

HIDDEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR REALTORS® UNDER QUARANTINE

The spread of the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 has rocked everyone back on their heels. For many small business owners, but especially those of us who work as Realtors, it's done more than that; it has knocked them clear to the ground. With most real estate offices across the country closed and agents told to work from home, many Realtors are scrambling to cope with a new work environment as well as figure out just what they should do with themselves.

If you're sitting on the couch right now in your underwear wondering what you should do today, get up, get dressed, and get going. This is NOT the time to hide. There are actually many hidden opportunities for you to build your business stronger even while we're dealing with this crisis. Here are some things you can do right now to keep your business moving:

Make an "As Soon As This Passes" Plan With Every Client

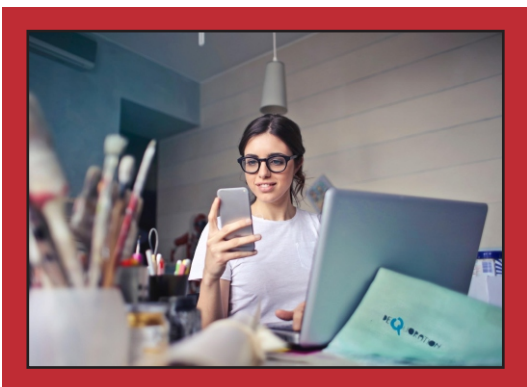


Let's be totally clear about something: This season of anxiety and social distancing will pass. We're going to figure this thing out, and life (and your real estate business) are going to start making moves back to normal. Sometimes it's hard for your clients to see past their current fears, so help them do that with a personalized "as soon as this passes" plan.

Take some time to think about each of your clients individually and what unique needs they have. What is going to help them weather this storm? Consider what actions and strategies are going to create solutions for their real estate goals. Use our [As Soon As This Passes Plan Template](#) and write these ideas down so they're easily shareable with your clients.

Then, reach out to your clients one at a time and request a video conference with them. Once you finish presenting your plan or if you can't reach them, send them your plan and make sure to mention that this is a unique, personalized plan that you developed just for them. Every agent is sending out a "what next" email. Yours are going to be personalized so your clients know you are still working hard for them as individuals, not "clients."

Sort Through Your CRM Contacts One by One; Filling in the Gaps



CHECK OUT FRESHSALES

In the same way that your website is the hub of your customer-facing real estate operation, your CRM is the hub of your agent-facing operation. If used properly, your CRM tracks every client interaction, helps you identify lead opportunities, and gives you the tools to manage your lead funnel so that the most important clients get the attention they need at the time they need it.

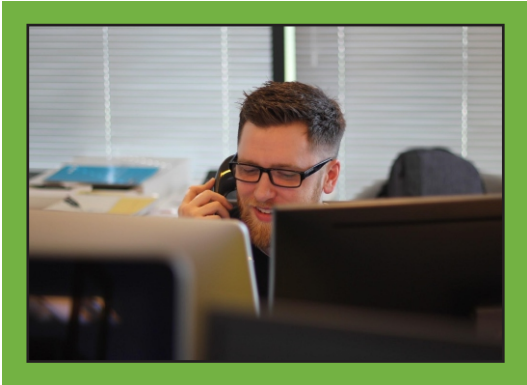
A CRM's effectiveness is magnified when your clients' profiles are filled out with as much information as possible. A name, phone number, and email address are great, but imagine the sort of personalized, timely communication you could plan for your clients if you had birthdays, anniversaries, closing dates, and social media profiles there?

Go through each of your contacts one by one, find and fill in as much information as you can.

If you don't have a CRM and are leery of making big purchases now, [Freshsales](#) will get the job done well, and it's very, very affordable at only \$12 per month. Plus, they have a free 21-day trial you can start without even entering your credit card, so you literally have nothing to lose.

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Request a Review from Every Past Client



Since your clients are probably sitting home watching Netflix anyway, now is a great time to ask them for reviews. You know most people are going to be sitting at home anyway, why not give them something to do?

If you're a little nervous about asking for a review and aren't sure exactly what to say, don't worry, we've got just the thing. [Check out this handy set of templates](#) to guide your communication; all you've got to do is fill in your client's details.

Use Your Existing Property Photos to Create Video Slideshows for Listings



We've known for a long time that video content rules the internet, but now that most of us are unable to host open houses or conduct showings, property videos and virtual tours are even more important. If you didn't manage to get video content for a property made before social distancing started, you can do the next best thing by creating a video from the still photos you already have.

If you don't have the video skills to get this done, try a freelance marketplace like [Fiverr](#). There are literally thousands of service providers there offering real estate video content work, starting at just five bucks.

CHECK OUT FIVERR

Make 5 Calls, Send 5 Texts, Send 5 Emails, Write 5 Thank You Cards Every Day



Want to know a secret? The real estate business is not about selling houses. It's about building and maintaining relationships. Yes, we facilitate the buying and selling of houses, but without the human interaction, none of that happens. Don't let this time of social distancing be a time of community isolation.

Friends, family members, ANYONE. Talk to them about what's going on in their lives, tell them about your new normal, and of course, chat about the real estate market. If they've been considering some sort of real estate transaction, it will surely come up.

Likewise, shoot off five emails and text messages to people you know, letting them know that you're thinking of them and that you hope they're well. This sort of empathetic outreach spurs conversation and creates a connection that you can build on.

Finally, find five people that you can thank, and thank them with a personalized, hand-written card. Even three sentences written on paper can make a world of difference for someone, and in this challenging time, a little encouragement is a great idea.

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Achieve Email Inbox Zero

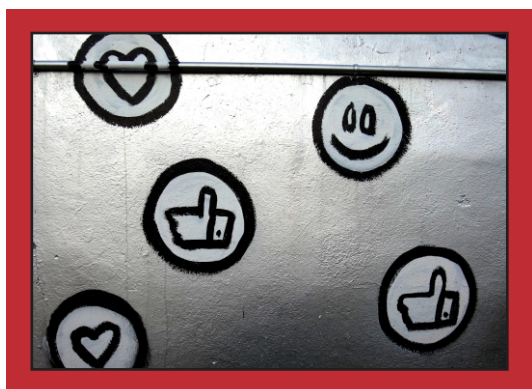


There are two types of people in this world; the people who have no unread email messages, and the people whose Mail icon on their phone needs a comma to display the number of unread emails. We're not here to judge you (who are we kidding, having 6,100 unread emails is INSANE), we just want to help.

Getting your email inbox under control is a great project. Start by making sure you've got no unread messages. If an important email comes in, you want to know about it, not try and guess about whether or not you have 321 unread messages or 322. Then, start deleting what you don't need, categorizing what you do need into folders, all with the goal of getting the number of emails in your general inbox down to zero.

It sounds like a bit of a daunting task, but is a great way to spend 30 minutes here and there. [Fast Company did a great step-by-step on this process](#) a couple of years back, definitely worth a read.

Build Out Your Social Media Profiles



Using social media is a great way to stay connected to your family, friends, clients, and prospects. Since so many people are at home right now, think of this as an opportunity to reach more of your sphere on social media to show them you're working on their behalf and keeping them educated.

As a real estate agent, you can maximize the benefit of this traffic increase by making sure that each of your social media profiles is complete with a fantastic headshot, a short bio, and links to your website. If someone takes the time to visit your profile and see what you're all about, don't let that person digitally walk away uninformed about who you are and what you do.

Design a Real Estate Farming Strategy



[DOWNLOAD FARMING GUIDE](#)

Real estate farming is a prospecting strategy that allows real estate professionals to position themselves as neighborhood experts by focusing on consistent marketing and communication for a specific neighborhood or area. The goal is to create a relationship with the homeowners in that area so that when it comes time for someone to buy or sell a home, you are the first person that comes to mind.

Real estate farming is a simple enough concept, but there are a lot of moving parts, which is why we put together a comprehensive guide to get you started.

Pro Tip: If you want to take your farming strategy to the next level, consider working with [Parkbench](#) to build a neighborhood-specific website that can act as the hub for all your farming efforts. [Parkbench](#) websites feature local news and events, highlight local businesses, and are a place where neighborhood members can learn more about real estate on their street and beyond.

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Better Categorize Your CRM Contacts



Mentioned earlier how important it was to fill out your CRM contact profiles; this task takes that a step further by better bucketing them into specific classifications. The more specific a client category is, the more tailored the message can be to them.

First-time homebuyers, vacation homebuyers, luxury homebuyers, and maybe even some investment property buyers. Each of these client types is going to have different messaging that will provide value to them, so why would you send them all the same generic email or texts?

By creating more specific buckets for your clients, you increase the value provided to each of them, thereby increasing your chance at repeat business or a referral from them.

Create the Email Drip Sequences You've Been Dreaming Of



OK, now that you've got those clients bucketed appropriately, it's time to put together email drip sequences. You know all those ideas you've had for drip campaigns? Now is the time to write them and build them.

You've got some time on your hands. Why not use it to think about exactly what messages your past and current clients will respond to, as well as the sort of thing you want new clients, Zillow Leads, website leads, and everyone in between to hear from you?

Don't know where to start with a drip sequence? Start with a personalized welcome series for new contacts based on how they enter your CRM. Leads that come in from downloading a home valuation from your website might be interested in:

- A thank you email introducing you and the ways you can help sellers in your community
- A deeper dive into more of the seller strategies that lead to higher sale prices and faster times on market
- An invitation to a virtual listing presentation via video conferencing

So much of your email communication can be automated and still provide the maximum amount of value to your recipients, as long as you can set up the drip sequences thoughtfully and with great content.

Complete Your Google My Business Profile



Have you ever Googled your favorite restaurant in order to get their phone number, or maybe to hear if they're doing takeout? If your favorite restaurant has a Google My Business profile, the information you're looking for appears right in the Google search results; you don't even have to click to the restaurant's website.

Google is attempting to answer many questions without users having to actually leave the Google infrastructure, and Google My Business is a tool to get this done. Completing your [Google My Business](#) profile allows your contact info to appear right in the Google search result, it also places you on Google Maps, and puts you in a list of area professionals when people do more general searches (instead of searching your name specifically, they search something like "REALTORS near me.") [Google My Business](#) is a free service and opens up a lot of doors; definitely worth your time.

Schedule Your Social Media A Month In Advance



Scheduling your social media posts in advance is a great way to remove busywork from your day-to-day schedule while still providing value and an opportunity for interaction for your audience.

Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter allow real estate agents with business accounts to schedule unlimited posts right in app. Instagram doesn't have a native post scheduler, but you can schedule up to 10 posts for free with tools like Buffer (more if you pay for the premium plan), and the free version of Hootsuite even lets you schedule on LinkedIn.

Not sure exactly what to post? Here are some ideas:

- Take a picture of your workspace and say something about your projects for the day
- Share your favorite afternoon snack (with a picture of course!)
- Share a quote that inspires you
- Share some home projects that can be done in a day
- Share a list of larger home renovations that can up a property's resale value
- Go live to discuss the best part of your day
- Share your best advice for people looking for things to do with kids at home

A quick note about scheduling your posts: This is great for news or articles you want to share, links to your blog or website, or properties you want to promote. But, it doesn't replace the necessary daily interaction with other users these platforms require in order to be successful. Remember, this is SOCIAL media. If you aren't being social (liking, sharing, commenting, interacting) with other users, you're not going to get very good results.

Better Your Business By Trying a Real Estate Course



GET YOUR FREE PREVIEW HERE

Real estate agents have a lot of options when it comes to professional development. If you're feeling like your state-mandated continuing education isn't doing enough to build your knowledge base and expand your horizon as a real estate professional, it might be time to consider a paid course from a reputable coach or trainer.

There are lots of course options out there, but we think you should start by checking out The Close's first premium course: [Six Simple Systems to Transform Your Real Estate Business](#).

We surveyed our readers and came up with six game-changing topics to help you propel your business forward, topics like revving your referral engine, taking better listing photos, and advanced negotiation strategies. With our course, you get over 200 pages of e-book content, tons of editable templates and checklists, and over 90 minutes of video. Right now, we're offering a peek inside the course for FREE, check it out.

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Do an Audit of Your Website



CHECK OUT PLACESTER

Your website is the most important part of [your real estate marketing plan](#). It is where you capture leads, where your social media points to, where you market your listings, and the best place for prospects to contact you and start their journey toward becoming a client.

Open up an incognito browser and head to your website. Put yourself in your prospect's shoes. What is the experience like? What exists on your website that is helpful? Does it look and work just as well on mobile as it does on desktop? What would a client expect to find there that isn't there? What is the search experience like? There are a lot of moving parts to a real estate website, getting them all working together is important.

Once you've identified where your website could improve, work with your brokerage IT department to start solving those problems. If you're not finding the solutions you're looking for or are ready for a fresh start with a newly designed website, we suggest checking out the options from [Placester](#).

[Placester](#) offers real estate-specific website templates designed to capture leads and offer a fantastic user experience from start to finish. If you're not quite ready to pull the trigger, check out our buyer's guide for the best real estate website builders of 2020.

Have at Least One Video Conference A Day With A Client



Now is not the time to be a secret agent. The further you get from top-of-mind for your clients, the harder you'll have to work to get back there when the clouds break and things start getting back to normal.

You can help mitigate this concern by having at least one video conference a day with a client. Call them up just to chat and check in with them, share with them their [As Soon As This Passes plan](#) from Tip #1, or talk about what the real estate market is likely to look like soon and how you can use that to your client's advantage.

If you aren't a video conferencing pro, don't worry, there are a ton of good options. FaceTime works great, so does Google Hangouts, Facebook Messenger, Skype, or Zoom. All of these tools are easy to use, have free options, and will provide you with a way to make that personal connection with your clients even when you're stuck at home.

Listen to Real Estate Podcasts



If you find yourself needing a break from screen-time but want to keep your work mindset, consider switching to a real estate podcast. It's easy to sit in one place and forget to get up and move around when you're at home (how many episodes of The Office have you watched in a row from your comfy chair?), so having a change of pace is a good idea.

Throw some clothes on, grab your phone and a pair of headphones, and spend some time walking outside while still leveling up your business.

Start by checking out our new favorite podcast: [Keeping It Real. Host DJ Paris](#) is based in Chicago and interviews top agents from his (and other) markets, grabbing their best advice on how to get ahead. As a now-regular guest on the show, I can tell you that the conversations are always insightful and offer advice that is easily applied to my business right away.

Try Your Hand at Phone Prospecting



CHECK OUT REDX

For those of you who thrive on the face-to-face interactions you get from door-knocking or handing out business cards at your local networking events, social distancing probably has you itchy to chat about real estate and the market with anyone who will listen. Even if this isn't your style, a lot of the traditional lead generation channels are going to slow down for a while, so taking control of your lead volume with prospecting strategies is a great idea.

If you're new to prospecting or want a new tool to get it done, try starting with [REDX](#). [REDX](#) connects directly to your local MLS, compiling a daily list of newly expired properties as well as contact information for the owners, sourced from all across the web. You also can get FSBO listings, and even use its Geoleads tool to get contact information for particular neighborhoods (an awesome perk if you're also operating a real estate farm too).

It has an optional built-in dialer for those of you who want to supercharge your efforts, making your call rates up to four times more efficient. Not sure what to say? We get it, cold calling doesn't come natural to everyone. Start by just checking in. Ask if everyone in the house is doing OK, how everybody is handling the "new normal."

Once you're ready to start expanding your repertoire, [check out the comprehensive list of cold calling scripts](#), perfect for any scenario.

Trick Out Your Zillow Premier Agent Profile



As if Zillow traffic numbers weren't impressive already (approximately 36 million people visit its site every month), with most people stuck at home and not attending open houses or scheduling property showings, there will be an unprecedented number of virtual home shoppers. Since we know that most homebuyers spend at least some time on Zillow as a part of their shopping process, make sure that your profile there is impressive.

Spend some time [getting your real estate bio](#) just right, get your [headshot](#) in there, make sure to claim all your past sales, add some video, and of course, get some fantastic reviews.

If you're not a [Zillow Premier Agent](#), you can still have a profile, but upgrading is definitely worth it. You get preferential placement in the Agent Finder Tool, and your profile and contact information appear next to listings in the areas that are most important to your potential clients.

Zillow is currently offering its Premier Agent services for 50% on new business through at least April 22, 2020, so if you've been considering trying Zillow out, now is a great time to do so.

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Clear Your Computer Desktop, Organize All Your Files



If you're at all like me, your computer desktop quickly collects things. Files I save for quick access, email attachments, [real estate memes](#), ya know, all the important stuff. But, even with a multiple monitor setup, there comes a point when all those files turn into clutter and makes it hard to get business done.

Try setting up a calendar reminder for yourself once a week (I set mine for Friday afternoons) to clear off my computer desktop, get the important files saved in the right place, and toss the ones you don't need. Ending (and starting) the week with a clean slate can make a major difference in your productivity.

Pre-Write Educational Articles for Your Blog



The way people contact you is by phone, email, or even by stopping in and visiting you in your office (when we have offices again). But, the reason people contact you is because you've demonstrated that you're an expert in an area they care about; an area that matters to them in the context of their next real estate decision.

Blog content is a great way to demonstrate that expertise. Your blog is your chance to write about topics that matter to you, and also provide value to your readers. Right now, you've got a captive audience (no pun intended) who will be hungry for home improvement projects, spring cleaning tips, suggestions for kiddo activities, and even curb appeal ideas to improve a property's market value.

If you want to get ahead and pre-write some content for after things get back to normal, try topics like market updates, lists of the best places to eat in drink in your hometown, best practices for buyers and sellers, or anything else that is going to provide value to your reader.

Every article you write there is a chance for buyers and sellers to identify you as the expert they need for their next real estate transaction.

Focus on Staying Positive



It's easy to feel down in the dumps about the market and the state of things right now, but remember, this will pass. You are going to make it through this, people are still going to need to buy and sell homes, and they're going to need a trusted professional like you to help them.

As a real estate agent, you're a leader in your community. Decide right now that you're going to be a source of answers. A source of calm, of best practice, of strategy, and of comfort. People trust you. Use that influence to create hope.

YOU TURN!

What sort of daily activities are you doing that is upping your real estate game? Send us your ideas in the comments, let's keep the conversation going.

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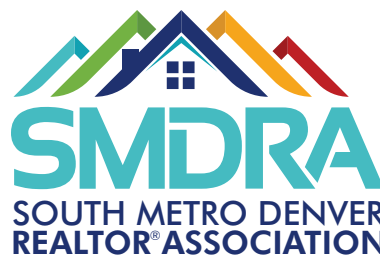


About The Close

The information in this document was taken from an article published on March 27, 2020 on The Close Website, titled '[21 Hidden Opportunities for REALTORS® Under Quarantine](#)'. This article is provided to the members of the South Denver Metro REALTOR® Association as a resource to assist them during the COVID-19 global pandemic crisis.

[The Close](#) is a new kind of real estate site designed to give agents, teams, and brokerages actionable, strategic insight from industry professionals. We cover real estate marketing, lead generation, technology, and team building strategies from the perspective of working agents and brokers who want to take their business to the next level.

We also strive to bring you the best insights from other disciplines including cutting edge psychology, business and marketing strategy, design, and disruptive technology. All for free, all to help you close more, and close better.



South Metro Denver REALTOR® Association (SMDRA), founded in 1945 is the second largest local real estate association in Colorado, currently representing 4000+ REALTORS® throughout the Denver metro area and 315+ business partner members in real estate related businesses. For more than 70 years, SMDRA has provided real estate professionals with the resources they need to help them grow and prosper in the real estate business.

For more information, visit www.smdra.com.

QUESTIONS?

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