

BUSINESS GUIDE:

# *What to do After Getting Licensed*

A REAL ESTATE EBOOK FROM



## BUSINESS GUIDE:

# *What to do After Getting Licensed*

As you prepare to get your license, it's only natural to wonder what life with a real estate license will be like.

Once you put in your hours, squash all those Pre-Licensing courses, and pass the licensing exam with flying colors, what happens next?

We've compiled tips and tricks from experts on our team of industry experts. With The CE Shop in your back pocket, there's no mountain too high and no house too big to sell.

— “ —

*The best time to plant a  
tree was 20 years ago.*

THE SECOND BEST  
TIME IS NOW.

— ” —

— CHINESE PROVERB

## *Choose a broker*

The relationship with your chosen broker will be a symbiotic one; you represent them as much as they represent you. While a bad broker might sour the whole industry for you, a good one can teach you the ins and outs and set you up to excel in the real estate industry.

## HOW TO *Interview a Broker*

Because real estate licensees are independent brokers, an interview with a real estate brokerage firm is not about them interviewing you as much as it is about you interviewing them. They're wondering if you're worth their time, while you should be wondering if this is a place where you can get the training, experience, and exposure you'll need to build your business.

# Considerations

## WHEN YOU'RE HIRING A BROKER

### SIZE OF FIRM

You may prefer a smaller firm for the camaraderie and one-on-one time with your manager, or a larger firm for the energy.

### FIRM REPUTATION AND LONGEVITY

It's also important to ask others about your broker's reputation. Brokers, like people, vary a lot.

### OFFICE PROFESSIONALISM

Is it a place you would be comfortable meeting clients? How many agents work there? Do you get your own office?

### LOCATION OF FIRM

Proximity to your home, but, more importantly, proximity to the areas and properties you'll want to work in.

### COMMISSION SPLIT

What is their commission structure like? What other costs are you responsible for paying?

### SPECIALTIES

Does the firm mostly work with residential, commercial, or property management?

### FLOOR TIME POLICY

You can sometimes get quality leads from floor time duty and blind incoming calls.

### MARKETING COLLATERAL

Does the firm offer marketing materials such as signage, business cards, and announcement cards?

### TRAINING PROGRAM

Is there a training program for new licensees?

—— “ ——  
*Do or do not,*

THERE IS  
NO TRY.

—— ” ——

— YODA



# *Your Sphere*

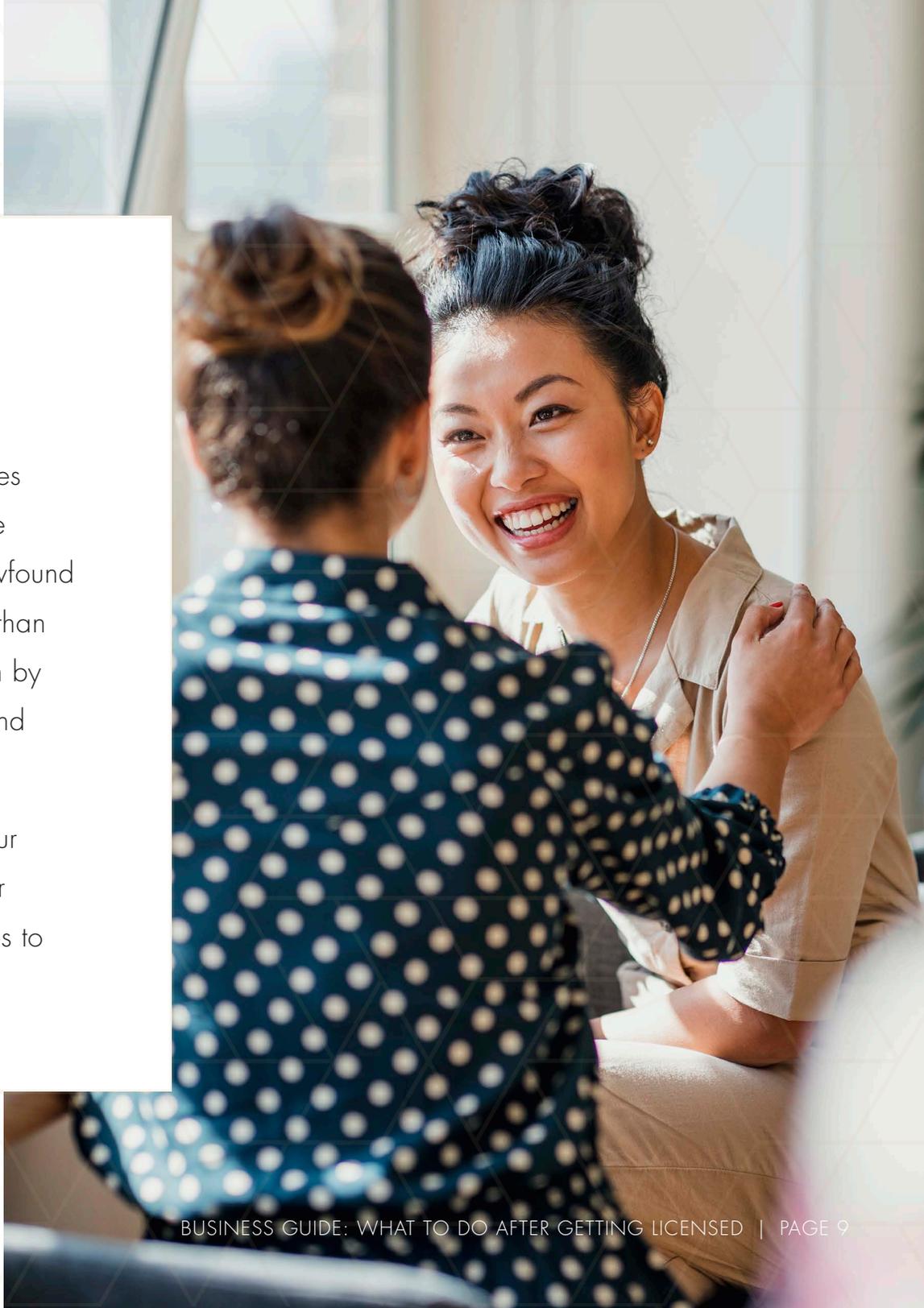
Real estate's a social industry, and as great as it would be for clients to just flock to you and put you to work, that's not normally how it happens – especially when you're just starting out.



# *Don't Fear!*

A common mistake that new licensees make is they fear their sphere. These agents would rather try out their newfound real estate knowledge on strangers than risk looking like a pushy salesperson by promoting their services to friends and family. This shouldn't be the case.

As an agent, you're here to help your community. There's nothing wrong or shameful about offering your services to people in your network.



HERE'S THE

# *Key to Real Estate*

It's all about people. They need to like you and trust you enough to refer your services.

Now that you know the secret, you might want to re-evaluate leaving your sphere out of the mix. Your sphere, after all, consists of your closest friends and family and, hopefully, includes all the people that would trust you with their real estate business.

These people know and like you more than anyone, so why not start with them?

# Communication with Impact

## 1 FACE-TO-FACE CONVERSATIONS

Try to meet face-to-face with each member of your sphere at least quarterly. Keep a log so you don't let anyone drop off your list. Make sure to write a note after every face-to-face meeting, but don't include a business card here.

## 2 PHONE CALLS

Try and help them see why you made the career transition. Always include two business cards (ordering business cards can take 1-2 weeks, so you should do this the moment you've selected a brokerage). One card is for them to keep and the other is to pass along to someone else who might benefit from a stellar new real estate connection.



# Communication with Impact

## 3 HANDWRITTEN NOTES

Contact your sphere and let them know you're now in real estate. Announcement cards do the trick, and many firms will even provide them for you. Keep them simple and to the point. You're selling houses, after all, not greeting cards. Personalize your announcement cards by including something the recipient already knows about you. Maybe you used to work together, or maybe you happen to know this person's been thinking of moving for a while now.

## 4 NEWSLETTERS

Maintain contact by sending a monthly newsletter featuring market news in the area. This can be as simple as a form letter (individually addressed, of course). Include any recent sales you've been involved with, any buyers you're working with, and any recent real estate news ("housing prices are seeing a 14% upswing in the area over this time last year..."). Be sure to cite your sources, aim for the newsletter to be an informational item as opposed to a marketing piece. Your goal is not to sell to them but rather to position yourself as the authority on real estate.

Don't be afraid to explicitly ask for business. Real estate coach Brian Buffini recommends **concluding every communication with, "By the way, I'm never too busy for any of your referrals."** The important thing here is consistency. The last thing you want is to hear that a friend sold a home with a different agent because they forgot you were in the business.



— “ —  
ALWAYS DELIVER  
MORE THAN  
EXPECTED.

— ” —  
— LARRY PAGE,  
CO-FOUNDER OF GOOGLE

# Top 10 Strategies Agents Use

## 1 | UTILIZE YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Starting out, 60 percent of your business will come from your sphere of influence, and it costs you pennies to manage it effectively. A couple of years in, you may get 80-100 percent of your business from your sphere, so spend time cultivating it and do not be afraid to approach friends and family for business. Even if they do not feel comfortable or do not have a need for your service, they might know someone who they can refer.

## 2 | TIME MANAGEMENT

Make sure to space out time to connect with at least five people every day, both in your sphere and out. You need to constantly be thinking “What can I do next to generate more business” and then scheduling time to go and find these new clients. Agent life can be busy, which means organization is a must.

## 3 | BE SHAMELESS IN YOUR PURSUIT

Timidness is the bane of all real estate agents. You need to put yourself out there and inform everyone you know about what you do and why you’re the best. Don’t be scared to give out your card or else you’ll lose potential clients over time.

## 4 | SPEND YOUR MARKETING DOLLARS EFFECTIVELY

Buying into leads programs, fancy websites, and splashy advertising does nothing for you. Be strategic in how you sell your brand and gain new clients and you will not need these money-wasting items. There are many inexpensive options like social media and referral programs that can help you grow.

## 5 | UTILIZE SOCIAL MEDIA

It’s all free but can cost you a lot of time if you don’t use it effectively, or not at all. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and blogs are all opportunities for marketing yourself and your listings. Be smart about how you post (no typos!), and don’t be afraid to try something new. Putting a giant panda in every listing photo might not necessarily sell the house, but it’ll sure garner more interest and establish your brand.



# Top 10 Strategies Agents Use

## 6 | KEEP YOUR FOCUS BROAD

Select a niche or geographical area to hit and hit it hard. You may not get results right away, but keep at it. It takes 10-15 impressions to leave a mark.

## 7 | STAY IN CONTACT WITH CLIENTS

Every time you do business with a client that you'd like to work with again, add them to your CRM database and stay in touch. Surveys show that 80% of real estate licensees don't stay in touch with their clients, and we all know that you're in that awesome 20% who does.

## 8 | USE TECHNOLOGY TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

You don't have to have the latest gadgets, but you do need to find and effectively use available technologies, like CRM and Social Media. These tools can help you gain the edge on the competition and grow the business.

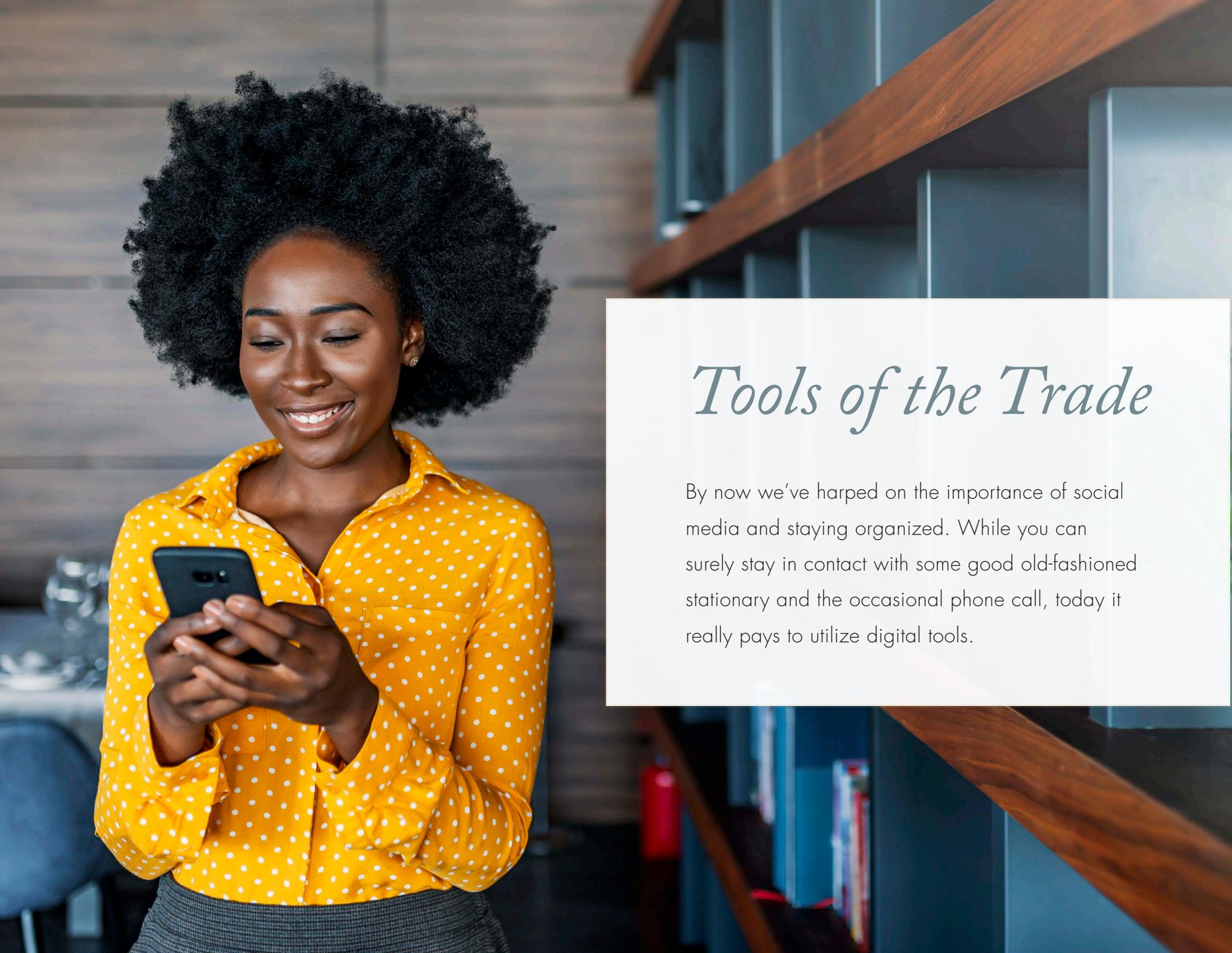
## 9 | FIRE UNRULY CLIENTS

You're the boss and you get to decide whom you work with. You don't want to spend time with people who don't respect you as a professional. You also only have so much limited time to work with in a day. Wasting it with a horrible client isn't what you want to be doing.

## 10 | ALWAYS KEEP LEARNING

Once you're out in the big bad world of being your own boss, you still need to make sure you're the best. Stay sharp with our online courses. Get a mentor. Volunteer for your local real estate board and attend the meetings. Connect with other licensees. Watch YouTube videos. Read books. Attend seminars. Add credentials. Keep up with newly listed homes in your area so that when a client asks you about a house, you can speak from the perspective of already having seen it. Be a credit to your profession and your career will benefit.





## *Tools of the Trade*

By now we've harped on the importance of social media and staying organized. While you can surely stay in contact with some good old-fashioned stationary and the occasional phone call, today it really pays to utilize digital tools.

# Tools of the Trade

## A SMARTPHONE

This one should be a no-brainer for any kind of modern business, but if you need it spelled out here you go: it's your notebook, web browser, camera, video camera, compass, GPS system – and, oh yeah, a phone.

## THE PAPERLESS AGENT

This is a training program that shows agents how to use a series of business applications on their iPad, whether working with buyers or sellers. Also included are strategies for conducting a majority of your business on an iPad. It works in conjunction with ZipForms, another tool that includes most real estate forms customized by region, and has fillable content blocks.

## SOME MEANS OF DATA BACKUP

If your data is only in one place, you're going to eventually lose it. It's a lesson most people learn the hard way, but you can avoid that pain by using a service like Carbonite.com, or by storing files on Google Drive or Dropbox. The more places you store your files, the less likely it is that a failed hard drive will ruin your day (or year).



## A TABLET OR LAPTOP

Since you'll always be on the go from one house to the next, mobile technology is a must. Some tasks might be too big for your smartphone (good luck with those Excel docs), and sometimes it's just nice to have a tablet or ultralight laptop to search the MLS, fill out ZipForms online, or maybe just ogle some nice houses with a client.

# Tools of the Trade

## FREE ACCOUNTS ON ZILLOW & TRULIA

It may sound obvious, but these sites are invaluable for increasing your exposure. Be sure to fill out your whole profile.

## CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT TOOL

CRM is one of the easiest and best ways to keep in contact with your clients. It allows you manage your rolodex in a digital fashion and provides you organization tools for keeping your client-base in sync with your schedule. It's also a very handy for jotting down notes from client interactions and a reminder system when a significant amount of time has occurred since you last spoke with a client.

## A CUSTOM SITE

There are a lot of options out there (free ones include Wordpress and Wix), but no matter how you do it, know that in today's age a website is a must. If you choose to go the paid route, it'll keep advertising off your page and will convey that extra oomph.

## SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

Having a website is good. Having a website people can find is better. Search Engine Marketing allows you to increase your odds of ranking higher when someone googles something like "real estate agents in my area." Using this marketing tactic is a the sure-fire way to get your name out there without having to be a door-to-door salesperson. If you're considering SEM, we strongly suggest working with outside marketers to set up your account for effective execution.

## GOOGLE FOR BUSINESS

You can purchase a domain name and professional email address through Google for a minimal charge. An email address ending in "gmail.com" is fine, but a purchased name like "homebyjorge.com" is even better. Custom signature blocks will also help your email stand out.



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THE WAY TO  
GET STARTED  
IS TO QUIT  
TALKING AND  
BEGIN DOING.

”

– WALT DISNEY

# *About Us*

Founded in 2005, The CE Shop has become the leading provider of online real estate education through an encyclopedic knowledge of the real estate industry.

Our ever-expanding course catalog of Pre-Licensing, Exam Prep, Post-Licensing, and Continuing Education products are trusted throughout the industry and offer agents across the country the education they rely on.

With courses available in all 50 states and D.C., we're driven by a desire to constantly improve, both for ourselves and our students.

