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# REAL ESTATE

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## Experts Speak Out on the Issues that Matter Most

### Grow Your Referral Business With Exceptional Customer Service

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In today's economic climate, growing your business can be a daunting task. Leads and listings are not just falling onto your doorstep as in the good ol' days. So how can you be a top performer? Let's first start by looking at your latest successes. How did you generate your last listing?

According to the 2010 National Association of REALTORS® Member Profile, a median of 20% of all NAR members' business is referrals from past clients.

To further support this, the National Association of REALTORS® Home Buyer and Seller Survey reports that 64% of sellers chose their agent based on a referral or had used the same agent in the past.

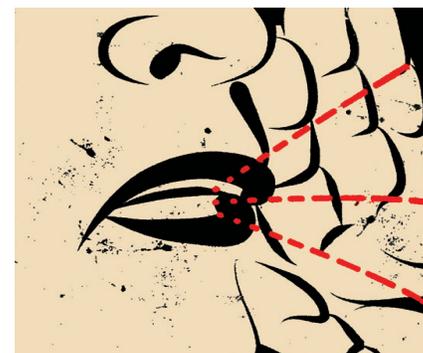
Reputation was the most important factor in choosing an agent, cited by 35% of respondents, followed by trustworthiness at 23%. Eighty-four percent of sellers are likely to use the same agent again or recommend them to others. Buyers also most commonly choose an agent based on a referral from a friend, neighbor or relative, with trustworthiness and reputation being the most important factors.

Given this, building a strategy to grow your referral business seems crucial.

### Provide exceptional customer service in your client's transaction

Real estate brokers and professionals across the country are using technology tools to offer a new level of service. Whether they help agents manage their transactions or give home buyers and sellers the ability to view their transaction via email or mobile device, these tools can help you stay in the forefront of your client's mind.

Another way to get people talking about their experience with their home purchase or sale is to master the closing. As you know, you want to avoid any possible surprises at the closing table, and the key to this is transparency. Always keep that line of communication open with your clients. Provide access to their real estate documents and status to notify your clients of any



issues and pending activities that must occur to keep the transaction on track.

### Be your client's trusted advisor

You know your market like the back of your hand. Share this information with your clients and become their resident expert. You can provide neighborhood data, school information and local retail information, as well as educate your home buyers and sellers about the real estate process and what to expect throughout the transaction.

### Extend your services beyond the closing

Another great way to better serve your clients is to offer new services centered around their home and move. Try partnering with a provider to handle basic utility hook-ups, provide quotes for home services, or assist with shopping for home appliances and insurance services for your clients. Stewart Title offers these services to our customers via our Stewart Concierge™ call center with great success.

These simple customer service tips will help your clients feel secure in their decision to make you their real estate professional. And in your business, great service is the key to getting more referrals. Having a plan to provide the best service in your area is the key to your referral success.