

## **On Becoming an e-Agent— A Girl Can Dream Part 31**

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*By Jo Becker, BA*

A couple months ago we talked about sending out a tax-time letter. (Have you sent yours out yet? Contact me for ready-to-go sample verbiage!) Another service I had long dreamed about providing past clients was an anniversary market analysis.

That is, every year we sent our clients a card on the anniversary of their closing. Market stats indicate that folks move, on average, every seven years and many begin thinking about it long before then. It was my plan to augment clients' five-year anniversary card with a custom CD on which I would have prepared and burned a market analysis for them.

My parents/partners and I took great pains to do a thorough market analysis and included educational information about the market in each one. This made our analyses quite long, so burning to CD seemed much more practical than emailing the file to clients. Besides, receiving an unexpected CD in the mail seemed more substantive than an anniversary email message.

The beauty of this tactic is supreme. Just like with the first-of-the-year tax-time letter, you're target audience consists of your own past clients—precisely those who know your work, your professionalism and your caring attention better than anyone else. Contacting them now shows that you haven't forgotten; that you still care. And to provide such an unexpected and meaningful service on an anniversary you share with them is priceless. Better yet, you're reaching them at a time in which, statistically, they're beginning to think about upsizing, downsizing, etc. Even if they aren't ready to move (might, in fact, never move again), everyone's curious to see whether and how much their property has appreciated and they'll remember your effort when friends and neighbors talk about moving.

Note that when presenting a market analysis to potential clients in-person, you needn't concern yourself with the program you use to create it, but if you're going to send an analysis on CD for others to open on their own computers, the best recommendation would be creating an Adobe Acrobat file. Using Acrobat's PDF (portable document format) file will preserve all of your formatting and assure that anyone can view the file without concern for what program you used to create it in and what programs they have available on their computers. (Unfortunately, Acrobat is expensive... I'll discuss some software alternatives in an upcoming issue.)

Before you begin, make sure you have all your past clients' transaction anniversaries on a calendar or chart, and highlight the five-year mark. Next, schedule time to prepare a market analysis a week or two prior to the anniversary date. Once done, burn your presentation to a CD and mail it with a handwritten, celebratory card.

Now, if you don't yet have a consistent market analysis layout or presentation booklet, deciding what to put in it is your first step. Craft your materials to be easy to read and attractive (use lots of white space), and above all, informative. Consider what file format you'll use and buy a supply of CDs and anniversary cards to have on hand.

If you need help with any part of a project like this—from creating a consistent presentation, to dealing with file formats and burning CDs—let me know. This was one marketing tool I longed to implement in our family practice and just didn't get around to it myself. I'd love to see you take the idea and run with it!

If all of this seems too overwhelming, ask for help, but keep trying! Before long you will get the hang of it. In the meantime, *hang it there!*

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Jo Becker has eight years of licensed real estate experience. As a former broker, she knows how important, and sometimes scary, technology and self-promotion can be. Jo has provided

personalized one-on-one marketing consultation and computer software training to the industry since 2002.

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