

EVERY AGENT NEEDS A GAMEPLAN



Top 10 Marketing Questions Asked and Answered

Question 1:

I am considering running 30- to 60-second advertising spots on my local radio station, is this a good investment?

Before you invest in any advertising, it's important to ask yourself what your goal is. The two main objectives of advertising are lead generation and branding. Radio has a much stronger branding aspect than it does lead generation. So if your goal is branding and a few leads, great, radio advertising may be just the ticket! If your goal is 100% lead generation, you might want to look elsewhere.

Question 2:

I've been a consistent million-dollar producer for the last three years and would like to double my business within the next two years. What are the best lead-generation strategies to get me to the next level and what type of budget would these strategies require?

To double your business the answer is NOT to work twice as hard. The answer is to increase your capacity. This can be achieved quickly through delegation. Spend more time with clients and prospects and hire other people for the administrative and marketing tasks. Most people find this to be a scary but also very rewarding step. This is the time when an agent goes from being a single person business to a multiple person company.

As for strategies to get you to the next level, start with creating a quarterly marketing calendar/budget and commit to implementing the strategies you've outlined. Our top producers are laser focused and track return on every marketing expenditure. They are aggressive about hosting monthly seminars, consistently sending 3000-5000 piece direct mail campaigns, and hosting client education or client appreciation events. While each agent's marketing activities should reflect their individual strengths, most are allocating 20-25% percent of their revenue to marketing. Plan your marketing calendar with this budget in mind but be flexible. Segment your marketing calendar into 3-month sections and track ROI on each strategy to determine which events to continue into the next quarter.

EVERY AGENT NEEDS A GAMEPLAN



For more information please contact GamePlan or GP Creative at 800-886-4757.

Question 3:

I enjoy hosting client appreciation events for my clients but haven't found them to be a good referral source. What can I do to encourage more clients to bring guests to these events?

There are several ways to increase the number of guests at a client appreciation event. One way would be to choose events at locations that would be broadly appealing such as a movie theater to host a premiere, a high-end restaurant for a nice evening out, or a park where other families would feel welcome. Agents are also including tickets with their invitations and giving their clients 2 extra tickets to give out to friends. Finally, the key to any successful referral event is to contact the client 2-3 days after the invite has been sent to proactively invite them to bring a guest. Be sure to follow-up a week later to see if they've had an opportunity to make contact with their anticipated guest.

Question 4:

I know the statistics about how acquiring new clients can cost five times more than satisfying and retaining a current client. Knowing that, what client retention strategies would you recommend?

Client retention is about personal contact. Luckily there is no shortage of ideas to stay top of mind with clients. Consider the following: email newsletters with relevant topical information, quarterly print newsletters with your picture on them (it's like seeing you again without actually being there), hosting client educational workshops to show your knowledge, client appreciation events to say "thank you," and ongoing gestures like birthday calls just to say "hello." Another strategy is to do semi-annual or annual reviews to stay on top of any changing circumstances in your clients' lives and the economy. Finally, a new strategy is to use web cameras and programs like Skype and GoToMeeting to do virtual meetings.

EVERY AGENT NEEDS A GAMEPLAN



For more information please contact GamePlan or GP Creative at 800-886-4757.

Question 5:

I was in the industry years ago and am just getting back into it. What is a good strategy to get myself back in front of people?

When reintroducing yourself it's important to be very focused in your strategy. Pick a specialty, a main focus for your practice. Then create a core value statement that succinctly describes who you are and what you do. This will help keep you focused and make certain you are not trying to be everything to everyone. Consider creating a 1-page professional bio called a prestige piece and include all of your service offerings and a description of the type of individual who can most benefit from your services. You can use this marketing piece as a capabilities brochure to re-introduce yourself to old contacts and as a great, quality piece to send to new prospects. Start your mailing campaign by sending to your inner circle first. Most importantly, at the end of each appointment or phone call ask your prospect for the names of other individuals. This will be the quickest way to build your prospect pipeline and ensure ongoing appointment activity.

Question 6:

I have placed newspaper ads in my local newspaper before with no responses. How can I make my newspaper advertising more effective?

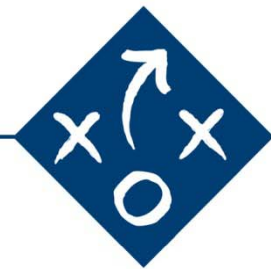
Newspaper advertising can be a great way to generate leads. It's also one of the easiest ways to throw away money. There are a lot of variables that go into a good advertisement including the message or offer, the readership audience, placement and creative execution. A good newspaper ad is big, in color and has a very strong offer or call to action. A common mistake is putting in too much information. Here's a tip: you should be able to look at an ad for 5 seconds and completely understand what the offer is.

Question 7:

I have held seminars in the past, but feel like the guests are not engaged and will start to lose interest before the night is over. How can I overcome this?

The number one way to engage guests at a seminar is to add simple interactive activities throughout the event. Whenever possible get their hands in the air, get them to stand up, encourage questions, get physical props into their hands and, most importantly, use their names as much as possible. Have an assistant in the back of the room keep track of the names of individuals who ask questions and be sure to single them out afterwards to thank them for their attentiveness and confirm that you answered their question completely.

EVERY AGENT NEEDS A GAMEPLAN



For more information please contact GamePlan or GP Creative at 800-886-4757.

Question 8:

I would like to build a website to start pulling in leads. Where do I begin?

The purpose of a website is to provide educational information and any leads should be considered a bonus. Mostly, a website's #1 goal is to help you establish credibility. Think of it like your online brochure. This doesn't mean that it won't be a deciding factor for a prospect so quality and professionalism is important. Websites are also a good way to communicate with existing clients about upcoming events and any updates or changes in your practice. Having a variety of financial articles and calculators on your site will encourage repeat visits. Plus these features may prompt your clients to refer your website to their friends and colleagues searching for answers to specific financial questions.

Question 9:

I keep hearing from other agents about their CRM. What is the purpose of a CRM and why would I want to use it?

Having a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system can be the cornerstone to a great business. The purpose of a CRM is to have a place to capture all of the important information about your clients and prospects. This is a very competitive industry and most often the details make the difference between a sale and hearing "I'll think about it." A good system is about more than just knowing about a client or prospect's financial profile, it's about knowing birthdays, the names of grandkids, favorite restaurants, beverages, hobbies, vacations and events in their lives that are important to them. The next step is using this information to create a very strong relationship. Knowing these details will be what differentiates you from your competition.

Question 10:

When do you know to scrap a marketing campaign?

A very common mistake is to stop a marketing program before it has a chance to really get going. Here are some general guidelines for a standard period of time for a campaign. Radio shows take a minimum of 13 weeks to start producing, newspaper advertisements should be run two times a week for six weeks, direct mail should be sent to the same list at least three times, and seminars should be done for at least three months. The main point is that marketing takes a commitment of time and money. If executed correctly and consistently, marketing often pays off.