

Tech Review: Smart Alto puts people first in its innovative lead qualification solution

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Smart Alto is a web-based lead qualification and appointment setting service for real estate agents.

Platforms: Browser, mobile

Ideal for: All agents and teams

Top selling points:

- Human-powered chat automation
- Countless lead source integration
- Discussions custom to lead type, source
- Largely hands-off
- Seamless calendar integrations

Top concern:

Expect some overlap between many of the existing CRMs out there offering similar services. However, Smart Alto's approach does stand out from competitive services.

What you should know

I was surprised to learn that [Smart Alto](#) has been operating since 2017 after graduating from the well-regarded [Y Combinator](#), a venture-backed startup greenhouse, so to speak. It doesn't accept ideas without market potential.

However, based on the pace at which the company's founder has been running of late, I could tell Hassan Riggs wasn't too worried about not being able to catch up with me.

But I'm very glad he did.

Conceptually, Smart Alto is something we've all seen before: a hands-off lead qualifier. It engages prospects via web chat or text on behalf of agents, aiming to turn them into a formal appointment.

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However, it's the "how" behind Riggs' company that makes it a formidable player in this space, right up there with [CINC's Alex](#).

The twist here is that Smart Alto is human-first. In fact, at no point is a programmed automation left to cover for you. (There is no *true* artificial intelligence in this space, but conversational AI is getting closer.)

A team of ISAs (inside sales agents *or* internet sales agent) engage leads using an extensive library of a-la-carte scripts that are quickly assembled according to lead source and type.

Smart Alto's ISAs are given a proverbial Lego kit of pithy, carefully constructed sales terms and discussion points from which they can dynamically assemble the most effective talk-track according to the lead's place of origin and intent. Call it an on-demand [script](#) builder.

Team members quickly search for responses and talking points that are part of an overarching script proven to be useful for the majority of a specific lead type.

Riggs has based his company's scripts on what he calls the "BANTAR" principle, an acronym for budget, authority, needs (wants/expectations), timeline, area, relationships (with lenders, agents, etc.).

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Agents are alerted to ISA engagements and can monitor the conversations, take over at any time, or just wait for appointments to appear.

If a person has value but isn't quite ready, they can be moved into the My Call List, a queue for leads an agent should reach out to personally. The My Appointments bucket is self-explanatory — the agent will see a 15-minute call dropped into their primary calendar.

The Future Fit category describes long-term follow-ups and Dead leads are exactly that.

Based on where the ISA deposits a prospect, Smart Alto then subjects them to an appropriate follow-up text campaign, which are as diverse in message as the script alternatives. They can be sequential or based on a specific date or event, like an intentional follow-up.

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Every lead is tagged by the ISA with a litany of descriptors that helps further define what campaign they'll be a part of, such as "1-month buyer" or "6-month seller."

Smart Alto's user experience was developed for its ISAs, and it's exceptional. With tight fonts, a smart use of colorized menu identifiers, clear function hierarchies, subtle iconography and a focus on keeping the conversation upfront, it looks more like a consumer-facing frontend.

Speaking of frontends, agents can customize and place a lead engagement/call-to-action prompt on their website.

Smart Alto is ready to pull leads from more than 200 sources, and it has formal relationships in place with LionDesk, [RealGeeks](#), [Sierra Interactive](#) and [Follow-up Boss](#). It's a [Zapier](#) devotee, as well.

The software can also mirror any lead routing structures teams may have in place upon sign-up.

Smart Alto has 500 clients in the U.S. and Canada, according to Riggs. And while that growth has kept it busy, I wonder what it may do to his business model. It's going to be harder to scale when dependent on expanding manpower in a sector that does it with code — and code that's getting

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smarter.

My unverified assumption is that the ISA model may become a premiere product, while a chatbot gets introduced at a lower-tier. Plus, Zillow's continued march into full-fledged brokerage could dissuade paid lead customers from renewing their contracts.

I'm speculating, of course. But isn't that a big part of the real estate industry?

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Craig C. Rowe started in commercial real estate at the dawn of the dot-com boom, helping an array of commercial real estate companies fortify their online presence and analyze internal software decisions. He now helps agents with technology decisions and marketing through reviewing software and tech for Inman.

Source: [click here](#)