

How Do I Begin Marketing to Professional Referral Sources?

Did you know that you could see a 25% increase in YOUR business by effectively partnering with another professional?

Who are my professional referral sources?

Think about what industries would provide an excellent cross-selling opportunity for both sides. What kind of services might your client need that you don't offer, and vice versa? Business-to-business marketing can be a profitable opportunity to grow your business by joining forces with another professional. Your goal is to offer a one-stop-shop for both your clients and theirs.

Some examples of professional partnerships to pursue are:

- Mortgage Professionals and Realtors
- Realtors and Home Inspectors
- Tax Advisors and Mortgage Professionals
- Financial Planners and Mortgage Professionals
- Realtors and Financial Planners
- Builders and Mortgage Professionals
- Insurance Agents and Mortgage Professionals
- Realtors and Builders
- Investment Bankers and Mortgage Professionals
- Attorneys and Mortgage Professionals
- Realtors and Investment Bankers

Along with community gatherings and chamber events, one source to find professionals to partner with is from your current clients. Lisa H. Buksbaum states that this can be a beneficial approach in her article titled "How do I market to local businesses whose owners are too busy to join associations?" Simply talking to your clients and getting to know what they do for a living could open a variety of doors for you as a professional.

How do I make my first contact?

Making initial contact and introducing yourself in a memorable and professional way is very important when pursuing new partnerships. It is also imperative to be consistent in your efforts to contact your prospective partner. Your goal is to sell them on your expertise, allow them the opportunity to build trust in you, and offer them something that no one else can in your industry.

If you haven't met them face to face yet, send a **Greeting Card** introducing yourself, and let them know you are interested in learning more about their business. Perhaps include a coffee shop or restaurant gift card and request a meeting over coffee or lunch. If you have already met them, send a simple note, handwritten, telling them you enjoyed meeting them at the event. Express an interest in getting together again in the near future to talk about ways that you may be able to work together. Add a personal touch to your outreach efforts and be genuine in your effort – it will establish trust between you and your prospect.

Another great idea to show your potential partner that you are serious about doing business with them is to send them a referral. In the article titled "Ten Simple Steps to More Customers with Better Networking" author Kevin Stirtz states that sending a referral doesn't cost you a penny. He also says, "If they're the kind of person you want to do business with, they'll reciprocate and a valuable, long-term business relationship could develop."



What valuable offers can I provide?

Offering educational value is the strongest tool you have since you are the expert in your field. Ask if you can present a **Seminar** on a certain topic to a group of their clients that they feel may benefit from it. Or ask them if they would like to co-present a seminar to both of your clients. Offer to send out helpful **Educational Brochures** to their clients to help educate them on particular subjects. Extending a special discount to *their* clients for using *your* services is a great way to help your affiliate offer incentives to their clients – and advertise your services as well!

Make an exclusive offer only available to *their* clients. Discuss with your business partner what they feel the best incentive would be to offer; they know their clients best. Being reliable, honest and consistent in your services and commitments are valuable qualities that you can market to your partners as well. It is also a great idea to find other professional partners that share these same values.

Offer to develop a marketing plan that will help you both accomplish your goals together. Download In Touch Today's complimentary **One Hour Marketing Plan** to help you plan out a strategy that will work for you both. (<http://www.intouchtoday.com/plan/index.php>)

How can I help keep the relationship successful?

Keep your professional partner updated on new industry information. Keep them informed of new products or services that they may be able to pass along to their clients. Also, when partnering with another organization, respect the requests and the expectations that have been established. Professional partnering can open up new doors for your business growth. The book "The Partnering Imperative: Making Business Partnerships Work" states that by effectively partnering with another business, you could see a 25% greater share of value than your competitors. Don't miss out on the many worthwhile business opportunities out there for you!

Professional partnering really works!

"My greeting cards started going out and I immediately began receiving referral calls. One of my old customers who received one of the cards is now a real estate agent at a very large office. She called me specifically to let me know how much she appreciated the cards, and especially how much she appreciated the thought that her clients that she would be sending to me would also be receiving these cards on a regular basis as well. This opened up a new real estate office to me. These were great, unexpected, and welcome by-products of your card campaign."

~ Andy B., Fidelity Funding Mortgage Corp

Resources:

Book: "The Partnering Imperative: Making Business Partnerships Work" by Dick Anne Deering, Anne Murphy

Website Article: "How do I market to local businesses whose owners are too busy to join associations?" by Lisa H. Buksbaum <http://www.inc.com/articles/2001/06/22842.html>

Website Article: "Ten Simple Steps to More Customers with Better Networking" by Kevin Stirtz <http://www.businessknowhow.com/marketing/better-networking.htm>

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