



Master my MARKETING

For Real Estate Professionals

This book was developed to help Real Estate professionals successfully build the online leg of their Real Estate business.

Through years of research and testing you we've found the answers you have been looking for and exactly where to get started online right here and now. Find out first hand what other professionals are using to generate 100's of consistent leads online each month.

“Everyone realizes there are things they don't know...”

....but to realize there are things you don't know you don't know, separates failure from success.”

Christian Stefferud

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Blogging

Blogs are the most important tool we have for succeeding in the online leg of our business. To most, Blogging is something that people do to express themselves or share personal opinions on. A place to post photos and tell stories. A sort of year book of memories that will be posted forever. Forever. That word is something that resonated in me when I first seriously looked at Blogging, and “forever” is what you should be thinking when reading this section about Blogging.

Why is Blogging powerful? Simple. It’s powerful because it’s the one and only tool that you can display your knowledge and expertise for the entire world to see...forever. I’ve spent thousands of dollars on print advertising, knowing full well that it was usually going from the left hand to the right hand to the trash. Simple as that. Obviously I was generating some business leads because of it, however not many. Now I simply post the knowledge and information I want to share on my Blog. Because my Blog is designed in a way that search engines can see it, my audience is now global. If you are posting current and timely information that people are searching for, they’ll keep coming back for more. In a sense, you’re creating credibility with a potential client before you even meet with them!

Starting Your Own Blog

The first place I would go to start Blogging is www.blogger.com. Simply because it’s free and the easiest one to use. Here are a few others to check out as well...from first to worst:

www.wordpress.com

www.typepad.com

www.yahoo.com

<http://peopleconnection.aol.com>

<http://home.services.spaces.live.com>

www.xanga.com

www.livejournal.com

www.vox.com

www.myspace.com

You can literally be up and posting your articles within ten minutes. No joke. You'll probably get caught up in designing your blog the way you want it to look, so don't be surprised if you begin to actually have fun and spend an hour playing with all the tools you'll find. We've found this to be an ongoing thing for about the first month or so.

15 Rules To Blog By

When I started our Blog I was all over the place on the topics I was posting. For the most part you'll see most Blogs are like that. The most successful Blogs however, are not. Here are the rules to live by when starting out:

1. Decide on a subject you will be concentrating on.
2. Pick a title for your Blog that will describe your subject matter.
3. Make sure all of your posts will have something to do with the subject of the blog.
4. Do not have audio boot up on your Blog (or website for that matter). If you're going to have audio make sure it has a play and pause button that the reader chooses to activate.
5. In your sidebar, place a Subscribe feature so visitors can receive a feed to your Blog. This will make it easier for them to gain access to the information you post.
6. Most Blog providers will have a search feature automatically built into the blog. If they don't, get one. The search feature will allow readers to search for particular topics in your blog.

7. Tags and Labels are an important tool to use when writing a post. A visitor can click on one of your tags or labels to display all the posts that deal with that subject.
8. Linkation to your website. Think of your Blog as a traffic generator and credibility tool. Once you've gained credibility make it easy for your readers to visit your website. Use hyperlinks in your posts back to your site. Think of your website as a tool. A place to put all the business tools and services you provide. Don't confuse your Blog with your website.
9. Linkation to other Blogs and websites. After or during the writing of your posts, pick words or phrases that you can hyperlink to other Blogs or websites to find out more information on your topic. The more credible links you have on your Blog the higher your search engine ranking will be.
10. Invite others to post on your Blog. You don't have to invite another professional that's competing with you, but you can invite vendors or affiliated business professionals to post. This will allow you to share the responsibility of posting and generate organic growth quickly.
11. Buy your own domain for your Blog. You're going to be advertising it and search engines will be showing it as a result....might as well create a little more credibility by buying your own Blog domain name. I use www.AddressBuilders.com.
12. Update your Blog frequently. I actually have a schedule to update my Blogs. At least three times a week to start. Having other authors helps with this immensely.
13. Don't be afraid to write from an opinion. People are interested in what others are thinking. Using canned content isn't necessarily bad, but it will come across that way and your readers will bounce out much quicker...probably never to return.
14. Visit Microsoft's free clip art site and upload a picture into each of your posts. Just like children love picture books, your readers will love relevant photos.
15. Don't write super long posts and use lists to simplify your content. Titles beginning with: "10 Things..." or "7 Mistakes..." are some examples. Search

engine conversions are much better using these as well. Don't make your entire site that way, but sprinkle them in there more often than not.

Follow these 15 rules and you'll be off to a great start. Check out www.RainCityGuide.com for a great example.

Conversions

The next trick is to use the right conversion tools for leads. There are many to choose from and the simple result you should be looking for is an email address. Once you have an email address you can follow up consistently with informative emails until the conversion turns into a lead. There are many email programs out there that will generate automatic emails to your conversion prospects. Pick one, write ten follow up emails, set it and forget it. The more lines you have in the water, the more fish you will catch...it's that simple. I'll cover more on conversion tools later.

Other Blogging Tools

Obviously I didn't cover everything there is to know about Blogging here, but it's enough to make you dangerous and effective. The next page contains a list of other topics to check out once you're up and running. The main thing you should be concerned with in your first 90 days and on into the your future of "Forever" is consistency. Post frequently. Use everyday emails you receive to stimulate topics. Those are the questions people want to read about. Keep a pad of paper next to your bed and when you think of something in the middle of the night write it down...then go back to sleep. Use that as your post the next morning.

Other Topics To Check Out:

SEO ~ Search Engine Optimization

Feeds

Email Subscriptions

Revenue Generators

Avatars

Analytics

If you'd like to learn more about developing an effective blog, feel free to contact me for a free consultation at Christian@MasterMyMarketing.com.

Websites

Your website should be used as a tool. In the past most businesses and business professionals used their website as their only online presence. Since the development of Web Logs (blogging), the typical website has become second fiddle. That being said, it shouldn't be overlooked. Many people have replaced their website with a Blog completely, but that is something that should never be done in business. Your website is the place to make your products and/or services shine. It's a place that you want the readers of your Blog to end up. Once one of your Blog readers walks their mouse over to take a click on your website link, they've subconsciously flipped the switch from "who is this person" to "this person seems credible...I'd like to find out more." If they land on your website page and it's not a well oiled machine with leather interior and a navigation system you've lost them. You need to grab that visitor and compel them to stay and look around a bit. Maybe even send you an email or fill out one of your conversion tools.

My experience is in the real estate industry, so I'm going to use real estate agents as an example. But, we want you to keep in mind that this applies to any business that wants to succeed or continue to succeed in the very near future.

So often I hear real estate agents say to us, "I need a new website" or "I got ripped off because my website doesn't do **Jack** for me!" My question to them is "What did you expect it to do?" The typical answer is to generate more business. That's where the rub comes. Most people are led to believe that if you build a website the business will come. Not true! If you build it with the right tools the leads will come. For those of you that own a business or are service providers, if you build it with the right information, pricing and credibility, the buyers will come.

Just like a brick and mortar business, somebody has to be working the shop. Are we transitioning **rapidly** into an age where more and more people are working from home and on the internet? Absolutely, without a doubt, for certain. But....the same simple truth of having to work your business still applies. You can't just build something online, admire it and wait for the business to come...to a small extent you can, but you still have to work it.

So, what do you do? Simple...work your blog, create engaging conversion tools for your visitors on your website and make sure you follow up with those people until they become clients or tell you to bug off. This requires consistency and somebody working the shop. Technology makes life easier if you apply all it has to offer. Systems and techniques are the key to any successful business. Application and effort is all that is required from you or your employees. Showing up is 80% of the battle!

If you'd like to learn more about developing an effective website to go along with your Blog feel free to contact me for a free consultation by calling (866) 960-9677 Ext 1 or Email me at Christian@MasterMyMarketing.com.

Info Flyers

Online

This is an awesome tool and one that most people overlook. When writing your posts for your Blog, upload an online flyer that has a hyperlink via a word or phrase in a sentence. Create a PDF file that contains survey information, product description, polls, statistics or whatever your business has to share. **Important:** *Make sure that your information and business information is clearly displayed.* People will print these out more often than not and keep them. You can even have a map to your office or business on a second page or a featured listing or fantastic loan program. The possibilities here are endless.

Hardcopy

Anything that you print, mail or advertise should have your blog posted on it. More so than your website or both if you feel it's important enough. The link to your Blog should be clearly visible when people go to your website. All hardcopy advertising should contain a lead conversion tool (www.CallSource.com, www.TextMyMLS.com, www.RealEstateGrowth.com) to generate prospects phone numbers back to you. This will accomplish two things:

1. It will allow you to measure the effectiveness of that particular marketing campaign, mailer or advertisement.
2. It will allow you to follow up with warm leads. Many professionals are afraid to follow up with a lead in this fashion.

Some sales people are afraid of the prospect being upset that they are calling them when they aren't expecting it. Because of this we've created a brief example that we use to begin dialogue: "Hi. This is (your name) with (company). I noticed you were looking for more information about (product/service/listing). This system allows me to call you back to see if I can answer any more questions you might have. Would it be okay if I told you a little bit more about (product/service/listing)?"

You've accomplished three things here. You've identified yourself, explained how you gained access to their number and asked for permission to continue. If this is still something that makes you feel uncomfortable then you should consider looking for a new career ...seriously...sales is definitely not for you.

Conversion Tools

This is a very robust topic and one that can take up a lot of time. I'm going to boil it down to the salt. Online conversion tools are simply the engines that drive leads into your business. They must be compelling, provide value and if at all possible be interactive.

I'll start simple. Write a report or provide statistics and information about your product or service. It can be about anything that deals with what you're selling or providing as a service. Pick topics that are current and presently popular. Create a sign-up form to gather your reader's information. At the very least get their email. Use a data collector that makes them use a valid email to send the report to. They get the report and you get the warm lead as well as a topic (the report) to go back to them with. Create another conversion link within that report that makes them interact with you even more. An audio postcard or two minute podcast link. There's a great product we've used over the years that allows us to record via the phone and post on any webpage that we share with our clients and all of them really dig it!

Avatars are all the rage right now. Wikipedia defines Avatars as: *a computer user's representation of himself or herself*. Will your Avatar make you money...probably not. Can it be used to generate a lead...definitely. It's easier for me to show you an interactive Avatar than explain it.

Avatars are virtual assistants to our team and provide your clients and customers valuable information. They also pull your visitors in and ask for the lead. Since they are programmed with artificial intelligence our visitors can communicate with them and they can even answer questions. You can also program them to answer on particular subjects. This is a valuable tool for any business professional wanting to keep people on their website as well as keep them coming back.

If you'd like to learn more about developing effective conversion tools feel free to contact me for a free consultation at Christian@MasterMyMarketing.com.

Listing Presentations

Though this is a bit off subject I thought it important enough to include. Something to consider when working with a new seller. How motivated are they to sell. Questions to ask:

Why are you selling?

To see how much they can get for their home or to test the market is unacceptable and a waste of your time.

Where are you moving?

If they're serious about selling they will know where they are moving to.

How much do you want to list your house for?

*In a **Sellers market** you can use comparables to set a sales price*

*In a **Buyers market** you must pay attention to your competition and what the inventory in months supply is to determine a price that will get the home shown.*

Once you've determined that they are serious about selling you're ready to compete for the listing. There are a few tricks to winning the listing almost every time and ways to outsmart your competition.

If you'd like to learn more about winning the listing 90% of the time, contact me at Christian@MasterMyMarketing.com.

Domains

The possibilities are endless when it comes to what you can do online. Before you go and put all the effort necessary into the online leg of your business, make sure you've decided on and purchased a domain for it. Buy separate domains for your blog(s) and anything else you'll be promoting online.

Stay away from your name or trendy nicknames. Stick with relevant names. A name that describes your business or geographical names are great too. Examples include www.SouthBayTitle.com or www.HomeOfTheQueenMary.com.

By promoting your own domain along with your business it will allow you to own all of your marketing efforts. One mistake I see professionals do all the time is buy their own domain, build their online presence and continue to use their yahoo, gmail, cox, aol or other service provider's email address. What's up with that? It's like nails on a chalkboard to me. That's like wrapping a gift, signing the card and deliberately leaving it at home. Think about how much you email. Every time somebody sees your email address they are reminded of your website and business

, but not if you're using one of the above mentioned service providers.

There are many companies out there that provide domain names. Here is the one that I use: www.AddressBuilders.com and www.Register.com.

Must Have Software

I think one of the biggest mistakes people make in business is not being self sufficient in all aspects. Okay, maybe it's impossible to accomplish "all aspects", but you can come close. Laziness and fear are probably the biggest culprits in this area, but if you take three months of spare time out of your life and learn a few programs you can function quite easily on your own in the marketing world. To keep it simple I recommend Microsoft products to my clients because most are already familiar with their operating system.

Here's the list:

1. Microsoft Outlook – Contact Management
 2. Microsoft Word – Word Documents
 3. Microsoft Publisher – Publishing/Marketing
 4. Microsoft Excel – Spreadsheets/Database Management
 5. Microsoft FrontPage or Adobe Dreamweaver - Web design
 6. Adobe Acrobat Reader – PDF Converter
- Adobe Photoshop – Photo Editing

These software products will require an upfront investment, however any business you start will require start up funds and in the big picture this cost will be nominal. This is a must if you plan on surviving through the younger generations competing with you. At the bare minimum buy the Microsoft products first (Microsoft Small Business or Professional pack will have most of them). You can get them for Macintosh computers

as well. Adobe Acrobat Reader is free online at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

The new breed of business professional will know these products in and out because they're like what pen and paper are to us. In fact, they'll probably be using even more sophisticated programs. Though the new software tools are cool and have a ton of bells and whistles, they aren't necessary to run with the pack or even lead it. You have experience and more confidence than the younger generations, couple that with a bit of a learning curve and you **will** overcome and succeed.

Email Marketing

Email marketing has come a long way. Simply put...it's effective. Even if your client or prospect doesn't open your email, they still see your name in the **from** section of their email program. You can track who opened your email, filter through remove requests, design beautiful newsletters or reports and so much more. It's an easy and effective way to stay in front of your clients on a regular basis. Here's a list of companies that provide email marketing services from first to worst:

1. iContact ~ www.icontact.com
2. Benchmark ~ www.benchmarkemail.com
3. Stream Send ~ www.streamsend.com
4. Campaigner ~ www.campaigner.com
5. Bronto ~ www.bronto.com
6. Vertical Response ~ www.verticalresponse.com
7. Jango Mail ~ www.jangomail.com
8. Constant Contact ~ www.constantcontact.com
9. Email Brain ~ www.emailbrain.com
10. Email Labs ~ www.emailabs.com

Budget

How much is all this technology going to cost me? Something we all are concerned about...our budget.

Let's break it down:

1. Blog ~ Free
2. Website ~ \$0 - \$1,000's
3. Domain ~ \$9.95 each per year
4. Email Marketing ~ \$9.95 per month
5. Avatars ~ \$500 per year
6. Hosting ~ \$3.95 per year
7. Software ~ \$500-\$1,000
8. Lead Generator ~ \$360 per year
9. Website Audio ~ \$360 per year

Your Time To Input ~ Effort and Patience

Yearly Grand Total: **\$2353.30** not including website

Monthly Grand Total: **\$196.10**

Summary

For less than \$200 per month you can and will be able to set up an effective online business that will be generating leads back to you within three months...depending on the amount of effort you put into it. I know of real estate agents that throw away thousands a month in print advertising and don't get the amount of leads that most do online. I hope this book has helped you and please keep in mind that though most of the examples in this report are real estate related, these principles cross over into any form of online business and can drive leads back to you the exact same way. Much success to you and happy hunting out there!