



Voice of the Real Estate Broker

REPORT

Actionable insights for real estate professionals



In our inaugural Voice of the Real Estate Broker Report, we collected survey responses from more than 1,000 real estate professionals across the country to better understand:

- Opportunities for growth in the real estate business
- Challenges facing real estate professionals
- Success and career satisfaction

Throughout this report, we share tips and best practices from professionals spanning all markets and specializations. We break down segments of brokers by high performers, moderate performers and underperformers. See page 5 for detailed performance information.

Data in this report is from a blind survey conducted in 2018 that generated 1,029 responses from licensed real estate professionals in the U.S. The study has a 5% margin of error at a 99% confidence level. All survey participants have taken a course with our sister school, McKissock Learning.

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Executive summary

5 Actionable insights

Today's real estate market is competitive and constantly changing. Real estate professionals are often pulled in different directions to keep up. What does it take to deliver results? How are brokers and managing brokers faring in a balance between "keeping up" and career satisfaction?

Here's an overview of five key takeaways real estate professionals can focus on to make this year both successful and enjoyable. Throughout the report we'll give you tangible ideas and real-life examples of how to execute on each of these insights.

1: Top-performing brokers rely on their community and local market to grow. Top real estate brokers nurture their referral base, engage in volunteerism, network at the community level, and have a deep understanding of their local market.

2: Organic referrals and repeat business are key. Building trust and loyalty through word of mouth and referrals leads to increased repeat business and income.

3: Don't avoid social media. Engaging on social media is an impactful way to highlight your listings and grow your business.

4: Brokers and managing brokers embrace flexibility, income potential and helping people. Real estate is a happy career, and is a deeply rewarding career option for those who value a flexible schedule, the potential to earn a high income, and the ability to help people.

5: Three keys to growing your real estate career this year. For brokers who want to earn more this year, focus on growing referrals, increasing online marketing efforts, and better time management.

About this report

Breakdown of performance levels in this report

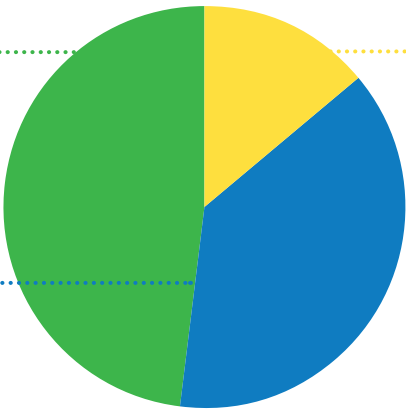
Performance-level breakdowns are determined by both **career satisfaction** and **annual income** from their real estate business.

Moderate performers (Average)

Are satisfied with their career, earning \$25,000-\$90,000 annually

High performers

Are satisfied or very satisfied with their career, and earning more than \$90,000 annually



Underperformers (Low)

Are dissatisfied or not very satisfied with their career, earning on average less than \$25,000 annually

Key Opportunities for Real Estate Professional Growth

Among all performance levels, real estate brokeres share their biggest opportunities for growth in the next year.

For high-performing brokers, their central opportunity is to fine-tune what’s already working for them: sustaining their income level, referrals and repeat clients and building out their digital strategy.

Average performers will find value in focusing on building up their expertise in both their local area and general best practices.

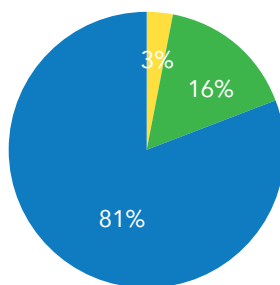
For under-performing brokers who are still trying to figure out what works for their specific market and business, their opportunities lie in foundational best practices, such as establishing budget and time management, delving into social media and online marketing, and a better focus on sources for quality leads.

High performers	Average performers	Low performers
Sustain income levels	Build local expertise	Develop best practices
Continue to work a solid base of repeat clients and referrals	Strengthen referral business	Master social media and online marketing
Continue to integrate social media marketing and online, automated systems	Stay current on industry news and trends	Focus on quality lead generation

Insight I: Rely on your community to grow

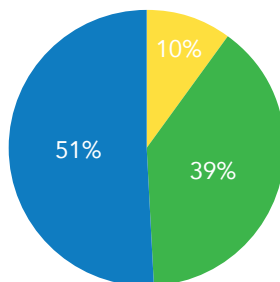
Performance Level | ■ High ■ Average ■ Low

Percentage of business from referrals and past clients



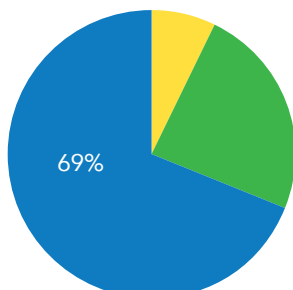
Nurture past clients Finding quality clients and generating new business starts with cultivating pre-existing relationships. More than 92% of top performing brokers attribute their professional success to a strong referral base, with many indicating 80% or more of their business comes from referrals and repeat clients.

Percent of brokers who volunteer or are involved in the community



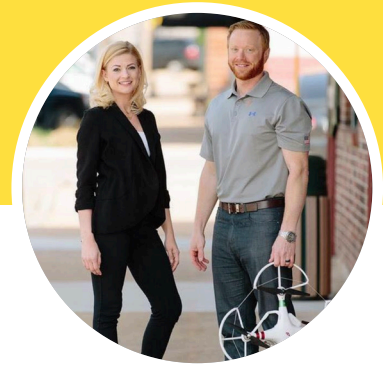
Get involved in your community Top performers grow their referral base through community efforts. They engage in volunteer opportunities and networking, which tends to increase their opportunities within their market, as well as their local expertise. Where novice brokers focus on open houses and cold-calling, and average-performing brokers try print advertising for modest results, top performers are cultivating referrals by working side-by-side with neighbors and collaborators.

Percent of brokers with strong local market expertise



Understand your market Local market expertise is built over time, and successful brokers have developed a strong network of go-to resources in their community. Top performers consistently ranked themselves as "growing" rather than "expert" when asked about how up-to-date they are on industry and market trends. These professionals tend to view their career development as a lifelong journey.

Spotlight on success



How one real estate team became the hub of their community

Josh Kahn, of The Josh Kahn & Katie Busk Team, took a creative approach to growing his real estate business in Eureka, Missouri.

He had been to training seminars where different social media strategies were taught, but he noticed everyone around him was simply pushing their business and not looking for a chance to serve the community.

"If I'm looking to buy a car I'm not going to follow a salesman who only posts about his cars for sale," said Kahn. "Maybe I will for that time being, but once I buy a car, I'm probably going to focus on something that's more interesting to me."

He knew the same was true for real estate and he wanted to find a way to bring value to his community. That's when he saw that Eureka had no online hub.

"I changed the name of our Facebook page," said Kahn. "It became the Eureka, Missouri page."

He began to post about local events and news. "I didn't think there was a lot in Eureka to talk about, so I had to look for things to integrate into there." In his search for content, he started frequenting local businesses and sharing information about them. "I would go out and eat dinner somewhere and take a picture of my kid eating meatballs and post it on Facebook," said Kahn.

Kahn didn't use the page as a selling tool in these early days but instead focused intensely on how to provide value to his immediate community. It took a lot of energy and attention, but the Facebook page blossomed into a trusted source that the community turned to for up-to-date information.

When Eureka experienced catastrophic flooding in 2015, Khan was one of the first to post pictures of the damage. "The pictures went viral," said Kahn.

As a result of his hard work, Kahn's Facebook page is now the go-to online presence for Eureka news, giving him a

massive audience which he has built a rapport with.

Slowly, he began to integrate his real estate business into his social media efforts, running contests to increase community engagement and tagging his business in all the photos to get top-of-mind recognition from the community.

One of his most successful contests is a take on "The Price is Right." Kahn will post pictures of a listing, and if followers can correctly guess the listing price they win a \$20 gift certificate to a local business. By doing this, Kahn can create engagement, support local businesses and drive interest in his listings. It's his creative way of showcasing his inventory without making people feel like they're being sold to.

It took several years for his online presence to start netting results to the bottom line of his business but now he says it's not uncommon for him to get 85 leads from Facebook a week. "We have more leads than we can work," Kahn says. "Getting leads at this point isn't a problem."

He estimates 75% of their business last year was local to Eureka. "Eureka," he says, "is our focus."

That's a sincere focus he's talking about — not a marketing ploy he executed. What worked for his strategy was being genuine and caring about the community.

"We were doing the community page purely out of good faith," says Kahn. "At no point did we expect anything back." They even put their own marketing dollars into the page to promote local businesses.

"I think that really translated," Kahn says. "If you're positive about the community you're living in and genuinely supporting local business, then people are going to be interested."

Follow The Josh Kahn & Katie Busk team on Facebook at: facebook.com/eurekamissouri/

Action plan

5 Ways to get know your community and local market



1. Introduce yourself

Identify three community leaders you'd like to get to know better and either ask for introductions to them or send an email introducing yourself. Having trouble thinking of what to say? You can share a link you'd think would be relevant to their work, congratulate them on a recent accomplishment, or just let them know you noticed they're making an impact in the community.



2. Stay in touch

When's the last time you made contact with past clients? If you don't already have a spreadsheet or tracking system in place to remind you about birthdays, holidays and regular checkpoints, create one today and be strategic about staying in their lives.



3. Show you care

While you can't be involved in every community event, choosing a few to participate in throughout the year will help you meet people and build rapport. If you don't already have a community volunteer event on the horizon, go to your community's website or social media pages and find an upcoming cause that fits your passion and your schedule.



4. Swap notes

Since real estate professionals experience more success the more they understand about their market, find a partner working in your market that you can share notes with — and vice versa. If you already have one, schedule your next coffee or lunch today. If you don't have one, who can you approach? Get in touch with someone you trust today.



5. Think like a journalist

Getting information about your market can come from many different places. Approach your market as if you're an investigative journalist. Sign up for your community newsletters, make a list of neighborhood newspapers and find out if there are any upcoming town hall meetings where you could learn something valuable or develop a new relationship.



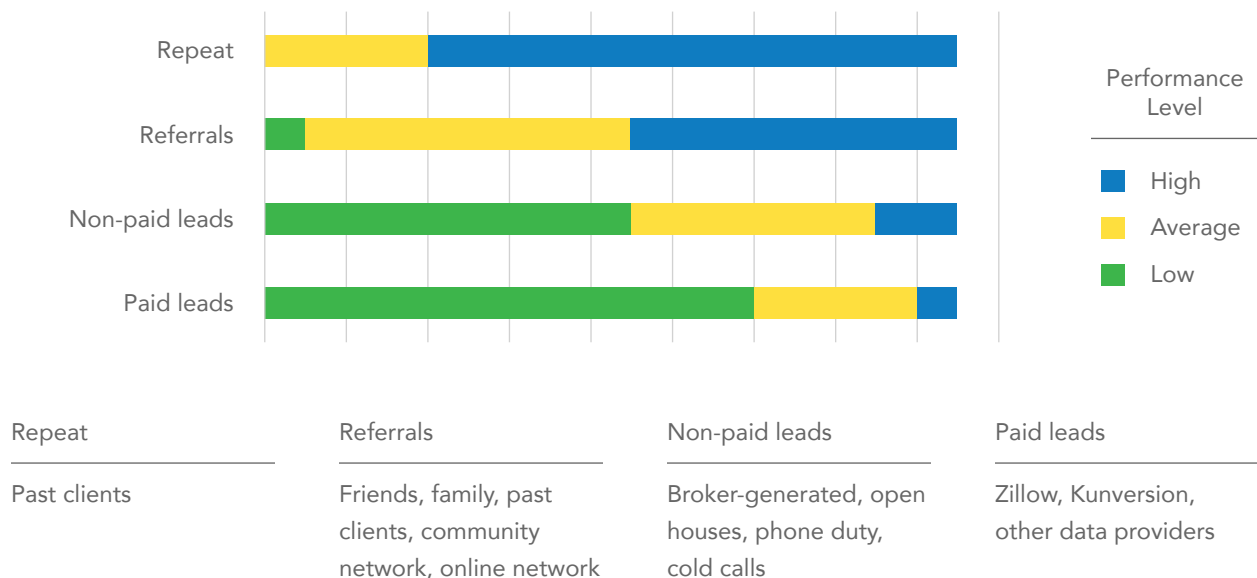
Pro tip Find practical tips and insights on how to grow your career in the Career Hub: SuperiorSchoolINC.com/Career-Hub

2: Organic referrals and repeat business



Top performers with ten or more years of experience report at least 90% of their business comes from friends, family, client referrals and repeat business. Brokers with four to ten years of experience leverage a blend of resources for referrals, and those with high levels of community involvement see the most traction in growing their organic referrals from family, friends and close contacts. New brokers often feel beleaguered toward generating quality leads and should focus on expanding their sphere of influence to achieve growth in one to three years.

Broker business sources % by performance level



Spotlight on success

How amazing service leads to real estate referrals

In a world of online marketing and social media, one path some brokers are taking to success is the old fashioned one: organic referrals and repeat business.

That's what real estate broker Alex Glaser believes in. The 32-year-old Richmond, Virginia broke estimates that between 50% and 60% of his business comes from referrals.

"Last year," said Glaser, "I sold 107 homes." That's over 50 referrals! The amazing service he provides is how he knows he'll keep getting referrals in the future.

He has been in real estate since he was 24 years old and in that time has developed some guidelines that keep his clients coming back.

Here are some of his top tips:

- "Set expectations on how the process will work," he says. When clients know what lies ahead they feel more at ease with the decisions they have to make.
- "Never, ever lie," he says. "Not to your clients, not to anybody. Ever."
- "Put helping your clients above making a commission," he says. This point is so core to his business that he says there has never even been a situation where he had an internal conflict about what steps to take when it came to selling a property.



Alexis Glaser, Virginia real estate broker, The Glaser Group
www.AlexSellsRichmond.com

He also credits one very practical strategy to his success: stay in constant communication with your clients.

"Send a monthly email newsletter," says Glaser, "call on their birthdays, their home anniversary, send handwritten cards."

Glaser also hosts bi-annual client appreciation nights, one in the fall and one in the summer. They've included everything from bowling to a brewery happy hour.

"We always change up the restaurant every year," he said, noting that about 75 clients will attend on average. The key to a great event? "Lots of food and an open bar," says Glaser.

His winning strategy boils down to one simple truth. "When they feel you care," says Glaser, "that is when they will love and refer you."

Action plan

10 Guidelines for growing your referrals

Feeling awkward when it comes to developing new leads? These tried and true tactics can help you create a network that pays dividends.

☒ **1. Set expectations on how the process will work.**

For new clients or those who are new to real estate, a helpful one-sheet that lays out the steps of the buying or selling process could kickstart the conversation and give clients something visual to reference.

☐ **2. Never lie to clients, vendors, your network or others in your community.**

Developing a motto or mission statement can help you stay focused on this when push comes to shove.

☐ **3. Put your clients above making a commission.**

This means giving attention and care to the smaller clients as well as the bigger ones. You never know who's going to move up the financial ladder.

☐ **4. Send regular communications on special days.**

Add birthdays, wedding anniversaries, the anniversary of their home purchase and the birth of a child to your calendar.

☐ **5. Stay in touch with social media.**

This will give you regular insight into what's happening in their lives, and, likewise, they'll see your successes and perspective.

☐ **6. Host client appreciation nights.**

A summer BBQ, a winter wine tasting or a brewery happy hour are simple gatherings to plan.

☐ **7. Truly care about them.** You can't fake this. Like the old saying goes, "they don't know how much you know until they know how much you care."

☐ **8. Find a way to bring value to your community.**

An easy way to get started is to look at upcoming community events and see if you can donate resources or time.

☐ **9. Don't forget about your online communities.**

Find a way to create engaging social media conversations. You don't have to host them — if there's another community page with lively conversation, join in by commenting regularly.

☐ **10. Be proud of your work.** It's hard to develop leads when you're embarrassed or apologetic about what you do. Be confident in the value you bring to clients and your ability to steer them through one of the most major financial decisions of their lives.

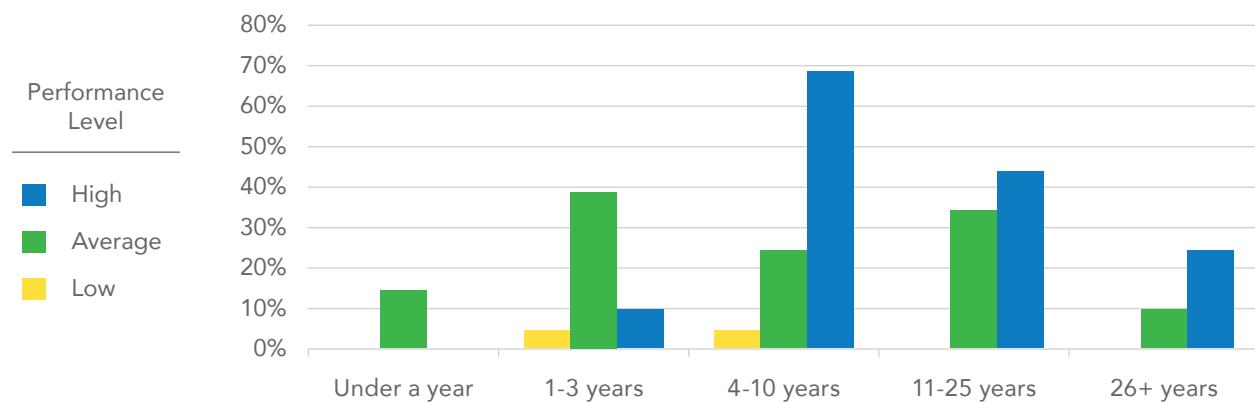


Pro tip Complete your continuing education requirements and learn new skills you can apply directly to your real estate business at [SuperiorSchoolINC.com](https://www.SuperiorSchoolINC.com).

3: Social media opportunities



Social Media Usage by Years Licensed & Performance Levels



Across every segment measured, brokers unanimously warn against ignoring online marketing and social media opportunities. Some responses crossed over into a broader concern for keeping up with evolving technology. While a minority of respondents indicate they are using social media but not getting results, many brokers felt they didn't have time to invest in this area, didn't know where to start, or simply preferred not to have their brand and business online.

Average and high performers, typically with four to ten years of experience, are experiencing the most success for generating quality leads and business from their online efforts.

High performers with 11 or more years of experience mention this as a primary area they will focus on improving in the next 12 months.

Spotlight on success



Mike Schulte, Queens, New York real estate broker at [Citi Habitats](#)

If anyone knows the power of social media, it's Mike Schulte. Last year, a client slid into his direct messages with a multi-million dollar transaction. Schulte never met the guy and still doesn't know what he looks like.

"Every time we connected was through social," said Schulte.

Schulte, a Citi Habitats real estate broker from Queens, New York, is one example of a growing trend in real estate: it's impossible to ignore social media.

"If you're not playing where everyone's paying attention," Schulte says, "you may still be relevant today but in 24 months you're not going to be relevant anymore."

It was two years ago that he came to the realization he needed to double down on his social media efforts to maintain relevance.

"Your purpose is actually to pull people into your real world where you communicate with them normally."

"I started posting every day," he says.

His goal? To be helpful.

"Information has always been so closely guarded to the chest. People don't share. I realized there was an opportunity there," he says.

Schulte decided to focus on two areas in which he is an expert: real estate and New York City. Schulte was born and raised in Queens. "The videos I put out early on were very specific to the industry and a lot of the dynamics that go in with transacting," Schulte says. However, it wasn't long before he added another element to his strategy. "There is some other value I can provide in telling the story of New York," says Schulte.

Schulte now has a videographer who follows him around daily to document his working style and record video clips for social media.

He says that other brokers don't find success in social media because they are too focused on selling and they're putting their money toward promoting themselves in the wrong way.

"When people spend money, they're spending money on the wrong things," Schulte says. "They're spending money on promoting their listings instead of spending money promoting the message they're putting out."

Schulte focuses on developing a relationship via social media. "Your purpose is actually to pull people into your real world where you communicate with them normally," Schulte says.

To do that, he finds ways he can give value instead of focusing on how to sell.

"I provide an insane amount of value and really don't ask for anything," Schulte says. Only about one in 30 of his posts showcase his listings.

"What I'm trying to do," he says, "is become one of the reputable sources because I believe we're moving away from a desire to get information from networks and we're going to start trusting individuals more. I'm trying to position myself to be one of those individuals for New York City, for real estate. It's telling that story and telling that journey."

Action plan

10 Ways to grow your social media and digital knowledge

It takes a step-by-step approach to master digital marketing in real estate. Here are some ways to get started.

☒ **1. Invest in a reciprocal mentorship.**

If you feel overwhelmed when it comes to digital marketing but know other parts of the business well, try finding another broker — perhaps a newer one — who excels in digital marketing but could use coaching in other areas. Work out a way to trade your expertise.

☐ **2. Decide which platforms you'll use.**

Not every broker needs to be on every social media platform. Where is your demographic spending the most time? Put attention and effort into what's already working.

☐ **3. Focus on continuing education.** Since the digital landscape is always changing, this is one area where it pays to continually educate yourself. Taking a course in digital marketing for real estate brokers can be helpful, or choose conferences that will advance your learning on this subject.

☐ **4. Follow influencers.** Pay attention to real estate brokers and other business professionals who are using social media in innovative ways. Try their strategies or reach out to them for tips on what they're doing.



Pro tip Stay up-to-date on real estate best practices and trends at SuperiorSchoolNC.com/Career-Hub.

☐ **5. Experiment.** Much success on social media is attributed to trial and error. There's no concrete formula for what will work with your audience. Get your hands dirty and be willing to make a few mistakes.

☐ **6. Develop a voice and style guide.**

It's important to decide what you'll say and how you'll say it.

☐ **7. Measure your results and track your ROI.** Brokers who know the impact of their marketing dollars get better results because they can measure success in real time and fine-tune their strategy immediately.

☐ **8. Stick with it for the long haul.**

Learning social media and digital marketing isn't an overnight process and many times, even when you implement a proven strategy, it takes time to see results. Establish short-term and long-term goals so you'll be motivated to stay the course.

☐ **9. Consider hiring a consultant.** If you're feeling overwhelmed with the enormity of learning social media, consider hiring a consultant who can teach you some basics. While you might not want to pay someone for ongoing work, finding someone who can coach you on strategy could set you up for future success.

☐ **10. Talk to other brokers.** No one knows what's working better than the brokers in your market.

4: A rewarding career

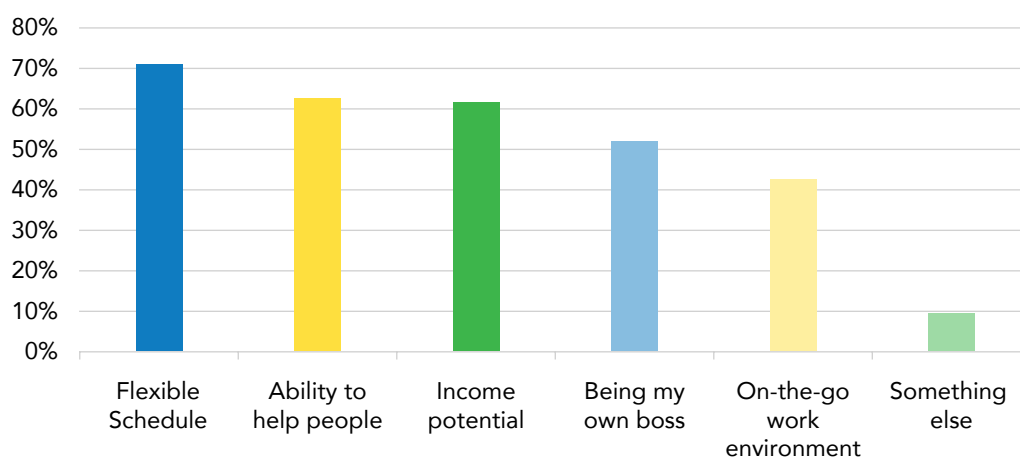
Pursuing a rewarding career can be crucial to performing at the peak of your field and sticking in the industry long-term. Our survey asked respondents to delve into what they find rewarding about real estate.

Being in charge of their work schedule, and balancing against other personal commitments is a primary reason many brokers chose a real estate career and stay in the business.

Many respondents said helping others is one the most rewarding aspects of their profession.

The majority of respondents said their income potential was closely related to the effort and time they put into their business.

What makes a real estate career rewarding?



Spotlight on success



Lori Burrows-Warren, California real estate broker, Alain Pinel Realtors

www.loribw.apr.com

It was the allure of being in charge of her own career that made Lori Burrows-Warren choose real estate.

"I came to the conclusion that I would probably be more successful being my own boss, not having to manage other people and getting the job done," said Burrows-Warren, who has been in real estate for four years.

Burrows-Warren tried other careers before, dabbling in marketing and tech. Real estate, however, allowed Burrows-Warren to capitalize on her strengths and create a lifestyle she dreamed about.

"After doing marketing and consulting and being with a small tech company, I realized that I loved the flexibility, the potential financial upside and that I actually loved this business more than I thought I would," Burrows-Warren said.

"I put off becoming a broker until I realized that the upsides were so great."

When Burrows-Warren was in high school her mom became a real estate broker. This actually pushed Burrows-Warren away from the industry — she wanted to do something different than her mom. "I put off becoming a broker until I realized that the upsides were so great."

Those upsides eventually sold Burrows-Warren on trying real estate as a career. It had everything she wanted — it challenged her to use her people skills, let her be the fierce negotiator she always knew she was and was flexible enough for her to prioritize family time.

After getting into real estate, Burrows-Warren found a deeper motivation in being able to connect with her clients in a genuine way.

"I'm motivated by helping my clients get into the homes they love and sell their homes for the highest possible price. It's really fulfilling when I see that come to fruition," said Burrows-Warren, adding, "I become friends with a lot of my clients."

Those aren't the only upsides that Burrows-Warren values about her career. She's a busy mom three children ages 9, 11 and 14. It isn't easy to balance a full-time career and full-time parenting, but Burrows-Warren says real estate gives her the best chance to do that.

"There are times where I'm not all that balanced and I have to improvise," Burrows-Warren said. "But the upside is that I can still go to my son's baseball game tomorrow, turn off my phone for two hours and work around that."

Making time for everything is challenging, but not as difficult as it was when Burrows-Warren worked in other sectors. "It's way easier because you're your own boss. You call the shots. I can volunteer in my son's class once a month now. It was harder before because I couldn't take time off in the middle of the day. But now I set my own schedule. I can work until 11 at night after my kids are asleep and then spend an hour with them in the classroom the next day."

For someone who avoided real estate for so long, Burrows-Warren is happy to have finally found a career that meets all of her priorities and helps her reach her goals.

Action plan

7 Questions to ask for a more rewarding real estate career

Here's how you can make your current real estate career more satisfying every day.

☒ 1. How flexible are your hours?

Real estate brokers consistently rank flexible hours as a reason they love the job, but even though you're not punching a timesheet it could feel like you're anchored to working long hours and being available whenever clients call. If your "flexible" hours actually mean you're working many nights and weekends, consider setting some boundaries around your time so you can enjoy your family.

☐ 2. Do you feel like you help people each day? Knowing you're participating in the biggest financial decision your clients might ever make can be incredibly rewarding, but it can be easy to lose sight of this with the day-to-day hustle and bustle. Consider starting an "encouragement file" where you save positive feedback to review on the bad days.

☐ 3. Are there more ways to share your talents? The skills you've developed as a real estate broker can be put to work helping your community or helping new brokers get into the business. Find ways to contribute your time and talent, in exchange you'll get a morale boost.

☐ 4. Do you earn enough? Let's face it, how much brokers earn can have a significant impact on their feelings about their career. If you think you're not earning enough money, some continuing education could be in store to help update you on trends, emerging best practices and ways agents across the country are making more money.

☐ 5. Do you control your business? You might have started in real estate to be your own boss, but if you're at a brokerage where your destiny feels predestined it could be demotivating. Brokerages can have a huge impact on broker success rates and happiness. Is your brokerage providing you a win-win scenario?

☐ 6. Are you managing your time? Poor time management skills can limit your satisfaction in your career. Instead of achieving a work-life balance, poor time management could mean you're working longer hours and getting less done.

☐ 7. Is there another niche where you're better suited? There isn't a one size fits all approach to real estate. Consider which niche might be a better fit for you — do you like commercial real estate? Luxury? Flipping homes? Interests change over time and the niche you started out in might not be the best fit now.

5: Keys to growth this year



Research from our [Real Estate Income Guide](#) shows that real estate professionals consistently earn more over time. But how can you grow your career this year for an improved bottom line?

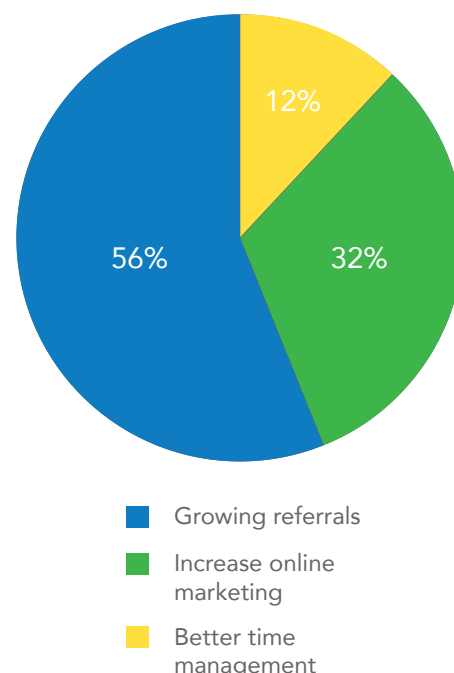
Responses in the survey show that the top opportunities to earn more this year focus in three key areas:

1. Grow your referral network. Referral growth is the most surefire way brokers seek to increase business with a total of 56% of brokers saying its key to their work. If you're struggling to grow referrals reach out to brokers who excel in this area and ask them to show you what's working for them.

2. Challenge yourself with online marketing. Don't be afraid to take on new challenges — since 32% of brokers recommend increasing online marketing to grow your business you might have to find a mentoring relationship or continuing education that can give you the skills you need to succeed.

3. Manage your time. The one area you can absolutely impact today is time management with 12% of brokers indicating its important to earning more. Plus, you don't need to rely on anyone else to get better at time management, making this an area of your business you can improve independently.

Keys to earning more this year



Spotlight on success



Nick Baldwin, Real estate broker and moderator of [Lab Coat Agent Group](#)

The lifestyle approach to time management

Running a Facebook group for more than 82,000 real estate professionals could be a full-time job, but for Nick Baldwin and Tristan Ahumada it's a side gig.

The two men are active real estate brokers, dads, husbands and in charge of Facebook's largest group for real estate professionals, Lab Coat Agents. Their schedules are jam-packed from top to bottom yet somehow both of them make time for family.

Ahumada picks up his daughter from school every day while Baldwin doesn't answer emails before 9:00 a.m. It's all due to time management skills they've honed over the years.

"We learned this the hard way," Ahumada said. His daughter was a newborn when the recession hit and Ahumada was regularly working around the clock, often showing properties at 8:00 p.m. or even later.

"That wasn't the way to have a fulfilling life or a business you could maintain a healthy consistency in," says Ahumada.

Baldwin came to a similar conclusion.

"You'll see a lot of brokers working 5:30 in the morning or 10:30 at night," Baldwin said. "Once you do that, it opens the door and gives your clients the permission to do that to you."

Both dads decided they were going to put family first and develop better time management skills to schedule around that priority.

"I would rather see a milestone in my children's lives than show a house," Baldwin said.

So they developed several habits. The first involved finding teams. Ahumada started to build his when his daughter was a toddler.

"I started noticing that if I bring in a broker to help me show I'll end up with a little bit less money but I'll take

back some of the life that I'm losing," says Ahumada. It took him about three years after developing a team to get back to the income level that he was at before bringing anyone else on. "But during those two to three years," he said, "I could take my daughter to preschool, spend time with her, it bonding us in ways I couldn't if I was working all the time."

Another thing they swear by is automation.

"Nick and I are the kings of automation," Ahumada says. They use a program that automatically follows up on leads from their website, and they personally jump in to the process when a client actually responds. That way they're not exerting energy before that following up with their many leads.

Ultimately, the two say it's about scheduling your priorities first.

"You'll see brokers saying, 'We're in a business where we have to work when others don't,'" Baldwin said. "To an extent that's true, but it's really not in the most part. I feel if someone's buying a home, that's a huge investment. That's not something that should be an afterthought. If someone's buying a home they need to treat it as a priority."

"We find that most brokers just plan out their schedule without planning around their lifestyle. We find that's the biggest mistakes because they're trying to return calls when they're picking up their kids from school or dinner," Ahumada said.

"Nobody talks about the whole lifestyle first approach," he said, "but we find that's what the most successful brokers do."



Tristan Ahumada, California real estate broker and moderator of [Lab Coat Agent Group](#)

Action plan

7 Strategies for better time management

Good time management enables you to work smarter – not harder – so that you get more done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. Here are some strategies real estate professionals can deploy to win back time.

☒ **1. Limit online distractions.** Use a free tool or app to block out notifications from social media during times of intense work. It can help you focus faster and stay focused for longer.

☐ **2. Find office space.** Do you work from home? While there are benefits to doing so, one of the drawbacks could be that you extend your work deep into the evening. Working from an office, even part-time, could help you organize your time so that when you get home you're actually relaxing.

☐ **3. Schedule your priorities.** Find out what really matters to you in life and schedule those activities at the beginning of the week. Whether it's being home for dinner every night, attending child's soccer practice or working out, all of those activities can be balanced with your real estate career if you make them a priority first and find ways to work around them.

☐ **4. Automation is your friend.** Whether it's follow up emails or calendar reminders, automating your business will take you away from the busy work and get you thinking on big-picture ways to grow your business with all the extra time you'll have on your hands.

☐ **5. Hire help.** Hiring some assistance, whether that means bringing on another broker, finding a virtual assistant or getting a digital marketing consultant, can help clear out big time blocks in your schedule for other priorities.

☐ **6. Make use of small pockets of time.** Can you get work done at the kitchen table alongside your children while they're doing homework? Is there a podcast you can listen to while you're driving that will teach you about digital marketing? Are there any small tasks you can do from your phone while you're waiting for clients to arrive for a showing? Small pockets of time can be put to use to help you get more done every day.

☐ **7. Develop discipline.** If you find yourself lacking the ability to stay on schedule or focused while you're working you may need to look into ways to sharpen your self-discipline skills. Podcasts, books and mentors can all assist you in becoming the kind of person you want to be.



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6: Broker voices: success factors



What's working the best and the worst for brokers, based on years as a licensed real estate broker? Here what brokers have to say.

Years licensed	Working best	Working worst
Under a year	Social media & online marketing <i>"What seems to be working the best for me is the use of social media. My generation uses social media for everything, and it's a great way to keep connected and to keep listings out in front of people."</i>	Lead generation <i>"Lead generation. It's going very slowly."</i>
1-3 years	Personalized attention and service <i>"I am very passion driven and service-oriented. I am blessed to live the life I dreamed of and that shows. I do very well with the face-to-face encounters with both buyers and sellers."</i>	Time management <i>"Time management. I can get distracted and feel like I'm being pulled in a bunch of different directions at once."</i>
4-10 years	Referrals from family and friends <i>"Getting referrals from my sphere of influence. They have started seeing me as a real estate broker. I think because of time and consistency."</i>	Time management <i>"I've gotten so busy and therefore can't handle what I call moving target buyers. These are buyers who don't know what they want and ask to see all sorts of properties without driving by first or doing some behind the scenes homework. I no longer have the time to go and show these."</i>
11-25 years	Referrals and repeat business <i>"I have companies who I pay to do my social media marketing. I also have a great website with a video of me talking. I think that is helping with others to get to know me as an individual person. I try to stay in front of my past clients as I am about 90% referral based which I love! I am involved in activities where I serve and am in the public a lot. This also helps people get to know me and know what I do."</i>	Social media <i>"Not using reviews in self marketing. Social media is still foreign to me. I need a teenager to walk me through stuff."</i>
26+ years	Referrals and repeat business <i>"I obtain all of my business from referrals. I have been building my referral base for almost 30 years."</i>	Social media <i>"Social media - I have not taken the time yet to be productive in that area - will be hiring an assistant soon to handle that."</i>

6: Broker voices: success factors

What's working best and worst for brokers, based on income levels? See what they have to say.

Income	Working best	Working worst
Under \$15,000	Referrals <i>"Satisfying clients and their referrals. I listen to clients, advise them, market their property effectively and efficiently, and deliver the results they want."</i>	Lead generation <i>"I'm not generating leads because I don't have a system."</i>
Between \$15,000 and \$29,999	Personalized attention and service <i>"Adding personal commitment to protect and educate clients on purchases to earn their respect and trust. My clients become my friends."</i>	Time management <i>"I work full-time for the government so I do not have time to invest in growing my business."</i>
Between \$30,000 and \$49,999	Referrals from family and friends <i>"Working by referral. This keeps me working hard for current clients (since I want/need them to refer me to friends/family) and also ensures that I keep in contact with my past clients. Otherwise I wouldn't have any business coming in."</i>	Time management <i>"Two jobs - I need to do real estate full-time and replace myself in my other business."</i>
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	Referrals and repeat business <i>"I am a volunteer in the community and get referrals from people I know."</i>	Social media <i>"I need to improve my social media interaction."</i>
Between \$100,000 and \$149,999	Referrals and repeat business <i>"Getting clients through referrals of past clients through a local give-back program to non-profits. My clients are very locally-minded and appreciate that I want to help give back to the community."</i>	Social media <i>"Social media - I just don't know enough about it."</i>
Between \$150,000 and \$174,999	Referrals and repeat business <i>"Getting referrals from past clients, providing quality service."</i>	Social media <i>"I should develop better social media and newer forms of business development."</i>
Between \$175,000 and \$199,999	Networking <i>"Networking is working the best in my real estate business, and I mean person-to-person networking - done in trade organization meetings, conferences, and seminars."</i>	Social media <i>"It's a challenge to keep up with all the marketing online and social media."</i>
\$200,000+	Referrals and repeat business <i>"Referrals are the most rewarding and generally the most loyal clients. Treat them right and ... people will appreciate it."</i>	Time management <i>"Not enough hours in the day to implement the ideas and systems we learn about."</i>

Spotlight on success



Evan Roberts, Broker and Co-Founder of [Dependable Homebuyers](#)

How skill-swapping can benefit everyone

Six years ago when real estate broker Evan Roberts earned his license and started in the business, he realized he needed to learn tricks of the trade beyond his real estate pre-license course.

"You have more complex transactions," said Roberts, "and you really need someone with 20 to 30 years experience who has been through the process before and who you can lean on."

What happens, Roberts wondered, when your clients didn't find a house and instead want to buy a lot and build? Conducting a transaction with a land broker is different than buying a house that's already built.

"Everyone has unique strengths and we work to mentor each other in our areas of expertise."

For help, Roberts turned to the brokers at Dependable Homebuyers in Baltimore, Maryland where he works.

"Our office has real estate brokers across many generations," he said. "Everyone has unique strengths and we work to mentor each other in our areas of expertise."

The brokers in his office were happy to help Roberts with this question and many more, but Roberts wanted to share something with them in return.

He noticed some of them were still doing postcard marketing and shying away from building website with an SEO strategy. "They don't feel as comfortable with content marketing or SEO," said Roberts. "That's where we're really able to trade our expertise."

To help them, Roberts set up what he calls a syndication network.

"Instead of them having to go learn these different platforms and the different complexities, what we do is just create their citations," Roberts said. "I just provide them a form, they go to this form, put in the information and click submit. I copy my templates."

Roberts also writes guest posts for their websites which provides the other real estate brokers with content and helps build the authority of both sites by creating backlinks.

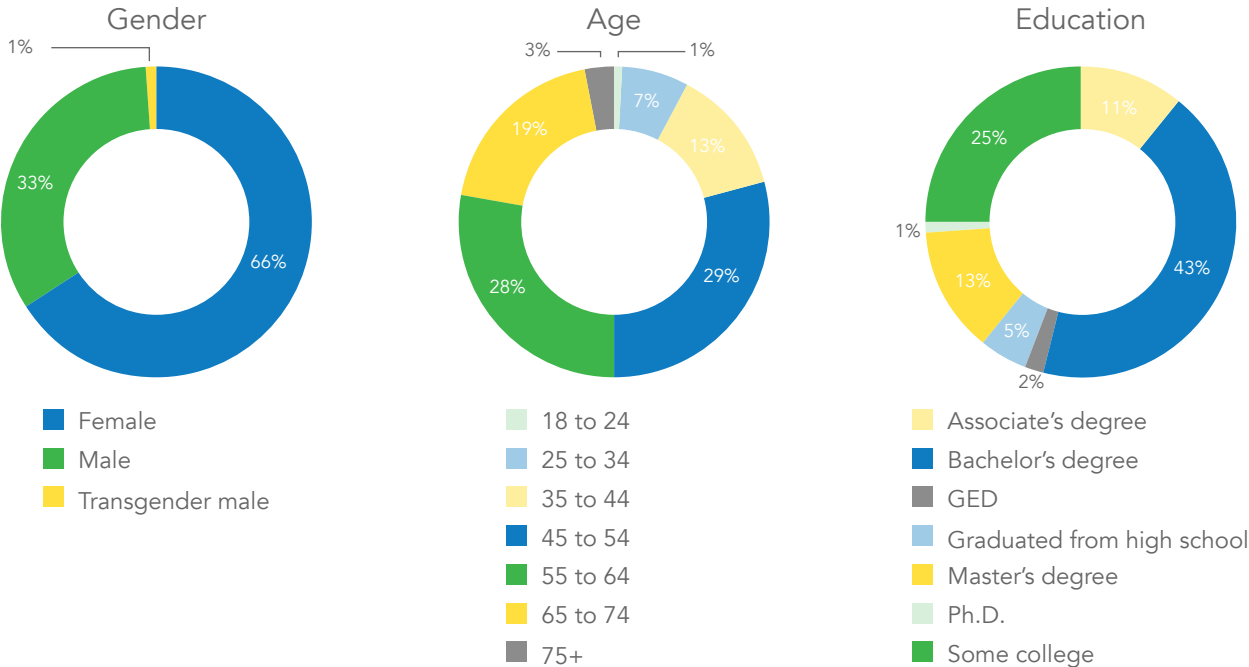
It's a lot of work for Roberts, creating all the content takes time. But, it's worth it. "I'm giving away a lot of value but like anything when you give a lot you gain a lot. When I need help with a transaction I can call someone and I know they're going to pick up," said Roberts.

This version of mentoring sees both sides learn something and as technology rapidly advances, it's becoming more and more common as new real estate brokers entering the industry have native knowledge of many marketing platforms that would take older brokers months of focus to truly learn.

These younger brokers now have something to offer while at the same time are hungry for the real life experience that older agents have amassed.

"A reciprocal mentorship," Roberts said, "is the best way to improve your weaknesses and mature your strengths."

Survey demographics



Survey respondents by state

State	Percentage	State	Percentage	State	Percentage
Alabama	2%	Kentucky	0%	North Dakota	1%
Alaska	1%	Louisiana	2%	Ohio	6%
Arizona	0%	Maine	1%	Oklahoma	1%
Arkansas	2%	Maryland	1%	Oregon	1%
California	0%	Massachusetts	1%	Pennsylvania	6%
Colorado	1%	Michigan	2%	Rhode Island	2%
Connecticut	3%	Minnesota	5%	South Carolina	2%
Delaware	1%	Mississippi	2%	South Dakota	0%
Washington DC	1%	Missouri	1%	Tennessee	3%
Florida	4%	Montana	2%	Texas	4%
Georgia	7%	Nebraska	1%	Utah	1%
Hawaii	0%	Nevada	0%	Vermont	0%
Idaho	2%	New Hampshire	1%	Virginia	2%
Illinois	1%	New Jersey	6%	Washington	2%
Indiana	5%	New Mexico	1%	West Virginia	0%
Iowa	1%	New York	3%	Wisconsin	1%
Kansas	1%	North Carolina	9%	Wyoming	0%

Resources

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Frequently Asked Questions: Still have some more questions about starting your real estate career? Check out our FAQs.