

VIRGINIA EDITION

TOP AGENT

MAGAZINE

HOW DO
YOU FIND
GOOD
SALEABLE
LISTINGS?

**Listings =
Higher Income**

**FACEBOOK
Q & A**

THE SMARTEST
THING YOU CAN
DO TO BUILD
YOUR BUSINESS
**Survival Strategies
for Today's Market**

Delicia F. Roebuck
From the Ground Up



Executive Publisher
Jessica S. Fisher

Writers

Kristin Campbell
Elizabeth R. Elstien
Jen Hadley
Nate Liederbach
Zach Mendelson
Joan Olson

Feature Story Coordinator
Melissa Giordano

Graphic Designers
Robert Cobb
Melissa Martinez

Copy Editor
Joel Billyson

Accounting
Samantha Smith

Sales
Kevin Miles
Paul Green

Assistant to Publisher
Shannon Christian

Phone 888-461-3930
Fax 310-751-7068
info@topagentmagazine.com
www.topagentmagazine.com

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TOP AGENT MAGAZINE



FEATURED COVER AGENT
DELIA F. ROEBUCK

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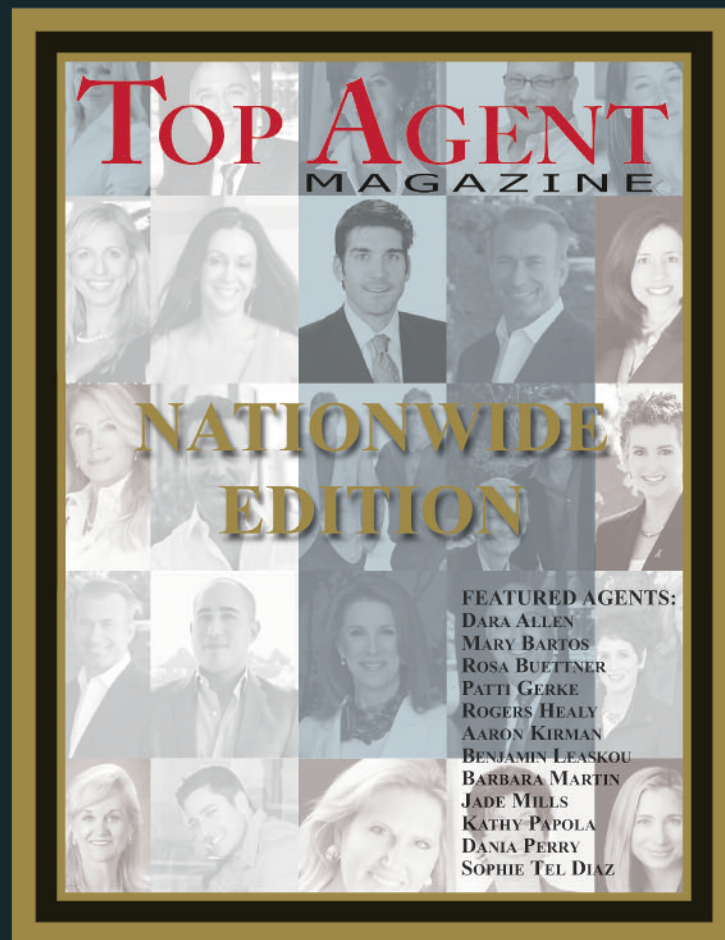
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How Do You Find Good, Saleable Listings?

By Mike Ferry

We know that in the Real Estate business, the agents who are taking listings on a regular basis are the agents who always earn the highest income. If we take the REO market out of this scenario, and we look at a somewhat normal market like we have today ... listing agents always succeed at a much higher rate than agents who are working with buyers. If you're going to look at becoming a listing agent, there are certain decisions you have to make. Let's look at 3 of them in terms of getting listings.

Option 1...sit in your office or at home and wait for business to find you. Believe it or not, this is the most common thing that agents do. What we have to look at is it is a really viable way of getting listings, the answer is universally "no." Yes, you can be sitting in the office and a "come list me" call could come in. If you happen to be sitting there when it comes in, you can wait and take a listing. If your goal is to do 2 or 3 transactions a year ... "waiting" is a good method of doing business, because the rejection level is (at best) minimal. The problem is, the production you receive is also minimal. You could be waiting at an open house for a potential buyer to walk in or for a neighbor to walk in and inquire about selling. You can be waiting while taking floor time and hoping that somebody calls and says, "Come list me." You could have dropped off some Just Listed door hangers in a neighborhood and gone to the office to wait and see if anybody would read them and call you. This particular method of doing business is probably the most common and, unfortunately, the most unproductive.

Option 2..."buying business"...this also is very common, because agents buy business in a wide variety of ways, whether it is running constant ads on a property they have listed and are trying to get a buyer to call from that ad...to personal promotion campaigns where you hope that somebody sees your name, recognizes it and then calls because you're the agent from the



ad. These are tried and true...they have been tried and done for years...and unless you're willing to commit a substantial amount of money into advertising and marketing yourself, they certainly aren't the best methods of getting new business for yourself.

In addition, in today's market, we buy business through purchasing leads off the internet. We buy business by overpricing listings because we're in competition with other agents or, what's worse, we buy business by cutting commissions so we can get a listing. In each case, you're buying the business. The question is...is this a viable, long-term method of getting business? The answer is partially yes. Why? Because agents have been doing it for years.

Third option...getting listings the old fashioned way...through good skills, a strong mindset, and the discipline to work every day at building a business. In looking at and talking to thousands of highly productive agents, who are taking 50/100+ listings per year, and who are the most

profitable in the businesses in which they operate...they gravitate towards option number three. For example, working your database effectively... meaning you're going to talk to everybody in your database 4 times a year and bring something of value to each call that you have with them. Do some type of a simple mailing 4 times a year to your database and remind them that you're "still in the Real Estate business and would look forward to any referrals they might have for you." The key with earning business from your database is making sure you don't have unknowns, meaning your database only has the names of people that you know and who know you.

Working with For Sale by Owners and Expired listings...we know they're going to re-list...we know their properties will sell...we know somebody is going to get the listing. The key is having the skillset and mindset to approach them, knowing that there's going to be rejection involved, but also understanding that they're going to list and you're as good a person as anybody to take that listing.

Working around your existing listings and sales thru either phone calls or knocking on doors. Just Listed/Just Sold are a great method of finding listings because you have the opportunity to share with the neighborhood what you've accomplished.

If each of us makes 15 to 20 contacts per day within the methods we've just discussed, or you're making 75 to 100 contacts per week (which is 350 to 400 per month) and you have reasonable skills and a reasonable mindset, you're going to take listings and you're going to do it with the highest profit margin.

To find out what kind of an agent you are and how you've been operating ... simply go back and look carefully at the last 12 months of your business. Where did each transaction come from? Source your business to determine whether you've been waiting, buying or going out and earning your business. It's a great exercise and something each of us needs to do.



TOP AGENT

MAGAZINE



Delicia F. Roebuck



Deliea F. Roebuck

Deliea F. Roebuck was a single woman working in the IT field when she bought her first home. Curious about the real estate process, Deliea began to ask questions to her agent in order to better understand the ins and outs of the business. Out of that curiosity came opportunity, as Deliea received her real estate license and after years of inactivity, made the decision to become an agent herself.

“My family situation changed and I still wanted to be in the work force, just with a job that was more tailored (to my family),” says Deliea, who is currently the Associate Broker of SweetHomeVA the umbrella of Prudential PenFed Realty. “(Real Estate) was the perfect fit ”

Serving the Northern Virginia communities in

Alexandria, Fairfax County and Prince William County, Deliea has spent the last 16 years becoming one of the most decorated real estate agents in the country. Some of her awards include Prince William Association of REALTORS® Top Producer (2004-present), Association of REALTORS® Lifetime Top Producer given to the top 1% of agents nationwide (2004-present) and the Prudential Chairman’s Circle Gold Award given to the top 2% of Prudential Real Estate Network agents (2011-present).

“I started from the ground up,” expresses Deliea, who is also an Accredited Buyers Representative, Certified Distressed Property Expert, Accredited Staging Professional and certified in Government and Corporate Relocation. Also, growing up as a



Sweet Home VA

“military brat,” she also has a niche with Military veterans, as well. “I enjoy working with those in the military because I have the opportunity to serve those who serve our great nation,” says Delia. “I love helping my clients and love the different personalities and family dynamics.”

“If you do it (real estate) consistently, and do it with passion, and follow the Golden Rule, you will succeed.”

Internet and social media marketing makes up 70% of her marketing. Delia understands the benefits of providing information relevant to the communities she serves. Delia believes the biggest reason for her success is due to her love for helping others. When it comes to the buyers

and sellers she serves, nothing is more important to her than ensuring they are taken care of both during and after the deal has closed.

“I’m entrusted with their biggest asset, so I take that very seriously,” Delia explains. “I’m not a one time wonder, either. I strive to be my client’s trusted advisor after the sale, to be their resource either immediately after settlement or years down the road when they need my services again.”

With 60% of her business coming by way of referral, there’s no denying that Delia is as good as advertised.

Previous clients have been quick to credit Delia. A condo seller from Bristow said,







“Deliea was terrific to deal with. She knows the business and isn’t afraid to roll up her sleeves to get the job done!”

A townhome seller from Gainesville has used Deliea to buy and sell homes stating that “each transaction has been absolutely wonderful. She has gone above and beyond for us each time, and I would recommend her to absolutely everyone looking to buy or sell a home!”

With all the support Deliea has received over the years from previous clients, none meant more to her than when she was recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

“Clients were so supportive during my recovery and it was during my illness that it dawned on me that so many of my past clients had become my genuine friends who cared and supported me throughout my journey” Deliea says.

“As someone who has always outworked her competition in order to be the best, this “life changing event” put things in perspective for

Deliea. “Now as a breast cancer survivor, my outlook has changed as I have assessed my life and what is important. Since then, Deliea has made it even more of a priority to take care of herself, enjoy every minute with her family and to give back to the community, something she encourages new agents to take to heart.

“Life is a gift. Make the most of it,” she says.

Despite the setback, Deliea refuses to quit her day job. “I enjoy what I do and it shows,” she exclaims. “Being a dedicated REALTOR® can be challenging but at the end of the day I can’t think of anything else I would rather do, I love my job!

Deliea F. Roebuck

Prudential PenFed Realty

Cell: 703 505 5252

Office: 703 396 6000

www.sweethomeva.com

Deliea.roebuck@penfedrealty.com

Facebook: Q & A

Top Agent Magazine Asked, You Answered:

Finish this sentence:

You know your clients think you are the best when...

- They give you a Tiffanys key necklace as a gift at closing!
- You get calls from past clients' family and friends saying that they heard you were the best agent in the business and that they want to meet with you.
- When two past clients without knowing both referred you to the same person.
- You are the family REALTOR® for several generations.
- They send referrals and bring a gift for me at closing!
- They hire me again!
- They need someone to call that they can truly trust and rely on.
- Promise little but deliver over and above.
- They consider you their friend—not just their REALTOR®.”
- They say, “Wow, you do have a really hard job. This is nothing like HGTV! Thank you so much!”
- They rave about you and send everyone your way!
- You get them a great interest rate.
- They insist on taking you out to dinner and give you a recommendation for your advertising.
- When you are a problem solver.
- You begin receiving calls to help their family and friends (shoot, maybe even their enemies) buy and sell real estate! It’s the best job ever!

The Smartest Thing You Can Do to Build Your Business

Eleven Experts Share Their Smartest Survival Strategies for Today's Market

By Julie Escobar

The smart ones ask when they don't know. And sometimes when they do." Consider these wise words from Malcolm Forbes, a man who clearly knows a thing or two about surviving financial storms.

Isn't that what we're supposed to do when we don't know, are facing adversity or are in over our heads? Heck, isn't that even what we're supposed to do to get ahead of the curve during tough times and be positioned for greatness when the tide starts to turn?

I think so, so I did. I asked: "What's the SMARTEST thing agents can do to build their business in today's market?" Fortunately for all of us, 11 of the top minds in the industry answered.

Here is what our special guests—Floyd Wickman, Mr. Interview™ — Michael Krisa, Bill Barrett, Darryl Davis, Carol Johnson, Mr. Internet® — Michael Russer, Matthew Ferry, Walter Sanford, Dave Beson, Claudia Wicks and Judy LaDeur—had to say about the smartest thing you can do to build your business now.

Industry icon Floyd Wickman: Well, I believe that's a three-part formula. First, work each week (we could stop there and increase production by 38%)... on bringing in saleable listings. That means getting face to face with a seller for a listing or price reduction. Next, get all buyers and lookers into the office to be qualified, and sell them on the benefits of the office like you never have before. Last, sell in-house inventory first!

Mr. Interview™ , Michael Krisa: My best advice? First, don't panic! Look



around your town/city/state, and identify the agents who are making the deals. Ask yourself what they are doing to adapt and how you can emulate them. Don't reinvent the wheel; take momentum from the ones already in forward motion.

Industry icon Dave Beson: Focus on filling the prospect pipeline and improving your presentation so that when you get in front of a "live one," you will win! If you aren't pre-planning your day and including an hour or more of prospecting by phone, in person, by letter, by email, by postcard and follow up, then you're missing the boat. I tell my audiences, "You have to be a missionary for real estate."

The easiest thing to do is to tell a success story—just one—about a couple who kept their house or a family that **WAS ABLE TO BUY** because of your help. If you need to share a story with someone in the office, that's okay. I have a letter that I suggest agents send out to everyone they know. It's cool to follow up by phone, too, even if it's just to leave a voice mail! Here it is:

Dear Bob and Mary,
I just reviewed my business for the year and found an amazing surprise: More than 61% of my business was past customers, referrals and repeat business.

Sure, it's been a challenging time in real estate, but where would I be without the support of important people like you and your friends? Many thanks for telling your friends about me, and me about them.

Be sure to let me know if there is anything I can do to help you or a friend.

All the best,
Your Name

Get in touch, and stay in touch—consistently. That's key.

Real estate and trends expert Bill Barrett: **DO NOT CUT BACK ON YOUR BUDGET!** Keep in touch with your past customers—meaning **ALL** of your past buyers and sellers—on a monthly basis. Superstars get 80% to 90% of their business from past customers through continuous prospecting and marketing. Consider that we're still on track to sell four million re-sales nationwide this year. Who's going to sell them? Certainly not the ones who "give up." Stay in the game.

Noted speaker Darryl Davis: I believe the best thing about this market is that we will see a flood of buyers coming out. Sellers who were waiting in the wings to sell their houses and buyers who were sitting in the wings waiting for rock bottom all will start to move as we see our market start to inch up. Remember: The agent with the most listings **WINS!** If I were to gamble, I would say things will be on the upswing starting this spring. So prepare for the surge of buyers by building your listing inventory **NOW!**

Recruiting pioneer Carol Johnson: Stay in constant communication with your book of business, customer base and centers of influence. There is a market—people are buying and selling! This is a good time to make a change. It's also a great time to develop new niche markets. Property condition is paramount right now—properties need to be in good condition, and prices have to be right. Make your listings the most compelling properties on the market!

Mr. Internet®, Michael Russer: I would have to say, launch your e-team. E-

team members specialize and differentiate themselves by targeting a niche. 90% of agents don't do this, which forces them to compete with everyone. Specialists know that they must always effectively answer the question, "What's in it for me?" for every client.

Industry coach Matthew Ferry: For agents, I would say that they need to find that faith they had in themselves before. I'm doing a webinar for all of my clients that includes a six-point action plan to help them find the courage and strength to make 2009 their best year yet. It takes honesty—about finances, about whether this industry is the right industry, and about resentment and anger. These mindsets and energies have a very damaging effect on productivity. People know what to do, they just don't do it. They don't do it because of hidden negativity in their mindsets. This must be discovered and removed.

For brokers, I would have to tell them to get to the heart of each agent's passion and purpose. Most people are focused on what doesn't work about life right now and, consequently, draw from that energy to make decisions. This is very detrimental and will pull you further into a mental breakdown. The key is to discover the future you are committed to and get focused on that. Everyone is operating in relation to the future they are present to. If you are in despair, then you are present to a bleak future. If you are empowered, then you are present to a future that you are looking forward to. Today's action is a function of the future.

Real estate expert Walter Sanford: Short and simple: "Triple (at least) your current listing inventory." This positions you to win when the market turns.

Speaker and trainer Claudia Wicks: Learn online marketing and how to use the technology tools consumers are using. You need to have an online presence and, of course, develop a database of prospects. Establish relationships with more prospects than ever before. Collect email addresses; use tech tools to stay in touch automatically until they are ready to buy and/or sell, and stay in touch with past clients.

According to NAR, many agents have been in the business seven years or less. They have never known this type of market. They do not know what to do to

generate business. Agents who have developed a large database of prospects, however, are not struggling. They have a steady stream of business. In this market, you need to get down to basics and build your business. That means generating prospects. You can do it by talking to everyone you know and asking for business by networking and letting everyone know it is a great time to buy. You also can do it by creating an online presence and branding yourself by marketing your own web site, blogging, joining social networks, and responding immediately to online requests for info.

Show up every day, and start working. Stay motivated by doing something nice for someone else, by talking to past clients, and by watching how you talk to yourself and not listening or “buying into” all of the negative talk. You can do it by believing in yourself.

Brokers and managers, the smartest thing YOU can do is provide training and encourage new skill building for your agents. Keep them engaged in productive activities such as networking opportunities, open houses involving the entire office or office tour of homes, or showing them how to market their listings online. I’d also suggest having “call nights” where they call past clients to stay in touch. Also provide them with valuable information such as:

which price ranges are selling, list price to sales price, days on market how to handle issues that arise at closing how to work with appraisers to help ascertain value what type of financing is available good news at the office such as new listings, sales and price reductions short sale help foreclosure information how to get a price reduction how to help get a listing in good condition or staged.

Recruiting guru Judy LaDeur: Agents, DO NOT read the newspapers, and please turn the TV off! Agents are glued to TVs and reading papers like never before, just looking for the gloom and doom. I say, “Ignore the press!” There are opportunities in every market, and the agents who are finding them are having a great year in real estate! This is a great time for apartment renters to buy homes. It also is a great time for sellers in a starter price range to move up to their dream home. Price homes correctly, and

stage them well. Homes are still selling! If you have listings that are not priced and staged correctly, get rid of them!

Brokers and managers, I'd tell you to first trim the fat! That means look at your costs, and see where you can cut back. You also should look at your agents, and trim a few of those as well. Most brokers right now are carrying agents who need to be out of the business. Those agents drain your office resources and staff.

I'd also tell you that there has never been a better time to recruit! Many agents are unhappy and looking for options. The brokers and recruiters we're coaching right now are having record-breaking recruiting years because they pick up the phone every day and talk to agents. In this market, if you are not recruiting, you will not survive!

And the last bit of advice is the same advice that I gave the agents. DO NOT read the newspapers, and turn the TV off! We are coaching several brokers who have doubled the size of their office this year by ignoring the press. If anything really bad happens, you will know about it soon enough. All of your friends who are glued to the TV will call and tell you what is going on! So stay focused, and keep moving forward!

Thanks to all of our extraordinary panelists for their extraordinary answers! When it comes to "asking" for help, you'll find this "dream team" of experts to be a resource you can turn to and rely on every time.

Keep an eye out for the other three parts of this series: Just Two Things...; Leadership Lessons From the Top; and Motivated—Me? Our generous experts shared more than 20 pages of insight, inspiration and information on these vital topics.

Julie Escobar has more than 20 years of sales and marketing experience in the real estate and speaking industries. An established author and industry resource, you will find her consistently seeking out innovative solutions, fresh ideas, as well as creative products and tools for the team at Prospects PLUS!, industry entrepreneurs and of course, valued clients. To learn more about the training and tools you need to survive in ANY market, visit www.prospectsplus.com today. © 2014, Julie Escobar. All rights reserved.

Sometimes Size Doesn't Matter

("G" rated for all ages)

You've heard it said that the difference between the great and the mediocre is that the great are willing to do what the mediocre won't. The world is filled with talented people who will never fulfill their destiny because of a lack of consistency and/or focus. It really doesn't matter whether we are speaking of sales agents, moms and dads, managers, teachers, athletes, students or factory employees. Rising above the crowd or getting back on track (for those desirous) generally entails doing the little things that can make huge differences.

A good part of an athletic coach's job is to grind away on the basics so the best performance comes more easily and often. The purpose of a student's homework is to demonstrate the grasping of ideas for competency in test taking and real world application. The good sales manager goes over the basics of the "nuts and bolts" of the product or service as well as selling techniques so the salesperson is comfortable and effective in all situations. Parenting classes give clues as to maximizing the child's potential. Therapists ask questions of clients to confront "sticking points" for that person to move on and function positively. Even major work in reducing fears and phobias is done through confronting the fear minimally, yet consistently, and moving through and beyond it. Little changes make huge bottom line differences. And, even in the face of preparation, it's easy for many not to do their best performance when it's important to do the best.

Dr. Milton Erickson developed a technique over sixty years ago (one of the few outstanding people studied for their effectiveness, eventually forming the foundation of information for NeuroLinguistic Programming). The technique was developed as a trigger mechanism to create peak performance, on demand. This is a technique that I have taught to thousands of people in sales to improve performance and hundreds of law school students to prepare for and pass the BAR exam the first time. Almost all third year students have



studied and done their review, yet typically 65% don't pass the first time. It's not because they are not as bright as the 35% who do, but in most cases they don't test well due to test anxiety. Control the anxiety and they have easier access to stored information. Sales presentations that end up poorly, also, in many cases can be traced back to tensions, pressures and closing anxieties (fears). Even in relationships where angry behavior has many saying things they don't really mean, words they can't ever take back, and not saying things that need to be said, think about the inability at those moments for the combatants to deal with pressures in a more productive and kind way. Think about how pressure and stress affect our sex lives, golf game, learning and our view of the world. What if there existed a technique that could make things better—now? There is.

Here is Erickson's technique, as I teach it in one of my classes. Before anything you do that you would like to do with excellence, focus, thoughtfulness or care, circle the index and forefinger of either hand, preferably with your eyes closed, relax with two or three deep breaths and repeat inwardly and silently how you are going to perform in the upcoming activity (in superlative—the best of terms). Use this idea before a sales presentation, a golf game, for speaking in public comfortably, to calm your temper down, studying or taking a test or ?? Before a sales presentation you

might close your eyes, take a couple of deep breaths and tell yourself, “In this presentation I will ask appropriate questions, listen well, speak with confidence, close assertively and remain calm and relaxed throughout.” Or, “I will absorb information during this class photographically and have instant access to all information at any time.” Or, “I will play this round of golf with greater focus and concentration than ever before.” The circling of the fingers is not a must. Any little physical gesture will do. This whole little process will take 10-15 seconds to go through. If you do this before any activity in which you would like to do especially well, you will not be disappointed as you see measurable results over the days and weeks ahead. Watch how your attention becomes riveted and present. You will now be more aware of your favorite sports celebrities doing little ritualistic gestures before an “at bat” a “free throw” or when “breaking a huddle.” This is a technique taught by sports psychologists to athletes for many years. Now it’s your turn.

Here’s why this is called a trigger or anchor and why it is a powerful tool.

If you are doing regular hypnosis sessions once or twice each day, as I teach them in class, meditating on your own or just taking some quiet time during your day, when peaceful and relaxed, touch your fingers together and silently tell yourself “each time I touch these two fingers together I relax and become focused and concentrated.” You are associating (anchoring) the sense of relaxation and positive focus with the touching together of the fingers. As you use the technique throughout the day, your mind will conform to this “post hypnotic suggestion” by creating excellence on demand and elevating your performance! The more you use this tool, the better and more it will work for you.

For those of you with a tendency to make premature judgments and discard ideas that are not in concert with your own, see if you can get past yourself and show yourself what you can do rather than what you can’t by doing this little technique 5-10 times per day. Evaluate its effectiveness in a few weeks. I think you will find the effort to be worthwhile. Go play!



Barry Eisen teaches personal development seminars and coaches Southern California top producing realtors. “Your business will never grow more than you do” is the theme; self hypnosis and behavior modification are the tools for playing a bigger game. barryeisen.com, barryeisen@LA.twcbc.com 818-769-4300

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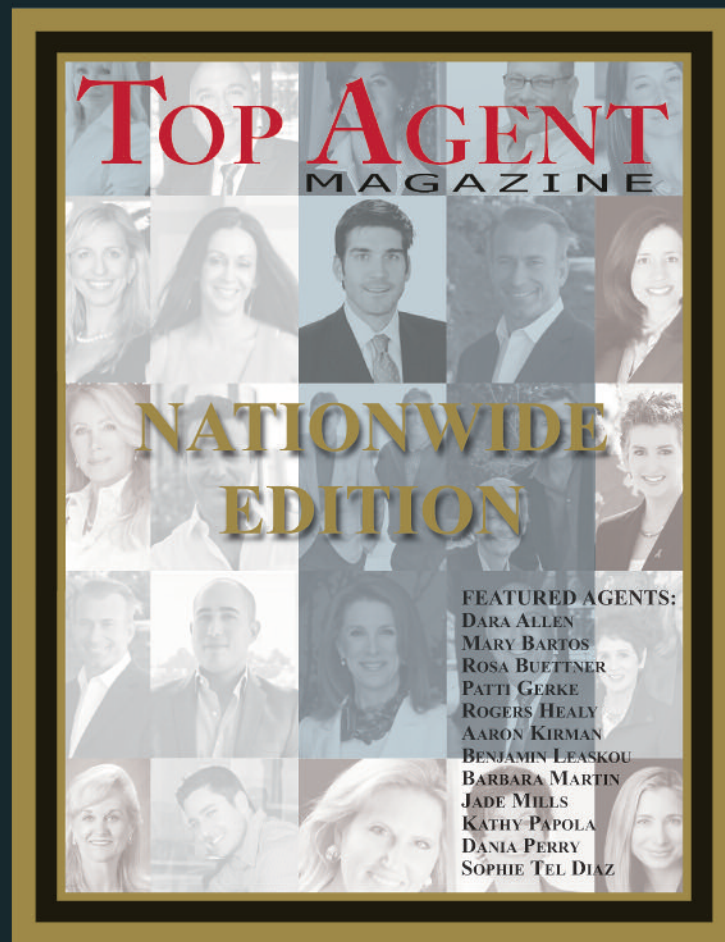
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