The best advice I’ve received on marketing myself as a luxury agent

When you deal with the most selective, discerning clientele in the world, first impressions matter. So do lasting relationships. Luxury real estate agents have to cultivate both through promoting a personal brand and showcasing exclusive services.

When it comes to successful self-marketing, it can help to follow the wins of those who have proven successful. Here, three luxury agents who have mastered the art of marketing share the top tips they’ve received from mentors and role models on their own journeys to success.

You have to put your best foot forward if you want to make it through the front door

Gene Northup, Sales Associate, Synergy Sotheby’s International Realty

Marketing yourself as a luxury agent begins long before you become one. “You are invited into the luxury market, you don’t enter it,” explains Gene Northup of Synergy Sotheby’s International Realty. “This comes from hard work, reputation, and knowledge. To be invited, you must have the right look on your marketing, dress the part, answer the phone correctly. You must present yourself as someone that can be trusted with a multi-million dollar estate.”

Therefore, what you know and who you know both matter. “The best advice I’ve received on

marketing myself as a luxury agent was to align myself with like-minded agents who specialize at the high end," says Moira E. Holley, Co-Founder and Senior Global Real Estate Advisor at Realogics Sotheby's International Realty. "Developing close friendships and building these relationships with top agents in other markets has been invaluable."

While it's important to impress potential clients, you're also presenting yourself to your peers. Building a strong business network has allowed Holley to market her own services better because she has been able to trade best practices and market insights with a circle of trusted colleagues.

Inspire through creative marketing

Shari Sagan McGuirk, Partner, Sagan Harborside Sotheby's International Realty

As an expert in luxury real estate first and foremost, it's crucial that clients see that you have an eye for finding and selling exceptional properties. "Staging is an integral part of the process and is something I rely on heavily," says Shari Sagan McGuirk, Partner at Sagan Harborside Sotheby's International Realty.

And while you can showcase your creativity through promotional materials and online media, she points out that you can market yourself — and your originality — in person, too. "I also am always looking for ways to enhance open houses. This fall, I am in the process of creating open houses at

my luxury listings with partners who appeal to the same buyer. Inviting an art gallery to showcase some of their work, as well as high-end jewelry designers, may help attract potential buyers — or at least to generate a different level of excitement about the property."

Build an online presence for you and your properties

Moira E. Holley, Co-Founder and Senior Global Real Estate Advisor, Realogics Sotheby's International Realty

Still, online marketing will play a major role in your strategy. "Keep it fresh: update your photo, share a professional video walkthrough tour of one of your best listings," advises Holley. "Video tours shared on social media are the most relevant way to get the word out about a new listing, a special feature, a great view, etc."

This hits on two key points: you want to build your own personal brand — a polished photo, a compelling bio — and connect with your professional network. "Communicate with your friends, past clients, and their friends via social media," she suggests.

Sagan McGuirk agrees, though she makes sure her online channels focus on more than the marketplace. "Social media has become flooded with images of homes and infographics about real estate," she opines. "In order to set myself apart, I have worked on presenting myself as someone

who connects with people with similar interests. I want my online presence to match my personality and I try to blend my love of fitness, culture, and community with my profession."

Build your personal brand beyond luxury real estate

This ties in beautifully to Northup's most memorable lesson: learn the lifestyle. "The best advice I have ever received came from a mentor: 'Gene, you need to become a student of luxury: learn more than cars, homes, and wine. Learn their world; it is very different from most of ours.' This has been invaluable, and I have become the information center for my clients for all things luxury."

By educating himself in the space and promoting that knowledge effectively to clients, Northup has consistently been able to provide white-glove services — whether finding a private tarmac in Cancun for a client's business jet, or connecting another client's family with a security advisor while traveling abroad. In these cases, Northup is no longer a real estate agent in Las Vegas; he's a luxury lifestyle expert who can give great service anywhere in the world.

"I have always worked hard to present myself as a trusted advisor," says Sagan McGuirk. "I want to be the first person my current and potential clients think of for anything relating to their home or lifestyle. I believe that your best life begins in a home and environment that inspires you, and I seek to create that feeling of inspiration in those around me."

Marketing yourself takes diligence, decisiveness, and attention to detail. But if you do it right, you will establish yourself as a leader in luxury real estate with the knowledge to meet your clients where they need you to be, and the skills to exceed every expectation.

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