



TOP PRODUCERS

GUIDE FOR
OPEN HOUSES

SUCCESSFUL
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"If you can make 2-3 meaningful connections during an open house, you can deem it as a success."

WHY HOST AN OPEN HOUSE?

- Sellers want an open house, give them what they want!
- For owner-occupied houses, encourage agents to bring customers during the open house to decrease the number of other showings to disturb the seller less.
- FEEDBACK on the home straight from potential buyers
- Engage in the community and brand yourself – be known!
- LEAD GENERATION! A great way to pick up other listings, clients, and buyers.
- New clients – it's like an audition for potential buyer/seller clients.
- A new generation of clients, MILLENNIALS – often check out homes prior to working with an agent. They like to check out homes on their own time and not be escorted around to different listings.
- New to Real Estate? Gain experience in the industry, plus learn about the nuances of homes. Can you tell the difference between oak and maple floors? Cherry vs. Alder cabinets? Different HVAC systems? Hosting open houses helps you learn the nuances.

BRING YOUR BRAND TO AN OPEN HOUSE:

- Be ORGANIZED, CONSISTENT, and have similar MATERIALS every time

WORKING WITH SELLERS:

- If your sellers are planning to also buy in this area, encourage them to work with you or your team for BOTH buying and selling. Why? It helps the transactions go more smoothly and will be easier to coordinate closing dates.
- Have seller be available via phone during open house, just in case.

WORKING WITH BUYERS:

Attending Open Houses:

- Do NOT give negative opinions about the house. Your clients are free to express their opinions, but you should not.
- If clients are interested in putting in an offer: Never talk strategy inside a house. GO OUTSIDE! *Some homes use nanny cams or security cams in their home.*

Clients Attending Open Houses Without You:

- Give your clients a stack of your business cards. Tell them to give your card to listing agents at homes they view/like. This way the listing agent can easily contact you afterwards.

TIMING OF OPEN HOUSES:

- Weekends are the most popular for open houses, but one option is to try non-traditional times for open houses. *E.g.) If the house is near a school, try an open house in the morning around the time school starts or for a couple hours around when school ends, so parents dropping off/picking up kids can stop by.*

- Twilight Open House: Weekday/Weekend evening open houses. Things to consider: street lighting, traffic patterns (great if on a quiet street that's near a commuter route home.) Treat this open house like a party/get together – help buyers envision themselves hosting parties in the home.

LISTING AGENTS NOT SITTING THEIR OPEN HOUSE:

If someone else will be hosting your open house for you, keep this in mind:

- Offer to walk the house with the agent beforehand. Point out special features, finishes, upgrades, nuances.
- Send the agent the house flyer in a format that they can change the contact info to their own and give them out at the open house.
- Treat the agent like it is their listing, and give them all the information you would want to have before you listed the house.

OPEN HOUSE PREP:

START ADVERTISING: Tuesday or Wednesday (3-4 days before.) *Don't advertise too early!*

HOW TO ADVERTISE:

- Input the open house to the MLS – it will then be syndicated online to Zillow, Trulia, etc.
- Social Media: Flyer or announcement. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram... *Pro Tip: use Facebook boosted posts and select a target based on location/age to advertise the open house to.*
- Print Media: Some agents love it, some agents leave it. If you want to use print media:
 - "Just Listed" – send postcards to neighbors and similar neighborhoods prior to the house being listed (so it arrives by the time it's listed). Once they know it's on the market, they'll be on the lookout for an open house in the coming week(s).
 - Saturday morning newspaper insert
 - Open House Postcard – have a neighborhood you're interested in farming? Invite them to your open house. (Try Oregon-based, expresscopy.com or bearprinting.com) *Pro Tip: sometimes postcards arrive late. Always put yourself on the mailing list so you know when it arrives. Do NOT put a specific date on the postcard. Instead write "Saturday, 1:00pm-4:00pm". If the postcard arrives on Monday (after the open house) make sure you're at the house the following Saturday to host another open house.*
- Invite the neighbors! Let owners in the area know about it and invite them to drop by.

SIGNS:

- Buy your own signs! Do not rely on borrowing signs.
- Put signs on every major road leading into the subdivision/street
- Add a rider to your signs to say the open house hours
- Attach balloons or flags to get attention
- Set up signs on way to open house (20-30min prior to start)

WHAT TO HAVE AT THE OPEN HOUSE:

- Home flyer or half sheet of info about the house/neighborhood
- Business cards
- Sign in sheet
 - Name, Phone, Email, "Do you have a Real Estate Agent?", and Preferred method of communication
 - If they ask why: Say for safety reasons, the seller would like to know who has come through their house in case something happens.
 - See "Follow Up" for tips about what to do with info.
- Snacks and water
- *Tip: You can brand your own "Homes by Design" or "Your Home and Lifestyle" magazines. These are personally branded and published 6-12 times a year. They are more expensive, but if you give it to a potential customer, they are less likely to get lost or thrown out than a business card.*

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL OPEN HOUSE:

- Be prepared.
 - If it is not your house ask the listing agent to walk the house with you and point out the house specifics, features, improvements, upgrades, plumbing, electrical, heating, roof, etc. Get ALL the information, more than what's listed on the MLS.
 - Have market statistics for the area prepared and know all similar inventory.
 - Have HOA costs, taxes, school districts, CC&R, shopping and neighborhood info
 - Be an area expert. Research the area and comparable pricing, pull neighborhood comps. Try to tour other nearby 'for sale' homes before the open house.
- Arrive 20-30min early, unlock all the doors, turn on the lights, set up snacks/water, and the house information, your business card, etc.
- Stand and greet customers as they walk in, introduce yourself. Do NOT stay on your phone or computer.
- Remember names! Either write them down, review the sign in sheet, or come up with a way to remember the names of the potential buyers in the house and address them by name when talking. It will help build a relationship and trust.
- Is there cool technology built into the house? KNOW HOW TO USE IT!
- Does someone have a question you don't know the answer to? GREAT! It's an opportunity to speak with them a second time. Get their contact info, tell them you'll find out, and follow up with them after the open house or the next day.
- Know the flow! Recommend the best route to tour through the home.

THE DON'TS:

- Do NOT stay sitting, on your computer, or on your phone when a customer walks in.
- Do NOT immediately ask a customer if they have an agent – ease into it. First let them look around the house, tell them a couple of its best features, learn more about what they're

looking for, let them do the talking, finally subtly ask if they have an agent AFTER you have a rapport going. OR use a sign in sheet with the question "Do you have an agent?"

- Do NOT follow them around the house – let them look around the house on their own.
- Do NOT use incense. Many people are allergic or sensitive to smells. If you want to make the house smell good, freshly baked cookies are a safer scent (and yummy too).
- Do NOT park in the drive way or garage.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

- Before an open house, tell sellers to lock up and hide all:
 - Prescription drugs
 - Valuables (jewelry, cash, etc)
 - Personal information (mail, bank statements, anything with sensitive information)
 - Anything that can be used as a weapon (guns, kitchen knives, etc)
- Unlock all doors before an open house. *If there is a dangerous situation, you and others can quickly exit using any door.*
- Remember to lock up afterwards and check the rooms AND crawl space! People target for sale homes – they use side doors, garage door openers in unlocked cars, or hide during an open house to access a house.
- Have 2 agents or have a lender/escrow partner attend the open house with you. It is good for safety and can help if potential buyers have other questions relative to the process.
- **This has mixed reviews**: Put a sign at the front door saying the open house is being recorded for security purposes (whether it is or isn't because it will deter theft). Though some agents argue that it deters people from feeling comfortable while at the open house.

AFTER THE OPEN HOUSE:

- Turn off the lights
- Lock ALL doors and windows
- Take down open house signs

FOLLOW UP:

- Give sellers feedback/open house report that evening
- If you used a sign up sheet (*these are general guidelines and ideas, remember to check their preferred method of communication*):
 - Email the customers that night with info about the house AND other similar listings. Sometimes people will be interested in seeing other homes on Sunday and you could get a client out of it.
 - Follow up with a phone call a couple days later
 - Follow up again right before the weekend to see if they want to view homes that weekend
 - If they have an agent – follow up with their agent. "Your clients came through my open house today. I was wondering if you talked to them or have any feedback. I'd love to work with you on this deal..."

GROUP OPEN HOUSE:

If there are many homes in an area/subdivision that are listed, a great way to have a successful open house, is to have them all at the same time. Many open houses in one area will bring in more customers and help increase viewing of all the homes. How to do this:

1. Contact all the listing agents
2. Arrange a house preview tour on a weekday for all the listing agents, and decide the day/time for the open house
3. At the house preview tour, have agents give feedback about each home, and provide that feedback to the house's listing agent
4. Help sell each other's homes – if you have a customer walk through that doesn't like your listing, but is searching for a home similar to one of the other agent's listings, point them in that direction.
5. *Pro Tip: One way to help increase buzz is to have a drawing for a prize (TV, gift cards, etc). Have all the agents chip in. People who visit the houses can enter the drawing.*

"Open houses are about more than just selling the house – it's an audition for you – with both potential buyer clients and potential seller clients. Don't only sell the house, also sell you."

