

Communicating Through New Technology



Are You Ready to Communicate with a New Generation of Buyers?

It wasn't uncommon to receive a text message from my 13-year-old daughter stating that her ride had arrived and she was heading to her girlfriend's house for a few hours. What was odd about receiving the text message was that she was only one flight of stairs above me when she sent this particular message. This was the new wave of communication through technology between a Baby Boomer and an Echo Boomer. That's what led me to the question of communications and the effects that technology proposes in our day and age.

That idea started the development of what I refer to as COM-U-TECH Management™, defined as the ability to utilize focused but unique forms of communication when relating across generational boundaries by applying the technology resources at our disposal. It is the means of identifying a common thread in order to manage personal and business communications utilizing technology. I started asking these questions:

- Are we effectively communicating in the correct fashion and are we sending the complete message in order to reach our business customers and clients?
- What is available and what are the means of reaching our clients and customers in communicating through this new age of technology?
- Where is this age of communication heading and how do I get started?
- How do we generate new and appropriate forms of

contact in our attempts to stay on top of the communication network?

Today's means and methods of communication have reached a whole new level. Snail mail and the traditional telephone have become outdated as a means of communication with the Generation Xer's and the Echo Boomers. The technology of IM (Instant Messaging) is now identified as the new wave of communicating with those groups. The Baby Boomers are having mixed emotions as some embrace the new technologies while others fear their growth. So how do we communicate between the generational boundaries and market our resources effectively to all age groups?

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In the real estate world we often talk about the effectiveness of personal communication and direct relations that we owe our

clients during a transaction. How do we communicate efficiently and effectively to be able to provide outstanding client-level services? Time consciousness, cost effectiveness and providing unique services becomes the main topic of discussion and focus during the transaction from inception to completion.

Since the evolution of the Internet, receiving and sending topical business and personal information has created a massive worldwide information network. The use of e-mail, search engines, Web sites, Podcasting, instant text messaging, blogging, streaming video, IDX, CD's, DVD's, and e-newsletters have markedly changed personal and business marketing. These changes will continue to evolve with the addition of videoconferencing, tele-seminars and on-line broadcasting. Real estate professionals today have an abundant amount of resources at their disposal for developing marketing approaches designed to reach potential clients of every generation.

However, only a small portion of the REALTOR® population is taking advantage of these opportunities to market themselves to potential customers and clients. Personal fear-based management (commonly referred to as procrastination) has limited the resourcefulness of the Baby Boomers and a new REALTOR® is emerging out of the Gen Xer's and the Echo Boomer groups.

NAR reported in November 2006 that technology was dominating many aspects of the real estate transaction process (eighty-one percent of today's homebuyers used the Internet to search for a home). Our buyers and sellers are more educated and computer savvy and are turning to the Internet first. As real estate professionals, we need to change with the times and be more open to technology-driven marketing concepts that will position us as unique players in our own professional fields of expertise. The COMM-U-TECH Management™ concept was designed in order to assist with the navigation through the raging technology waters.

I once heard it said, "If you always do what you have always done you will always get what you have always gotten." That profound statement alone moved me in a fashion as being a pioneer and an innovator in my own field of play. For most of us, it is the decision to take action that remains the hardest step. Once you get started, the doors of opportunity open and they remain open for all who want to walk through. To my surprise, I found that after I got started on the technology road, the process was extremely easy to understand with online support, help desks and virtual assistance. The COMM-U-TECH Management™ concept was developed for the sole purpose of bringing new forms of communication linked with technology into a management system designed to communicate through generational boundaries.

Your marketing approaches should be able to reach the masses in many forms. If you are target marketing and you are looking to communicate to a particular group, generation or

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client (e.g., first-time buyers, commercial and business opportunists, international interests, vacation and retirement properties, or luxury homes), then carefully research and choose the type of communication that best reaches that group. You could even modify an approach directed toward the Baby Boomers and generate focus through flash video website design to attract the

Echo Boomers. Keep a current, concise and consistent message and open the boundaries through technology to make the concept appealing and noticeable to all.

Maintaining a communication technology management system is the best way to keep up-to-date with current customer and client relations. There are numerous ways to establish and keep a real estate database management system, such as Top Producer, Respond, Sonoma or Microsoft Outlook. Each system is unique and there are different functions that you will have to explore to gauge which reporting and tracking system suits your needs. The opportunities are endless and your new technical abilities will have a dramatic effect on your communication skills. Always strive to be a step above the rest. If you can turn on a computer and send e-mails, then don't be afraid of the world of technology. Use the resources of technology to enhance your personal and business growth. Start today and people will be talking about you tomorrow.

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