

arch

Competitive Advantages through
Innovative Marketing & Technology

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Ask? Belinda

Fax Broadcast, Home Affordability and Refinance Lines

Dear Belinda,

I recently did my first fax broadcast and am now ready to do another. I have already loaded my fax. How do I indicate that I want the new fax not the old, to be sent when queuing my broadcast?

Sincerely, Flustered from Ft. Worth

Dear Flustered,

Your fax broadcast system will hold one fax image at a time. When you load a new fax into the system, it replaces any fax image previously loaded.

Please note however that once you have queued a broadcast, the fax for that broadcast cannot be changed. If a change is needed on a broadcast already queued, you must cancel the broadcast, load your new fax and then requeue it.

Dear Belinda,

I want to view the fax that I have loaded prior to sending my broadcast to make sure it loaded properly. How do I do that?

Please help, Stalled in St. Pete

Dear Stalled,

Fax Broadcast allows you to request a test fax by pressing 6

for Fax Broadcast and then 5 to Request a Test Fax from the Main Menu. This test fax will not only give you a representation of how the fax will look, but it will approximate how long your fax will take to send.

Dear Belinda,

We have purchased the Home Affordability and Refinance Lines. As loan officers, we have several different loan programs available to our clients and we are not sure how to best merge your system with these programs. Any ideas?

Thanks for your input, Puzzled in Pomona

Dear Puzzled,

As you stated, mortgage professionals have many loan programs available to them these days. So many that to integrate them into our system would mean excruciatingly long surveys, severely limiting the systems' effectiveness by phone.

The Home Affordability (HAL) and Refinance (REFI) Lines offer a "no-frills" insight into prequalification and viability of refinancing, respectively. However, the true strength in both of these services is in lead generation, finding people interested in being prequalified or refinancing.

The very fact that the services do not include the many available programs actually benefits you in that provides you the "foot" to put in the "door" so to speak when you follow-up with the prospect. You have the perfect reason to make the call - to let them know that whether or not the results they received were positive, you have many other programs available that can get them in a home or get them refinanced.

please write to belinda at belinda@archtelecom.com

In this issue: New Arch Services, Farming Past Clients with Greg Herder, Customer Profile: Bill Glazer, Ask Belinda

SOLUTIONS

The quarterly newsletter of Arch Telecom

In this issue of Arch Solutions we explore one of the most important aspects to kickstarting a business or maintaining an already solid business - cultivating past clients. We have an article written by Greg Herder of Hobbs/Herder Advertising which focuses on farming past clients. Bill Glazer of Gage Menswear is this quarter's profile. Among other things, he discusses direct response marketing and how he has increased his bottomline through staying in touch with clients. We'll also introduce four new services designed to make your life much easier.

Once again, we want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our many customers for continuing to allow Arch to provide your telecommunications solutions. Enjoy the newsletter!

How to Effectively Farm Your Past Clients

Everyone knows they should stay in touch with their past clients. The reality is that most agents do one of two things; they send a Christmas card once a year; or they send the same thing they send to everyone else—neither of which is very effective.

Here's the problem with plan one. After clients have moved into their new home, agents know their services are no longer needed, at least for a couple of years and probably four or five years or maybe longer. The agent thinks, well, I don't need to be too aggressive. I have some time and I want the clients to send me some referrals, so I will play it low key. The agent sends a nice closing gift and maybe a letter asking for referrals. Suddenly, time has passed and its Christmas. So the agent sends a standard Christmas card in order to, at least, stay in touch.

To consumers, it feels so very different. The clients remember the marketing efforts used by the agent to attract them as clients in the first place, and the interest and attention the agent showed during their transaction. Then they move in, and they really like the closing gift. But it seems as though their agent has dropped off the face of the earth. Three weeks go by and the clients get a letter asking for referrals. No matter how happy the clients were with you when they closed, they start to think they were just another transaction, and the only time they will hear from you is when you want more business. Then they get your Christmas card, along with the one from the insurance guy they have not talked to in a long time as well as a bunch of other people they have had little contact with or who are trying to sell them something. Suddenly you are just another sales person. It does not take long to undermine your past clients' loyalty that you earned with great service.

Agents don't want this to happen, so they go with plan two—send them the same stuff everyone else gets. Here's the problem. Again you have to look at it from the consumers' point of view. They have only one agent with whom they feel they have a special

relationship. You helped buy or sell a home for them. They are used to having you talk to them personally. Then they move in and suddenly you are no long there. After a couple weeks, they open their mail and see something from you. As they look at it, they realize its one of your standard mailings. Suddenly it hits them—they are now just a name on your list.

So what should you do?

The secret is to develop a marketing plan just for your past clients. First, you must really understand the emotional connection your clients have to you through the experience of buying a home. Buying a home is ranked as the fourth most stressful event you can experience. Number one is losing a loved one, two is getting a divorce, three is losing a job, and four is buying or selling a home. As a Realtor®, you have become a confidant. You know more about them financially than most of their friends. They feel as though they have a special relationship with you; you are their agent. You, on the other hand, have many clients, and helping people buy and sell is no big deal. It's what you do everyday. Recognize this difference.

Here's the plan:

After a transaction closes, send your normal closing gift. Then a week later, send the formal research questionnaire that asks them to evaluate your services. There is a sample in the MegaMarketing workbook. The objective here is to show that you value their opinion of you. The amazing thing is that, even if they complain about something you did, they feel you listened. And they have even more respect for you as an agent and a person.

Two weeks later, send a letter that tells them you were thinking of them and you realized that, right after people move into a new home, they often forget to get out and enjoy life a little. And, because you did not want that to happen to them, you have enclosed two tickets to the movies so they have an excuse to get out.

Two weeks after that, send a letter that tells a personal story about something in which you are interested. The object here is to make the clients feel you are writing to them as a friend.

One week after that, send three copies of your personal brochure with a letter telling them you build your business on referrals from your friends, and you would appreciate it if they would give your brochure to anyone they know who might be interested in moving. You will find that, by setting up this mailing with the research questionnaire, the movie tickets and the personal letter, you will get a huge increase in response.

At this point, you are ready to put them into a group of all your past clients to whom you mail something 12 times per year.

Here's what to mail:

Once per quarter (four times per year), send a mail-merged letter on your house flier master or personal letterhead that updates

(cont. on p.3)

customer profile

Bill Glazer Gage Menswear



Bill Glazer has operated his two family-owned Gage Menswear retail stores in Baltimore, MD for 28 years. He has been an Arch subscriber for a little over two years. We recently had the opportunity to sit down with Bill to discuss marketing strategies, direct mail, and how much Arch has had to do with his continued success.

Arch Telecom: Where did you gain your marketing expertise?

Bill Glazer: My first eighteen years, I ran my business as all other retailers do: buy the best merchandise, sell at the best price, service my clients to death. About ten years ago I realized that where the real money was to be made was learning how to market your business; and that's exactly what most retailers are fairly poor at.

I started buying books originally on anything to do with marketing and advertising. I soon found that direct response marketing was the place I needed to be. It would allow me to measure my response and figure out the return for each dollar spent.

About eight years ago I came across Dan Kennedy. I bought his materials and started to implement his ideas into my business, adding little twists that I thought would work best for retail. He probably has had the greatest influence on my strategies.

AT: How has your marketing approach changed since you started using Arch services?

BG: Prior to finding out about Arch, I marketed through the same media as most others in the business. I used newspaper, radio and television advertising, some billboards but direct mail was the lion share of the advertising.

Then I learned about Voice Broadcast (VB) through a Dan Kennedy Platinum meeting. I started experimenting with VB as a follow-up to direct mailers and it was a huge success. The first time I used VB was for a Thanksgiving promotion in 1999. We had a 92% increase in business from the same promotion as the prior year, which was a success in of itself.

This was a significant discovery for us. Now I use VB frequently and in many ways. I've used it as a lead-in to a direct mail piece to let clients know the mailer is coming. I've even used VB as a standalone without direct mail on occasion, if I need to notify clients FAST about a special event or other money saving opportunities in the stores.

AT: Bill, you have other services with Arch as well, namely Marketing Edge, which allows your callers to go to several different extensions. Do you integrate the two services at all?

BG: No I don't. VB is predominantly used as a strategy to get existing clients to come back again. My Marketing Edge is used for new customer acquisition strategy. I run a yellow page ad, a

Warning ad such as "Don't buy new menswear until you've listened to this prerecorded message!" The toll-free number is listed in the ad, of course, and upon calling, they can request reports such as *Seven Different Secrets About Buying Menswear* or *Five Questions You Should Ask Any Menswear Store Before You Select Them*. Then customers have the option to leave voice mail with their name, address and phone number or connect to a store directly. I use the same strategy to run small ads in our newspaper.

AT: How has our services impacted your business?

BG: We track amount of transactions, transaction size and total volume. In cases where we've added VB to a promotion and compared to the previous year's promotion, we've averaged a little over 30% increase in all three categories. Although, the increases can't be contributed directly to VB, it's very compelling that they are due to it's use.

AT: What advice would you give someone needing to create a broadcast message?

BG: A couple of key things that are good to know. First, you don't have to be intimidated about recording the message. One nice thing with Voice Broadcast is that after recording the message you have the opportunity to listen to it and make sure you like how it sounds (inflection of your voice, etc.). If not just rerecord the message.

The second thing is that the message should not sound like a recording. If there are stumbles in your message, that's OK, it sounds more natural.

AT: What is the most unique message that you've left?

BG: Well I can't pinpoint just one message. After a period of time, like any other media, you have to reinvent it a little bit. One thing we have done is hire celebrity impersonators to do some recordings. We've sent messages using impersonators for George W. Bush, Elvis and even Bugs Bunny. Customers get a kick out of the messages, often mentioning the message at the store.

AT: Now I understand that you have even created your own course for retailers. Tell me a little about that.

BG: Yes, I've developed a marketing course which teaches retailers how to cut the fat and waste out of all of their advertising dollars. I teach them how to use "outside of the box" strategies to market and advertise their businesses such as what we discussed today. VB and the use of free Prerecorded Messages, both are very cost efficient ways to grow a business. For more information on this course, please visit us on the web at billglazermarketing.com or call us at 800-545-0414. ✿

Quarterly Contest Winner: Mike Saunders

of Chase Manhattan Mortgage, is this quarter's winner of a \$500 American Express gift certificate. Keep those referrals coming as we continue the contest! Call your Arch representative with a referral today at (800) 882-9155. You'll be entered in our drawing and will be eligible to reduce your per minute rate by \$.02 cents or receive a \$50 certificate!

Past Clients (cont.)

them on the local real estate market. It should be written in a story format something like, "John and Mary, I want to keep you updated on what has been happening with the local real estate market this past quarter. Prices are on a slow but steady rise, interest rates are steady, etc." The goal is make them feel that you, as their friend who is also a realtor, simply want to keep them informed.

Three times per year, send a mail-merged letter on your house flier master or personal letterhead that updates them on what is happening with you. This is like a letter you would write to a friend who has moved away. Tell them about your kids, your vacations, and your hobbies. Some agents complain about this. They say it's corny. I know it will make you rich.

Three times per year, send a fun card. Many of our clients have had great success with things like a Merry-After-Christmas card, Happy Groundhogs' Day card, April Fools' Day card and National

Smile Week card. Look for something offbeat so yours will be the only card they receive for that event.

Finally, send a letter with three copies of your personal brochure that asks for referrals and repeat business.

That's the plan. I promise it will generate more business from your past clients than you have ever made in the past.

Greg Herder was a successful agent and office manager before co-founding Hobbs/Herder Advertising, an agency that specializes exclusively in creating marketing materials for Realtors®. He has personally written over 1000 successful direct-mail campaigns for agents as well as the complete campaigns for some of the nation's top agents. He is author of numerous books, special reports and articles on various aspects of real estate marketing. ✿

New Products & Services

Arch Introduces Four New Services to Enhance Your Business

At Arch we like to think of ourselves as your partner, providing you with tools to enhance your professional life. We know that all professionals seek to get the most out of their business; leveraging time more efficiently, providing better service to their customers, and of course making more money. In seeking ways we can help you, we periodically survey current and former customers for insights. A common thread is that some customers find it difficult to keep up with the number of leads generated, and generally lack time to follow through on other important business building tasks. To address these needs, Arch introduces four new products designed specifically with your time and business building efforts in mind.

Powerline Automatic Mail Fulfillment – Having trouble keeping up with leads? Let Arch automatically produce a direct-mail fulfillment piece to every lead your Powerline system generates. The mail piece can be delivered in either a first class stamped window envelope or a creative self-mailer. Our service will automatically customize the mail piece with your name, contact information, salutation, signature, logo, accreditations, etc. You can select the letter body from ten different proven winners created by Don Hobbs of Hobbs Herder Advertising, or create your own letter body. It's your choice, with all customization made on our website 24 hours a day.

To give us an opportunity to evaluate real-life customer needs, we are currently limiting this service to the first 100 customers calling. We invite any interested customers to give us a call at (800) 882-9155. Initial customers will receive special incentives for assisting us in rolling out this service.

Powerline-Voice Broadcast Automated Follow Up – To complement the direct mail service above, Arch has designed a service that uses our Voice Broadcast technology to automatically attempt delivery of a recorded message to every lead generated in the Powerline system. All you need for this service is to activate

Voice Broadcast on your Powerline system, record your message, and let us do the rest. For the best results, use both direct mail and voice messaging. Experience shows that the combination of direct-mail with a follow-up voice message significantly enhances response rate.

Post Viewing Survey – Have you ever held an open house and were simply too swamped to keep track of all the prospects? And do you wish you had a better way of gathering and documenting honest feedback on property showings? Let Arch help you with our Post Viewing Survey.

We provide you with a flyer inviting the buyer prospect to call our special 800 number and complete a brief survey. To incentivize the prospect, Arch will enter them in a monthly drawing for a gift certificate to Amazon.com (at our expense!). The survey consists of a series of standard questions answered with touch-tones, and ends with a voice mail that allows the prospect to say whatever is on their mind. Arch transcribes the message, and provides the results to you in a web report. The results automatically include the name and address of the prospect!

We believe this is a great tool for real estate professionals to provide feedback to sellers, negotiate price reductions, and maintain prospect lists for follow-up. Mortgage professionals can offer this service to agents and receive a steady stream of prospects.

IVR Fax Mail – Ever been out in the field and needed to receive a fax but weren't sure where to have your client send it? Well now your Powerline system will accept faxes and automatically store them in "fax mail". The faxes can then either be downloaded to your email or to any standard fax machine. If you would like this service activated please call us or send an email to support@archtelecom.com. ✿