



## Builders Are From Mars...Realtors Are From Venus

An insider's look at how to bridge the gap and generate more sales!

Notes from March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009 SMC Sales and Marketing Managers Roundtable

Maxine McBride, President of Clockwork Marketing, moderated a panel of four distinguished Realtors as they answered questions about doing business with homebuilders. Panelists included:

- Gina Sharp – Watson Realty
- Annette Large – Exit Realty
- Linda McMorrow – The Legends of Real Estate
- Kevin Hanley – Keller Williams Realty

### **Q: How do Realtors want to receive information from builders?**

- Marketing materials are not as important as face-to-face interaction – get to know us!
- Flyers are not impactful – save your money.
- Be clear about geography of home/community. Many Realtors are very specific about the areas they cover.
- Email communication is the best way to let Realtors know about products and promotions – keep the email short, provide appropriate links in the email and be clear about any Realtor incentives.
- Don't be afraid to pick up the phone!

### **Q: Realtor office visits – do they work?**

- Yes – they can be a great way to build relationships and share your message.
- Tie them into the office's team meeting – many hold their meetings on Tuesdays.
- Make sure the information you are sharing is pertinent to that office (geography is important).
- Keep the time to ½ hour and offer to cater if it's a breakfast/lunch meeting.
- Know the office and what works for them – some offices don't have regular meetings or prefer to reach out to builders and invite them to present.

### **Q: Is it possible for builders to contact Realtors too much?**

- No! We need to hear from you, please keep in touch!
- Important – focus on the Realtors who focus on you. In other words – don't contact EVERY Realtor in town – contact those who you know work in your area and sell your homes.

### **Q: How does a custom builder promote their work to Realtors if they don't have models/specs to show?**

- This is where relationship building is key.
- Visit offices; pick up the phone; set appointments – get to know your Realtors.



**Let's talk about MLS. Are builders doing a good job using MLS as a way to provide information to you?**

- When it comes to MLS...more is better!
- List ALL of your spec homes, not just a few.
- Upload surveys, floor plans, copy of sales agreement, upgrade sheet, etc.
- Don't forget to include the estimated completion date of the home.

**Q: Do you visit builder websites?**

- A combination of yes and no responses
- Make sure builder websites include model hours, phone numbers and after hours phone numbers.

**Q: When it comes to Realtor incentives – what works?**

- Commission incentives work.
- In entry level price ranges (\$100K-\$250K) – the best incentive is to help the buyer get into the home with buyer incentives like help with closing costs, lower rates and help with CDD fees.

**Q: How can builders best communicate the Realtor incentives?**

- 1) Email
- 2) Phone
- 3) Private remarks in MLS

**Q: Is the tax credit helping and how can we help inform buyers about the credit?**

- Yes, it is working for those buyers who were on the fence.
- Watson Realty Realtors have buttons that say "Ask Me About the \$8,000 Tax Credit"

**Q: How do you feel about a site agent contacting your prospect directly to follow up?**

- This is okay as long as the Realtor is kept in the loop.

**Q: Builders aren't doing as many Realtor events as they used to. If they were to start hosting events again, what is your preference for time/day?**

- Luncheons on Tuesdays work well for many Realtors because those are meeting days and they can tie them into caravans.
- Builders can also ask to host an office meeting at a model.

**Final Word from each panelist:**

- Advertise in Realty/Builder Connection
- Pick up the phone
- Network in SMC
- Be timely and share as much information as you can