

Management and sales tools for the residential real estate broker

Business Strategies

Traditional broker uses separate Internet team to handle online leads

In the old days of real estate, if a prospect wasn't ready to buy a home in the next month or two, Realtors didn't waste their time.

In the new world of online home shopping, incubating a lead might require an agent to stick with a prospect for as long as 18 months.

That fundamental difference led Arizona broker Rosey Koberlein to try a fundamentally different way to tackle the business. She created an "I team" — for "Internet team" — of agents whose sole focus is to work Internet leads.

Distinct from the rest of Long Realty Co., this 30-agent team operates on a different technology platform, reports to a separate manager, and receives a different split.

Long Realty's I team uses the BoomTown real estate platform to generate leads and manage client relationships. The software's algorithms advise agents about details as minute as the appropriate time to call a prospect.

It's the sort of direction that a traditional agent, accustomed to calling her own shots, might not abide.

"The right type of agent is going to do what they're told to do by a system or a leader," Koberlein says. "They have to be totally engaged with this technology platform. It is counterintuitive to the persona of a Realtor."

The I team manager is nontraditional, too — she's not a real estate broker but a former manager at a software company. The manager focuses mainly on holding agents accountable for following up, she says.

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The BoomTown system generates 30 to 35 leads a month in the Tucson area. Long Realty pays BoomTown a monthly fee, and it charges agents referral fee.

Because the company provides the leads, agents are on a split more favorable to Long Realty than typical agents.

The I team generated about 250 transactions and \$220,000 in profit last year, Koberlein says.

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