



BUILDING YOUR  
**REFERRAL  
NETWORK**



## INTRODUCTION

# IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

Your clients are not coming to you because they want cookie-cutter lending options and call center customer service. They're coming to you because you're a **face in their community with local ties and expertise**—because they DON'T want a call center experience. In fact, lenders who offer a personal touch are much preferred over online lenders for all age groups, so use these strategies to your advantage.



# Strategy 1: Offer a Top-Notch Local Experience

Something that big-box retail lenders can't offer is YOU. And because of that, you can **capture market share** by being a resource, possibly the most important one, in helping get your client's offer accepted. This means going the extra mile, something that a "dot-com" lender and call center employees can't and won't do.



## Create Experiences that Matter™

Creating an experience that WOWs positions you for referrals to friends and family.

### Here are some ways to get there:



Be generous with your knowledge, educate and advise new buyers



Offer clear, proactive communication during the loan process



Provide a free mortgage check-up on demand



Utilize technology tools to stay on track



Tailor communications to individual situations



Keep in contact over the long haul



Share your successes with testimonials and reviews



Ask for referrals and reviews

### On-Time Closing Commitment

Offering a commitment to close on time not only gives your client peace of mind, it helps with the negotiation process when they're putting an offer in on a home. Positioning them for success not only helps them, but helps you **win their business** and referrals.

APM offers two types of commitments:



Keys on Time



TBD Loan Approvals

# Strategy 2: Build Long-Term Relationships

## Play the Long Game:

Buying a first home can be a process. Some market considerations require patience and multiple attempts. There can also be income, **asset or credit concerns** that need to be resolved.



Thankfully, there are many ways to keep yourself in front of your clients over time, including:



Long-term marketing campaigns with easy-to-follow tips that get them on the path to homeownership\*



Value-add services for past clients

- Free mortgage checkups
- Free tools to check on equity and payment options



In-person and virtual events

(co-hosted with a referral partner for an added bonus!)

- Topics such as budgeting, getting offer accepted, renovation loans, etc.



Consultations on both short- and long-term goals. Document and save these discussions



Social media: Don't forget about showing up - being seen and found is critical for long-term nurturing



## PRO TIP:

APM has plug-and-play marketing at the ready!



## Building Advice-based Relationships

Being a great lender is more than completing a transaction. It's creating an environment where you **position yourself as an expert** on all things mortgage related.

Provide informative content that addresses topics like:

- Market Update
- Local real estate trends
- Wealth building
- Homebuying tips

You want to give clients all the info they need to make the best decisions, but you also want them **coming back to you for advice** whenever you might be able to help. Clients should know you have a lot more to offer than your average lender - you're a trusted partner!

## Nurture, Nurture, Nurture!



**Email:** One way to stay in touch with referral partners and clients is through frequent email updates that deliver valuable content. Reach out to them once or twice a month with information they may find interesting.



**Social Media:** Meet people where they are every single day—on social media. Social media platforms are an especially good place to post news and videos. Social media does a superb job to help connect with people and build personal relationships that lead to more loan referrals.



**Special Occasions:** Don't forget birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. It's also a great idea to remember the date a client bought their home with a personal note (and a great time to offer them an annual mortgage review).



**Friends and Family:** Do those who know you best know you're a mortgage advisor? Don't assume the people in your life know exactly what you do and remind everyone that you're never too busy for them or their referrals.



**Reviews:** While getting a 5-star review is not always within your control, excellent customer service and simply asking for a review can go a long way toward building a referral business, and is a great way to showcase a favorite client and show people how great you are.

## PRO TIP:

Have a system in place for requesting reviews, then make it as easy as possible for clients to leave them for you. At APM, we have an automated tool that will do this for you, then you can share your successes quickly and easily.

## Go the Distance

Cultivating referral partners takes patience and tenacity. Some have existing partners, others might have been burned by a previous partner. **Putting your partner's needs and the needs of their clients first can help build trust.**

## There are countless things you can do to earn referral business. Here are a few of our top tactics:



Provide market updates, products or other buyer solutions consistently



Give second opinions for clients using a competitor



Create marketing materials for their new listings proactively



Engage on social media networks to promote their work



Provide co-branded marketing access



Record a video for them – or WITH them!



## Co-branded Tools & Marketing

Mobilize your business with APM Mobile and get started with using your customized dashboard today!

Integrating APM Mobile saves my agents time. They introduce the mobile app to buyers during the prequalification/preapproval stage so they can calculate monthly payments during the home search process, and even save the scenarios. Once in contract, the app allows them to walk through the loan process quickly, painlessly and naturally.

—Tyson Rondeau, NMLS #185843

### PRO TIP:

APM's mobile app is available to all loan officers and can be co-branded with your agents at the click of a button.

## Features Designed with Your Business in Mind



Custom Branding & Virtual Business Cards



Custom home search integration



Mortgage Calculators



Prospect activity insights



Secure, compliant mobile document scanning & uploading



Real Time Loan Status with push alerts

# Strategy 3: Offer Customized Marketing for REALTOR® Partners

With all the changes happening in the industry, new restrictions for property showings, and an uptick in activity in the real estate market, the last thing real estate agents have time for is marketing. This is a **perfect opportunity for you** to offer your support and show your real estate agent partners your willingness to go above and beyond for their business.



Through APM's marketing tools, our loan officers can **provide customized, ready-made marketing materials** to keep their business going at no cost to the real estate agent. Sounds like a no-brainer, right? Within minutes after a listing hits the market, you can provide your Realtor® with visually attractive marketing materials for print and social media so they can showcase their listings. Talk about winning their business!

## APM Loan Advisors can choose from a variety of marketing pieces, including:



Open house and listing flyers



Single-property websites



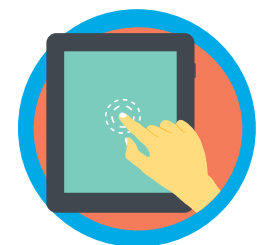
Property reports



Neighborhood infographics



Pre-listing presentations



Targeted Facebook posts



# Strategy 4: Invest in Partnerships

There are many types of partnerships to consider. Open your imagination and think about the professionals who come into contact with potential homebuyers or refinancers, then build your messaging around their clients' needs.



Real estate agents



Homebuilders



Community organizations



Educational institutions



Large employers



Contractors



Financial Planners



Attorneys

## Partnering with Real Estate Agents

One of the best ways to get referrals is to **partner with real estate agents** who want to work with a trusted lender. Then you just have to make sure that lender is YOU! Starting out, it may be easier to target newer agents. As you establish rapport in your community and industry, you will likely be able to attract more seasoned real estate agents.

## Offer Specific Programs to Help Their Clients Get Their Offer Accepted

Agents working with buyers who have financing contingencies have to work twice as hard to making their **offers attractive enough to get accepted**. That can mean writing offer after offer before one finally takes. Offering a fully underwritten loan approval or closing guarantee can make all the difference. You're more likely to get referrals from an agent if you have a product that can help their clients compete.



## Establish a Local Presence

Many real estate agents don't want to work with lenders who are unknown or don't have established reputations. It's worth taking the time to **create a strong local presence** (online reviews, active social media, word of mouth) so local agents know who you are and how dependable you are.



## Communicate

Over-communication is KEY to **winning repeat business** from real estate agents! Everyone's under enough stress, so it's important they know that financing is going to go through. These days, sometimes it's the lender calling the selling agent that makes the difference and brings the deal together, so be willing to go the extra mile for your real estate agent partners.

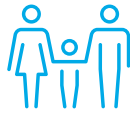


## Partnering with Home Builders

Partnering with home builders selling new construction developments is a great way to generate new referrals.

You can help by working to qualify potential buyers for the builder, then streamlining the buying process for those buyers. This is a real service to them and also **gives them incentive** to have buyers work only with you.

## Partnering with others



**Friends and Family:** Do those who know you best know you're a mortgage originator? Don't assume the people in your life know exactly what you do. Remind everyone that you're never too busy for them or their referrals.



**Financial Planners:** People who have a financial planner are more likely to have their finances in order (including higher assets, higher credit, and well-documented income). They are also more likely to qualify for a mortgage or refinance. Financial advisors will be eager to work with you if you bring something to the table that enriches their relationships with their clients. This gives financial advisor confidence to share clients with you.



# Strategy 5: Act Local

Take a look around. What's happening in your neighborhood? When it comes to community, commonality is the strongest bond there is. Consider working with churches, non-profits and schools to offer education on the importance of good credit and credit building. **Spending time** with members of these groups builds long-term relationships with potential customers.



Here are some ways in which you can show up in your local market:



Using social media to share local news



Hosting free informational seminars



Sponsoring youth sports teams



Signing up for a local class or group



Promoting local businesses and services



Donating your resources



Shopping locally



Supporting local schools



Volunteering to coach a team or be a mentor



Joining a local service organization, such as such as Chamber or Rotary



Organizing a community event like a clean-up day or shredding event



## Build Community Relationships

Don't underestimate the value of building relationships in your community. Mortgage is a **service-based business**, and those relationships will continue to cultivate referrals for you.

Spending time at community events means that your name and face are in front of more people in a low-pressure setting. **Showing up** at these events shows that you care about the community and making it a better place to be. And you just never know when the conversation is going to turn to someone needing a home loan! (It happens more than you might think.)

## It's Worth Taking the Time to Cultivate Loan Referrals

Like we said at the beginning, it's worth taking the time to make sure you've thought through all of your possible loan referral sources and **have a plan** for them. These are the activities that keep your business going, and you can't go wrong by investing both time and money into them.

# Strategy 6: Prioritize

Building trust with a prospective client, referral partner or community member takes time. It also takes **delivering on every opportunity, every time**. If you start by wowing them with an exceptional experience from the beginning – then delivering each and every time after that – the business will follow.



## Some great ways to put process and priority around your systems are:



Leverage a CRM for notes and follow-up dates



Operationalize dates and tasks in your LOS with your team



Use email campaigns for long-term nurturing



Communicate proactively and regularly with borrower and referral sources on active transactions



Prioritize dates, hitting every date and making sure everyone is aware of possible delays (and the reasons why)



Thank your source for the referral with a handwritten note upon receipt of referral and upon close



Talk up your referral sources! Being able to refer business to them is the best way to get referrals in the future



Use the white-glove approach for referrals so they feel taken care of

## Prioritize Purchase Business

It's important to **prioritize your purchase business**. At APM, we've made the commitment to prioritize purchase business for your realtor partners, and they need to hear this from YOU.

Realtors need to know they can rely on you to ensure their purchase loans close on time, every time. This is something many lenders have struggled to do in recent months. There's a lot of extra work and worry for the realtor and their client if you aren't able to close on time.

APM is doing its best to adapt our company policies and guidelines to the current environment to help you close purchase loans on time. Our **outreach and communication** are to give you the what, the why and sometimes the how so you are informed and can take applicable action to best manage your business. We are ever committed to living the values of transparency, respect and scrappiness during these unprecedented times.

## CONCLUSION

# KEEP RELATIONSHIPS WITH REFERRAL PARTNERS GROWING



Realtors and other referral partners are relying on you to **stay connected** and provide them with accurate information about what's happening in the mortgage world and with their clients. Don't leave them wondering! If they don't hear it from you, they will hear it from someone else and it could cost you a relationship that you've worked long and hard for. **Now is the time** to fight for your purchase business. Don't let it fall by the wayside!

Stay consistent. Show up. ALWAYS pick up the phone! Don't put off contact because you're too busy. If you don't maintain these relationships now, it will cost you later



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