

COVER STORY

BY LISA A. BEACH

A killer listing description can make or break the traction a property garners in the marketplace.

That's why Paul Saperstein, a broker-associate with eXp Realty in Delray Beach, decided to outsource his.

"Last fall, I started working with a professional copywriter who specializes in real estate content," explains Saperstein, who's used professional photography in his listings for years. "I think that professionally written listing descriptions help to further differentiate the homes I sell."

Property descriptions are probably the most dreaded part of preparing a listing for most agents, admits Saperstein, but outsourcing his has made the process more efficient and effective.

"This streamlines the process and timeline of adding new listings to the MLS and brings consistency to the quality of each home's marketing materials," he notes. "It's also a great value-added service that makes sellers feel that they are getting a high level of care and professionalism from me and my team."

Tips like this—from experts who have been there, done that—can help you build or expand your business. With that in mind, Florida Realtor magazine gathered ideas from top real estate coaches, educators, trainers, brokers and agents. Here's what they had to say:

TECHNOLOGY

1. Voice marketing is huge! Host your own podcast or an Alexa Flash Briefing. Use the Anchor app on your phone to record your first episode.—*Michele Bellisari, Realtor, RE/MAX Services Boca Raton*

2. We hire virtual assistants for administrative tasks, creative work and tech help through Upwork.com and use Fiverr to get odd jobs done quickly and inexpensively.—*Josh Rogers, Team Lead, eXp Realty*

The Best of the Best!

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MONEY-MAKING IDEAS

The 2019 Innovation Round-Up

them with other ads year-round.—*Jeff Lobb, Founder and CEO, SparkTank Media and Coach52*

5. We use the Ylopo platform to create, review and monitor all of our digital marketing campaigns, and to connect with customers and help our agents serve them better.—*Collin McDowell, Vice President/ Partner, Greg Garrett Realty*

6. Select innovations that fit your needs and enhance your style and personality without losing your human touch.—*Jessica Rosato, Broker-associate, ONE Sotheby's International Realty*

7. Pick core apps/products carefully. Reevaluate your tech annually and ask is there a better tool this year?—*Hal "MiamiHal" Feldman, Realtor, RE/MAX Advance Realty*

8. Video is king! If you haven't got a goal to shoot at least 52 videos over the next year, you need to get to it. How else are you going to stand out, get noticed and earn the business of your dreams?—*Tom Ferry, CEO, Ferry International (Video Marketing is King)*

9. If you want your local business to rank higher on Google, claim and optimize your Google My Business profile.—*Sherry Bonelli, Owner, early bird digital marketing*

10. Make sure that every page of your website has a unique Title and Description tag.—*Sherry Bonelli, Owner, early bird digital marketing*

11. When did an email, text or tweet ever reach out and shake someone's hand? Everyone's losing out by relegating rapport-building to digital messages that can quickly be deleted.—*Martin "Marty" Rueter, Executive VP Coldwell Banker Commercial*

12. When working remotely in public places, avoid public Wi-Fi. Use a wireless hotspot or virtual private network (VPN)

3. Write emails in batches and schedule them to send in the future. You save time, and it allows you to write important emails when you are most focused. Two email scheduling programs I recommend are: Boomerang and Right Inbox.—*Craig Proctor, Owner, Craig Proctor Seminars & Coaching (Power Tools to Fuel Your Productivity and Remove Distractions)*

4. The most valuable piece of data you should collect is an individual's personal email address. With companies like Adwerx and Facebook, you can target ads to individuals using their emails, then retarget

like IPVanish for the best protection and safe browsing.—*Burton Kelso, Chief Technology Expert, Integral*

13. I use Home Wizard's cloud-based suite of tools to generate referrals and repeat business by sending my customers branded e-newsletters and tailored home-care reminders and tips.—*Laura Russell, Charles Rutenberg Realty, Clearwater (Personal Branding: Building Customer Loyalty, Florida Realtor, October 2017, p16)*

14. Using Smart Marketing, a predictive marketing tool and CRM system, I can reach out to the right seller at the right time with the right message. This all-in-one automated marketing approach saves me time and money.—*Dana Hall-Bradley, Owner, Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate Fine Living (Target Marketing: Better Than a Crystal Ball, July 2017, p18)*

15. When considering new technology, do your research on which tools work with the tools you already have. Otherwise, you end up with programs that don't "talk" to each other, costing you time and money.—*Craig Grant, CEO, The Real Estate Technology Institute (Take 5: Your Must-Have New Tech Tools)*

16. To create social media content that wows readers, use tech tools that can

elevate a snoozy picture into a share-worthy graphic masterpiece. Two to try: WordSwag (turns an image into a story by adding a text overlay to photos) and Animoto (creates a movie in an instant).—*Beth Ziesenis, "Your Nerdy Best Friend" (Take 5: Fun Tools to Amp Up Social Media)*

17. Focus on apps that help you work efficiently and increase sales, such as Workflow (an automation app) and QuickBooks Self-Employed (categorizes expenses and tracks mileage).—*Carlos Melendez, Broker-associate, Florida Premier Realty (Take 5: Apps to Make Your Work Life Easier)*

18. We encourage customers to post a review of their transaction on Zillow Agent Reviews. We'll also copy and paste them onto our website and company blog and use these testimonials in listing presentations.—*Jenny Wemert, Keller Williams Advantage II Realty (Zillow Agent Reviews: Easy Transaction, Jan/Feb 2017, p14)*

19. A CRM is the lifeblood of an agent's business. Opt for a real-estate-specific platform with a proven track record that will be around for years to come. The more common the platform, the less time you will spend training people on the team.—*Travis Robertson, Real Estate Coach (8 Weeks to a Clear Concise Database, Nov/Dec 2016, p33)*

20. Invest in BombBomb—it's email video marketing made easy and it's trackable. My email open rate is 45 percent (industry norm is less than 20 percent). The new app makes it easy to record and upload videos. And there is no more mistaken context of your words.—*Sue "Pinky" Benson, Realtor, RE/MAX Realty Team*

21. Just because you wear a Fitbit doesn't mean you're fit. Remember that technology is a tool to make you more effective and not to replace the work you

Everyone is losing out by relegating rapport-building to digital messages that can quickly be deleted. Reach out and shake someone's hand.

—*MARTIN, "MARTY" RUETER, EXECUTIVE VP COLDWELL BANKER COMMERCIAL*



RUETER

need to put in.—*Tommy Choi, Co-founder and Owner, Weinberg Choi Residential/Keller Williams Chicago-Lincoln Park*

RECRUITING

22. Recruit based on attitude not aptitude. Make sure the potential agent or staff member is a good cultural fit for your brokerage so that you aren't poisoning the well.—*Collin McDowell, Vice President/Partner, Greg Garrett Realty*

23. Our best agents were previous customers. Offer a referral fee to agents and ask them to be on the lookout for great agents.—*Betsy Pepine, Broker-owner, Pepine Realty*

24. Think long term when building your team. Many brokerages go for quick profits when taking on team members, but leveraging long-term potential is a winning strategy.—*Paul Saperstein, Broker-associate, eXp Realty*

25. Great recruiters start with relationships not tied to an outcome. Serve others' needs, and they will naturally be attracted to joining you.—*Josh Rogers, Team Lead, eXp Realty*

26. People like to follow successful and genuine individuals. Just be real when recruiting.—*Nury B. Cunha, Realtor, eXp Realty*

27. Open a real estate school so you can form a relationship with prospective agents.—*Betsy Pepine, Broker-owner, Pepine Realty*

28. When recruiting experienced agents, keep in mind

that the process is similar to a buyer consultation. Ask more than you talk. Do your research—know their history better than they know it. Remember, it's all about them, not you.—*Tom Ferry, CEO, Ferry International (Recruiting Tips & Scripts)*

29. Track your recruiting efforts like a marketing campaign. Before you start running ads or making phone calls, set up a tracking system

When recruiting, the goal of making money isn't enough. Look for salespeople who will be passionate about helping others through real estate.

—*D. DEWEY MITCHELL, CO-OWNER AND BROKER, BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOMESERVICES FLORIDA PROPERTIES GROUP*



MITCHELL

that measures your recruiting performance.—*Andrew Flachner of RealScout writing on Inman.com (6 Ways Real Estate Brokers Can Recruit Like a Tech Startup)*

30. Facebook ads lets you customize and target your message. And the price is right—a basic pay-per-click campaign could run around \$150 per ad.—*Sonny Downey, Broker, EXIT Real Estate Gallery (Take 5: Facebook Ads: Your New Recruitment Tool)*

31. Developing job descriptions is an essential key to building your team. Write down everything you do over two weeks. You'll see a pattern—revenue and non-revenue

If you haven't got a goal to shoot at least 52 videos over the next year, you need to. How else are you going to get noticed and earn the business of your dreams?

—*TOM FERRY, CEO, FERRY INTERNATIONAL*



FERRY

producing tasks. Have team members sign the description, so everyone's clear about expectations.— *Leigh Brown, Broker-owner, RE/MAX Executive Realty (Take 5: Building Your Dream Team)*

32. Real estate is about serving others, so I chose to build my team around a giving-back and paying-it-forward culture. I hire people who have big hearts—who truly care about people—and teach them about real estate.— *Patrick Stracuzzi, Broker-owner, RE/MAX Community (Systems for Success, June 2017, p32)*

33. Understand a prospect's motivation. The goal of making money isn't enough. Look for salespeople who will be passionate about helping others through real estate.— *D. Dewey Mitchell, Co-owner and Broker, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group (Finding New Sales Associates, Jan/Feb 2017, p28)*

34. Videos introducing me, my team and my office are helpful recruiting tools. Prospective recruits get to know us and what our culture is like. We already have, in theory, a relationship when somebody walks through the door.— *Lisa Treu, Owner, Treu Group Real Estate (Vid-E-OH!, September 2015, p10)*

35. To recruit younger agents, build relationships offline. Yes, offline. If you want to get people excited, you have to get them into the office.— *Travis Robertson, Real Estate Coach (3 Smart Tactics for Recruiting Younger Agents, July 2016, p6)*

36. Look for an outgoing personality. A tool such as

To create social media content that wows, try WordSwag (turns an image into a story by adding a text overlay to photos) and Animoto (creates a movie in an instant).

— BETH ZIESENIS, "YOUR NERDY BEST FRIEND"



ZIESENIS

the DISC personality assessment can be very helpful in identifying prospects who are comfortable meeting new people and building a personal network.— *D. Dewey Mitchell, Co-owner and Broker, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group (Finding New Sales Associates, Jan/Feb 2017, p28)*

37. Ask the interviewee to tell you about a situation in which there was a conflict and how he or she handled the situation.— *Eric Sain, Realtor, District Sales Manager, Illustrated Properties, Palm Beach*

MARKETING

38. I'm known for my A-List that has the best of the best suggested vendors for all types of services from home, to living, to activities around town. This helps me promote my business as well as local businesses.— *Jodi Avery, Real Estate Broker, Realtor, P.A., Keller Williams Realty*

39. Social media has become the best source and highest ROI marketing. Learn to use it and make three-fourths of your posts personal and one-fourth

of your posts about real estate to enhance your brand.— *Collin McDowell, Vice President/Partner, Greg Garrett Realty*

40. In a fast-paced email world, snail mail wins. I send a note a day on personalized cards to someone in my sphere of influence.— *Diana Galavis, Broker-associate, Watson Realty Corp., Jacksonville*

41. Be professional, return calls, and be the go-to Realtor for real estate needs (i.e., roof repairs, septic issues, etc.).— *Brett House, Broker-associate, RE/MAX Florida & Alabama*

42. Consistent income = consistent action, and consistent action = systems.— *Karen Coffey, Coach, Karen Coffey's Making Agents Wealthy*

43. My marketing plan is me! With every customer, with every listing, another sign goes up, another customer is talking about me—without fees or contracts, just good, old-fashioned pavement pounding.— *Shirley Weems, Broker-associate, Waterman Real Estate Inc.*

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— DIANA GALAVIS, BROKER-ASSOCIATE, WATSON REALTY CORP., JACKSONVILLE.



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44. If you aren't getting any results from your Facebook business page, it's because no one cares about your content. Instead, bring value to others by creating a page of helpful content that promotes your community and the people.— *Jeff Lobb, Founder and CEO, SparkTank Media and Coach52*

45. Volunteer with an organization in your niche market. People work with people they connect with on a personal level. Giving back to the community, purposefully and with enjoyment, is the best advertising money can buy.— *Julia Monte, Sales associate, Keller Williams Classic Group, Sarasota*

46. YouTube videos of local happenings and businesses have made us the local experts.— *Josh Rogers, Team Lead, eXp Realty*

47. Consistent and effective marketing helps you brand yourself and stay top of mind. Focus on innovative marketing that brings you desired results. Track those numbers so you know exactly where to best put your efforts and dollars.— *Jessica Rosato, Broker-associate, ONE Sotheby's International Realty*

48. Mix online, print, video, word-of-mouth and social media marketing. Think outside the box (Signs on your car, coffee shop seminars, etc.) Whatever you do, the branding and message should be exactly the same across all your marketing.— *Hal "MiamiHal" Feldman, Realtor, RE/MAX Advance Realty*

49. If you run paid digital ads, make sure you send people who click on your ads to pages on your site (or landing pages) that are relevant to the topic of the ad they clicked on.— *Sherry Bonelli, Owner, early bird digital marketing*

50. When creating your marketing message, always think about what problem your customer has and what solution you can offer to help fix that problem.— *Sherry Bonelli, Owner, early bird digital marketing*

42 MORE IDEAS ONLINE! Check them out at www2.floridarealtors.org/magazine

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— SHERRY BONELLI, OWNER EARLY BIRD DIGITAL MARKETING



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