



Promote yourself online in 9 easy steps

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Last year, 92 percent of buyers used the Internet during their home search — and 43 percent checked out properties online before even talking to a real estate agent, according to [National Association of Realtors® \(NAR\)](#) research.

If you aren't trying to market your services with online advertising, you may be missing out on prime promotional opportunities. Try these 9 tips to generate more leads:

- 1. Go where your prospects go:** Place an ad where potential clients will be looking for neighborhood and home pricing information. Zillow and Trulia are two of the most popular consumer real estate sites, and you can find other top-ranked options on [eBizMBA.com](#). Ad costs will vary. For example, Trulia's real estate agent ad option, [Trulia Pro](#), ranges from \$29.99 a month to \$79.99 a month to feature up to 10 listings on the site. Agents need to contact [Zillow](#) to get pricing for its Premier Agent service. You can also look to social media. Almost all agents (91 percent) promote properties on social media, according to [NAR](#). The ads generally aren't

exorbitantly expensive. Facebook™, for example, says businesses spend an average of \$5 to \$50 a day on its ads, according to [Reuters](#) — and they can be a good way to reach younger users. [Pew Internet Project](#) research found that 82 percent of 30- to 49-year-olds and 89 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds regularly use social media sites. Can't find room in the budget for a social media ad blitz? Convincing satisfied clients to post about your work can go a long way. Younger and older buyers are equally likely to use online real estate agent recommendations, according to [NAR's 2014 Homebuyer and Seller Generational Trends](#) report.

Related: [7 tips for real estate agents to become social media gurus](#)

- 2. Catch clients' attention:** Your headline may be the only part of your ad some people read — so make it count. [NAR](#) recommends phrasing it with a sense of urgency to imply the property is in high demand. A persuasive headline should also clearly identify a benefit for the reader and include something that'll make him or her curious, according to [RealtorMag](#). Yahoo Small Business Advisor's [21 Tips for Writing Great Ad Headlines](#) can offer additional help.
- 3. Write killer copy:** If you're promoting a specific property, referring to at least one enticing feature — like its proximity to a school — in the ad's first 10 to 15 words can help entice readers, according to the Charlotte Observer's [10 Easy Tips for Writing an Effective Real Estate Ad](#). Try to also include as much information as you can fit on the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, square footage, outdoor space and other major amenities.
- 4. Inspire action:** Getting your name out there is great — but you also want readers to contact you. The solution? Add calls to action, encouraging them to follow you on your social media channels and to reach out to you when they're ready to buy, sell or rent property. For tips on writing compelling calls to action, check out these tips from [Yahoo! Small Business](#).
- 5. Market yourself in each ad:** Include your logo, contact information and a tagline, if you have one. [Zillow](#) suggests designing your ads with the same fonts and colors as your flyers, website and other marketing materials to help strengthen your brand recognition. And highlight your top selling points — the traits that set you apart from your competitors, such as your experience selling a type of property or knowledge of an area, which can help convince potential clients you're the best agent to work with.
- 6. Consider hiring help:** If writing ads isn't exactly your forte, take a cue from the 17 percent of agents who use a marketing assistant to help publicize their services. Compensation methods vary: 38 percent pay assistants hourly, 20 percent give them a salary, and others pay assistants per task, give them a cut of the commission or have another arrangement, according to [RealtorMag](#). If you're looking to hire someone full-time, [Salary.com](#) estimates you'll pay approximately \$23,000 to \$48,000 a year, depending on location and other factors.
- 7. Use common keywords:** Google's paid search ads are a great way to connect with homebuyers, but the process is a little tricky. You participate in an auction, and your ad content must earn a high "quality score" (based on factors you may not be able to predict). For information on best practices for Google's display, text and mobile ads, check out [Marketleader.com](#).
- 8. Reel in your ROI:** Advertising is expensive — real estate agents typically spend \$100-\$500 a month on online ads, according to [Placester](#), so you want to measure your results on each site to determine the biggest bang for your buck. Check out [Placester's](#) formula to calculate how your recent online advertising investments have paid off.

Related: [How to make your marketing dollars work as hard as you do](#)

9. **Be persistent:** Sometimes, consumers need to see your message multiple times before it registers. Consider running ads several times a month on real estate sites or combining them with other marketing efforts, such as blog posts or social media site posts about a property, for the maximum effect.

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