

# TECHNOLOGY

## Web-Lead Generation Made Easy

Mt. Vernon, Ohio, Star Sam Miller works in a county with only 50,000 people, yet he still managed to close 380 transactions in his peak year. He's an efficiency expert, and while he recognizes real estate is a "people" business, he prefers to invest in technology, keeping his team small in size (six), with only two buyer agents.

"It's cheaper to invest in technology and systems than people," Sam says. "Technology requires less overhead, it's less expensive, it doesn't take time off, and it takes up less space." Sam, whose entire office is 600 square feet, says that he knows agents with offices the same size—or bigger.

Sam makes the most of his investments, too. Last year, he credits (at least) 45 transactions to Web leads generated from his various stealth sites, which offer great value to buyers and sellers and tend to be less intimidating for them because they don't appear to be affiliated with any real estate agents. He enlists the services of STAR POWER Star-Recommended Supplier Real Pro Systems to design and maintain his sites, which have provided him with hundreds of leads in the past year.

Stealth sites offer to send interested clients information in a non-threatening way, so people often submit data that can immediately be entered into a database. Based upon certain criteria, the agent then adds the client to a drip e-mail campaign, which can extend for up to a year. That's important because in many cases, people begin their real estate process with an online search that

may last a year—or longer. An automated drip e-mail campaign ensures steady follow-up and compliments your periodic phone calls.

Here is an example of what buyers are sent via a drip e-mail campaign in addition to relevant new listings as they become available:

1. Day 1: Welcome message.
2. Day 4: Intro to e-mails sent with properties that match client's search criteria.
3. Day 10: Report covering recent home-siding issues in the news.
4. Day 16: May I provide an additional help in your home search?
5. Day 22: Did you know that many homes built before 1978 have lead paint?
6. Day 28: Tidbits on securing a mortgage loan.
7. Day 34: A few ways to address home-plumbing issues.
8. Day 46: Article about home heating and issues to note during your home search.
9. Day 52: Are you receiving enough properties from us? Modify search criteria.
10. Day 58: Do you know about the new artificial stucco being used on newer homes?

11. Day 64: Did you know my services as a buyer agent are free to you?

12. Day 70: Article that discusses foam insulation.

13. Day 76: Buyer representation and benefits of working with Sam Miller.

In addition to the drip e-mail campaign, Sam also programmed his Palm phone to receive reminders when homes matching someone's search criteria become available. This way he can call the person to let them know they'll be receiving an e-mail of a brand-new listing that just hit the market—so they'll be the first to know of its availability.

Sam also credits many of his Web leads to the "stickiness" of his sites. He managed to increase the average amount of time people spend on his sites by offering value to the visitor, including a virtual tour (Visual Tours) for every listing. Each listing also has its own e-mail address that people can click to receive more information, so Sam immediately knows which property the person is interested in—a big timesaver.

Because of the stickiness factor, another of Sam's ideas has paid dividends. On his site, [www.sammiller.com](http://www.sammiller.com), he has two links: "I want to list my home" and "I want to buy a home." People become comfortable browsing his site and are more

inclined to enter their names, phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses (in addition to more non-required data they often choose to disclose). Sam says that he receives an average of two requests a week to make listing presentations this way. His other site, [www.SamMiller.net](http://www.SamMiller.net), keeps people engaged with podcasts among other features.