



Currently, More Than 75% Of People Research and Buy Their Home Online – Real Estate Agents and Brokers - Are You Prepared?

Every day, more and more searches are conducted online. The Internet has become the primary vehicle for business ventures, shopping, research, products, services, and communicating with others. As technology advances every day, the pioneers of the business world are discovering the importance of marketing on the Internet. Not only does Internet marketing yield the best return on investment, but it is rapidly becoming a necessity rather than a luxury. For a real estate agent, broker, or company to be able to compete and satisfy their customers they must position themselves to sell houses over the Internet.

According to the latest surveys conducted by top-rated real estate magazines, now more than 75% of people use the Internet to research and buy their home. With the recent rise in gas prices, real estate searches on the Internet continue to climb substantially.

Most real estate agents and brokers now have their own sites on the web, with features such as pictures of properties and floor plans. It has enabled the potential customers to enjoy hassle-free home buying. Having a website not only enables you to brand and promote yourself but also allows you to promote the services you render.

The problem is getting your website to stand out from the competition. There is such plethora of real estate websites out there that it has now become an overwhelming task for a particular real estate agent to get his or her website ranked on Google, Yahoo, and MSN (the three major search engines). And if a website doesn't appear in top ten of the first page on these search engines, chances are, no one will ever find them, let alone visit them.

Now the real problem comes into play.

The real problem is this: most real estate websites are either a sub domain of the parent company (Coldwell Banker, Keller Williams, etc.) or the real estate agent got a deal on a great looking template and hosting for something like \$59 down and \$39 per month.

Search engine optimization (SEO) contains a series of strategic and technical solutions, including selection of the most appropriate keywords, preparing search engine friendly content, and linking and submitting the website to major search engines like Google and Yahoo. All of these factors work together to enhance your website ranking in the search engines for real estate related keywords.

The reality, however, is that in generic searches in cities all across the US, real estate websites rarely, if at all, make it into the top ten on one or more major search engines. In the instances they are ranked, it is because they have been developed and built by a web master and not a template driven one stop website company.

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The disappointing fact is that while template websites look great, they are not effective for SEO or Internet marketing.

If you plan on successfully marketing your real estate website online you will need to start out with these three fundamental basic requirements.

1. Website -

Every real estate agent, broker, and company should have a website of their own. Having a website allows to specifically brand a company and communicates how they do business. It must be specific and cater to the right audience maximize reach. If a website is devoted to real estate in Renton, WA, it should provide relevant information pertaining to homes available in the area, the benefits of a location, and the facilities available. Any relevant information regarding the schools and shopping malls in that area will help to persuade audiences to consider a home in a given neighborhood. The web pages must be informative, appealing to the eye, and to the point.

The website should be built by a qualified developer and should be able to stand alone as it's own site, rather than as a sub-domain of the parent company or a real estate one-stop-shop template and hosting store.

2. Search Engine Optimization -

I recommend that before you even build your website you should speak with a reputable SEO firm. If you already have a website then you should consider having an SEO firm conduct a detailed analysis of your real estate website as well as your target markets.

Be sure to ask about structuring your real estate website with appropriate search terms, synchronizing Meta tags, and formulating link popularity programs.

The SEO firm should know and explain how they will make use of the search engines to your benefit. Use of the most generic key words that are common, and making sure your website is ranked among top ten on Google, Yahoo, and MSN, as per the applicable generic key word search, will substantially increase visibility for your company. You are also insuring more targeted traffic to your page, and the number of prospective clients will increase.

3. USP -

You will need to research your local market and define your unique selling proposition, which will give you an edge over other real estate players. This will help you develop a foundation on how to market your services as well as determining what audience will seek your assistance in finding a home.



Can You Get Ranked, You Ask.

The reality is (with the exception of paid placement), ninety-nine percent (99%) of all the real estate websites in the greater Puget Sound Area will never receive top ten ranking on any of the three major search engines, no matter how visually appealing, cool, or trendy these websites are. This is because they are trying to get by with a cheap on-stop-shop real estate website.

Imagine what it would mean for your company if your website was always ranked in the top ten of the three major search engines (Google, Yahoo, and MSN) for the ten major cities of the greater Puget Sound, I-5 corridor? You can get there, but you will need your website to be properly developed with correct SEO deployed architecture.

Believe me when I say those real estate agents and brokers who understand the power of the Internet have a distinct advantage over those who don't. So I ask again, are you prepared?

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