

The Lead Nurture Formula

for Real Estate Marketing Success



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Why Lead Nurturing Matters for Your Marketing

We're roughly two full decades into the 21st century. Think about how far technology has come during that time.

Smartphones and tablets are glued to consumers' hands 24/7. One social network or another controls most everyone's attention spans for much of each day. And when it comes to commerce, purchasing products and services of just about any kind takes mere seconds online.

In other words, we live in the Gotta-Have-It-Right-Now Era, and this doesn't just apply to consumers, but brands as well — including and especially agents and brokers.

Think about your own real estate business, for instance: You (rightly) want to use **digital tools and resources that help you attract your audience, capture more leads, and close more deals**. But one facet of your marketing and sales cycle you may not think of enhancing with technology is your lead nurturing approach.

Fail to develop an effective lead nurturing strategy for your agency, and all of the prospects you add to your CRM database will just sit there and, in turn, fail to become new business. In short, having a fully fledged, comprehensive, personalized lead nurturing plan is an absolute must in this day and age.

While **putting the right real estate tech in place to aid your nurture efforts** is essential, so too is understanding the tactics and techniques that will transform your potential clients into actual clients.

In this guide, you'll learn everything you need to know to craft an extensive lead nurturing action plan that will help you move leads down your marketing funnel — and generate more business.

What You Need to Know About Modern Nurturing

First and foremost, you must understand why **lead nurturing has become the central cog of agents' modern marketing machines** before you can implement your own nurture blueprint for your business.

Whether you're a buyer's, seller's, or rental agent, the nurturing strategy, at its core, remains the same, for the most part. It starts with contacting leads moments after conversion and ends with requesting to represent them.

It's in this middle phase, though, where you'll have to conduct a variety of marketing activities in a relatively specific order to keep leads moving toward your ultimate goal: conversion into new clients.

Here are the core tasks associated with modern lead nurturing — and the specific types of premier real estate technology needed to conduct and complete the tasks in question:

Setting up lead profiles

New leads, along with their contact info and housing needs, have to be added to your customer relationship management (CRM) software and updated as their circumstances change and you gradually communicate with them regarding their preferences and timeline.

Assigning grades to leads

Assign a score to each your leads, ideally using a bare-bones system that's easy to use. For example, **in Placester's lead management system**, agents can designate their prospects with a green (strong lead), yellow (decent lead), and red (weak lead) grade.

Segmenting leads into buckets

After grading your prospects, it's equally important to separate them into different buckets based on their housing criteria — buyers vs. sellers, “hot” vs. “cold,” and so on — so you can add each to different drip email campaigns. Speaking of which . . .

Developing email campaigns

Use automated drip email campaigns for each lead segment, each of which offers distinct messaging to each segment and nurtures them at different rates (e.g. “fast” drip for “hot” leads who may convert soon; “slow” drip for your “cold” leads — more on this later).

Reprioritizing each prospect

Each action a lead takes with your online presence can help you better determine whether they’re someone to continue nurturing and try to close soon or if they ought to be deleted from your CRM altogether. So, analyze their activity over time.

Making the final sales pitch

Eventually, the cream of your lead crop will rise to the top, and you’ll figure out who you ought to reach out to to convert into new business. You’ve worked hard to this point, so nailing your sales spiel is paramount to a successful overall nurture strategy.

There are certainly other tasks you have to handle to master your real estate lead nurturing approach, but at the end of the day, these are the primary ones you need to nail down.

In other words, you must have a modern real estate CRM and drip marketing system to develop a top-tier nurture strategy, so research the best tech options for your agency before delving too deep into building out your plan.



23%

Nurtured leads experience a **23% shorter sales cycle** than non-nurtured prospects.

— **Market2Lead**



451%

Brands that nurture leads with automation see up to a **451% increase in qualified leads**.

— **The Annuitas Group**



82%

82% of brands say their lead nurturing strategies help them achieve their objectives.

— **Ascend2**



3 Reasons

Why You Need a Lead Nurturing Strategy

#1: Most of your leads simply aren't ready to buy/sell right after.

Many leads don't turn into clients right after converting online. As a matter of fact, it often takes months to move prospects through one's marketing funnel and turn them into new business. It really doesn't matter the industry in which you work, though: Ask practically any professional at any B2C or B2B brand about their nurture efforts, and they'll tell you it takes quite a bit of time to close clients.

#2: Each of your lead segments requires its own distinct nurture strategy.

No two leads are alike, meaning each one requires a unique marketing plan. One prospect may prefer email newsletters before considering your business, while others are more ready to buy or sell now. Thus, you need to have multiple approaches for your different lead segments so you carefully advance them through your marketing and sales cycle.

#3: Contacting new leads boost your odds of client conversion.

Making initial contact with a new lead within an hour (or, ideally, minutes) after they convert — in your case, this will occur most frequently online via lead capture forms on your website — is the best way to stay top of mind with prospects. In fact, data proves that **contacting leads right after they become such greatly enhances your odds of earning their business** at some point down the line.

Who to Target with Your Online Nurture Activities

Getting started with online marketing automation tools, like drip email software, to begin a new lead nurturing strategy (or augment your existing one) isn't as difficult as you may think.

In fact, if you have a **premier platform in place that includes both a CRM and drip campaign automation**, you're in better shape than a lot of other agents out there — possibly even ones in your own market.

The best real estate lead management system offers nurture features and functionality like:

Pre-made, customizable drip email campaign templates

The foremost CRM platforms today are really online operating systems that include all of the marketing and sales bells and whistles pros like you need to succeed with generating and nurturing leads. One big feature to look for is a **lead management system that offers ready-to-optimize email templates** to which you can add your branding and own custom messaging.

The ability to import leads from just about anywhere online

You're not just earning new prospects from your real estate website (though that's the dream, isn't it?). Rather, you're (likely) getting leads from portals like Zillow and Trulia and ad platforms like AdWords and Facebook for Business. Thus, you need to be able to get these prospective clients into a single database with ease — something your CRM needs to offer.

Lead assignment capabilities for real estate brokers

If you're a broker, you know there is no one optimal way to share leads among your team. To reduce the hassle of having to comb over prospects from separate software and, ultimately, assign them to the agent you deem the best fit for them, you can handle this once-burdensome task with ease using a **best-in-class real estate lead management**

solution. What's important, once you have this system in place and you've learned the ins and outs of the digital resource, is using said software to target the leads you think are worth your time and energy to nurture.

It's not as simple as, "This lead just came in, so I'll nurture them first." Instead, you should be saying to yourself, "Okay, it's time to analyze my current collection of leads and figure out who's who" — that is, segment your leads.

Start by listing out **the types of people you typically work with.** Do you mostly represent high-end sellers looking for pristine luxury properties? Or do you tend to help first-time buyers find their (modestly priced) dream home?

Once you have a strong notion of the kinds of individuals who hire you and your real estate agency, you have the **basis needed to organize your CRM database** and, afterward, attribute leads to different buckets.

Now, this isn't to say you're older and colder prospects don't deserve the time of day. It's more that you need to capitalize on leads who clearly are far and away the better nurture targets — ones who could close at any moment.

For instance, if you **received a new lead who filled out a lead capture form** to download a piece of content — maybe a buying checklist — and another who filled out a home valuation form and added a note to you via email saying they want a comparative market analysis ASAP, it's pretty evident who deserves your attention first and most.

Having said that, if you don't employ an enticing email campaign for both of these leads, neither is likely to convert . . . which brings us to how you can get your drip messaging up and running — and yourself that much closer to generating more business and revenue.



How to Engage Leads with Placester's Email Blast Feature

WATCH NOW

A background image showing two business people in suits shaking hands, with a blue gradient overlay at the bottom.

The Nurture Workflow for New Leads

From Prospect to Client

Step #1: Personalize every single email you send.

You can't email every new lead moments after they become prospects. So, automate this task. Send email autoresponders to your latest leads right after they fill out a form to thank them for doing so. Whether they filled out said form to get a buyer's or seller's guide or schedule a consultation with you, offer your appreciation and say they'll get the asset or information they're looking for shortly.

Step #2: Create profiles for new prospects in your CRM.

Some CRM systems will automatically develop these profiles for you, but regardless of how you get new prospects in your database, just be sure to develop their unique profiles right away. Also, be sure to add in all pertinent details regarding their housing preferences, if available, or, at the very least, how they became a lead (e.g. filled out a home valuation form to determine their residence's value).

Step #3: Add each new lead to a drip email campaign.

The autoresponder is simply a one-off message to express your gratitude to leads for . . . well . . . becoming leads, really. Having said that, you still need to place these prospects on dedicated drip email campaigns that are geared toward who they are (buyer, seller, renter, investor, etc.) and how they became a lead (content download, meeting request, open house sign-up, etc.), among other traits.

Step #4: Monitor prospects' email and website activity.

With the right real estate website, drip marketing software, and lead management platform in place (ideally, **ones that come in the same all-in-one solution for agents and brokers** — hint, hint), you will be able to methodically observe your prospects' engagement from both your website and emails and, in turn, discern which leads appear to have the most interest in you and your agency.

Step #5: Determine which leads become “qualified.”

It's vital to figure out which of your (hopefully and presumably) numerous prospects are actually opening your emails, clicking through to your site from those messages, and further engaging with your listings, blog posts, and other pages. Why? Because this is really the only effective way for you to deduce which leads are at the bottom of your marketing funnel and, thus, ready to buy or sell soon — and hire representation.

Step #6: Make your move with your “hot” prospects.

After you've evaluated which leads seem most ready to buy or sell (you'll be able to more easily determine this over time), it's time to make “the ask” of your prospects. If they want to work with you, you're good to go. If they express a desire to wait on their housing decision, let them know you can follow up at a later date. If they outright state they won't hire you, you can delete them from your CRM and focus on your top leads.



Improve your lead nurturing with Placester's marketing solution.

Watch our Lead Nurture Series webinars to learn how you can more effectively transform your prospects into clients.



Part 1 | The Lead Nurture Series:
Automate Your Email Follow Up

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Part 2 | The Lead Nurture Series:
Automatic Email Campaigns

WATCH WEBINAR



Part 3 | The Lead Nurture Series:
Automatic Email Campaigns

WATCH WEBINAR

How to Engage with Your Nurture-Worthy Leads

Ah, email: the preeminent means to convert your bottom-of-the-funnel prospects into brand new clients. You won't find a more important digital marketing instrument for your real estate business than your automated email software . . . meaning it's time you learned how to use your system wisely — or get such a system to begin with.

Let's assume you've already taken the initiative to get a top-notch drip marketing platform for your business (like, say, **the one that comes with Placester's operating system**). Half of the lead nurture battle is won. Now, you can concentrate on building actual campaigns.

First, you need to determine the drip campaigns you want to run. This will vary from agent to agent, technically, but for the most part, there are a few core campaigns you'd be smart to set up at the onset of your email strategy (**NOTE:** The first campaign below needs to be conducted before you can begin the other two):



CAMPAIGN #1: New Buyer/Seller Leads

You often won't know much about new leads except for the fact they found something useful on your website which led them to become a prospect. So, add each to this campaign featuring a series of messages about your agency, listings (yours or otherwise), and market, along with a blog post digest. After each lead has gone through the email gamut, so to speak, you'll know **which engaged (and deserve further nurturing)** and which didn't (and can be added to the "nurture later" list).



CAMPAIGN #2: Hot Buyer/Seller Leads

It's the folks from the former group — those who engaged highly with your first series of emails — who need to be added to this campaign. This can chiefly feature more promotional messaging to get the prospects in question more interested in who you are and what you can do for them,

more so than general tips/best practices content from your website. **Explainer, listing, and neighborhood videos are ideal**, while photos and clips of you and your team and clients in this campaign's emails can also greatly aid your efforts to convert leads.



CAMPAIGN #3: Cold Buyer/Seller Leads

As for the email recipients in the latter group from your first campaign — the leads who didn't interact with your set of emails — they can be added to a “cold” prospect campaign that's sent far less frequently than the “hot” lead campaign. Whereas the “hot” campaign can have emails sent a couple times weekly, this one shouldn't be sent more than once every few weeks, so as not to annoy prospects who clearly aren't interested in you (at least not yet).

Now, you might be asking, *“That's nice to know which campaigns to run — but what do I actually email in each one?!”* Well, in short, there's no one right email formula for your leads. Each and every real estate business (and, in turn, marketing strategy) is unique, as each one entails a unique audience.

Having said that, there are many kinds of emails that have historically done well with both buyer and seller leads you may want to infuse into your own campaigns. But beyond those, it's really up to you to test a whole variety of emails you think your prospects would find interesting — and that would help them convert into clients.

BONUS TIP: It's important to remember this cold hard truth: You won't convert all of your leads into new business. In fact, data shows the percentage you convert may end up in the low single digits . . . but if you play the high-volume, high-quality lead generation game well enough, **that low percentage can yield amazing ROI.**

Ensure your website is up to snuff (e.g. **make sure your site has the essential lead gen pages**) and your paid advertising efforts are constantly optimized (e.g. **using targeted Facebook ads to earn first-rate prospects**) and you'll have the the marketing foundation necessary to thrive and, ultimately, convert more clients.

Where to Take Your Nurture Strategy From Here

The whole reason you likely downloaded this guide was to get actionable takeaways you can use to better your lead nurturing strategy. So, let's get right to the point — and share how you can “win” with your online nurturing.

Below you'll find the ultimate action plan that can turn your interested buyer or seller prospects into satisfied clientele, which includes the seven core activities that will make you a lead-nurturing expert. Some may take six months to convert. Others might take six days. While the nurture timeline varies, just know this blueprint will take your business to new heights:



ACTION ITEM #1: Getting the Right Technology

We can't stress this enough: Not having a modern, sophisticated tech platform to handle the indispensable nurture tactics that **ultimately convince leads to choose your agency** will more likely than not prevent you from earning their business — and lead them to other local agents. Test out the tools available in the marketplace, get demos of these solutions, and then pick the optimal one that fits your particular needs. There is no one right software option for every real estate pro, so this step, while potentially time-consuming, will save you time (and many-a-headache) down the line.



ACTION ITEM #2: Developing Clear Goals and KPIs

You didn't get into real estate without creating an exhaustive business plan, right? (If you're just getting started, don't worry: **This business planning template is perfect for you.**) Well, you also need one for this facet of your online marketing. Whereas your lead generation plan is all about learning how to turn your site visitors into new prospects, your nurturing plan is all about understanding what constitutes a good and bad lead, who's worth nurturing, and what “success” and “failure” looks like.



ACTION ITEM #3: Setting Up All Email Activities

As already noted (several times), email is your key to winning over your leads. Automation can help, but at the heart of your email campaigns is the human factor. Personalize your messaging and craft copy that shows leads you care about their housing needs — and you're the right person for the job. The only way you'll connect with your end-of-the-sales-cycle leads and prompt them to hire you over the competition is with drip emails that relay your value prop and provide relevant, locally focused info.



ACTION ITEM #4: Understanding CRM Functionality

On any given day, you'll probably see at least a few dozen "updates" regarding buyer and seller leads in your CRM database. Some will have new preferences for the types and price ranges of properties they want. Others will have a more specific time frame in which they need to offload their residences. Given the propensity for leads to update their wish lists and desires over time, you need to stay on top of this data and **update their respective profiles in your CRM daily**. This will ultimately give you insights into who is and isn't worth your nurturing energy — and tell you which prospects appear as ready as ever to hire representation.



ACTION ITEM #5: Working Hard to Convert Clients

All of the amazing tech tools in the world won't help you improve your lead-to-client conversion efforts if you don't do your part as an agent. Not that we need to tell you already, but it's imperative you understand how to talk to your prospects, put yourself in their shoes, and — when they appear close to making a decision — communicate why you're the best real estate pro for the job. All of your nurture activities will be useless without leveraging your sales savvy.



ACTION ITEM #6: Analyzing Successes and Failures

You don't need to be a data analyst to know when your nurturing approach is (and isn't) working. When the clients aren't coming in and your emails remain unengaged with, it's fairly obvious something is amiss with your strategy (e.g. no/few email opens). Instead of burying your head in the sand and hoping your emails will improve, though, you need to be proactive and measure everything: from your biggest successes to your biggest missed opportunities. Once you have this data compiled, you can move to the next step . . .



ACTION ITEM #7: Knowing How to Refine Your Plan

Experimenting with one's marketing isn't a new concept whatsoever. Brands in just about every sector, both B2B and B2C (like you), non-profit and for-profit (also you . . . obviously) take their data and use it to figure out the weak aspects of their nurture strategies (e.g. weak email "offers"; poor timing with communications; not relaying value enough). So, be sure to optimize and re-optimize your nurturing efforts every month to get the kinks out and fix **your digital real estate marketing machine**, so to speak. Without this kind of routine fine-tuning in place, your leads will all blend together — and you won't be able to tell who's getting that much closer to choosing an agent.

And that's really it. That's how you go from an "I-Kinda-Sorta-Get-Lead-Nurturing" mindset to an "I-Definitely-Know-How-to-Earn-More-Business" mentality.

As is the case with most (if not all) online marketing activities, your version of "success" won't happen overnight. But, with the right attitude, lots of determination, and **the best real estate technology to help you convert more clients**, you can leverage lead nurturing to build a sustainable business that grows with each passing month.



Learn how Placester's software can boost your lead nurturing.

Check out our in-depth webinars to find out how the Placester platform can simplify your lead nurturing — and earn you more.



Modern Real Estate CRM

Insider Tips for Using an All-In-One CRM

WATCH WEBINAR



The Future of Lead Nurturing

How Placester Helps

WATCH WEBINAR



Get Real Estate Website Advice

Tracking Lead Activity on Your Website

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5 Ways to Craft Highly Engaging Lead Nurture Emails

#1: Personalize every single email you send.

It's a simple thing, really: adding your leads' names to the top of every email you send them. However, this kind of personalization goes a long way in building trust with your prospects, getting them to engage with your messages, and directing them back to your real estate website. So, be sure your drip email software allows for this kind of personalization to enhance your nurture strategy.

#2: Test your subject lines, copy, CTAs, etc.

A/B testing isn't just something you ought to conduct solely for your website. Rather, it's an ideal approach to put into play for your drip campaigns. As strange as it may sound, you can see drastically different results with your emails by altering the tiniest things (e.g. one subject line that reads ***"Discover Local Housing Statistics for _____"*** against one that says ***"Discover Local Housing Stats for _____"***).

#3: Get right to the point to engage recipients.

Your website is the ideal medium for lengthy, explanatory copy that details your business, community, and expertise. Emails, on the other hand, are meant to be short form and direct. For instance, if you want seller leads to sign up for a free consultation, ensure your CTA is succinct: ***"Sign up today to schedule a 15-minute online chat with me."***

#4: Identify emails that helped close prospects.

After a few months' worth of emails to your lead list(s), you'll be able to detect which campaigns — and which emails within those campaigns — performed “best.” By best, we mean the ones that led to the most opens, clicks, and additional lead capture forms or calls or emails to you directly. Those who partake in the latter activity clearly want to learn more about you and/or buying or selling a home, meaning they'vere likely your top prospects to call next.

#5: Secure feedback on your email campaigns.

Whether it's from past leads who never converted (and likely won't at any point) or past clients you've worked with, it's optimal to get feedback from your prospects and customers to understand what they did and didn't like about your email nurturing efforts. You may find you sent emails too frequently, ones that weren't clear, or even ones that just didn't appeal to your audience. Whatever the issue(s) are, this info can help improve your future drips.

