

Auto-Marketing to First-time Homebuyers



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Introduction

Welcome to “*Auto-Marketing To First-time Homebuyers*”, a short course in using auto-responders to specifically target first-time homebuyers for loan originators. While the information contained in this report is detailed, and has been proven to work through personal use, no guarantees are given that it will work exactly the same for you, and I ALWAYS encourage testing any form of marketing to consistently improve results.

I also encourage you to try and personalize these messages to suit your own personality when appropriate. By purchasing this report, you are free to use these messages and information for your own use, but may not sell or re-distribute the information to others without permission. Should you have questions, comments, or be

interested in other available reports and materials, please feel free to contact me at info@northwindfinancial.com, or check out our website at www.northwindfinancial.com.

What Exactly IS An E-mail Autoresponder?

E-mail autoresponder systems work like fax-on-demand type systems. Similar to when you call a fax machine, dial a code and get a document back within minutes, the autoresponder system sends e-mails back within seconds. If an e-mail is sent to an autoresponder, it can send a pre-written e-mail message back to an address with a pre-written message, and contain personalized information.

Using A Sequential E-mail Autoresponder

Until fairly recently, you could only send out one autoresponder message at a time, however, now it is possible to set up and program a whole series of messages to be delivered automatically at different intervals.

For example, message #1 might go out immediately, then message #2 goes out 2 days later, then message #3 goes out on the 6th day, then on the 10th day another message, and so on.....

The best part is that this can be pre-programmed to happen automatically and start the sequence when a customer sends in an e-mail. That means that you can set the system up once, and it will keep on working over and over and over again without you having to touch it!

Let's look at how we can use this concept to market our origination services to a specific market – first-time homebuyers.

Marketing To First-Time Homebuyers

First-time homebuyers are a great target market for loan originators. Not only are there a lot of prospects, but it is a continually “renewing” source of business, and these customers tend not to “shop” you around like more experienced borrowers that have been through the process a dozen times.

The key to being successful with first-timers is to develop a strong personal relationship with the borrower that is based upon trust. Their ability to trust you as a knowledgeable professional who knows the business, and to trust you as a personal resource that will walk them through the process and educate them as to their needs.

Automated e-mail systems that communicate with them in a “non-threatening” environment, with good solid information accomplishes both – and without any repetitive effort on your part. The idea is to invite them to get more information regarding the home-buying process, and send it in little chunks so they get familiar with you – and the process, and believe that you are the professional that they need to deal with.

What I have found, is that a series of well-timed messages, in conjunction with short and informative reports, allows them to become more familiar with me and gets them to call back with a greater close rate. First, let’s look at properly formatting the e-mail message itself.

Formatting Your E-mail Messages

First, it is important that you format your e-mails to 65 characters per line or less. Everyone’s e-mail programs are different, and you want to be sure that they are able to read it easily without distraction. If you just type it in like a word-processing letter, it could appear like this on their screen:

Dear Blah,

Blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah.....

The spacing will not follow the format that you intended, since their computer e-mail program is different than yours. Since even the basic programs at a low resolution read 65 characters, this will insure that they will be able to follow it easily even with basic software programs.

The secret to making the lines 65 characters (or less), is to use a “hard return” (that means hitting the “Enter” key) when you approach 65 spaces at the end of a line. Also use a BASIC font that will be easily read by their computer. Fancy fonts may look nice, but not if they don’t have that exact font. Use Arial, Times New Roman, or Courier for the best results.

For the easiest way to format the e-mail message, I use Microsoft Word, and then save it as a .TXT file format. I will also use a guide at the top to keep me in tune with where the breaks need to be – similar to this:

-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----/

In addition, you want to use an autoresponder service that allows you to customize the e-mail with the borrowers’ information. Usually you will only be getting basic information about the borrower – first name, last name, and e-mail address. I will use their name in

the subject line and during the message so they become more comfortable with the information and approach. It personalizes it to them.

To see how a great set of autoresponder messages looks, go to the following site and enter your name and e-mail address in the “test drive” fields:

<http://www.aweber.com/?101599>

Now that we know how we want them to look, let’s look at the specific messages we want to send.

Autoresponder Message Series

For my “first-time homebuyer” series, I use 7 sequential messages sent to the customer over a period of about 1 month. Keep the messages fairly short, so they can be read by the recipient quickly. Here are the messages I use (you are free to use these messages for yourself or as guide to personalize your own):

(for these messages, we will assume that the recipients name is Steve):

Message #1

Sent – Immediately

Subject Line: Welcome Steve! – Getting Prepared For Homeownership

Dear Steve,

Thank you for your inquiry about the basics of buying a home.

Attached is the report that I promised you, entitled “Getting Prepared For Home Ownership”. This report will explain many of the basics in understanding what goes into looking for, selecting, and purchasing a home.

Please review the attached report at your convenience, and feel free to call me with any questions you might have. You are under no obligation, and real estate agents or any sales rep will call you.

You see <Steve>, buying a home is a big decision, and we want to be sure you understand the process and are aware of the right questions to ask BEFORE you ever talk to anyone. As a result of my personally working with hundreds of new homebuyers just like you, I know that you have many questions. For your convenience, I’ll forward you another report in a few days which explains a bit

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about interest rates, and how they affect you and how much you can afford.

In the meantime <Steve>, if you have any questions about the report or the home buying process in general, please feel free to call me at (616) 336-0888. Thanks again for your interest, and I wish you the best –

Sincerely,

Chip Cummings, CMC
Rum Creek Financial Corporation

Message #2

Sent – 2 days later

Subject Line: Steve, how much house can you afford?

<Steve> -

Hi! Hope you had a chance to look at the report I sent you a few days ago. As you can see, there is a lot that goes into the process, and the first place to start is with the financing.

After working with thousands of people over the past 18 years, I know one of the most basic questions you must have is – How much house can I actually afford?

I have attached a quick report for you that explains the basics of qualifying, and what formulas lenders typically use to calculate payments and possible loan amounts. There are several programs that allow you to get into a new home with very little or even no money down! This report will illustrate the basics of what money might be needed for the purchase of a home, and some of the options for down payments.

Take a look at the report <Steve>, and let me know if you have any questions. Another report that I have prepared looks at interest rates and how they relate to qualifying. I'll pass that one on to you in a few days.

Thanks again, and happy reading!

Sincerely,

Chip Cummings, CMC
Rum Creek Financial Corp.

Message #3

Sent – 4 days later

Subject Line: Steve – here’s The REAL Story on Interest Rates

Greetings <Steve>!

Interest rates are low, as everyone on the planet knows by now. What you may not know, is that interest rates are only a part of the equation!

Let me explain <Steve>.....

Yes, you can certainly save money on your payment with lower interest rates, but there are several other factors that influence the TRUE interest rate that you pay! Just because someone offers a 4.00% interest rate, doesn’t mean that it all there is to the story.

<Steve>, there are hundreds of different mortgage programs out there, and all of them have different types of interest rate and cost structures attached to them. To help you sift through all the hype, I have prepared a short report for you called “The REAL Story on Interest Rates”. It’ll help you understand the relationship between rate and cost, and why they can vary – and that interest rate should NOT be the only thing you look at!

I have found that an educated homeowner is a happy homeowner, and want to be sure that all your questions are answered. If you are interested in talking about your specific qualifications and circumstances, please feel free to call me at (616) 388-0888. I’ll be glad to give you a half-hour of my time, with no obligation of course, to answer any questions you still might have.

Hope to talk to you soon –

-Chip Cummings

Message #4

Sent – 4 days later

Subject Line: Steve, Have you checked your credit history?

<Steve> -

Hope the report on interest rates helped you out. There's a lot of misleading information in the marketplace, huh?

One thing I forgot to mention the other day, and that concerns credit reports. Obviously credit plays an important part in the overall equation as well. What many people don't understand, is that your credit doesn't have to be perfect (who's is, right?) to get a new home!

In fact, there are many programs designed for people that have a few "bumps" in their past, but that doesn't have to be a problem.

Knowing that one of the first things you might want to look at is your credit <Steve>, I have attached a sheet which explains a little more about credit reports, and where you can go if there are errors or to get copies (sometimes they can cost a few bucks). Of course, I'll be glad to run a credit report for you at no cost, and look over to see if there are any items that would be of concern to a lender.

If you would like me to provide you with a complimentary copy of your credit report, just give me a call at (616) 388-0888, and we can get one right away for you.

Take care <Steve>, and let me know if you need anything else –

-Chip

Message #5

Sent – 5 days later

Subject Line: Steve – Interested in buying a home with little or no money?

<Steve> -

Hi, me again..... Just wanted to let you know about a

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couple of special programs that are designed for first-time homebuyers – specifically with little or no down payment required!

Knowing that many first-time homebuyers don't have a lot of extra cash to work with, I developed that attached report as a quick guide on what options might be available. Take a look at it <Steve>, and let me know if you have any questions. As always, you can call me at (616) 336-0888.

Look forward to talking to you soon –

-Chip

Message #6

Sent – 5 days later

Subject Line: Steve, let's look at possible financing options

Hi <Steve>!

I know I've loaded you down with a whole lot of info lately, but hope you're finding it informative. The idea is to know about all this financing stuff before you make the final commitment on buying your new home.

In addition to the little to no-money down programs that I told you about a few days ago, there are a few other programs you might be interested, so I attached a quick report for you <Steve>.

It's time we got you Pre-Approved for the loan, which as you know we can get done in less than a day. I won't don't charge you a dime, since I won't get paid anything unless you find a house, AND I get you the money for it!

Look over the attached info, then give me a call <Steve> - I'd love to go over it.

Talk soon –

-Chip

Message #7

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Sent – 7 days later

Subject Line: Steve, how's the search going?

<Steve> -

Just wondered how the search was going.....

Many times, people ask me about the advantages of working with a real estate agent, or trying to find a house on their own.

I don't know <Steve>, there are advantages to both! I've enclosed another short report on working with agents and also "For Sale By Owners" (who we affectionately call FiSBO's!) which talks about the right questions to ask, and the process of making an offer on a house.

Believe me <Steve>, I know what a scary step that can be! It doesn't have to though, and you want to make sure it's structured and presented in the best possible way for you. Look over the info, and call me when you get a chance – I have plenty of resources to assist you with every detail of the hunt!

Happy hunting, and look forward to talking to you soon <Steve> -

-Chip
(616) 336-0888

As you can see, these messages get more informal and take on a personal tone as they go. This gets the customer comfortable with me as a professional – and as a "trusted friend". Usually I will receive the call from the customer within the first 3-4 messages, so you want to make sure that the later messages compliment any other conversations you might have had.

Each of the e-mails is sent with a separate "short report" that contains information about a specific topic, and covers the most frequently asked questions. This saves time on my (and my staff's) part, and is more convenient to the customer.

Then the question is, how do I get them there in the first place?????

Pop-ups

There are all forms of marketing techniques for attracting first-time homebuyers, including traditional advertising, information sessions at hotels or real estate offices, direct mail, voice mail broadcast, and many others I have used in the past. I have written several articles and other reports on various marketing strategies. Here I want to look at a simple form of “opt-in” e-mail permission marketing that is used to generate the initial sequence of autoresponders that we are discussing.

The simple format I prefer for most first-timer homebuyers to “opt-in” (which is where they specifically request the information), is through the use of “Pop-Ups”. I am sure you are familiar with the concept of pop-ups, as they can annoy any web user who has ever visited a website!

Pop-ups are the small (usually advertisements) boxes that pop up when you enter a website. These boxes can be any size, and can pop up “over” a website, or under (known as pop-unders) – and can trigger several other pop-ups to other websites as well.

For our purposes, we will not be using the “annoying” type of pop-ups that smack a customer in the face with an advertisement. Instead, we will be using a simple invitation for first-time homebuyers to get a free report. They simply need to input their name and e-mail address, and the sequence begins.

A sample Pop-Up could look like this:



I have used various types of pop-ups, all with various levels of success. To find out more about pop-ups, how to generate them, and some samples, please go to the following link:

<http://www.popuppro.com>

They have a free trial version to assist you in creation of the pop-up. The pop-up can include a box for entering their name and e-mail directly, or can take them to a different page to do that. Once they click okay, then the “e-mail” (the customer information is transmitted via e-mail to the autoresponder system) is sent to begin the sequence.

Their initial message with the report will arrive in seconds. You can receive a report showing which customers have responded to what ads, and test the effectiveness of each one to determine which one is pulling better results.

The Seven Reports

The reports that I use for each of the e-mail messages are attached in a separate file for your use. I recommend that you personalize them with your name and company information, as well as other important details regarding your operation and personality. The titles for the reports are:

- 1. Getting Prepared For Homeownership – What You Need To Know!**
- 2. How Much House and How Much Payment Can I Afford?**
- 3. What They Don't Want You To Know About Interest Rates!**
- 4. What's My Score and Other Credit Reporting Mysteries!**
- 5. Getting Into A Home For Little or NO Down Payment!**
- 6. Making Sense Out Of Mortgage Programs – What's For ME?**
- 7. The Search Is On – Real Estate Agent or FSBO?**

As you see each of these reports addresses an individual topic so as not to overload them too quickly with information. I need them to stay focused.

The reports are also not too lengthy – usually just a page or two. The report is not meant to be time-consuming to read, only to get them call me and consult for professional advice and follow-up. If the report is too lengthy, they will just skim over it – or worse yet, not read it at all.

Keep it simple, and give them a reason to call you for more information so you have the opportunity to sell yourself.

Where To Go Next

Now you know the basic of setting up an autoresponder sequencing system. I have used this for first-time homebuyers, established customers, real estate agents, other affiliates that I work with, and other such opportunities. The provider I primarily use is a company called aWeber, and they can be found at the following site:

<http://www.aweber.com/?101599>

In addition, here are some other resources you can check out:

www.sendfree.com

www.freeautobot.com

www.getresponse.com

www.autobots.net

www.emailaddresses.com

www.autoresponders.com

www.proautoresponder.com

If you have other questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at info@northwindfinancial.com.

Best wishes to your success!



-Chip Cummings, CMC

"Advanced Sales Strategies – Producing Advanced Personal Success"

Chip Cummings is a national speaker, trainer and consultant. For information regarding topics and availability, please call (866) 977-7900.