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Branded Email In The Real Estate Industry

By Jason DeVelvis

You're in the real estate industry, and that means you've got a brand. Chances are, you've spent quite a bit of money to build that brand, whether it's through franchising fees, marketing, websites, business cards, other print materials, advertising, yard signs, and/or through other means. And whoever answers your phones probably answers it with your brand as well - "Good morning, thank you for calling Your Brand Here Real Estate, how can I help you?" Your brand is out there, getting you business, because people recognize and trust it. But what about your email? How much could it benefit you to include your brand on each email you send every day?

I'm not talking about mass email campaigns. I'm talking about branded email that transforms your everyday, plain text emails into dynamic sales pieces. With a good email branding system, you can include your logo, colors, your picture, and links to your website. Some solutions even allow you to upload pictures of properties directly into the designs. Because over 90% of all communication is visual, the power of having graphics in your email is tremendous. Also because of this, branded email will soon become a standard or even a "requirement" in the real estate industry, much like business cards and websites.

A Quick Scenario

Lets look at this scenario - you are a prospective homebuyer and you receive email from two real estate agents. One is a plain text email that introduces the agent and directs you to his website for more information. The second one you receive is branded with the brokerage logo, colors, and it fits with all of the rest of their marketing material, so you instantly get a great impression in your mind of her company. The agent introduces herself and directs your attention to a picture of a newly listed property in your price range, and tells you to click on it for more information. Are you more likely to search the first agent's website for a property, or click on the image to look at that house and possibly similar houses?

Branded email also helps build a relationship with your client. In the situation above, you received an email from the agent with a link to a house in your price range that you may be interested in. It was tailored to you, who would you go back to for more information or more listings?

What Should I Look For?

Next, I want to give you a quick rundown of what to look for when you're considering a branded email system. First and foremost, if the company has a free trial, take it. You don't want to purchase something and end up hating it. While you're researching, here are some questions to ask -

Do the emails get past spam filters? This question is rather self-explanatory. If your emails don't get to their recipients, the solution is a waste of your money. Note that the body of the email also has a lot to do with getting past a spam filter - if you're using big, bold, red fonts, **CLICK HERE** links, and/or the word free (or other flagged words) repeatedly, chances are your email won't get through. What size are the branded emails? In this case, bigger is not better. (If you're using Microsoft Outlook to send email, it may be embedding the images on its own. Ask your solution provider how to turn this off)

Is the product easy to use, or do you have to change the way you currently send email? Can the template be set up to contain links to different pages/areas of your website? This is very big question, since being able to say "Click on the Virtual Tours link above to check out our properties!" is much better opportunity than "Hey, go check out my site at

www.EmailAppeal.com

and click around until you

find our tours." As the old adage goes, on the Internet you're always 1 click away from losing a customer.

Can you easily change your contact information, picture (if the system allows you to upload one) and any other sensitive information on your template, or do you have to pay the solution provider to change them for you? Do you have control over the aspects of the design, or can the users change the design at will? Brand control and consistency is a big deal in any business.

Does the system require you to send your email through a different server or to a different email address? This is a security risk whether they say so or not, as your emails are all being routed through a third party server. A good system will work without requiring you send your email through any third party.

What Kind of Pricing Should I Expect?

Most branded email solutions are very cost effective, so your decision should boil down to features. Make sure you get the answers to the questions above, and make sure those answers are in line with your expectations of any software provider. If you do a little homework, find a great product, and use it diligently, branded email will pay for itself with increased sales over and over again.

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The Real Estate Boom – How Long Will It Last?

By Dylan Miles

There is a lot of fear about the real estate industry. Media reports suggest that the real estate industry is a bubble that is about to burst. But how true is this? Below are two facts that suggest there is no real estate bubble.

Fact No. 1

The real estate economy is local, not global

Unlike the stock market, which is based on the national and world economy, the real estate market is very much a locally-based economy. What does this mean? This means that while the stock market is influenced by economic rise and fall of industry all over the nation, the real estate market is not. Real estate prices in California may not influence prices in New York, and that's that. In real estate, a broad analysis of what is happening around the nation does not always reflect what is happening in your home town.

Fact No. 2

When there's a demand, there's a supply

As long as there's a demand there's a supply. Real estate is about real people who need homes, and people will always be buying homes, because people need to live somewhere. If you look to the future, you'll see that there's an ever increasing demand for real estate. Take, for example, the fact that millions of migrants are arriving in the United States each year. This movement translates into a need for real estate. Moreover, it's also much easier to get a home loan these days, which means that people will be buying homes. People also get married much later, which means that they'll probably be buying a home while still single.

Home buying is a concrete need, unlike the stock market, which is less concrete. In the stock market, buying and selling happens at the snap of a finger. In real estate, economic activity is less volatile. The industry is inherently more stable.

The real estate market will rise and fall, but in general real estate prices rise in the long term. So, if you are investing, simply hold onto your purchase for the long term, and you'll see that this is no bursting bubble.

Dylan Miles, journalist, and publisher, is the owner and co-editor of

<http://www.realestateboom.info>

on

which you will find more a detailed version of this article.



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