



# Connect!

REAL RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IDEAS



by CHAD RUEFFERT

Ask someone for a synonym for the word salesperson and you're likely to hear terms like "pushy", "aggressive" or even "dishonest."

## Don't Forget to Sell Yourself

It's one reason, and a valid one, that real estate salespeople prefer relationship marketing to traditional salesmanship. They want to create a long-term connection with a potential customer and avoid being seen as an irritating, commission-hungry salesperson.

That's the right attitude to have, but sometimes it can be taken too far. The fact is, if you're not just a little pushy, a little bit aggressive, you may actually be hurting your brand image and missing the chance for referrals.

When you list a home, the number one thing that customer wants is for you to aggressively, vigorously, energetically, and enthusiastically sell their house. How you sell yourself, how passionately and actively you endorse yourself and your services will directly reflect in the minds of customers and referral sources on the way they picture you selling a property. The more aggressively you sell yourself, the higher opinion your prospects will have of your ability to sell their home. And it gives referral sources confidence in their desire to endorse you to their friends and family.

Real Estate coach Brian Buffini has often said that the number one reason a real estate agent fails is "politeness." Agents are either

overcompensating in their efforts to not be seen as pushy or are too nervous to self-promote and it's hurting their bottom line. So when you are talking to potential customers, and potential referral sources, don't forget to sell yourself. The people you meet expect it, and respect it, so long as you do it correctly. Here are a few tips that will help you build your salesperson brand and generate new customers and referrals.

### **Sell a Product Instead of a Person**

For some people self-promotion is very hard. Even for successful people, it can feel like bragging to talk about your personal accomplishments. If this describes you, try remembering that what you are selling is a product or a "brand". You the "person" are not the same thing as you the "brand". Thinking of yourself as "Jane Smith Realtor, Inc." rather than just Jane Smith can help you overcome the natural aversion to self-promotion.

### **Modesty is not the Best Policy**

Many real estate agents need to overcome the thinking that it is arrogant or conceited to highlight your accomplishments. Part of the resume of a good Realtor is their sales volume in comparison to the competition, as well as their advanced designations,

continuing education or experience that sets them apart. You have to find ways to talk about these things because they are your competitive advantage. Be proud of your successes and others will share your pride.

### **Share the Wealth**

One of the best ways to ensure people don't look at your self-promotion as self-absorption is to have the same positive attitude about others. When you say uplifting things about everyone, the positive things you say about yourself are more easily accepted.

### **Exchange Pressure for Persistence**

No one wants to feel pressured. It's one of the top complaints about salespeople. But if you don't ask for the business, it's likely you'll never get it. So exchange the full-court press for a system of positive persistence. When you find someone who is a potential customer or referral source, begin a regular plan of communication and follow up with them so that you are immediately top of mind at the appropriate moment without the uncomfortable demands for immediate action.

*Chad Rueffert is president of Braintree Marketing, Inc. and the creator of the From Your Friends Relationship Marketing Program.*

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