

Text Prospecting: When and How should we use it?

With Team Plus Realty

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Why and When Agents Should Text Their Leads

The common misconception: Many real estate agents categorically dismiss text messaging as a tool for communicating with prospects.

“You should never text – always call your leads and engage with them live,” some agents say. Other agents believe “There’s nothing that text messaging accomplishes that a phone call doesn’t do better” and “Texting is impersonal, and my business is all about my brand, so I don’t text my prospects.”

A zillow study showed that 25% of buyers prefer to be communicated with via text or email and that number is growing every month. Why try to force a phone conversation with a new lead if, for whatever reason, they would rather text with you? Besides, avoiding text messaging altogether isn’t an option; according to NAR, 55% of buyers say it’s important that their agent be able to communicate via text message.

How am I missing out?



Think about the many situations where you're able to momentarily use your phone but not able to make or take a call. If you get a new lead while in the midst of an important meeting, taking a bathroom break, or out celebrating your wedding anniversary, sending a quick text to them now, as opposed to calling them later, **can be the difference between the lead becoming your client – or a competitor's.**

The new lead might be unable to take a call or answer an email when you reach out to them but able to quickly respond to a short and simple text message. This is why unsuccessful attempts to get in touch with new leads over the phone should be followed by such a text.

The value text messaging offers to agents extends beyond making first contact. Because text messages are less disruptive and pushy than phone calls, they're a valuable addition to your lead engagement toolbox. Consumers who are reluctant to answer phone calls from agents because they're early in the home buying or selling process are often more willing to answer a text from those same agents.

Is it efficient?

An even more important reason to use text messaging is that it can greatly improve lead follow-up time.

Because rapidly responding to new leads is essential (ideally within five minutes, according to an MIT study), you should use whatever means you have at your disposal to get a hold of them quickly.

Strategies

Take notes.



Only text consumers who know you. Texting consumers who haven't registered on your website or been introduced to you in some other fashion amounts to "text spam" and is a great way to get your phone number blocked. One exception to this rule is referrals, but only text a referral if you mention the referrer by name and describe your relationship with them.

Start texts with the lead's name. Including your lead's first name at the beginning of your message adds credibility and helps to ensure they'll actually read it. Without using their name, your lead might justifiably assume that the text message they received from an unknown number is spam.

Identify yourself. Another way to avoid having your text messages get treated like spam is to identify yourself by name and company. The template "This is [your first name] with [your company]" works well for this purpose. Identifying yourself in this way is typically unnecessary with older leads who you have already communicated with.

Offer value in your text messages. As with other forms of communication, offering something of value will increase the likelihood that the leads you text will respond positively. For texts to buyers, identify their home preferences and offer to show them listings, in person or electronically, that match their criteria. For texts to sellers, offer a free home valuation or local housing market report to give them an idea of how much their home could sell for.

Strategies

Take notes.



Create urgency. A text message that says “Some great two-bedroom homes were just added to the local market, and I can help you tour them before other buyers can” is more compelling than one that says “I can help you find local two-bedroom homes.” You can create the same sense of urgency with other timely updates, like offering to share recently-released housing market statistics with your seller leads.

Keep your text messages short. The longer the text message, the less likely it is that you will get a response. There’s no hard and fast limit on how long text messages should be, but 150 characters or less is ideal. It’s often difficult to fit everything into a short text message, so send a longer one if you need to. Succinctly but completely communicating everything you need to say in one message is preferable to sending a short and vague text that could confuse the recipient.

Keep the conversation going. Simply sending a text to your leads isn’t enough; your texts should also entice a response of some kind. Perhaps the best way to do this is to ask a short, simple question. For buyers, this could be “What type of home are you looking to buy?” For sellers, “When are you looking to sell by?” Offering something of value, as discussed above, will also accomplish this.

Ten Topics to Follow Up with a Buyer:

1. **I just sent you a home to look at.**
2. **I wanted to give you an update about the overall market**
3. **I wanted to update you about interest rates**
4. **I wanted to update you on a new lending program (grant money)**
5. **I wanted to talk about new construction homes and see if that's a possibility and help you understand what you need to know. (base price vs ending price, lot premiums, uneven lots that need retaining walls, I can represent you and it won't cost you a penny more, help you understand the contract, help fight if the quality isn't there etc.)**
6. **I just sent you a video about some of the areas you are looking it to show you whats possible**
7. **I wanted to talk about how low inventory is and tell you what to expect and how we can help.**
8. **I was curious if you had a particular area in mind that you wanted me to try and find off market deals for you.**
9. **Home prices are expected to go up 5-7% this year and I was curious if there was a way for you to take advantage of that.**
10. **Im wondering if you are ready to get pre qualified. (its never to early so they can fix any scores or bump them up to get the highest rate like from a 720-740 can affect your rate, plus sometimes fraud can happen so its good to check several months in advance to make sure.)**

Ten Topics to Follow Up with a Seller:

1. I just sent you a home that came active in your neighborhood
2. That home I sent you went under contract
3. That home sold for \$_____
4. Did you need any names or recommendations for people that do fix ups, painting, carpet etc?
5. I wanted to update you on the overall market
6. I wanted to give you a detailed update on (city) and what has been happening the last 30 days
7. I just sent you an article about decluttering, its so important
8. I just sent you an email about _____ I think it will help
9. IF they need to buy again send them updates on new homes.
10. I wanted to talk to you about staging, we have an interior designer that we can send out.

Aha!

Check out these examples.

Hey **[first name]**! I just received your inquiry. Are there any questions I can answer for you? I'm available to call, text, or email - whatever works best for you.

Hello **[first name]**, this is **[your first name]** from **[your company]**. I'm unable to talk right now but will call soon. Need anything in the meantime?

Hey it's **[your first name]** from **[your company]**. Sorry I missed you - is calling this number the best way to reach you?

Hi **[first name]**, it's **[your first name]** with **[your company]**. Thanks for reaching out! What is your preferred contact method - text, phone, or email?

Generic Inquiries.

Aha!

Check out these examples.

Hello **[first name]**! Thanks for contacting me about **[address]**. I'll check if the property is still available and get back to you ASAP. What's the best time to call back and set up a showing?

Good morning, **[first name]**! This is **[your first name]** with **[your company]**. Thanks for inquiring about local properties for sale. Which home would you like to see?

Hi **[first name]**! I see you're interested in **[address]**. Do you have any questions about that property?

Good morning! It's **[your first name]** with **[your company]** - happy to help you find your dream home. What's a good time to call you back?

Hi **[first name]**. Thanks for asking about **[bedroom count]**, **[bathroom count]** **[area]** homes for sale. I just emailed you some homes you might like - please let me know if you want to see any of them!

Hi, it's **[your first name]** from **[your company]**. Happy to help you find a home. Let me know if you want a copy of my **[area]** housing market report.

Hey **[first name]**! This is **[your first name]** with **[your company]**. It's a great time to buy in **[area]** - let me know how I can help with your home search.

Hi, it's **[your first name]** from **[your company]**. I received your inquiry. What's the best time to call you back?

Templates for Buyer Leads.

Aha!

Check out these examples.

Hi **[first name]**! **[area]** is currently a seller's market. I've already sold **X** homes for **\$X** or more above asking price this year. I can provide a home valuation if you want to know how much yours could sell for.

Hi, it's **[your first name]** from **[your company]**. I received your inquiry about getting a home valuation. What's the best time to call you back?

Hey **[first name]**! This is **[your first name]** with **[your company]**. It's a seller's market in **[area]** - let me know how I can help you sell your home.

Hi **[first name]**! Still considering selling your home? The selling process can be tedious, but my home selling guide will make it easier. Let me know if you want a copy.

Hello, **[first name]**. Just reaching out to let you know that **[area]** home values have increased **X%** over the last year. Let me know if you want a copy of my **[area]** housing market report - it'll show you how much your home could sell for.

Hi **[first name]**! Your home valuation will be ready soon. I have a few quick questions about the property before I send it over - are you available to chat now?

Hello, **[first name]**. I'll send your home valuation over ASAP. What is your timeline for selling your home? It's currently a great time to sell in **[area]**.

Templates for Seller Leads.

Hi, it's **[your first name]** from **[your company]**. Happy to answer your questions about selling your home. Let me know if you want a free home valuation.



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