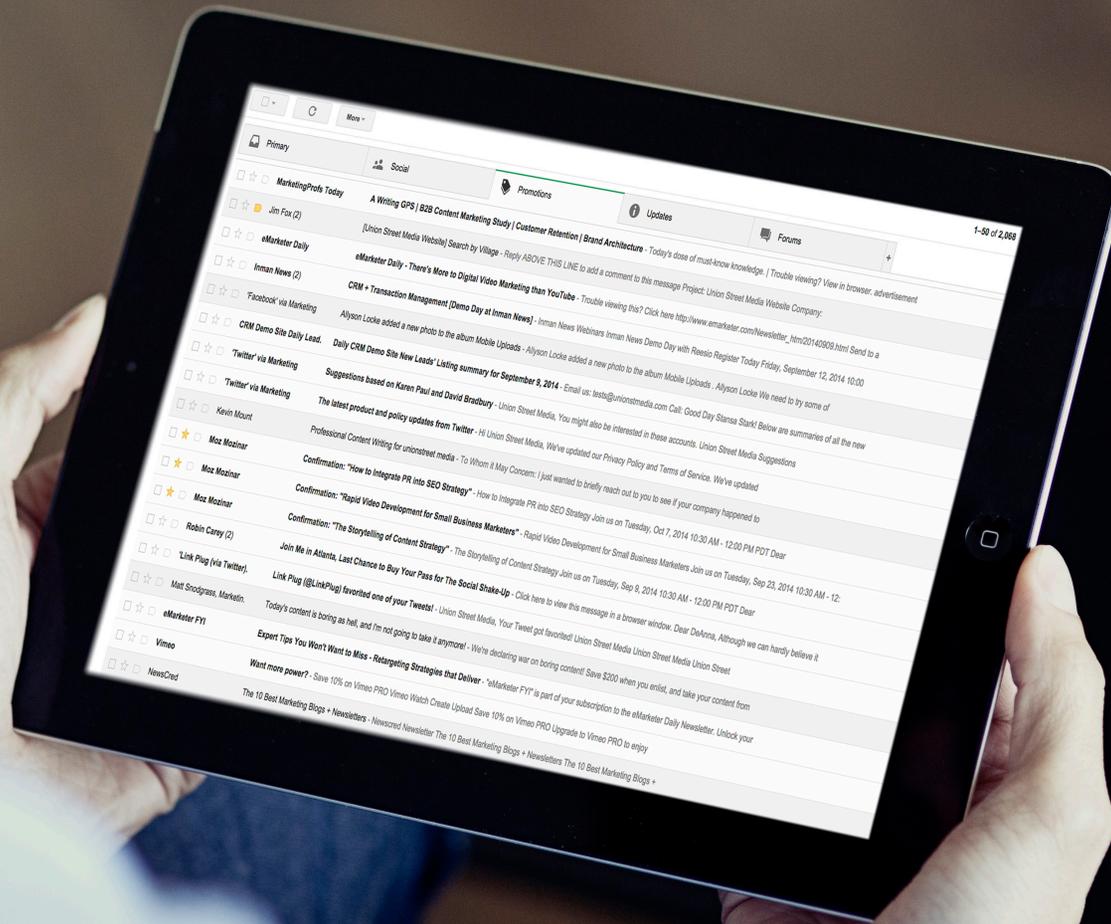


Think Outside the Inbox

How to successfully manage your real estate leads with a Customer Relationship Management tool.



Union Street Media is a web development, web design, and internet marketing company that creates lead-generating websites for the best and brightest of the real estate world. We work closely with real estate agents and office to deliver user-friendly web experience that target qualified buyers and sellers in their respective local markets. Our team thrives on innovation and lives on the front lines of real estate technology.

What's a CRM?

A CRM is an intuitive system that helps you organize your business, take action on your best leads based on real-time data, provide better customer service, and ultimately sell more homes. A CRM gives you access to advanced metrics that predict your clients' buying behaviors and efficiently assigns incoming leads to your agents. Once your clients are in the system, you can nurture your leads through personalized marketing strategies that transform your efforts into successful sales.

Real estate agents are busy people - is that an understatement? They rush around from open houses to office meetings to showings and back again in order to complete a sale. Yet, despite such demanding schedules, real estate companies too often hemorrhage their time with simple tasks that could be solved through automation. A CRM automatically assigns leads, creates tasks, and nurtures client relationships more efficiently and effectively than you could do manually.

Every CRM worth its salt will walk you through three essential steps to enhance your workflow:

- 1) Implement a strategic process for lead management.**
- 2) Integrate your marketing and follow-up strategies into a single system.**
- 3) Use valuable data to make smart decisions about leads and business methods.**

A CRM connects all the important dots - from capturing site traffic to generating qualified leads to effective follow up - and creates the momentum that engages clients from start to finish. Happy customers make a happy business (but you knew that already).



So what does a CRM look like in action?



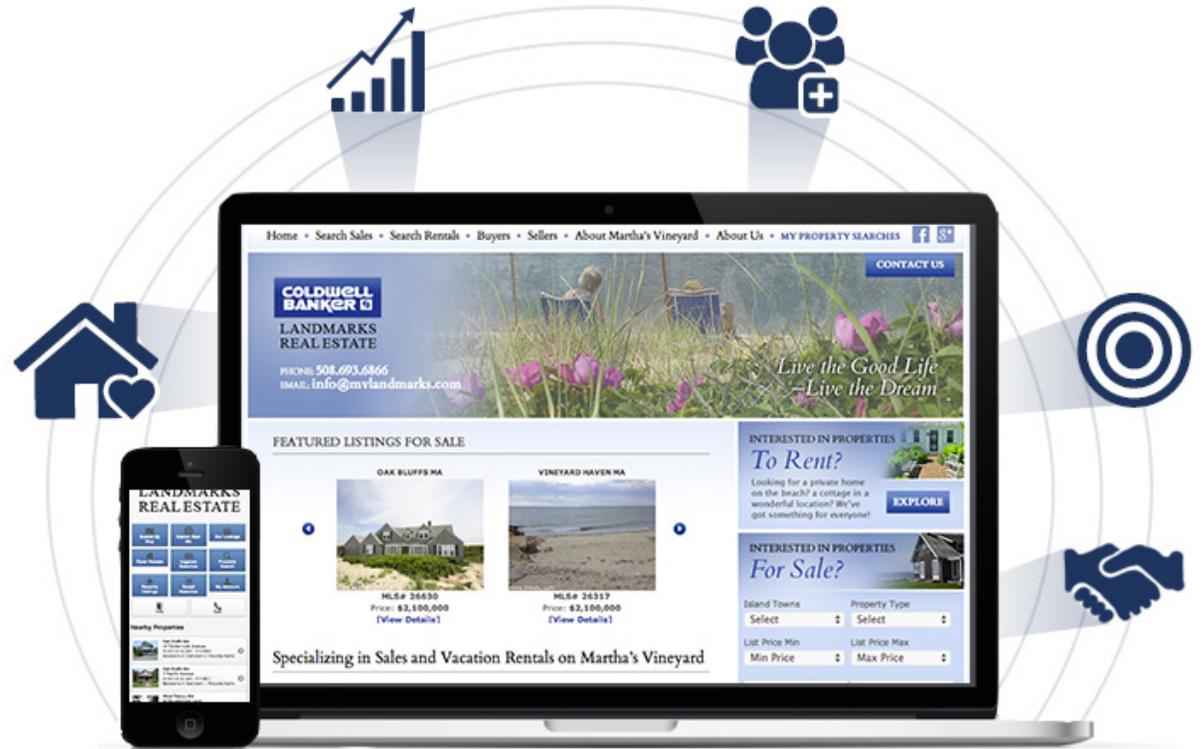
Research shows that 35-50% of sales go to the company who responds to a lead first.

Let's say Amy is on the lookout for a condo for sale in your market. After searching for available condos on Google, she lands on your website and begins searching your listings. She likes what she sees, so she creates an account and saves a couple of properties to her favorites list. Then she leaves.

Meanwhile, your CRM sends Amy's information to your very best agent for follow-up. The system automatically sends a text message and email to your agent, informing them of the new lead. When you agent logs into the system, they immediately pull

up all of the listings that Amy viewed - as well as all of the site pages she visited. Your agent notices that Amy seems to be in the market for a condo less than \$200,000; he also notices that Amy missed one of your newest listings in her search. When he sends Amy an email about the new listing, he already has a wealth of information about what Amy is looking for, and he's better able to help her reach her goals.

Pretty soon, Amy's posing next to a "SOLD" sign, and your team has built a solid relationship with one more lifelong client.



A CRM Designed Specifically for Real Estate

There are a lot of CRMs out there. Choosing one can feel like getting lost in a complicated maze. The real estate world is unlike any other. It comes with its own challenges, rules, and industry-specific vocabulary. So why put your customer relationship management in the hands of any ol' CRM?

As you search for a customer management solution, be on the lookout for a CRM that is simple, married to the style of your company, and flexible to fit the way that you do business. You should choose a CRM that you genuinely believe you could use and that your agents are likely to accept.

Union Street Media's building overlooks Lake Champlain, and you can see rowing teams practicing from our office windows. These rowing teams are always in sync; they all pull at the same time as a single unit, the boat lurches with each pull, and they propel themselves forward. If one team member were to miss the pace, the boat would drag through the water and gradually veer off-course. Much like these powerful rowing teams, the best CRM ensures that everyone from your team pulls in the same direction.

Think of each rower as an essential piece of your sales process: marketing, lead generation, follow-up, and analytics. All of these pieces should work together at the same time - under a single login, to deliver the best results. The best CRM orchestrates your business from one system and handles the entire journey of your leads - from web to sale.



So how can you tell if a CRM is designed specifically for real estate? **We've got a few tips:**

- 1) Its features should be designed to **perform at critical moments** of the home buying process.
- 2) You should have the ability to **route incoming leads to agents based on specific criteria**; for instance, if an incoming lead is looking for land, you should be able to automatically send those leads to an agent in your company that specializes in land transactions.
- 3) When leads enter your system, you should be able to **sort them based on criteria specific to real estate** (ex. tenants, landlords, etc.).
- 4) Your CRM should allow you to **continually follow up with categories of leads** in a personalized way based on their site behavior.

5) Your CRM should help you **tailor a specific follow-up strategy to each individual lead** by viewing that lead's search behavior. From there, you should be able to handpick a list of relevant listings and send the list to a lead for review.

- 6) A good CRM should empower you to **interact with buyers and sellers** in different ways. This means using personalized messaging that speaks to the unique needs of both buyers and sellers.



One System, One Login

Yeah, it's supposed to be that easy. In a world where we constantly switch between devices, we're used to owning multiple accounts that float through the ether of the internet. Pretty soon, you forget half of your passwords and fall down the rabbit hole of new password requests. You can't conveniently access lead information or take action on lead follow-up.

It doesn't have to be that way. When you look for a CRM for your real estate company, find one that lets you access the entire system from a single login. You save time, energy, and resources. More importantly, your business information stays secure.

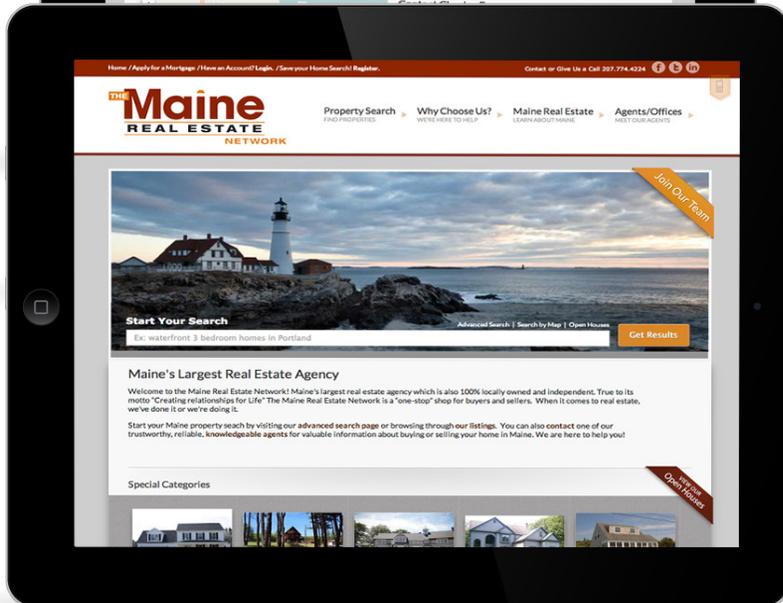
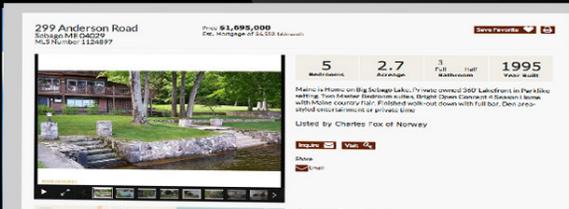
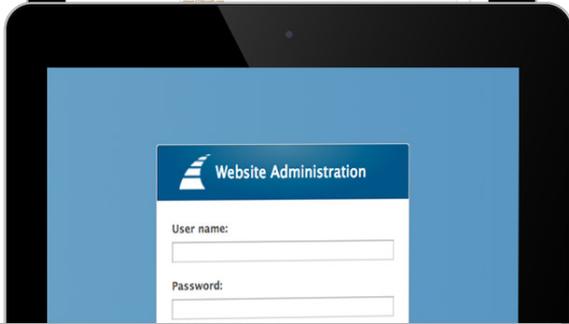
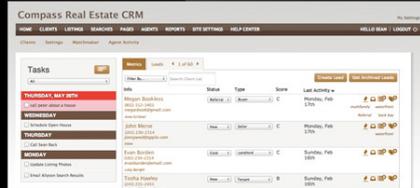




Photo by Tawheed Manzoor

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A CRM unlocks lead conversion rate improvements of up to 300%.

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Photo by Flickr user Tripp

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Customer Relationship Management opens your business to increased sales revenue - up to 41% per agent.

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Essentially, your website and CRM should be the same tool. You should be able to access your site, CRM, blog, and analytics from one convenient location. From site traffic reporting to leads to follow up, you want a system that generates a closed loop sales strategy: from the moment the lead enters your system to the moment you close a sale, your CRM should help you and your clients every step of the way.

Think about it this way: houses are made up of many rooms. We're used to navigating smoothly from one room to the

next in our home, but what if each room required a separate password to enter? We'd spend a lot more time trying to get around than actually getting anything done.

It's the same with a CRM. No one wants to log into their blogging account and then have to log into a separate account to see how those blog posts are performing. You want a CRM that lets you move seamlessly between all aspects of your site and shapes your business into a well-oiled machine.

How can a CRM improve my business?

The process of customer relationship management in real estate.

A CRM is not a pile of bells and whistles that exist just for the heck of it; it's an optimized platform with tools that have specific goals for lead generation. A CRM helps you connect the dots between marketing, process, and analytics to focus your company on one overarching goal: to sell more homes.

To keep a steady flow of leads to your CRM, you'll want to increase your reach.

Reach

If you want to expand your business, the first step is to get noticed by potential clients and boost your web presence. After all, you'll need a steady flow of incoming leads to use your CRM. Your CRM should support a content strategy that arms your site with optimized pages that rank well in search engines and draw fresh traffic to your site.

First, ensure that your site has an **integrated IDX solution**. Integrated listings provide automatic content that search engines index to analyze your site's web authority. Increased web authority gives your site more power, and this power drives new visitors to your website.

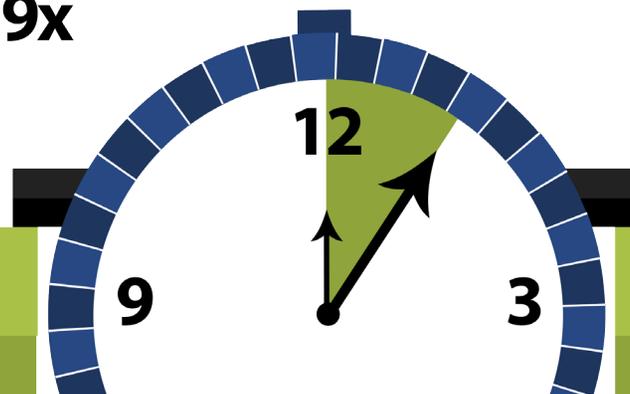
Next, focus on building out optimized **content pages** for your site. These content pages can come in many forms: blog posts, recommended search pages, and town landing pages. Each of these pages should contain targeted local keywords that market your site for better search engine placement.

Finally, complement your search engine optimization with a paid search strategy. Sites like Google Analytics allow you to bid on certain keywords and can present your site to people who search for your targeted keywords. Social media sites also allow you to create and promote messages to a larger audience for a small fee.

A CRM offers an average return of **\$5.60** for every **\$1** spent.



If you follow up with web leads within five minutes, you're 9x more likely to convert them.





Hi there,
Congratulations on
buying your first
home!



Marketing

A good CRM doesn't just focus on how to get existing leads through the sales funnel; it works to ensure that you have a steady flow of leads arriving to your inbox every week. You should invest in a CRM that provides these three marketing strategies:

Drip campaigns allow you to build relationships with new and returning clients by automatically sending periodic messages that are relevant to their stage in the purchase process. Each lead's status should be tracked in real-time within the CRM to systematically update your email campaigns. A basic ongoing drip campaign can keep in touch with past clients periodically for the next time they are ready to buy or sell. A recent study found that 86% of people forget their Realtor's name two years after the sale. If they can't remember your name, then they won't return for your business. A very basic ongoing

drip campaign holds onto these buyers and establishes long-standing relationships with your clients.

Bulk emailing lets you network with clients through relevant emails that are sent to groups of leads. These groups should be organized based on lead criteria (ex. tenants, landlords, etc.) as they are tracked within the CRM.

Activity logs are the most important aspect of a successful CRM marketing strategy. These logs document the behavior of visitors on your site and tell you exactly which listings your visitors view. When you know which listings a lead favors, or their saved search criteria, it helps you paint a better picture of their wants and needs. This information lets you approach the lead with an arsenal of knowledge that helps bring the sale to a successful close.

“ **89% of companies** who agreed that their leads are of high quality use a CRM tool. ”



Process

It's all about the process, and a good CRM is built to match efficient lead nurturing processes. The second a client steps foot into your website, you should have a detailed plan to capture their attention, follow up, and help them navigate the real estate market to achieve their (and your) goals.

Lead routing: your CRM should have the power to assign leads around constraints that are customized to your business. An advanced CRM allows you to design an automated lead flow based on who has “floor duty,” who is online, who is off-duty, and who is on vacation. It should also sort leads based on the expertise of your agents; if you have an agent that specializes in multi-family investment properties, incoming

investment property leads should go there first. This functionality translates to faster response times and quicker conversions. According to InsideSale.com, 35-50% of leads go to the company that responds to that lead first.

Task management is also key to a successfully implemented CRM. To keep your leads organized, find a CRM that allows you to assign various tasks related to your leads. These tasks should be organized into lists that remind you of your next steps while nurturing your leads and let you know when you are near or behind deadline.

Your CRM should allow you to analyze a lead's search history and recommend specific properties to them based on their search behavior (bonus points if the system automatically generates local listings based on the lead's search criteria).

Find a CRM that allows you to *tag* leads based on real estate categories. This feature allows you to make sense of the diversity of your leads. You wouldn't approach a buyer the same way you would approach a seller, and you wouldn't approach a luxury homebuyer the same way you would approach a first-time buyer. You should be able to organize these leads into manageable chunks that let you formulate targeted plans of action.

Analytics

A CRM can gather huge amounts of data about your site and its visitors, but what good is data if it can't be analyzed? While all CRMs compile data about your site, make sure that you invest in a CRM that includes advanced tracking, reports, and metrics in an easily digestible format.

Look for a CRM with an extensive *lead intelligence program* that allows you to see every page a lead has visited, every listing a client has viewed or "favorited," and every search performed or saved by a lead. In short, you want to be able to keep tabs on the progress of your clients by viewing every notification sent to each lead. These features will alert you to what your clients want before they even think to ask you for help, so you can be ready to close the deal when they knock on your door.

A CRM designed for real estate success will also include **listing reports** that analyze the number of views, inquiries, showings, and social media shares for every listing in your inventory. This way, you'll be able to see which properties are the most popular among your clientele. You should use these reports to determine common trends across your most popular properties, and apply those strategies to all of your listings for better visibility.

A **performance dashboard** is also key for a successful CRM. You want a system that lets you evaluate how many searches are performed and saved on your site, how many listings are viewed or favorited, and how many leads your site converts on a day-to-day basis. The performance dashboard should inspect each of these data points to review how well your site operates.

