

Supercharged Marketing Part 2



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Supercharged Marketing

- SCM Parts 1 & 2 show you how to market home inspections from A to Z, from start to finish – **what to say, what not to say, how to say it, when to say it.**
- Please don't take offense if you are currently doing any of the things that we feel are not worthwhile: instead, keep an open mind. *We speak from years and years of experience.*

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1.

Social Media Marketing



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Social Media and Websites

- Traditional **face time** marketing vs. social media and internet marketing
- * **Face time** requires *you* to go see *them* on *your* schedule.
- * Social media and websites require *them* to come to *you* on *their* schedule by visiting your website and voluntarily networking with you...
- * So, your message must be compelling!

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Social Media Marketing

- Why do I need this if **face time** is so effective?
- * It reinforces **face time**.
- * It allows you to reach referral sources outside of a real estate office.
- * It's rapidly growing so you can't afford to ignore it, in fact...
- * *It's preferred by many of your potential referral sources and clients.*

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Social Media Marketing

- *Social marketing* is being part of a community and participating in it.
- It's virtual **face time**: customers/clients become **familiar** with you on their schedule and at any time, 24/7.
- It offers an ongoing dialogue with customers/clients that is difficult to achieve through real **face time**.
- *It can be done for little or no money.*

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Social Media Marketing

- Social media includes:
 - * Facebook (social contact site)
 - * Twitter (micro blogging)
 - * LinkedIn (more "pro" than Facebook)
 - * Yelp (ratings from clients/customers)
 - * Your own website (next section)
 - * Blogs (next section)
 - * eNewsletters (next section)



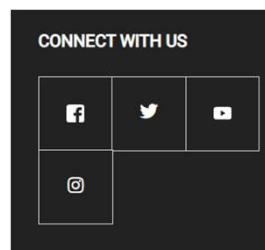
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Social Media Marketing

- **Facebook is huge.**
- Over 2 billion accounts.
- You reach customers and clients through fan pages and group participation, but...
- ...you need much more than just an account – it's about adding "friends," creating a fan page so customers and potential clients can "like" your company.
- Many, many agents are on Facebook.

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Provide link to social accounts on website



LET'S GET SOCIAL



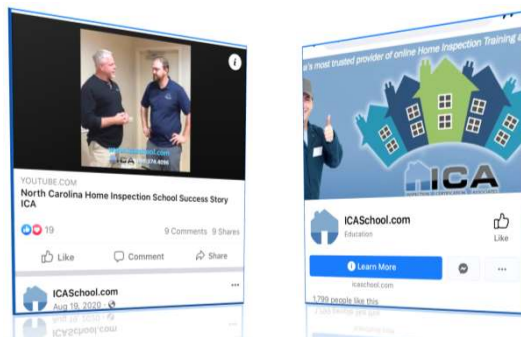
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Social Media Marketing

- By "liking" your Facebook page, people will receive your posts on their "wall" (page).
- The more people that "like" your page, the more inter-connected you are.
- You can place a "like" button on your website to drive more traffic to it.



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Social Media Marketing

- **Twitter:**
- Over 300 million users – one of the ten most visited websites worldwide.
- Allows you to send and receive “tweets” (messages up to 280 characters) to networked contacts (followers).
- Often used as a marketing micro-blog to send regular messages to contacts.
- Target will be agents, not clients.

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Social Media Marketing

- **LinkedIn:**
- Essentially Facebook for business, with over 700 million members.
- Many agents are on LinkedIn.
- Contacts must be invited and accepted.
- You can join or start groups, which allow ongoing dialogue.
- Target will be agents, not clients.

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Social Media Marketing

- **Yelp:**
- Local search and user review site.
- More than 100 million monthly visitors.
- You update your own business listing, and your clients post their reviews.
- Target will be clients, not agents.
- Primary demographic is 26-35 years.
- Reviews could be good or bad.

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Social Media Marketing

- **If you need help:**
- Use the internet – search for “Facebook marketing,” “Twitter marketing,” “Yelp listings,” etc.
- Hire a social media marketing service (\$20/month and up).
- Hire a community college IT student (check with the school’s IT dept.)

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Social Media Marketing

- **Facebook marketing help:**
- <http://www.facebook.com/help> (look for “Ads and Business Solutions”)
- <http://www.facebook.com/marketing>
- Just type “Facebook marketing” in Google or other search engines.

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Social Media Marketing

- **Twitter marketing help:**
- <http://www.twitter.com> (look for “help” and “resources” at bottom)
- <http://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics>
- Just type “Twitter marketing” in Google or other search engines.

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Social Media Marketing

- **LinkedIn marketing help:**
- <http://marketing.linkedin.com/>
- <http://learn.linkedin.com/>
- Just type "LinkedIn marketing" in Google or other search engines.

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Social Media Marketing

- **Yelp marketing help:**
- <http://www.yelp.com>
- <http://biz.yelp.com/support>
- Just type "using Yelp for business" in Google or other search engines.

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2.

Websites, Emails, and Blogs

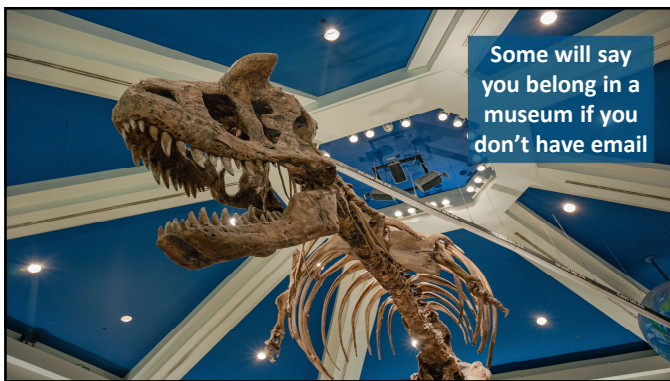


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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **You MUST have a website and email.**
- Most professionals have websites, and they will expect you to have one, too.
- Just about everybody includes email in their communication toolbox – you'll look like a dinosaur without it.
- Many clients would rather have you email or link the report to them and their agent or attorney (especially younger clients and clients not at the inspections).

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **You need a DECENT website:**
- Your website should reflect the same marketing message and image as all of your other marketing activities.
- Because good websites operate in layers, you can provide greater detail about your services than in a printed brochure.

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Unless you are really computer savvy, you probably should have a site designed for you.**
- Good websites give a prospect "a free sample" of your services (defect photos, sample report pages, home maintenance information, testimonials).
- Don't post your fees on your website: ask clients to call you during regular business hours (email quotes are tough to close).

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Web design does not have to be expensive.**
- Surf the internet and find out who designed a site that you like (usually at the bottom of the home page).
- Check at colleges for IT students.
- Try www.stoltzdesign.net
- *Be sure you get the website files.*

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Web hosting is cheap (less than \$100 annually).**
- Many designers also offer hosting.
- Try www.godaddy.com (one of many)
- Ideally, your domain name is "yourcompanyname.com"
- Buy all the variations - .net, .org, etc.
- You'll want to maintain it yourself.

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Search engine positioning is important if you hope to attract clients.**
- You can pay somebody to do it (reputable firms are expensive).
- Try www.selfpromotion.com – it's time consuming but it really works (the service is "free," but a donation is requested - \$20 to \$30 is adequate).
- Be careful with pay-per-click ads.

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Building community content into your website will attract followers.**
- Home maintenance tips, housing market data, links to mortgage brokers and insurance agents build traffic.
- Promoting your local community (focused marketing) with information links to local merchants, coupons, and updated blogs will build repeat traffic.

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Email can be essentially free and does help to build brand recognition.**
- However, unless your content is useful, your email will get quickly deleted.
- Sending a weekly or monthly eNewsletter with timely topics can keep your email (and branding) alive.
- Email services (ConstantContact) start at \$15/month (but you write the content).

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **Blogs are online journals.**
- Your blog's real purpose is to generate traffic to your inspection website.
- Can use blogging software, a free hosted blog service, or be self hosted.
- Your web designer can probably help you with getting this set up.
- You need decent writing skills.

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Websites, Email, and Blogs

- **You should probably enjoy writing because it needs to be fresh: weekly or even daily (doesn't have to be long).**
- Your message should be about homes: maintenance, inspection issues, new technologies, etc. and include photos.
- <http://www.probblogger.net/archives/2006/02/14/is-a-blog-right-for-you/>
- <http://www.probblogger.net/archives/2006/02/14/blogging-for-begginers-2/>

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3.

Grassroots (Community) Marketing



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Grassroots Marketing

- **Grassroots marketing can grow your business without agents (but more slowly).**
- It's all about **community** marketing.
- In large, urban areas, it can generate inspections, either with focused marketing or separately (but it's never as effective as getting **face time** with real estate agents).
- **Everyone** (businesspeople, clients and even agents) likes **community involvement** and it helps to build brand recognition.

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Grassroots Marketing

- Grassroots marketing can be especially effective (**and is needed**) in small communities and rural areas...
- ...and it often involves an educational component: you will spend a lot of time explaining the value of a home inspection:
- You'll tell anyone who will listen how it can save them time, money and aggravation;
- And you'll tell agents who'll listen how it can minimize their liability.

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Wayne County is about 716 square miles, about 17,000 people



There are about 20 licensed agents for the whole county.

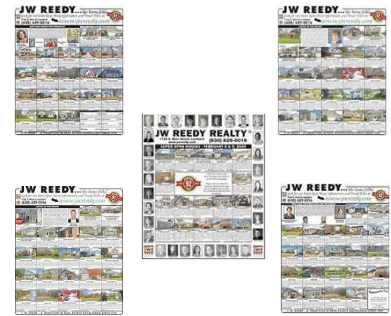
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Grassroots Marketing

- A lot of good marketing comes from your own general awareness of, and exposure to, your **community**.
- There are many “hidden” marketing opportunities right under your nose.
- Just reading the local paper can provide marketing leads...

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You might find someone that would be good for a few referrals in the local newspaper!



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Grassroots Marketing

- **Know your local newspaper owner and/or editor.**
- They can be a great source of information about your community and, if they like you, can help to “spread the word” and help get you inspections.
- Take them to lunch.
- Inspect their house for free, as a demonstration – and give them a written report. Treat it as a real inspection.

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Write a column for a local newspaper.**
- A handyman or “home tips” column is most effective, but the column could be about any topic. Answering readers’ questions writes the column for you.
- Weekly, bi-weekly or monthly is fine.
- You might not get paid for this.
- You might need a ghost writer or the newspaper editor’s help.

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For a change

Exec desperately seeks more time with family

William is a top Hamilton business executive desperately seeking more time for dinner with family, home renovations, reading and taking walks with his wife. This is his vision of being an engaged parent. But William is “one self-worth and success is soaring, the loss of control and pleasure he feels in his family life is a source of grief and distress for him. Integrity and empowerment as a father and husband are key values in life, William says. In our sessions, we worked backward from his own vision of the role he desires at home. Then we brainstormed some daily opportunities to manage his time differently so he could better honour his family values. Reviewing his major job responsibilities, he realized he must fine-tune his use of time on an ongoing basis by: # Setting clearer expectations of himself and staff around him. maintains the status quo as viable choices in some cases. He then chose one aspect of his work day that might have the greatest return for his efforts: prioritization. William got a boost of encouragement when he realized two things: # He was not critically looking at each day’s to-do list. # He was putting the same level of effort and energy on different work projects, regardless of returns for his company and his time. He realized that, on reflection, his professional success need not suffer if he has dinner with his family more often instead of alone at the office. ©Sheeba Varghese-Denys is proprietor of

Ready for a change?
Do you want to climb the career ladder faster? Improve your relationships? Or just get organized? Email the Go Health editor at gohealth@goon.com about the change of behaviour or mindset you want. And you may be considered for a free, one-hour telephone session with a local coach who will help you tackle the change. Describe in 200 words or less what you want to change and how you want things to be different. Then, every other Thursday, read about the winners in our 8.

SHEEBA VARGHESE-DENYS

A weekly or monthly column can give you exposure and credibility.

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Local service clubs, churches, community organizations and other groups are hungry for speakers.**
- Discuss building maintenance tips (for free) and weave in your story (not exactly the same as for agents). Answer all questions directly. Bring business cards, flyers, brochures and a sample report.
- Be sure to stay and mingle (**face time**).

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Banks are being stuck with bad houses.**
- Talk to a local community banker in charge of the loan department (not one of the big chain banks).
- Explain to them the value of having you inspect every home they're providing financing for.

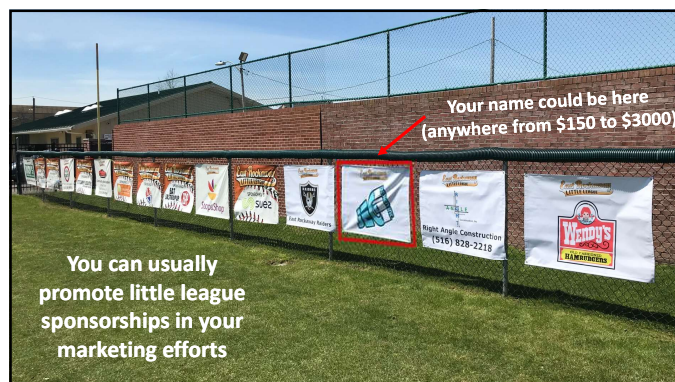
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Grassroots Marketing

- **Sponsoring a little league team can work, but you really should get the face time you have "earned."**
- Show up at all the games. Actively root for "your" team. Get to know the parents, coaches, etc. Do not be bashful about supporting "your" team or "your" kids.
- Wear a team jacket with your sponsorship name on the jacket.



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You can get this type of exposure through a little league team sponsorship (\$200 - \$1000)



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Grassroots Marketing

- **Get a table at the local or county fair, local art and craft fairs, festivals, gatherings, local malls, etc. (cost varies).**
- But don't just sit at your table and hope somebody will show up – you need to work it...
- ...stand outside your table space, work the crowd – have a promotion or contest that requires folks to show up to your table to be entered in the contest.

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Believing in Yourself

- Six characteristics of a successful entrepreneur:
 1. **Has a lot of energy**
 2. **Willing to try new things**
 3. **Likes working with people**
 4. **Is not easily discouraged**
 5. **Is well organized**
 6. **Likes to take charge**

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Get involved all over your community in a prominent way.**
- Run for local office: school board, village trustee or town alderman, park board, county commissioner (some of these seats go unfilled).
- Volunteer to serve on local government committees (public works, community development, etc.).

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Join community organizations, even if you are in an urban area, because they're really networking groups.**
- Jaycee's, Rotary, Audubon, Lion's, Masons, Knights of Columbus, Shriners, church groups, preservation committees, citizen's action committees, community action groups, etc.

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Grassroots Marketing

- **These activities enhance your visibility (and you might make some new friends!)**
- Join the committees within these organizations – get really involved.
- There are often photo opportunities that come with **community involvement.**
- Realtors® are often involved in these groups for the same reasons you should be (they're trying to locate buyers and sellers, and you need referrals).

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Joining networking groups can be somewhat effective.**
- Groups such as BNI have countless local chapters in which they allow only one member of a profession. The idea is to bring business professionals together – but there's a membership fee.
- Joining high profile community groups such as Jaycees is probably more effective, and it's free.

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Organize local events, like “senior chore day,” food drives, “bike path clean-up day,” or “park clean-up day.”**
- If you hear of someone wanting to get a program started, step up to the plate and take charge.
- If someone is already running the program, offer to help.
- These are also photo ops for your local papers (free advertising for you!)

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Grassroots Marketing

- **More ways to spread the word:**
- Volunteer at the local hospital, local grade school, or soup kitchen.
- Have a company vehicle (real pain or vinyl, no magnetic signs!) and drive it everywhere.
- Work your church (discretely and to your comfort level).
- Join your local chamber of commerce and be involved with events.

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Grassroots Marketing

- **More ways to spread the word:**
- Participate in business card networking with other merchants.
- Give free maintenance inspections to other local businessmen.
- Get your local grocer or other merchant to throw your flyer in a bag for each customer (and you provide their coupons with your inspection reports).
- Offer energy audits as well as inspections.

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Grassroots Marketing

- **More ways to spread the word:**
- Participate in (*or start your own*) home buyer’s seminars and expositions.
- Arrange for joint marketing efforts with a reputable mortgage broker.
- Direct mail or going door-to-door to homes in a new subdivision will usually yield several 11-month warranty inspections (expect to pay in the low hundred for a mailing list).

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Grassroots Marketing

- **Grassroots marketing requires persistence and consistency to work.**
- Take every opportunity to educate.
- Wear your company apparel everywhere, all the time.
- Tell everyone exactly what you do and why you love it so much.
- Be passionate about your job.

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4.

Micro-Marketing

Friends and Neighbors



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Micro-Marketing

- There are many “hidden” marketing opportunities with people who already know and trust you.
- **This is a great way to increase business without spending money.**
- We all tend to overlook the easy marketing opportunities that are right in front of us.

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Micro-Marketing

- Where’s your business card?
- Do your neighbors know what you do?
- How about your doctor, dentist, insurance agent, accountant, favorite restaurant, etc.
- Don’t forget churches, clubs or other organizations you belong to.
- Or groups that your kids belong to (Little League, Scouts, dance classes, etc.)

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Micro-Marketing

- Don’t be bashful with neighbors, friends and family. Make sure they know exactly what you do.
- At social gatherings, make conversation with folks, ask them where they are from and what they do. It’s a great lead-in to tell them what you do.
- Give your business card out to everyone you talk to. You’d be amazed at where you can get inspections from!



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5.

Performance Marketing

Delivering a Quality Inspection Product



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Performance Marketing

- **Delivering a quality product.**
- Your inspection style, report format and style, and overall customer service skills together make up your product.
- Apart from the reporting system you use, performance marketing increases business without spending more money. It’s just time and effort.

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Believing in Yourself

- Six characteristics of a successful entrepreneur:
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 2. **Willing to try new things**
 3. **Likes working with people**
 4. **Is not easily discouraged**
 5. **Is well organized**
 6. **Likes to take charge**

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Performance Marketing

- **1) Has a lot of energy**
- The home inspection is a performance and you're on the stage. Everything you do and say is being observed.
- Even on bad days, great performers "suck it up" and give a good, if not great, performance.

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Performance Marketing

- Every successful inspector is a **good communicator**.
- You must develop the ability to deliver potentially bad news in a non-alarming manner.
- You have to work successfully with all types of personalities and viewpoints.

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Performance Marketing

- **At the inspection:**
- Clients: Most important people at the inspection. Be sure to address all of their concerns: what may seem minor to you may seem major to them.
- Communicate on your clients' level (and everyone else's). Most people don't know what a "double tap" is, so explain it in terms that they can understand.

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Performance Marketing

- **The key to being a proficient inspector: *Consistent Inspection Habits and Procedures.***
- Perform every inspection in the exact same manner and order (minimizes your liability and no surprises for the agents).
- Always do what you have promised.
- Write what you say and say what you write.

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Performance Marketing

- **The inspection starts in the street:**
- * Have a decent, clean vehicle.
- * Dress appropriately (logo shirt, no jeans).
- * Don't park in the driveway, or be prepared to move.
- * Arrive 20 to 30 minutes early.
- * Knock on the door and introduce yourself (tell the seller what to expect).
- * Get started on the exterior.

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Believing in Yourself

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 5. **Is well organized**
 6. **Likes to take charge**

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Performance Marketing

- **3) Likes working with people**
- Watch or listen for the arrival of your clients (and/or the real estate agents).
- Meet and greet – be the first to say hello and identify yourself. Act genuinely interested in the agents (if present) as well as in your clients – after all, you’d probably like referrals from them.

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Performance Marketing

- If there’s more than one client, address them both equally until they indicate to you who will be their “lead representative.”
- Give everyone a business card.
- In nicer weather, review the contract outside and have your clients sign it.
- Briefly explain what you plan to do, and ask if there are any questions or concerns.
- Show them around the exterior.

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Performance Marketing

- When you enter the house, be sure to change into clean “indoor shoes.” **Make sure this is noticed.** Explain how you “respect the house and owner.”
- Find a room to “set up” in: usually the kitchen counter works well. This is where you will get the pre-inspection agreement signed, prepare and review (or deliver) the report, answer any last questions, and receive payment.

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Performance Marketing

- **Great customer service tips that work:**
- Put a clean sheet or drop a cloth under your ladder or over clothes in a closet when you enter the attic.
- Keep your hands clean and don’t smudge up walls, mirrors, etc.
- Use a small rechargeable vacuum if any insulation is spilled on the rug.

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Performance Marketing

- **Great customer service tips that work:**
 - In wet weather, always clean the floor of the foyer or entryway with an old rag as everyone is leaving the inspection.
 - NEVER use the owner's hand or bath towels – bring your own.
 - Leave everything exactly as you found it.

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Performance Marketing

- **Great customer service tips that work:**
 - Be courteous to everyone (even if you want to choke them!!).
 - If you break a personal item, admit it and deal with it.
 - Try to maintain a dialogue with your clients during the inspection, but don't let this slow you down.
 - Don't tell "war stories;" stick to the job!

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Performance Marketing


- We strongly recommend a **computer formatted report, with color photos, and a defect summary that's uploaded to an FTP (web) site with a link emailed to the client.**
- Onsite delivery is not a marketing advantage anymore provided you complete the report by the next day.
- Advise clients/customers when the report will be ready, and keep your promise!

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Can anyone actually read this report?

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This inspector will be uploading the report to an ftp (web) site and emailing the client a link



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Performance Marketing

- There should be an abundance of well-written, preset comments in the inspection report software.
- Regardless of report delivery, always review the inspection and “close things out” with the client before you leave.
- The report and/or home maintenance information should be presented in a quality binder printed with your company name/logo.

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Performance Marketing

- If delivering onsite, be prepared to provide as many copies of the report as your client (or customer) wants.
- Ask if there are any other questions.
- Collect your fee and thank your client(s). **Tell them to call you with questions about the house for as long as they live there.**

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Performance Marketing

- **Thank everybody that is present at the inspection for their time.**
- This includes clients, friends of clients, sellers, agents, etc.
- Be sure to thank the agent for the referral, if appropriate.
- Be sure to ask the agent for referrals, if they did not refer the client.

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Performance Marketing

How many marketing opportunities are there on a typical home inspection?

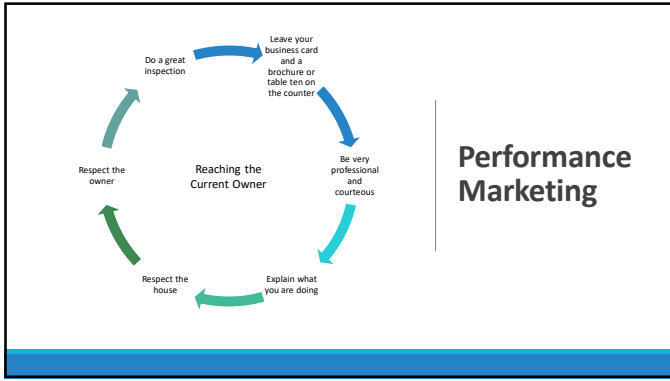
At least **2** and as many as **7**

89

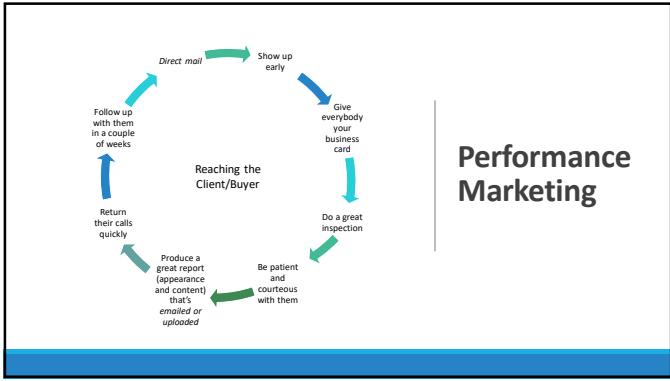
Performance Marketing

- Current owner
- Buyer (typically your client)
- Selling agent
- Listing agent
- Buyer’s attorney (regional)
- Seller’s attorney (regional)
- Buyer’s mortgage broker

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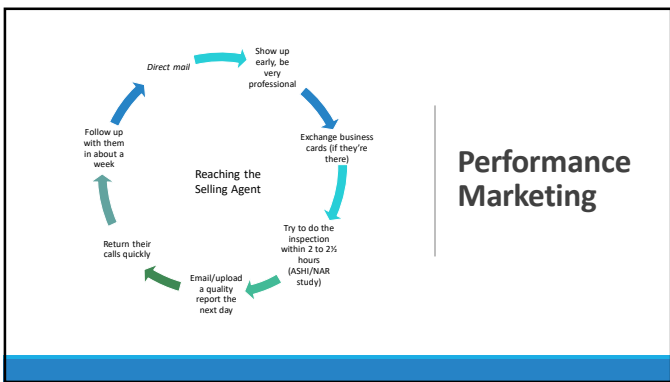
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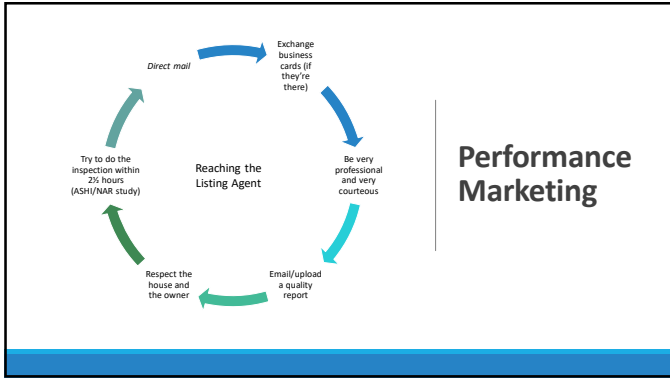
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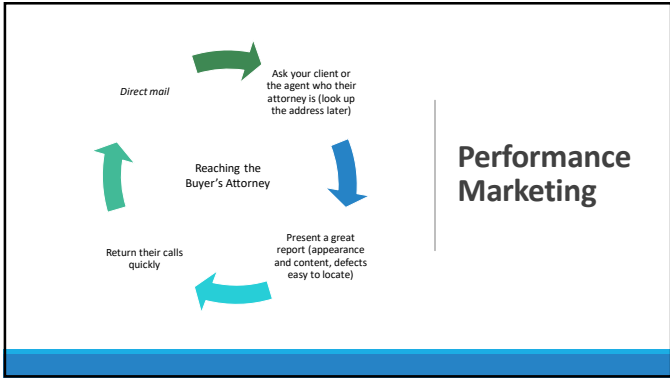
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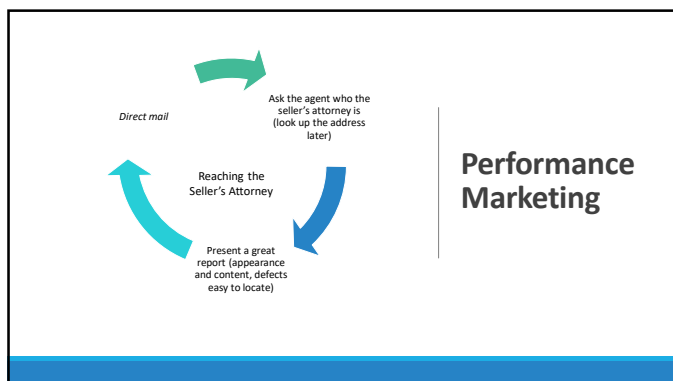
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Performance Marketing

Other customer service tips:

- If you find a major safety issue, such as a gas leak, leave a pre-printed safety notice on the kitchen counter for the owner (with a business card, of course).
- If the owner is not home and it looks like rain – close the windows for them.
- If the owner is home, ask them if they are familiar with the inspection process and review it with them before you start.

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Performance Marketing

One other on-site marketing tip:

- If the owner is home, make a little conversation and ask them where they are moving – if they say they are still looking, let them know you'd be glad to work with them (discreetly, of course).

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6.

Daily Business Marketing

Telephone and Office Skills

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Believing in Yourself

Six characteristics of a successful entrepreneur:

1. Has a lot of energy
2. Willing to try new things
3. Likes working with people
4. Is not easily discouraged
5. Is well organized
6. Likes to take charge

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Telephone and office marketing skills will increase business with little or no extra money being spent.**
- It does require better use of your time.
- **Being well organized** is often the biggest difference between those that are successful and those that are not.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Your databases need to be constantly maintained.**
- This includes tracking referrals, putting all inspections into the client database, updating with all direct mail activities, updating with new information (address changes), etc.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **You should make follow up calls after every inspection.**
- **Call the selling agent** about a week after the inspection. Ask how things are going and if there are any questions or anything you can help with. If they were the referral source, thank them. If not, ask them for a referral.
- Leaving a voicemail message counts.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **You should make follow up calls after every inspection.**
- **Call the client** about two weeks after the inspection. Ask how things are going and if there are any questions or anything you can help with. Thank them for the opportunity to work with them. Tell them you appreciate referrals. Tell them (again) to call you with questions for as long as they live in the house.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **You should make follow up calls after every inspection.**
- If the referral came from someone else you know, call them and thank them (mortgage broker, attorney, client, etc.). Tell them you'll try to refer them, too (if appropriate).

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Daily Business Marketing

- **You should be doing some direct mail marketing nearly every day.**
- There are marketing letters to agents that should be sent out after most inspections (*direct mail will be covered in the next section*).
- These all need to be tracked in your databases.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Keep your fees to yourself. Do not publish them.**
- Agents will ask, so just give them general ranges and state that “it really depends on the size of the house, since that’s the fairest way to charge.”
- If your fees are published, you’ve lost the ability to raise them in response to several factors (bad house, bad location, bad client).
- Old price sheets never go away.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Publishing fees makes your inspection service seem like a commodity.**
- Groceries are commodities. One gallon of 2% milk from store “A” is pretty much the same as another gallon of 2% milk from store “B.”
- Do you really believe that your home inspection will be no better than one performed by some other inspector?

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Publishing fees removes your selling opportunity with a potential client.**
- If they already know your price, then why call? If a prospect has three brochures (or names), but knows only your price for the house, the prospect is going to call the other two first, **AND MAY NEVER CALL YOU IF ONE OF THE OTHERS HAS GREAT TELEPHONE SKILLS (or a great story).**

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Our Prices

Dwelling Size	Our Prices
Up to 2,000 Square Feet	\$275.00
2,001 – 3,000 Square Feet	\$325.00
3,001 – 4,000 Square Feet	\$375.00
4,001 – 5,000 Square Feet	\$450.00
5,001 – 6,000 Square Feet	\$550.00
6,001 Square Feet or Higher	Special Quote

Ancillary Inspection Components

For Crawl Spaces Add	\$50.00
For Fireplaces Add	\$50.00
For Additional Level Floor Add	\$25.00
If Detached Garage/Storage Included Add	\$75.00
Attached Garage/Built In Add	\$25.00

Why call this inspector when I know their price?

I'll just call the next two referrals and see who's cheaper!

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Daily Business Marketing

- **You really need full time, live telephone answering.**
- **Forwarding to your cell phone is not the best idea.** Depending on your location (dead spots), provider and phone, some of your incoming calls may go directly to voicemail.
- According to Teena Rose, a professional career coach, you can expect “50 to 60 percent hang-ups from potential clients” when they get voicemail.

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More missed cell phone calls (and opportunities) up in smoke!



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Daily Business Marketing

- **Answering your cell phone during an inspection is poor customer service, and if you turn it off, your calls are going to voicemail.**
- Your client is paying you good money for two or three hours of your time. While you may think it's OK to say "excuse me for a moment," you are violating the sales mantra of making the client feel like they are your ONLY client.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **I can't afford to hire someone full-time to answer my phones.**
- You are **SO WRONG**. You just have to be creative.
- An OK way is to hire one of the several home inspector answering services – they charge a nominal fee to schedule inspections for you.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Here's a better way to get live telephone coverage:**
- Hire someone to work out of their house. Put a phone line in, train them, then pay them a fee per inspection booked (probably \$10 to \$15 per job).
- Make sure they have no barking dogs or screaming children.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **How do you find an in-home arrangement?**
- Run a help wanted ad in a local newspaper. Check at churches and senior centers.
- Ideal candidates include "shut-ins" or handicapped folks, retired folks, writers, or folks running their own home-based business.
- They just need to agree to pick up your phone when it rings.

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Daily Business Marketing

- **Answering your phone to drive your inspection booking rate sky high:**
- *"Smith Inspection Service, this is Bill, how can I help you?"* Speak clearly and distinctly. Telling the caller your name helps to form a bond (you're no longer anonymous).
- Caller: "I need a price for a home inspection" (or any variation).

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Daily Business Marketing

- Bill: "Great, I can help you with that. Can I have your name please?"
- Caller: "Sure, it's Harriet Homebuyer."
- Bill: "OK, can I get your phone number please?"
- Caller: "Yes, it's 800-761-1698."
- Bill: "Thanks. How did you happen to hear about us?"

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Daily Business Marketing

- Caller: "My Realtor gave me your brochure."
- Bill: "Oh, that's great – which Realtor are you working with?"
- Caller: "Betty Bigseller at RE/MAX." **(this priceless marketing info needs to be entered in your marketing database)**
- Bill: "Sure, we know Betty. Tell me about the house."

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Daily Business Marketing

- At this point you will conduct whatever dialogue you need to establish your fee for this inspection. When you've determined the fee, SAY THIS:
- Bill: "Well, Harriet our inspection fee for this house will be \$350 and we can be there Tuesday morning at 9:30 so can I go ahead and put your name down for that time?"
- **Say this as one long sentence!**

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Daily Business Marketing

- By phrasing your quote this way, you are making it *easier for the client to say yes and harder to say no.*
- You are not asking them to hire you – you are instead telling them you are ready to go – this is harder for the potential client to resist.
- It's a subtle but very basic (and effective) closing technique.

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Daily Business Marketing

- If they do say no, they want to call around or "I'll get back to you," here are some strategies:
- **"Your price is \$50 higher than another inspector I called."**
- Say, "Yes, Harriet, it's true that our price is higher. May I tell you why?" Then give them your unique selling proposition. Emphasize your great customer service.


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Daily Business Marketing

- **"I just want the cheapest inspection."**
- Say, "I know price is important to you, Harriet. May I take a moment to explain some of the differences in home inspection companies? Then you will know why some charge more than others."
- Again, go to your story (a little different for clients), emphasize your great customer service, training, background, etc.

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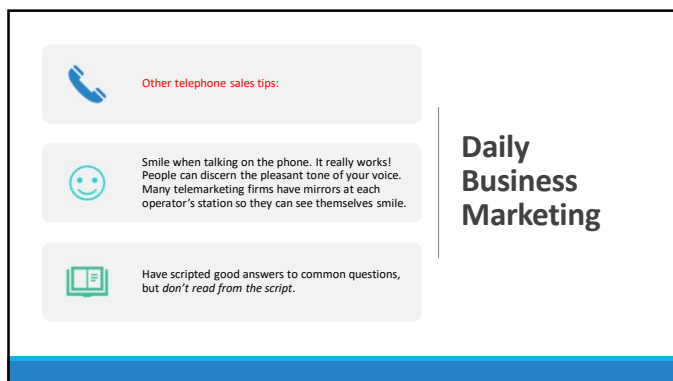
Other telephone sales tips:

 Use the prospect's name in conversation – either first or last (whatever feels right).

 When you find out where the home is located, say "Oh, Glen Ellyn is a real nice area – there's a great restaurant near the Metra station," or "Northbrook, oh sure, I've inspected a lot of homes there so I'm very familiar with that area." Anything you can say to help form a bond.

Daily Business Marketing

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Other telephone sales tips:

- Smile when talking on the phone. It really works! People can discern the pleasant tone of your voice. Many telemarketing firms have mirrors at each operator's station so they can see themselves smile.
- Have scripted good answers to common questions, but *don't read from the script*.

Daily Business Marketing

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7.

Direct Mail Marketing



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Direct Mail Marketing

- Utilizes **"canned letters"** to referral sources which include other marketing materials (usually business cards and brochures).
- Utilizes semi-annual **"maintenance tips" mailers** sent out to all of your past clients on March 15 and September 15.

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Direct Mail Marketing

- The **canned letter campaign is directed towards agents, attorneys (if applicable) and mortgage brokers in your focused marketing area only (only a few per week)**.
- These are quick to print with the database (but should be personalized by an actual signature and other handwritten notes).
- They help to build brand recognition through repetition, but follow up phone calls and visits are still necessary to put a face to the name (**face time**).

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Direct Mail Marketing

- Canned letter types:**
 - RTY (Referral Thank You)
 - MSA (Met Selling Agent)
 - MLA (Met Listing Agent)
 - DMLA (Didn't Meet Listing Agent)
 - A/B (Attorney/Broker)

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Direct Mail Marketing

- If you don't already have some decent letter head and envelopes, then get some printed up (or create them on your computer)**.
- While we are trying to provide personalized service, we need to look professional.

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Direct Mail Marketing

- **The text in each type of letter is similar.**
- They all should contain elements of your story, but with the language tweaked for each recipient type.
- A couple of business cards are placed *inside* the tri-folded letter, and a brochure is included in the envelope.
- These help cut through the clutter by putting your business cards right onto the agents' desks when they open the mail.

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Direct Mail Marketing

- **You'll make a bigger impact with a handwritten note.**
- Use a "canned" thank you letter, but jot a few words either on the letter or on a sticky note that you apply to the letter:
"I enjoy working with real professionals and sure would appreciate your referrals" or "Thanks again for your referral, it's great working with you!" and sign the note with your first name only.

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Direct Mail Marketing

- Use your database to track what was sent and when you sent it.
- Put new contacts into your marketing database and sort by zone.
- You don't have to send a letter to everybody you meet (**stay with your focused marketing plan**).
- You need **"face time"** with these new contacts.

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Direct Mail Marketing

- **"Maintenance tips" flyers, mailed twice a year to most of your past clients, keep your name and number in front of them in a way that's helpful and not seen as blatant advertising.**
- If your inspection product is good, client mailers will yield a huge return.
- You'll get some of these back, so remove them from your database (and save a few bucks).

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Press Releases



Press Releases

- **Usually overlooked by your competition.**
- A simple and effective way to increase your visibility (and not dead yet!)
- Must be sent out regularly to be effective.
- Can be recycled every couple of years.
- Enhance your position as an expert, even if you are a newer inspector.
- Local editors often need "filler" and you can make it easy for them.

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Press Releases

- Determine your target publications (typically small, local newspapers with real estate sections), and then find the right editors.
- Prepare your press releases in the customary format: distribute at least four unique press releases per year.
- Seasonal themes work well.
- Make yourself available: **“face time”** works really well with editors, too.

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Press Releases

- **Do you feel like an expert?**
- An electrician might know more than you about electrical, but if you're in the middle of a Wal-Mart, you probably know more about electrical than everybody else in the store – and *these people* are your potential clients!!!

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These folks need to know that you're an expert

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Press Releases

- **Use the power of the press to your advantage.**
- Costs nothing but time, paper and postage – and maybe a few lunches (can be emailed but follow-up is necessary).
- It's “advertising in disguise.”
- It legitimizes your position as a housing expert.
- You *know* you're an expert – now everybody else can read it in the paper!

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Supercharged Marketing Wrap-Up

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Supercharged Marketing

- Wrapping up:
- You should build your marketing program around **focused marketing** because it is so effective, and it saves time and money.
- There is no substitute for **“face time,”** but **social media, websites, performance marketing, direct mail, daily business marketing, grassroots marketing, and micro-marketing** will all add \$\$\$.

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Supercharged Marketing

- Your goal should be to get another referral from every inspection you do.
- You need **“face time”** to build and keep your referral sources.
- You should make a *quality* **“face time”** marketing contact every business day (**that would give you about 250 quality contacts a year**).

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Supercharged Marketing

- Remember: every day that you don't do any real marketing is another day farther behind your energetic competitors.
- No marketing opportunity is ever “lost,” because it's always taken by someone (why not you?).
- **It's entirely within your power to do as many inspections as you want.**

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