



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 Your Market Tailored Solutions

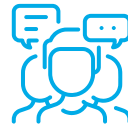
The dot-com retail lenders can't offer customized tailored solutions that address the needs of today's borrowers. Get to know your local market, and **provide financing solutions that others don't offer.** That's where you will stand out and capture market share.



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 solutions for today's market and affordability challenges



Utilize technology tools to stay on track



Provide options and tailored financing solutions that meet the needs of your borrowers



Learn and offer the products that your local market needs



Share your successes with testimonials and reviews



Ask for referrals and reviews

Specialty financing solutions help you stand out in today's market:

- In-house construction and renovation lending team
- Manufactured home loan financing
- Bank statement loans
- ITIN borrowers
- In-house jumbo lending department with dedicated underwriting up to \$3 million
- **And more!**

Strategy 2: Build Long-Term Relationships

Play the Long Game:

Not every lead turns into a customer right away. That's why it's important to have strategies in place that can help you stay in front of clients long-term and nurture them until they are ready.

For your past clients, it's important to offer them consistent value and ongoing communication to keep you top of mind for their next mortgage transaction.



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
- Ongoing wealth-generation strategies



In-person and virtual events

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

- Topics such as budgeting, getting offers 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 Updates
- Local real estate trends
- 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, letting you 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 pre-qualification/pre-approval 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 and virtual business cards



Custom home search integration



Mortgage calculators



Prospect activity insights



Secure, compliant document scanning and uploading



Real-time loan status with push alerts

Strategy 3: Offer Solutions for Realtor Partners

Realtors want to partner with lenders that can provide solutions to the challenges they're facing in the market. This means taking the time to help their clients **overcome affordability challenges, offering solutions through products, and helping to make their offers stand out in today's market.**

Right now is the perfect opportunity for you to offer your support and show your real estate agents your willingness to go above and beyond for their business.



APM's marketing is top-notch, but it takes more than that. Helping Realtors earn and keep business makes you invaluable. Offer them marketing support for sure, but then also think about how you might be able to help with co-hosting events, or sharing their social media—what can you do to make THEM look good?



Affordability and payment scenarios and illustrations



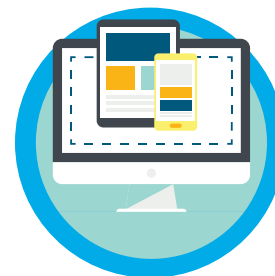
Listing and open house marketing support



Collaborative marketing and video



Co-host events and open houses



Pre-approvals and second opinions for all listings and offers



Promote, tag and engage on social media



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.

Partnering with Homebuilders

Partnering with homebuilders 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.



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 investing 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. Be willing to go the extra mile for your real estate agents, their clients, and all parties involved in the transaction.

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 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 Chamber or Rotary



Organizing a community event like a cleanup 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

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 Referral Partner & Customer Experience

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



Provide value that goes beyond the transaction

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. There's a lot of extra work and worry for the Realtor and their client if you aren't able to close 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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