

REALTOR'S REFERRAL  
MARKETING PLAYBOOK

**How to wow clients,  
gather praise, and  
generate leads.**

**boast**





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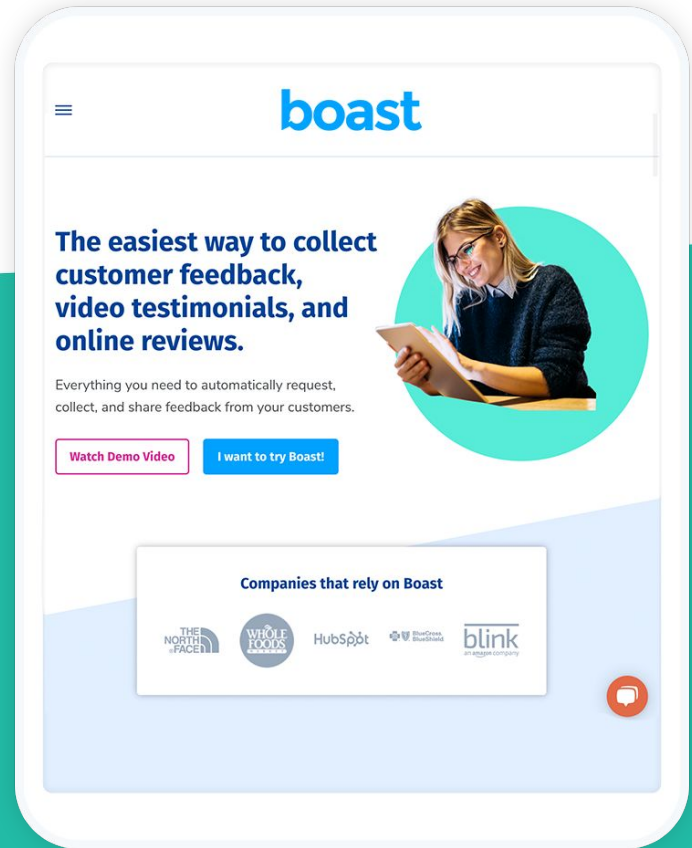
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# About Boast

**Boast** is the customer feedback automation platform for real estate professionals who want to leverage customer stories to grow their business.

We created Boast to help Realtors leverage customer stories to build trust with prospects and generate more leads and sales. We believe prioritizing customer feedback fuels business growth. Our all-in-one customer feedback automation platform makes it easy for Realtors to prioritize customer feedback by managing feedback surveys, review and testimonial collection, and referral requests and rewards.



The screenshot shows the Boast website landing page. At the top left is a hamburger menu icon, and at the top right is the "boast" logo in blue. Below the logo is a large teal circle containing a woman with glasses looking at a tablet. To the left of the circle, the text reads: "The easiest way to collect customer feedback, video testimonials, and online reviews." Below this text is a sub-headline: "Everything you need to automatically request, collect, and share feedback from your customers." At the bottom of this section are two buttons: "Watch Demo Video" (pink) and "I want to try Boast!" (blue). Below this is a white box titled "Companies that rely on Boast" containing logos for THE NORTH FACE, WHOLE FOODS MARKET, HubSpot, BlueCross BlueShield, and blink (an eggbar company). A red speech bubble icon is in the bottom right corner of the page.

# Awesome Organizations Collecting Praise With Boast



Home Partners  
of America®



BARRY JENKINS  
YOUR FRIENDS IN REAL ESTATE TEAM



# About This Playbook

Since 2013, Boast has helped 1,000s of organizations large and small collect and share video testimonials and online reviews. Over the years, we've learned a ton about what makes an organization sharable and worthy of praise and referrals from customers.

The Realtor's Referral Marketing Playbook compiles this knowledge into a single resource to help real estate professionals launch a business-boosting referral program.

If you are a Realtor or real estate marketer who is serious about leveraging your network to fuel business growth, this playbook is for you.

You'll find everything you need to implement a proven system for wowing clients, collecting praise, and generating leads through referrals.



# What Is Referral Marketing?

Referral marketing means developing an intentional process for leveraging your network to generate leads.

For many Realtors, referrals are the bread and butter of their business. But what sets Realtors drowning in leads apart from those struggling to make ends meet?

Actively encouraging referrals from your network versus just hoping referrals happen.

To actively encourage and effectively cultivate referrals, Realtors need to understand what drives word-of-mouth marketing and why it works.





## Why Does Referral Marketing Work?

Most real estate transactions are personal, emotional, and life-changing.

People don't like to make a split-second decision when it comes to buying a house.

People want to know they can trust the person guiding them through the process of making this decision. They want to know that you'll have their best interest in mind and that you'll understand them, their needs, and their desires.

It's no surprise that prospective home buyers would rather rely on a referral from a trusted source than a Google search.

## WHAT IS REFERRAL MARKETING

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Aside from the benefits for the prospective lead, understanding the motivations of the referring client and why they take action is key to any successful referral marketing program.

Marketing professor and author of *Contagious*, Jonah Berger, provides insight into this with his six principles that drive us to make referrals:

### **Social Currency**

We tell others because we want the credibility of being in-the-know and making a good recommendation.

### **Triggers**

We tell others when something is top-of-mind.

### **Emotion**

We tell others when we care strongly or have an emotional connection to something.

### **Public**

We tell others with our actions.

### **Practical Value**

We tell others about things that can benefit them.

### **Stories**

We tell others when there is a story worth sharing.

Referral marketing works because, with the right frame in place, your clients will naturally advocate for you, amplify your brand, and help you grow your business.



## How to Generate Referrals

Keeping the principles that drive referrals in mind, we developed a word-of-mouth strategy that leverages natural behavior around making referrals to effectively move the needle for your business.

Our 3-Step Referral Marketing Framework will help you create a reason for your clients to refer friends and colleagues while incentivizing them to do so.

We'll detail each of the three steps in this framework throughout the playbook:

### Wow

Give your clients something to talk about and a reason to refer you. Their reputation is on the line when they make a recommendation, so providing top-notch service is essential to winning their trust.

### Ask

Make an effort to ensure referrals happen. Whether it's a direct referral or an online review, clients are more likely to take action when you make a personal request.

### Reward

What is in it for the client? They'll be far more willing to go out of their way to help you with a little incentive to do so.

# 3-Step Referral Marketing Framework

The 3-Step Referral Marketing Framework is a step-by-step approach to building a business-boosting referral marketing program.

We created this framework to help you give your clients a reason to refer friends and colleagues while incentivizing them to do so.

Follow these steps to wow clients, generate praise, and grow your real estate business.

## Wow

- Get organized
- Gather feedback
- Go the extra mile

## Ask

- Gauge sentiment
- Request praise
- Ask for referrals

## Reward

- Acknowledge
- Incentivize
- Communicate



# 1. Wow

The first step in the Referral Marketing Framework is to wow your clients.

We know from the six principles that drive referrals that building trust and delivering an amazing client experience are vital.

To build a referral generating machine, you have to do the work to become worthy of receiving referrals from your clients.

You have to give your clients something to talk about and a reason to put their reputation on the line.

So, practically, what does this look like?

## Get Organized

Wowing your clients will require some serious organization and process development.

### Here are some organization tips:

- Have a system for managing client relationships
- Map out a client lifecycle journey
- Document key facts for future reference (birthdays, kids names, favorite sports teams, etc.)
- Develop processes for client communications (what to communicate and when)
- Create email templates and phone scripts for common situations
- Automate follow-up when appropriate
- Create tasks or set reminders for when automation won't cut it

### It is also important to have the right tools for managing leads, clients, and processes:

- CRM software for managing past and active clients, partners, and your sphere of influence
- Up-to-date calendar with daily and weekly time blocks for key business activities
- Marketing automation software for ongoing marketing communications
- Knowledge management software for quickly sharing resources internally and externally
- [Client feedback software](#) for surveys and review/referral requests

# Gather Feedback

To effectively wow your clients, you need a baseline for how they are feeling. You'll want to know which clients are promoters that can be leveraged for gathering online reviews and generating referrals. You'll also want to identify which clients need some extra attention to be truly wowed. To get a baseline, send out a regular survey to active clients asking for feedback.

## We recommend NPS surveys because they provide a quick snapshot and are super easy for the client:

- Ask clients a single question in an SMS message or an email
- Use the quantitative data for an overview of client health
- Identify unhappy clients before they leave a bad review
- Leverage brand advocates for testimonials and online reviews
- Compare responses across your client base to know where to focus your attention
- Benchmark your client responses against others in the real estate industry

## How NPS surveys work:

- NPS surveys ask a simple question – How likely is it that you would recommend (Agent Name) to a friend or colleague?
- The survey includes a 1-10 scale, typically in an email or SMS
- Respondents are classified as Promoters, Passives, and Detractors based on their responses (More on this in the Ask step of the Referral Marketing Framework)
- The rating is followed by a second question asking why the client gave the rating they did

In addition to surveying active clients regularly, sending out a longer survey after closings can provide valuable details on what areas clients are thrilled with and where you can improve.

Whether you use NPS or not, we always recommend using at least one quantitative question in client surveys, so you can easily segment clients based on their potential level of advocacy. This is important for the Ask step of the Referral Marketing Framework.

We also recommend using a tool like [Boast](#) to automate the process of sending surveys and managing client sentiment – saving you time so you can focus on wowing clients and running your business.

## Go the Extra Mile

Oftentimes, the Realtor who gets the referral is the one who is willing to take a chance and do something without the expectation of a reward.

When you go the extra mile in the short term, you'll reap long term benefits.

Some ideas for wowing clients by going the extra mile:

- Be intentional about following up – Some intentional reasons for following up with active clients might be to ask for their thoughts on a specific listing or to gather feedback on their current level of happiness with the process.
- Be intentional about checking in – Some intentional reasons for checking in with past clients include sending a birthday card or a small gift on the anniversary of buying their home.
- Be a valuable resource – Send a regular newsletter with engaging content and provide educational resources specific to each client's situation, like home seller or first time home buyer.
- Have amazing follow-through – Sometimes wowing clients is as simple as doing what you say you are going to do when you say you're going to do it.
- Under promise, and over deliver – Manage the expectations of your clients to set yourself up for success.
- Embrace delayed gratification – It may be tempting to prioritize quick, easy wins, but by putting in the extra effort now to wow your clients and build relationships, you'll set yourself up to receive more referrals down the road.

## 2. Ask

Step two of our Referral Marketing Framework is making the ask.

Wowing your clients is great, but it's not enough to maximize your referrals.

Our approach to asking for referrals is two-fold:

- Direct referrals – Ask your happiest clients to directly refer you to their contacts or colleagues who are in the market.
- Indirect referrals – Ask clients to share a raving online review or testimonial to help you win new clients.

[90% of buyers](#) say they would recommend their real estate agent to others.

So, if you aren't receiving referrals from a significant portion of your clients, simply requesting a testimonial, review, or direct referral has the potential to make a huge difference.



# Gauge Sentiment

In the Wow step of the Referral Marketing Framework, we gather feedback from clients. Now it's time to put that feedback to work by identifying your promoters, passives, and detractors.

By using a mature NPS or client survey system, you'll be able to quickly segment audiences so you can:

- Follow up with detractors individually
- Follow up with passives to learn what it would take to turn them into a promoter
- Reach out to promoters for a review or referral

It may also be helpful to segment clients and NPS by type of client (buyer, seller, both), location, price range, etc. to gather additional insight into how to improve client experiences.

# Request Praise

Once you know who your promoters and brand advocates are, you can ask them for praise – like testimonials and online reviews. This is a referral marketing activity that can lead to huge rewards by generating indirect referrals outside the spheres of influence of you and your clients. Credible online reviews and testimonials help you establish trust with prospects and generate leads.

To effectively ask for testimonials or online reviews:

- Prioritize your top platforms (Ex: Video testimonial, Google Review, Zillow Review)
- Ask clients using their preferred communication medium (Ex: Email or SMS)
- Test and ensure the process of sharing their story is extremely simple, regardless of platform
- Automate several follow-up requests if a response is not received on the first ask
- Consider offering an incentive to boost your success rate (More on this in the Reward step of the Referral Marketing Framework)
- Consider using a platform that will automatically request praise to save time and prevent clients from slipping through the cracks

[Click here](#) for email templates you can use to ask clients for a testimonial or online review.

Learn [how Boast helps Realtors](#) request, collect, and share online reviews and video testimonials.

# Ask for Referrals

While some word-of-mouth referrals might happen naturally, the best way to get direct referrals from promoters and advocates is to ask.

We know from the principles that drive referrals that clients are more likely to share what is top of mind. This is one reason why directly asking for referrals can be so effective.

Successful referral marketing requires a process for asking the right clients at the right time.

Here are our best tips for asking clients for direct referrals:

- Ensure the clients you ask are healthy by gauging sentiment from regular feedback surveys
- Make your first ask as soon as possible to plant a seed in their mind
- Follow up at reasonable intervals to keep your request top-of-mind
- Ask clients using their preferred communication medium (Ex: Email or SMS)
- Use a system to automate requests and minimize manual work
- Offer an incentive to maximize responses (More on this in the Reward step of the Referral Marketing Framework)

## 3. Reward

The final step of the Referral Marketing Framework is Reward.

This is where we incentivize clients to make referrals, and also reward past referrers to encourage them to make additional referrals in the future.

Rewards can come in the form of tangible gifts, coupons or discounts, or simple acknowledgement and appreciation.

## Acknowledge

When you receive a referral, acknowledge the referrer and express your appreciation.

One of the drivers of word-of-mouth is the social credibility that comes with making a referral.

Your clients have to put their reputation on the line to make a referral, so reassure them that they made a good decision.

By letting the referrer know they can trust you to take care of their friends and colleagues, you can instill confidence to encourage future referrals:

- Send a personal thank you
- Assure them that the referred client will be taken care of
- Let them know you'll follow up about how things are going
- Open the door for more referrals by asking them to keep you in mind

# Incentivize

Acknowledging a referral and expressing your appreciation will be enough to encourage reviews from some of your best advocates.

But other clients will need a little something in it for them before they'll take action.

Here are some ways to maximize referrals by incentivizing or rewarding clients:

- “Coffee’s on me.” – Send a Starbucks gift card
- “Your next purchase is on us.” – Send an Amazon gift card
- Send some swag – A tshirt, tumbler, or other branded goodie
- Offer a kickback or commission – This can be a great option for strategic partners in the industry

Consider simplifying rewards by using a software tool to:

- Send requests to clients for referrals
- Collect contact information of referred clients via web form
- Distribute gift card rewards to referrers

## Communicate

Keeping an open line of communication with all clients can help maximize referrals, but this is especially important when it comes to those who refer new business.

Close the loop on each referral to reassure the referrer that you've held up your end of the deal and to continue nurturing the relationship to encourage future referrals:

- Update the referrer when the referred client closes
- Continue regular outreach with postcards, newsletters, and emails that include valuable content
- Send a gift or a card for birthdays and holidays
- Be active on social media, and encourage clients to follow you so you're always top of mind when their network asks them for a referral



## Next Steps

This playbook is designed to help you build a business-boosting referral machine by wowing clients, gathering praise, and generating leads and sales.

To succeed, you need to operate your business with a referral marketing mindset. You need to bake the concepts in this playbook into your day-to-day interactions with clients and into your long-term processes for maintaining relationships.

The referral marketing mindset is what sets top-performing Realtors apart from those starving for leads. It's the difference between constantly expanding your sphere of influence and merely treading water.

Any Realtor willing to put in enough time and effort can take their referral marketing to the next level by following this playbook.

But if you want to jumpstart the process and automate feedback surveys, review and testimonial collection, and referral requests and rewards, we might be able to help...



# Try Boast

If you're serious about maximizing referrals to grow your real estate business, we can help.

Boast simplifies client feedback for Realtors so you can wow your clients, gather praise, and generate more leads and sales.

With our client feedback automation platform, you can:

- Create client feedback surveys to gauge sentiment
- Segment promoters from passives and detractors
- Send requests and collect video testimonials and online reviews
- Request referrals and send gift card incentives

[Try Boast Free](#)

[Watch Demo Video](#)

