alter the value of your home. Since it is my intent to specialize & focus my practice in this neighborhood, I'd be more than happy to take a brief look through your home to give you a quick value with absolutely no obligation on your part. It's just something I do with the hopes that if you did sell sometime in the future you might consider my services."
  - D. "You see, an appraiser would typically charge you around \$500 to appraise your home, and I'm attempting to help you alleviate that cost."
  - E. "I also wouldn't want you to straighten up your home just for me. I'm a REALTOR® and we're very used to viewing homes before they're ready to show. I assure you it won't affect the value at all."
  - F. "Would this be of any benefit to you?"
  - G. [PAUSE – Let silence do the heavy lifting]
  - H. "Great! How about I swing by right after I lock-up here?"
- 

With those two sets of scripts (shown above), you can make the most of your open houses. You'll be able to "harvest" open houses, using the events to build your farm and to find buyers for all of your properties, not just the one you're showing.

Coming up, in the following chapter, we'll be leaving the real world and venturing online. Away from the human contact of open houses and into something altogether different.

# CHAPTER 9 EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

*“Building an email database for my neighborhood farms has helped me market to residents with increased frequency at virtually no cost. My neighborhood databases are now my most powerful marketing tools.”*

**–Amber Rothermel**, \$21.5 million in annual sales volume

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Open houses. Flyers. Door knocking. All three are highly effective strategies for real estate farming. But they aren't easy. At least where logistics are concerned. Open houses require you to hold an event and usually give up your weekend(s). Flyers require you to pay postage and fuss over graphic design. And door-knocking requires time and, depending on the weather, a good umbrella or overcoat.

Despite their requirements, we're not suggesting you avoid doing open houses, flyers, or door-knocking. Quite the contrary. You should still do all of these strategies. Assuming you want the success which comes with real estate farming.

But know this - there are additional ways to farm that aren't nearly as involved. These additional ways often require less money, time, and attention. So in a sense they're easier than the three “difficult” strategies we just mentioned. Yet there are some definite drawbacks. Reasons, in other words, that what appears easy may end up being a harder way to go.

For this chapter, let's look at one of the additional strategies for real estate farming. The strategy is email marketing.

Of all our farming methods, it's undoubtedly the easiest. Unlike the other methods, email marketing won't require you to pay postage, give up your weekends, or brave inclement weather. None of that is necessary in order to communicate with neighborhood residents.

Email marketing is also advantageous because its campaigns can be run on autopilot. Many farmers do this through “drip” campaigns.

They'll often set residents up to be "drip-fed" a series of ready-made emails over the course of an entire year.

Like drops of water falling into a bucket, these emails add up in time. By the end of a year, for example, a resident who's received the emails could be "overflowing" with feelings of trust toward a REALTOR® and excitement to have the REALTOR® list their home. All as a result of a steady, email campaign.

Advantageous as it is, the use of email is not without its drawbacks. These drawbacks come to the chagrin of most real estate farmers who tend to communicate more with email than any other way.

Of the drawbacks, a major one is spam filters. A spam filter will mark your emails as spam, divert them from a resident's inbox, and ensure the resident never reads your messages.

When this occurs, it's arguably worse than a resident hitting "unsubscribe" or sending you a hostile reply email. The reason being that you often have no sense of what happened to the email you sent. Did it go through successfully and then get read? Maybe. But then maybe it didn't. Maybe your email actually hit the spam filter and went unread. You just don't know.

This is why we've emphasized email as a supplement to your farming plan. Let it reinforce the other strategies, filling in the gaps and giving you more touches.

While we're on email marketing's drawbacks, another relates to obtaining email addresses. You need email addresses from the residents of your farm. With those addresses, you can put residents on a "drip" or other email campaign. Yet actually getting the addresses themselves can be a daunting task.

The most effective way to do it, although not the quickest way, is to organically collect email addresses. You could do this, for example, by getting neighbors to fill out the guest list at your open houses. This approach would be effective because every email address you got was from a real person. Someone who attended your open house, who you'd probably met too.

Other ways to organically get addresses and build your email list include telephone calls and door knocking. Once more, these methods ensure you're getting email addresses from real people who clearly indicated it's OK to email them.

To help you in your organic list-building efforts, here's a useful script. You can work this script in, for example, when calling residents to advertise a home you've just put up for sale.

---

## Script

"Would you like to be kept up to date on the prices of homes that sell in your neighborhood?

[pause]

Great! What's your best email address?"

---

Organically building your list is great, but it does take time. So if you're in a hurry or just don't like waiting, you can take shortcuts. Farming agents often speed up the list-building process by using neighborhood directories. There are also many companies that can, for a reasonable price, provide you with the email addresses of residents in specific areas.

Once you've assembled your list, you can then embark on email campaigns. Since you're using email as a supplement to your other farming efforts, the campaigns you create should reflect that. This means your emails' subject matter will virtually mirror that of your hand-delivered flyers and mailers. The idea is not to be creative or differentiate your messaging.

None of that matters because in all likelihood, residents won't receive most of the marketing you send. Chances are they'll miss the bulk of it and only catch one or two of your efforts. So the quality of the content you send is not nearly as important as the content itself.

Keep your sights set on frequency and consistency. Those are the keys to success in email marketing.

In mirroring the other items you send, your emails should contain "just listed", "sale pending", and "just sold" listings. They can also be "mirrors" by containing any of the following: seasonal subject matter, market updates with comparative market analysis, open house information, and information about the agent or the agent's business.



*An example of holiday content delivered by email*

# a holiday treat

FOR ALL OUR SPECIAL SNOWFLAKES

VISIT OUR SITE TO FIND OUT MORE: [ADAMJONES.COM](http://ADAMJONES.COM)



ASPEN HOME & GARDEN SHOW



Aspen Convention Center  
500 N. Main St, Aspen, CO 12456  
+1 555-556-8889  
[info@aspenhomeshow.com](mailto:info@aspenhomeshow.com)  
[www.AspenHomeShow.com](http://www.AspenHomeShow.com)

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**FREE  
ADMISSION**

ASPEN HOME & GARDEN  
SHOW

January 8th & 9th

\*\*\*

Compliments of

**Audra Heller  
Real Estate**

(555) 987-1243  
[www.AudraHellerProperties.com](http://www.AudraHellerProperties.com)  
[audra@audraheller.com](mailto:audra@audraheller.com)

*Another example of farming content sent by email*

To stay consistent and on top of all your emails to residents, you can use a customer relationship manager (CRM). CRMs are computer programs that organize and structure the items needed in your campaign. A CRM can hold contact information (names, emails, phone numbers) and provide email and mailer templates.

Best of all, most CRM's have features that help with follow-up and relationship building. With the right one, you won't have to remember to email or call various member of your database. Nor will you need to remember that a resident you're contacting, for example, has a six-year old son or is divorced. Those details and a reminder to contact the resident, can be provided by the CRM. In this particular case, the CRM would send you a reminder message at a time you scheduled. As for the resident's personal information, the CRM would enable you to record it and then update your notes on each successive communication.

A final point on email, before we move on. The point being that your emails don't have to be passive. You don't have to use email as many agents do, passively sending emails without ever asking for a reply. The emails you send can be active. You can directly ask residents to reply, for example, if they'd like more information or to use your services as an agent.

The way you'd ask for the reply or other action is referred to as a "call to action". Like the name suggests, it's a way of calling the email's recipient into action.

In our emails to residents of Willow Glen Estates, for example, our call to action could be the following - "Contact me for your free Willow Glenn Estates home price evaluation."

Through this call to action, we're directly and purposefully asking residents to contact us. Then, to make it easy for them to contact us, we could provide a link to our website. This link would go in the body of the email. Clicking it, residents might go directly to a page of our site with fields for entering their contact details and scheduling the home price evaluation.

In our example with Willow Glenn Estates, the call to action is for a home price evaluation. A call to action can be anything, though, and it doesn't have to always include a link to your site.

Still, as a general rule, most of your marketing to residents of a neighborhood should repeatedly contain the Willow Glen Estate's call to action. You should be asking neighbors who get the email to contact you for a home price evaluation. The reason is that a free home price evaluation is virtually the same thing as a listing consultation. Residents that want to know the price of their home could be interested in listing it. Or they might at least be open to the idea. But you'll never know unless you ask. Which is precisely why calls to action are so important in your emails.

Asking is important, no doubt. Make sure, however, that you also listen. This idea is at the heart of our next chapter. In that chapter, you'll learn a unique real estate farming strategy - one that's more personal than email yet just as easy.

Question	Choices	Answer
It's recommended that when farming, e-mail addresses are to be collected, when possible, :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. From a service</li><li>B. Organically, in person, or from open house registrations</li><li>C. From Social Media Research</li><li>D. As a last resort</li></ul>	B. Organically, in person, or from open house registrations
Messages in e-mails should be ----- by including a -----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Assertive, ultimatum</li><li>2. Active, call-to-action</li><li>3. Passive, "by the way" signature</li><li>4. Aggressive, deadline/ countdown timer</li></ul>	2.Active, call-to-action

# CHAPTER 10 FACEBOOK

*"Facebook has changed the face of real estate farming. There is no faster way to grow relationships, build a database and market to residents than by properly using the tools that Facebook provides."*

**–Dani Beyer**, \$24.3 million in annual sales volume

Listen up! Not to us, but to your farm. That's the key with this next strategy. The strategy under discussion is social media, namely Facebook.

With each passing year, Facebook becomes an ever more effective tool for real estate farmers. It's inexpensive and enables lightning-fast communication with a large number of residents.

Plus, unlike email which is also inexpensive and fast - Facebook is far, far more personal in nature. There's an inevitable sense of connection among users. This connection is the result of calling other users "friends" and sharing highly personal information with them. Information ranging from one's birth date to the name of their spouse. It's all shared freely on Facebook by users, along with personal (and often revealing) photos too. All of it creates a seemingly intimate online environment. The kind of environment that's ripe for a real estate farmer to tap into.



*What the "f" are we talking about?*

*Facebook and Farming!*

Unfortunately, most agents don't know the right way to use Facebook. They recognize the opportunity inherent in it. But they go about seizing this opportunity in a very inefficient manner.

Agents erroneously attempt to use Facebook as a means of talking to the friends they're connected with. They use their own posts as an agent to communicate their marketing message. This is done in the hope that the agent's Facebook friends will get their information from the posts and somehow want to use their services.

It's a nice thought. Yet it's not how social media marketing works. Social media isn't about "trumpeting" your message. Rather, it's about listening.

Here's where that principle we mentioned comes into play. The real estate farmer who succeeds on Facebook is the one who listens. Instead of marketing by what they post on their own Facebook timelines; these farmers understand the importance of listening to their friend's posts and then engaging with them. In this way, the farmer's social media marketing efforts represent an entirely different approach from the average agent. One that can be referred to as "social listening".

The key to social listening is of course, to listen. Then, after listening , you can engage and react to what others are saying.

Make sure, though, that you're listening to the right people. This is another trap agents can fall into. Even if they do understand the need for listening, agents will listen and then engage and react to all of their friend's posts. This may be good for the friendships. But it fails to make an impression with the other people an agent is connected to. The people who are actually likely to give them business.

Also, understand that Facebook chooses which posts its users see in their newsfeed. Posts are prioritized based on which the users engage with. The engagement being in the form of likes and comments.

The more likes and comments a post receives, the greater its importance - at least in Facebook's eyes. This causes Facebook to place "important" posts at the top of the newsfeed.

Facebook's prioritizing of posts therefore presents a serious problem for many real estate agents. Agents who limit their listening and engagement to just friends and family are guaranteed to miss out on what their "farm" is saying. The posts of their "farm" and sphere of influence members will be pushed down, far down, in the agent's own newsfeed.

This means the agent will never see the posts from those who matter to their business. And, not seeing the posts - much or ever - the agent won't engage with them at all. As a result, they can lose touch, online, with their farm. Becoming isolated from the ebb and flow of community members' lives - as depicted in rich detail on Facebook.

Successful farmers avoid this trap through a different kind of isolation. They practice isolation in the sense of isolating communications from residents. By separating residents' posts and other messages, there's no way the agent can miss what's going on. This is done using Facebook's lists.

What's a list? It's a Facebook feature which allows friends to be categorized into differentiated lists. Instead of just accepting a friend request - users can organize their Facebook friends into various categories for easy reference. The category of friends on a list can be one supplied standard by Facebook (close friends, family) or it can be one you the user create.

The real estate farmer who uses lists could, for example, create a list called "Willow Glen Estates". On this list would go everyone in their farm and/or their sphere of influence.

Having added farm residents to a Facebook list, the agent could open up the newsfeed for that individual list. The agent would then simply go down the list, liking and commenting on the posts of residents.

Think of the impact this will have on residents. Residents are bound to appreciate getting likes or comments on their Facebook posts. They'll also see the agent's name every time the agent engages with their posts. So the agent gains name recognition, coupled with residents having a positive feeling about their name.

It's also a "win" because agents become more knowledgeable about those in their farm. Reading the posts of neighbors in the community, agents will learn about residents' personal lives. They'll see who's birthday it is or which resident has just given birth to a new baby.

Then, coming from a place of contribution, the agent will look to add value based on what they see. At the very least, the agent can send birthday wishes or offer congrats on the new baby's arrival. They can also offer condolences when a pet or family member passes away.

Well-wishing and condolences are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg though. If an agent wishes to truly add value to residents via social media, they can go even further.

Agents may recommend the services of preferred vendors when a resident has a flooded basement and needs it repaired. A scenario like this would be a golden opportunity to build immeasurable goodwill. The kind of opportunity you're unlikely to miss, provided you use Facebook's lists.

You don't have to wait for floods either. You can give recommendations to residents on a movie to see, a daycare center to use, or any other service or provider that the residents' posts suggest a need for.

You can also use Facebook as the basis for personalized offline communication. Suppose, for example, that you learned in a resident's post that their child were going off to college. You the agent would then have a valid reason to pick up the phone and call the resident to congratulate them.

Additionally, Facebook enables you to identify current and future sales opportunities. You can spot these opportunities from seeing the events taking place in the lives of your firm's residents. Pivotal life events like marriage or divorce may allude to a move or a home purchase in the near future. Using Facebook, through the lists feature, you'll be able to pick up on the opportunities and act accordingly.

Beyond lists, you'll also want to make active use of Facebook's direct message feature. This feature provides a rich opportunity to grow your neighborhood contact information database.

Using direct messages, you can move Facebook friends to your client database, along with corresponding email addresses, telephone numbers and physical addresses.

This becomes important because agents are often connected with many people on Facebook who aren't in their customer relationship management (CRM) systems. These connections exist therefore purely as Facebook friends and not as a part of the agent's client databases too.

Moreover, there's no good way to export, sync or otherwise move these Facebook friends to an agent's CRM with contact information for each friend intact. Recognizing the problem, we've developed a solution. It's an easy process you can follow to systematically add Facebook friends to your database.

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## Script - A Direct Message to Transfer Facebook Friends to your Database

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"Hi it's Brian. How have you been? I'm updating my real estate database and I'd love to send you something over the holidays and from time to time. My real estate business was amazing last year, but I need to do a better job of staying in touch with people I know. So would you mind replying with your current home address, phone number and email address to help me out?"

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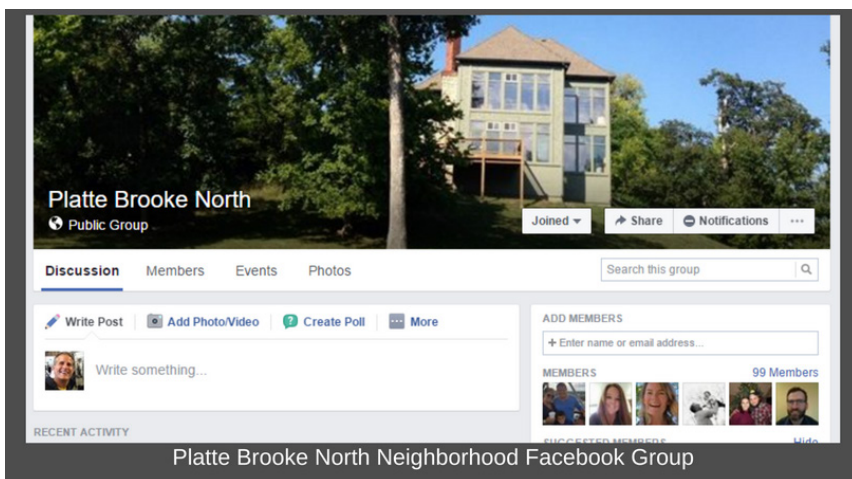
For the script above, simply copy and paste it into direct messages that you send to neighborhood residents in your community Facebook list. When you do, you can typically expect to get responses from well over 50% of the message recipients. The responses in turn will allow you to rapidly grow your neighborhood database to mail, call and email neighbors more effectively.

Now, a word of warning when using Facebook or other forms of social media. This is not the same as newspaper advertising. That kind of ad-only messaging may work for those who read the newspapers, but social media is an entirely different "animal". One that requires an interaction. So it's not enough to merely have your services shown. Your services must be shown in a way that fits with the thoughts, desires, and interests of those you're connected to.

It's comparable to being at a party and listening to what party-goers have to say. Once you hear them, you then look for opportunities to casually mention you're in real estate.

Baring this in mind, an agent's own Facebook posts should be more personal than business-focused. Otherwise the agent risks offending their friends with social media spam and even being blocked or unfriended.

In the spirit of being personal and not purely business, you might also create a Facebook group. The group would be for your neighborhood's residents. Using it, residents could exchange information, share events, and communicate with each other.



Platte Brooke North Neighborhood Facebook Group

*An example of a neighborhood Facebook group*



Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Facebook Page

*An example of the page for a neighborhood's Facebook group*

To get people in the group, you'd friend residents on your mobile phone when meeting them face-to-face during open houses or door knocking. Then, you'd add the residents to your Facebook list or the community group.

Following this step, you could foster involvement in the group by referring to it in all of your mailers, flyers, and phone scripts. You might mention it on your business website too. Any of these actions would get the word out about the group and prompt members to begin interacting in it.

On that interaction, in your Facebook group; it's important to encourage residents to begin doing it immediately. Have them start using the group as soon as it's created and encourage them to share valuable information too. Information, for example, like when the community's services (schools, public libraries, etc.) open and close each year.

The Facebook group can also be used to maintain neighborhood security. Through posting to it, missing pets or suspicious vehicles can be announced to residents. Other possibilities for the group include posting "Wanted" notices for baby sitters, nannies, and car pool members. "For Sale" notices are possible as well, with residents selling "big ticket" items like cars. Or residents could even organize and coordinate an entire garage sale within their neighborhood Facebook group.

Seeing residents post, you'll want to get involved in the group too. Doing more than merely creating it. When you do become involved, you should always come from the standpoint of contribution. You can contribute by posting the same sort of value-added content to the Facebook group that you're providing by email. Market updates are also appreciated by residents too. Provided these updates come, as we've said, from a place of contribution. And to contribute, really contribute, you start by listening.

That's Facebook in a nutshell. It's the eighth of our strategies and like the rest, it's pivotal to real estate farming. As we continue in the next chapter, we'll see how you can engage with your community, offline, in a major way. A way that goes beyond Facebook, naturally, and even beyond the engagement in your other outreach methods - especially the seemingly unbeatable door knocking or open houses.

Question	Choices	Answer
Rather than posting about real estate at a high volume, successful agents connect with their farm through:	A. Contests and Polls B. Listening, engaging, and responding C. Lurking and re-searching D. None of the above	B. Listening, engaging, and responding
To focus social media conversations, organize messages, and connect, it's recommended you create:	1. Lists and groups 2. Benchmarks and standards 3. Another profile, so you can recommend yourself as an agent 4. A predictive algorithm that pinpoints signs of financial trouble	1. Lists and groups
Direct messaging is a tactic used to:	A. Avoid broadcasting conversations to your entire audience B. Connect on an individual level, tailored just to one person C. Maintain a record of communication to build on D. A, B, and C	D.A, B, and C
Building and hosting a group community page allows you to manage a space where	A. you can target and pursue potential listings and buyers. B. residents could exchange information, share events, and communicate with each other.	C. residents could exchange information, share events, and communicate with each other.

# CHAPTER 11

## NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

*"Each client event I conduct typically generates four to eight transactions. So the event pays for itself many times over. I focus my efforts on the number of invitations and contacts I make to invitees promoting the event rather than on the details of the event itself."*

**–Mike Gunselman,** \$23.4 million in annual sales volume and 109 homes sold per year

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Who says business and pleasure don't mix? Average REALTORS® - that's who. Top REALTORS®, however, know that business and pleasure do mix. This second group of REALTORS® often mixes business and pleasure into a refreshing "cocktail". They do so through our next farming strategy - neighborhood events.

Neighborhood events are fun events a REALTOR® may hold in the neighborhood they serve. The events are intended to be "fun" in the truest sense of the word. This is reflected in the event activities which could include bringing in a relatively inexpensive bounce house for the children of residents.

A bounce house is perfect for neighborhood events. Not only is it fun, but bounce houses also tend to be cheap and easy to set up too. And the large size of the bounce house is bound to attract crowds of residents.

Along with a bounce house, your neighborhood event might include face painting and games like bag toss. While you're at, you could throw in a variety of food and beverage options. Make your event a carnival.

The sky's the limit really, in terms of what you could do for a neighborhood event. And in terms of where you can hold it. If you did the carnival we described, you might hold it in a neighborhood park, a community pool area, or as a part of an open house.

Great, but what about business? A carnival or other event is fun, no doubt. And neighborhood residents certainly benefit. But what does it do for you the REALTOR®?

More than you'd expect. Far more.

First off, there's the goodwill you build. If you're recognized as the organizer of the event, neighborhood residents are bound to appreciate your efforts. The sense of goodwill is practically inevitable as children frolic in the bounce house, for example, and their parents munch on tasty carnival food.

Neighborhood events also benefit you in a more direct way. The events allow you to obtain contact information from residents for future opportunities. That information, in turn, directly builds your database of people to communicate with, using the various strategies in this book.

To get contact information from those attending your event, you might hold a raffle. Make it a drawing where residents get tickets by providing their name, email, physical address, and phone number. With a ticket, they'll have a shot to win a prize (often donated by vendors) that's being given away. The more valuable or "cool" the prize, the more residents will want to participate in your raffle.

Participants in a raffle are also unlikely to provide fake information. The reason being that fake information could prevent them from receiving the prize. So holding a raffle will bring you high-quality, overwhelmingly accurate contacts.

Effective as they are, raffles aren't the only way you can get contacts at your neighborhood event. Another approach is to get contacts by meeting neighbors face-to-face. As you meet and talk with them, the time will be right to exchange contact information. You can also pull out your cell phone, connect with neighbors on Facebook, and help them join the neighborhood Facebook group.

Speaking of Facebook - be sure you shoot photos and videos at the event. You'll want to post them on Facebook, during and after the event. By documenting the event like this, there's no risk of it being forgotten. People will remember the occasion long after it has passed.

The photos and videos you shoot at the event are useful in your promotional materials too. A photo for example, of children in a bounce house at your event might be perfect on a flyer you gave out. The same is true with any other photos that might be taken. As for videos from

the event, those could go on your website, in your emails to residents, and in your neighborhood Facebook group.

While we're on promotion, you should know that it's the key to a successful neighborhood event. That's "successful" in the sense of your event being well-attended and everyone knowing you were the one who organized it.

To have an event like this, you'll need to make as many touches as possible. The more touches you can make promoting the event, the more successful the event will be.

How do you make these touches? You do it through emails, telephone calls, text messages, mailers, flyers, and FB posts. Any outreach can work, provided it reminds residents of the event and cements in their minds, the idea that you're providing value through the event to the community.

All of these promotional methods also work for the raffle we mentioned and any other contests you hold for prizes. Feel free to promote both a raffle/contest and the neighborhood event where it's being held. Both allow you to make more touches promoting the event. With more promotion, there's then an increased likelihood of people referring you the agent, to the next person they know who needs to buy or sell a home.

Getting referred or otherwise connected to a new client is another way you benefit from neighborhood events. Of all the benefits to you, it's certainly the most apparent. There's none of the haziness that can surround other benefits like goodwill. Not that goodwill isn't important. It absolutely is. But as benefits go, a client is a far more "black and white" thing. With a client, you the REALTOR® will most likely get a commission. So you'll probably find it easier to justify the cost of holding a neighborhood event. Even if the event generates just one or two commissions, it'll still have been worthwhile from a financial perspective alone.

Depending on your event, though, you may not be the one picking up the tab. Preferred vendors will often pay for all or part of a neighborhood event's cost. They'll step in as sponsors on behalf of the agent. The vendors have an incentive to sponsor the event since a large turnout of residents means more business for them too.

Then again, maybe no one has to pay for the event. Perhaps your neighborhood event will actually be a charity drive. You could, for instance, organize a neighborhood-wide canned food drive. Under your direction, residents would donate canned goods and other non-perishable food items to a given charity.

Your charity drive could be for other items too. Among the alternatives, coats and other forms of clothing can work quite well. You could even do a charity drive through solicited raffle ticket purchases. With a raffle, you'd organize it so the money from ticket purchases went to a well-recognized charitable organization.

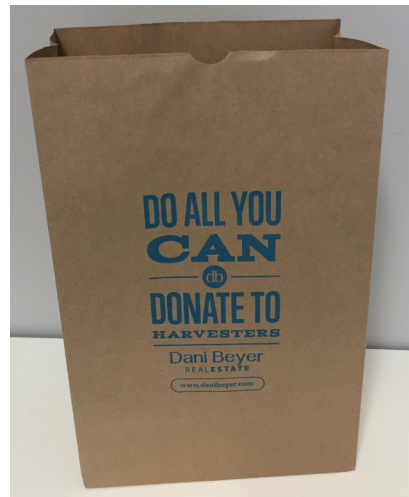
Whatever the organization, a charity drive is definitely worth considering. It ensures that you, the real estate farmer, feel good about your business efforts. And the drive also ensures that neighbors see you care about your local community.

If you'd like to organize a charity drive, it's relatively simple to do. Let's say you're organizing a canned food drive.

You could start by announcing the drive to residents of the neighborhood through a flyer that's distributed on doorsteps. With the flyers, you'd also include a grocery bag. Ideally, you could have your name, logo and contact information printed on the bag for added professionalism.

Following the flyer's instructions, residents would place their non-perishables in the bag and place the bag out on the curb at a specific date and time. At that time, you the agent would drive by and pick up the bag to deliver it to the charitable organization.

Before then, however, you'd also want to promote the drive through mail, email, social media and telephone calls. All of these methods create additional touches with the neighbors. Since farming



***A bag used for an agent's community food drive***

is, figuratively, a “contact sport”; more touches means more mind-share with neighbors for you the agent.



In the interest of gaining mind-share, you can make more touches after the drive is over. At that point, it would be time to thank everyone in the community for donating. You could give thanks by touching the community once more - with flyers, email, mailers, and postings to social media.

As you gave thanks for the drive, you could provide pictures and statistics of the total money (in dollars) or goods (in number of items) given to charity by the neighborhood as a whole.

You'd also be wise to include photos of yourself giving the donations to the organization. Talk about great publicity. If you did this, neighbors would instantly recognize you, by name and face, as the one who gave to the charity. This recognition would positively impact their future interactions with you.

As you consider neighborhood events, a third type to think about are client appreciation events. These events can be as open-ended in nature as the others we've described. Whatever you end up doing, be sure to heavily promote your client appreciation event through many different types of communication mediums.

Promoting the event is essential because it's how the majority of your referrals will be earned. Since the key to building a referral business is

making multiple contacts to people in an agent's client database, client appreciation events therefore provide an amazing opportunity. These events let you reach out to the people you know, communicating with them repeatedly before and after the event, and staying top of mind.

Here are some examples of ways you can promote your client appreciation events:

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### **Email**

1. "Save the Date" emails
2. Event invitation emails
3. Event reminder emails
4. Post-event "Thank You" emails

### **Telephone Calls**

1. Event invitation call
2. Event reminder call
3. Post-event "Thank You" call

### **Group Texts**

1. Reminder texts
2. Post-event "Thank You" texts

### **Mailings**

1. Event invitation mailer
2. Post-event "Thank You" mailer

### **Facebook and Social Media**

1. Timeline posts
  2. Create a page and/or group for the event
  3. Direct messages
- 

That's a lot of ways isn't it? A lot of ways, in the example (above) for client appreciation events. And a lot of ways, in terms of all the strategies we've discussed so far in this book.

We're nearing the end of the discussion now. In the next chapter, we'll cover the final strategy needed to build your real estate farm. It's a strategy so low-key you might not even think of doing it. And that's precisely why it works so well. Join us in the next chapter, Chapter 12, for this final strategy of real estate farming.

Question	Choices	Answer
For your event to be successful, touches are recommended to be spread between	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Flyers</li> <li>2. Emails</li> <li>3. Calls</li> <li>4. Texts</li> <li>5. Mailers</li> <li>6. ALL OF THE ABOVE</li> </ol>	6. ALL OF THE ABOVE
To bring more value to the community, partnering with a _____ is recommended.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Affiliate</li> <li>2. Charity</li> <li>3. Ice Cream Truck</li> <li>4. Neighbor with a pool</li> </ol>	2. Charity
To maintain contact with neighbors after the event, it's recommended do all of these EXCEPT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Post event photos of the event to social media, tagging people</li> <li>b. Send thank you notes, and save the date flyers for next events</li> <li>c. Contact those who RSVP's and didn't show, to tell them they were missed</li> <li>d. Mail out success/ results, i.e. buyers, investors, listings obtained.</li> </ol>	D, Mail out success/ results, i.e. buyers, investors, listings obtained.

*"My local neighborhood websites help me stand out from the competition. They show how my marketing is not just focused on the actual homes I sell. We also market the three most important things in real estate: Location, Location, Location."*

**—Robyn Graham**, \$20 million in annual sales volume

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Contribution.

That single word alone will play a major role in your success at real estate farming. If you'll just act in the spirit of contribution, in the spirit of adding value to residents in your farm; you'll be well on your way to success.

So far, we've given you nine ways of contributing. Those nine ways are perhaps better known as our strategies for real estate farming. Call them what you will, but there's no denying that each of the ways/strategies we've covered allows you to make meaningful contributions to your farm.

Whether it's holding a neighborhood event, sending a helpful set of emails, or connecting with neighbors through door-knocking; each of our ways/strategies comes from a place of contribution. With the emphasis being on adding value, rather than forcing our marketing on others. This way, our efforts will be warmly received by residents and we'll be able to continually stay in touch with them.

To round out our understanding on ways to contribute, let's now cover a tenth way. It's our tenth and final farming strategy too.

The strategy is community websites.

What exactly are they? You might be in doubt since the term is rather broad.

For our purposes here, let's define a community website as a website REALTORS® build to showcase the community where they work. Showcasing the community accomplishes a variety of things at once.

First, it directly contributes to the good of the community. This is because a community website highlights the neighborhood and its various amenities. Visitors to the site can see the amenities (walking trails, schools, shopping, etc.) along with the neighborhood's most attractive parts. With the right photos and descriptions, all of these details can be brought out in their full splendor. Visitors to the website will thus come away with a highly favorable impression of the neighborhood/community. Seeing it as very appealing place to live.

This impression ties in with another thing that community websites accomplish. These sites make prospective buyers interested in the community. Buyers might therefore have an interest in our listing(s) within the community. So as a service to them and the community too, it's only natural that we include our listings on the community website. That way anyone who thinks about living in the neighborhood can get a sense of what homes are available there.

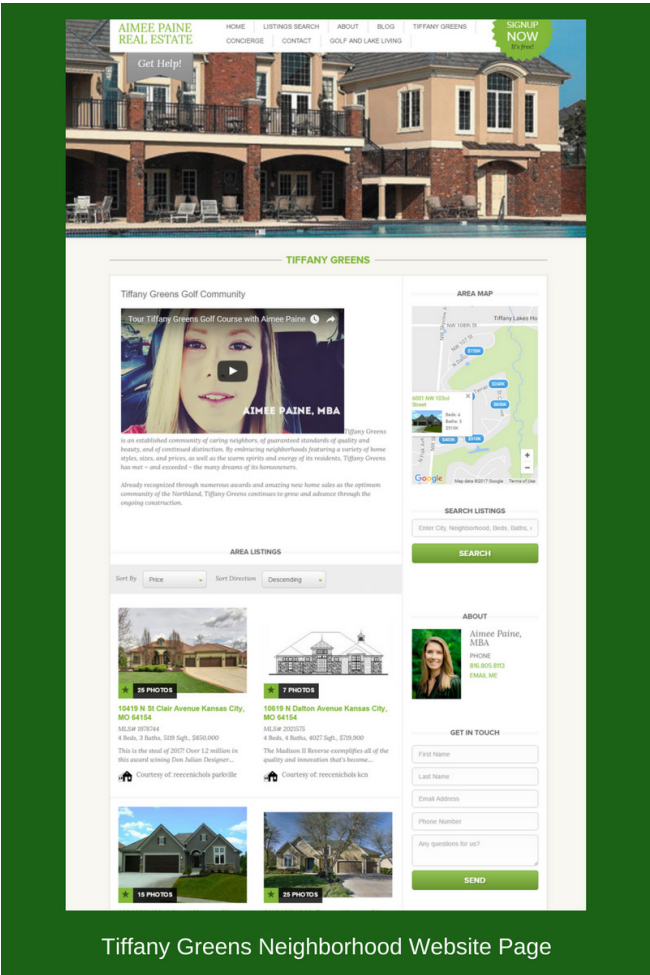
We'll also provide information on the site from our comparative market analysis (CMA). Having the CMA's information on our community website makes it easy for prospective buyers to see how the homes in our neighborhood compare to others, perhaps their own.

Our site's CMA further benefits residents of our community who may be curious what their own home is worth. With the information from the CMA on our site, residents can get a sense of the value of their home. Depending on the resident, this knowledge may motivate them to begin thinking about listing their home. Perhaps they've had this desire for a while and just needed more information. Or, perhaps the resident is startled into action at the thought of the windfall they'd receive from selling their home. Either way, our community website has been an invaluable asset to them.

In order to better serve these residents - those inspired by our site to consider listing - we can mention our own services. We'll do this through having a section of the community site which briefly addresses our expertise in the area as real estate agents.

Having introduced ourselves, our listings, and the neighborhood - we don't want to leave website visitors hanging. Any visitors considering living in the neighborhood (prospective buyers) and any visitors considering selling their homes in the neighborhood (prospective sellers); should be able to take the next step.

We'll help both groups proceed forward with a contact form and a call to action button. These items enable people to enter their contact information, click a button that reads "Join the waiting list", and then connect with us. We'll then be able to begin a discussion with them about moving to the neighborhood or selling a home in it.



Tiffany Greens Neighborhood Website Page  
An example of a community website

With people contacting us through our community website, the site therefore serves a third purpose. It generates leads for us as REALTORS®. Those leads being people who've been stirred in a buying or selling direction by what we've put on our website. Our community site has helped them and it now helps us too, as the leads come flowing in.

Leads won't come, though, unless people visit our community website. To ensure they do, we need to make the site highly visible. Make people aware that it exists and is worth checking out.

We can do that by creating sign riders featuring our community website's address (URL) and having these sign riders hung beneath all our "For Sale" signs. We can also highlight the site in our emails and post about it on social media. In these latter cases (email and social media), we'd include both the URL and an action link taking people to the site.

Our site can be promoted additionally through including its URL on mailers and other offline outreach. Having a laptop or tablet handy at your open houses and community events would also allow you to promote your website - since you'd be able to personally show it to residents. Promote the community website in all of these ways and you'll ensure it won't go unnoticed.

The promotion we do satisfies another purpose too. It connects us, in the minds of others, with the neighborhood. People see us as THE real estate agent for the neighborhood. And who can blame them? After all, we're the only agent that's contributing so much to the neighborhood/community that we actually have a website to benefit both current and potential residents. No other agent does this, so we instantly stand out among any other REALTORS® in the community.

Unlike the community's other REALTORS®, we're also seen as an expert on living in that particular community. Our knowledge is on full display with all of the information on the community site. It's obvious to anyone visiting the site that we "know our stuff". We couldn't have created the site if we didn't.

Our competition - the community's other REALTORS® - may also "know their stuff". But where's their proof? They'll have to go round it

up, somehow. While they worry about that, we can relax and build an insurmountable lead. The kind of lead which makes us far and away the most trusted, respected name in real estate for the given community.

And it's all thanks to our community website.

Now, if you're like most REALTORS®, you're probably not a web designer on the side. So while you may love the idea of a community website, you may be intimidated at the thought of actually creating one.

The truth, however, is that it's not difficult to create a community website. You can use an inexpensive pre-created website template, or even get by just creating a quick "landing page" dedicated to the community.

With a website, the template you use will start off as being for a single property site. It's original purpose will be to market just one listing. Don't let that deter you. You can take this template for a single property website and expand it into one for a site promoting the entire community, as a whole.

Following that, you'll want to replace the single property website address (URL) with one more appropriate for the entire community. An example would be replacing "www.1342broadwaystreet.com" with "www.WillowGlenEstates.com". This way, the site wouldn't be limited to only that one property (1342 Broadway street). Instead, the site would include 1342 Broadway along with any other homes in the same neighborhood (Willow Glen Estates).

In order to keep your site focused on the neighborhood and not just one home, you'd need to adjust the content on the site too. Instead of showing the features of a single home, you'd be showing off the features of the community. Showcasing it, as we discussed earlier.

A good way to do that, which we didn't mention is through video. Shooting a quick video of the neighborhood, its common areas, and communities can do wonders for your site. This video, included in the website's virtual tour feature, is certain to captivate visitors. They'll also get a better sense of the neighborhood, and be more inspired to connect with you.

So they can connect, you'll use pre-created "call to action" buttons

on your community website. These buttons will come standard in the template you're using.

Once you've got the "call to action" buttons set, along with the rest of the community site; you can kick back and let the fun begin.

That position of "letting the fun begin" is kind of where we're at now, at this point in the book. We've now covered the tenth and final strategy of real estate farming. What remains is for us to figuratively put all the pieces together. We'll be doing that in the next chapter. We'll also be providing you with an expanded sense of what farming means. This includes showing you the number one reason why real estate agents fail at farming. It's a big reason too, one you might be making without realizing. Are you? Stay tuned. The answers await in the next chapter, our conclusion.

# CONCLUSION

*"Implementing Brian Icenhower's farming methods has helped my team turn listings into strong neighborhood farms that produce a steady flow of listings and buyers on a consistent basis."*

**—Edie Waters**, \$60 million in annual sales volume & 275 homes sold per year

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We're now at the end. Or the beginning. Depending on how you look at it. It's the end of this book about real estate farming. But it can - and should - be the beginning of your real estate farming efforts.

If you're serious about your success as a REALTOR®, there's no better way than farming. For starters, it's simple and easy to implement. We've seen that with each of our strategies in this book. None of the strategies are exactly "rocket science". Nor do they require vast riches or superhuman abilities. Any dedicated REALTOR® can do the ten farming strategies in this book, whether that's you or your competition.

Speaking of competition, that's another reason for farming. When you farm, you don't have to compete with other REALTORS®. There's no competition because you're recognized as THE agent in the neighborhood and not an agent who happens to work there.

In addition, farming allows you to avoid "chasing" prospective clients or engaging in "pushy" marketing. Clients will instead come to you, the listing agent. They'll be drawn to you by your marketing, which provides value.

With value as its focus, you don't risk turning people off. Those you market to will be "turned on" and appreciate your efforts. They may even look forward to hearing from you. That's great since farming provides countless opportunities for communicating. You get countless chances to send flyers, knock on doors, post to Facebook, and utilize all of the other strategies we've explored throughout this text.

Having sung farming's praises, you're probably eager to start on it. Or

maybe do more of it, if your marketing already includes some of the strategies in this book.

Before you do any farming, hang on for just a minute.

We need to give you a warning about farming. Otherwise we'd be doing you a tremendous disservice.

The warning is that real estate farming isn't a "done deal". In other words, not every REALTOR® who farms is automatically guaranteed success. Real estate farmers can, and often do, fail.

When they meet with failure, it usually comes down to a single reason. The number one reason, in fact, for failure among aspiring real estate farmers.

What's to blame for their failure? Lack of awareness.

Real estate farmers who fail are not aware of the "how" of real estate farming. We've given you part of the "how" in this book. But you'd be remiss to read this book once and believe you knew absolutely everything about real estate farming. For as they say, the only constant is change. That goes for nearly everything in life too. From the weather outside to the fashions people wear to the events in daily news around the world.

Change is also a certainty where we're concerned - in real estate. Look at our industry. Just ten years ago, for example, Zillow and Trulia might have been seen purely as weird misspellings of the words "Pillow" and "Julia". Yet today these sites are among the most powerful forces in the real estate business.

Change is just as much a certainty when it comes to strategies within real estate. Those continue to evolve as well. So while a strategy may not change conceptually, the practical application of it can. And often within just a few years.

In the case of farming, the overall principle of farming won't change. Farming's strategies will also, conceptually, remain the same. But the specific mechanics, the ways in which the strategies are applied may change. This is especially true where a strategy like Facebook is concerned, given Facebook's continual evolution.

All this is to say then, that you shouldn't stop learning. Not if you want to succeed at real estate farming and thus be a top REALTOR®.

Instead, you must constantly update and maintain your understanding of real estate farming. Just as you'd regularly renew your real estate license, so too must you renew your sense of farming.

To keep your knowledge updated, check out [TheRealEstateTrainer.com](http://TheRealEstateTrainer.com). The site offer a wealth of knowledge on farming and many other real estate topics. Where farming is concerned, you'll find additional scripts, along with useful videos and articles. Do yourself a favor and visit the website after you've read this section. You won't regret it.

Before you log on, let's quickly recap farming's core principles. That way you'll have the principles in mind while exploring the site and expanding your knowledge of farming specifics.

The first farming principle to remember is that it's a "game of touches". By "touch", we mean making contact in a meaningful, value-focused way with a given audience. As a real estate farmer, your aim is to find a neighborhood or community and then touch its residents repeatedly. The more of these touches you can make the better. For with each touch, you're building what we call "mind-share". Mind-share means the amount of "mental real estate" you occupy with those residents in your community. Touches build mind-share by essentially pushing you into a resident's mind. And pushing out of the resident's mind, any thoughts of other REALTORS®.

As you touch, make sure to always come from a place of contribution. Seek to provide value to those in your community (your farm). This way your farming efforts will never be seen as spam. Neighbors won't mind. They'll appreciate your efforts and embrace the marketing you do (flyers, gifts, etc.), treating it as a welcome guest, rather than an unwanted pest.

Another of real estate farming's core principles is alignment. Your marketing efforts need to be aligned with your customers. You do that by providing value, as we mentioned. It's not enough, though. Your efforts must also be aligned with activities that actually generate listings. When the two are aligned, the result is a win-win situation for everyone. You add value to customers through your marketing, so they benefit.

And your efforts generate listings, so you as a REALTOR® win too.

Along with alignment, success in real estate farming also comes from recognizing a unique connection. It's the connection between a home's ultimate purchaser and existing neighborhood residents. Often, the ultimate purchaser of the home is a friend, family member or acquaintance of someone already living in the neighborhood.

Knowing that, your farming should focus on neighbors of the property you're listing. Touching the neighbors repeatedly will enable you to increase exposure for your listing, as well as the listing's price and the speed in which it sells.

Your listing may sell fast but your own work as a farmer will still take time. That's a principle of farming too. It's the sense that this is not a quick sprint. It's the marketing equivalent of a marathon, rather than the 50-yard dash.

If you're going to run that "race", so to speak, you need to concentrate on consistent effort over time. Consistency means, for example, that you send flyers and emails, each month on schedule. Even when you're "too busy". You must maintain this consistency or you'll risk losing the mind-share you've built up with residents.

Being consistent in your marketing doesn't have to stress you out though. You can make the entire process painless by having systems in place. Systems will allow you to keep track of your farming's "touches" while also managing the million-and-one other things you're doing. Have systems and you'll find it easy to stay on pace in the "marketing marathon" of farming.

## About Icenhower Coaching & Consulting (ICC)

Icenhower Coaching & Consulting (ICC) offers structured real estate coaching programs designed to fit the specific needs of real estate agents and brokers seeking to increase their business income while maintaining a balanced life. Whether it be new licensees, solo agents, team leaders, team members, or broker/managers; ICC's customized real estate coaching plans are tailored to achieve the specific goals set by each individual client.

Having coached and trained thousands of agents, ICC founder Brian Icenhower's real estate coaching systems and models will dramatically enhance the career of real estate agents at any level of production.

### Coaching Programs

In coaching, ICC offers both one-on-one and group real estate coaching programs. All programs are comprised of weekly telephone conferences and include a variety of real estate coaching support materials.

#### **ICC's programs cover such relevant and useful topics as:**

- Lead Generation – Business generation methods, Sources to increase commission income
- Prospecting – Expired Listings, For Sale By Owner (FSBO), Circle Prospecting, etc.
- Building a Referral Database – Center of Influence (COI), Preferred Vendors
- Internet Lead Generation – Social Media, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Blogging, Video Marketing, etc.
- Real Estate Teams – Recruiting, Hiring, Training, Management, Structures, Compensation, Job Descriptions, etc.
- Real Estate Farming – Geographic, Organizations, Businesses, etc.
- Real Estate Scripts – Dialogues, Role-play, Objection handlers, Best practices, etc.

- Time Management – Scheduling, Prioritizing, Tracking, Accountability

Want to know more?

To learn how ICC can coach you to greater success in your real estate career, visit [www.TheRealEstateTrainer.com](http://www.TheRealEstateTrainer.com)

Still, as any marathon runner knows, you can't go it alone. That goes for both first-time marathoners and the old vets. Both seek out expert coaches who can provide them with the training which will ensure success.

In your case, with real estate farming, you don't have to go it alone either. Log on to that website we mentioned earlier. TheRealEstateTrainer.com. There, you'll find the support and assistance you need. It's waiting for you, in the form of educational materials, along with options for coaching and training. Visit the site to ensure you're able to not only run the "marathon" of real estate farming, but win it too.

Question	Choices	Answer
For best results, A community website's main design should showcase:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All listings available, sold, and expired</li> <li>2. Your listings available, sold, and coming soon</li> <li>3. The communities features and accomplishments</li> <li>4. 4-5 Call-to-action buttons that require registration to learn more about coming events, maps, and preferred vendor networks</li> </ol>	3. The communities features and accomplishments
To drive traffic to a community site, URLs might be featured:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. On all flyers</li> <li>b. On sign riders</li> <li>c. On related websites</li> <li>d. On Social Media pages</li> <li>e. All of the above</li> </ol>	e.All of the above
The content on your community site will remain relevant as long as it remains:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Static</li> <li>2. Dynamic and updated</li> <li>3. Spell-checked</li> <li>4. Multi-faceted and sponsored</li> </ol>	2.Dynamic and updated