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& COMPANY MAGAZINE



## BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY & RELATIONSHIPS

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LONG-DISTANCE SWIMMER DIANA NYAD

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CELEBRATES 20 YEARS,  
1996-2016



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**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** David Lally  
**VP OF SALES & MARKETING** Terri King  
**MANAGING EDITOR** Florance Chung  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** Franz Krachtus

**CONTRIBUTORS**  
Dawn Brookshire, Beverly Buffini, Brian Buffini, Dermot Buffini, Florance Chung, Laura Foreman, David Lally, David McGhee, Joe Niego, J'aime Nowak, Brian Wildermuth

**GRAPHIC DESIGNERS**  
Pip Abrigo, Angela Bruno, Augusto Dela Cruz, Rodney Diaz, Franz Krachtus, Colleen Lynch

**CONTACT**  
Buffini & Company  
6349 Palomar Oaks Court | Carlsbad, CA 92011  
800-945-3485 | buffiniandcompany.com

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Last month I flew to Nashville for some meetings about our new podcasts. The car service to the airport had its own Wi-Fi. Staff in the terminal scanned my boarding card straight from my phone screen before scanning me! Onboard, I connected to inflight Wi-Fi like so many others around me. When I landed, my phone's GPS guided me straight to the hotel in a city I've never set foot in before. The valet asked for my cell number, then handed me a ticket. "When you want your car, text the number on the card and it'll be waiting for you." Of course it will, I thought.

In eight hours, technology and I had banged into each other in genius and fascinating ways. But the fact remained; I had used all of those devices and processes to get me to a face-to-face meeting. Why? Because it was live, interactive, explorative, collaborative and conversational. And that truly seems to be where we are at our best. We're relational animals...we form communities, have families, and build cities so we can live in close proximity. We are connected to each other in a complex and sophisticated manner, picking up on cues, facial expressions, movements, and energy as we adjust accordingly. And while I love technology and enjoy all the speed and efficiency it brings, sitting down across from someone is unbeatable.

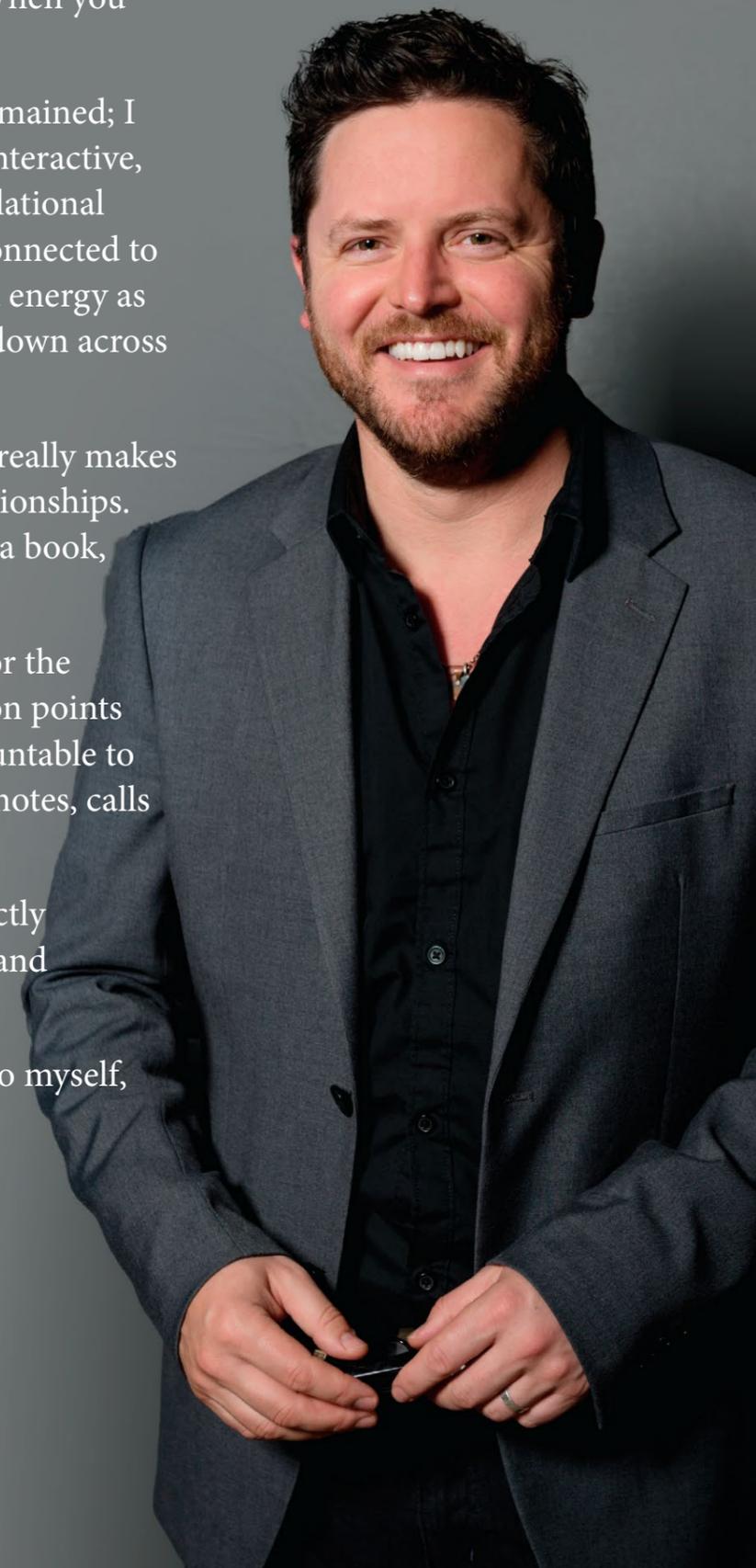
But of course it's not an either/or situation today. It's the combination of technology and relationships that really makes the world go. But tech's purpose should be this—to help you. Help you succeed, help you forge deeper relationships. Help you get more done so that you can step away from technology and get time with those you love, read a book, enjoy a glass of wine and a great view—whatever it is that represents the good life for you.

Tech will be a big part of some exciting innovations this year, like our new MarTech Trends™ Conference, or the launch of two brand new podcasts. But as always, we'll be teaching people how to strengthen the connection points they already have with customers who love working with them. Our Coaches will hold our Members accountable to "relational" goals they've set—how many times they'll connect with clients through visits, lunches, letters, notes, calls and real honest to goodness "human" connectedness.

While it wasn't a hardship to fly to the great city of Nashville, after a busy work travel schedule I wasn't exactly scanning the airwaves for another cross-country trip. That said I know that one morning of conversations and meetings bridged a gap. It was invaluable and could have only happened face-to-face.

Now, I must wrap up this piece on my phone before uploading it to the File Transfer Protocol, emailing it to myself, and exporting it as a PDF to print wirelessly in the other room.

*David Lally*  
DAVID LALLY, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



# Bridging the Gap

The New Year offers an opportunity for a fresh start... a new beginning not just in our businesses, but in our lives too. It's a great time to reach out to your relationships, reconnect and build momentum for the busy months ahead.

This year, we are excited to celebrate 20 years of coaching and training people in 37 countries worldwide. We've had the privilege of helping over three million folks build great businesses and more importantly live the good life. Our customers look to Buffini & Company to cut through all the clutter of the market and the many distractions that exist in our world so they can focus on what matters most. The times we live in now are so dynamic and exciting—especially as it relates to technology. And for every great piece of technology that can help us provide value and stay focused there are ten others that drain us of our time and energy. Or as Brian says, “they are weapons of mass distraction.” That's why we are so excited to launch our brand new MarTech Trends™ Conference.



**“There are a lot of shiny tech toys out there, but you don't want to waste time with the wrong ones. At the end of the day this business is about building relationships, and everything you do should come back to that principle.”**

This full day of training with three of our very best speakers will share tech trends and marketing strategies for today's business. Attendees will learn how to cut through the clutter and apply those technologies that help your business instead of hindering it. There are a lot of shiny tech toys out there, but you don't want to waste time with the wrong ones. At the end of the day this business is about building relationships, and everything you do should come back to that principle.

Buffini & Company has made significant investments in technology that support our philosophy of building meaningful relationships to help you generate referrals. A few years ago, we built Referral Maker® CRM because our clients were asking us what technology can be used to best support their ongoing client relationships. Today, Referral Maker helps them leverage technology to generate referrals and stay in touch with their best clients.

Technology has made all of our lives easier, but it has also introduced another avenue to sidetrack us from our goals. We are in the people business, and a computer will never replace the connection you can make with someone while helping them make the biggest investment of their life. Here's to you and your best year yet!



Dermot Buffini  
Buffini & Company CEO

The Success Tour was fantastic! The hope that you are offering for the Good Life; I can't thank you enough! I am totally on board with the whole process and I signed up for Coaching and can't wait for it to begin. My favorite thing about the way you speak to us is when you stop and say, "Look up here right now." You are so sincere! I'm all in; I hope you see my success story one day!

— **Jeanie Larson**  
The Alliance Group Realty  
Hilton Head Island, SC

My team and I have just finished Day 3 of Peak Producers and I wanted to thank you for all you have done to bring this program to us. I've been in and out of your system for more than 10 years and although I've always been a believer and practitioner of relationship-based business, I've lacked consistency.



A friend once said to me that once you produce at a certain high level, managers and the company praise you, but they don't know what you aren't doing. There is a lot I have not been doing. When I recently went into Coaching and lamented that my team wasn't doing the necessary tasks, I said maybe I would do Peak Producers with them. My Coach, Nick, said, "Ya think?" I'm so glad I'm here.

— **Susan Manners**  
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices  
Chadds Ford, PA

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me, my daughter, Paige, and my boyfriend, Mark, at Buffini & Company last week. It was an honor to meet you in person and tour your HQ. It's a very impressive office with lovely people. I look forward to learning more and appreciate all you do. Please let me know if I can give back in any way, and, by the way, I am never too busy for your Wine Country referrals!

— **Tiffany A. Knef**  
Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate  
Sonoma, CA

Thank you for creating the environment that has changed my life. With the help of my Coach, Darrin Jackson, my experience has widened and deepened and I am living in gratitude today. It's a Good Life!

— **Christopher Howard**  
Douglas Elliman Real Estate  
Brooklyn, NY

Thank you for equipping me emotionally, financially and professionally to be able to walk away from "the deal of a lifetime" because I was able to "see" it was not for me! You've changed my life and I am humbly grateful.

— **Jeanne Koerner**  
RE/MAX Realty Affiliates  
Gardnerville, NV



# LETTERS TO BRIAN

I wanted to thank you for your years of motivation and encouragement! I went to my first MasterMind this past year and loved it! I've been in your system for years and am on my second Peak Producers class. I wanted to tell you that I am having my best year ever! I listened to your CD a while back and I wanted to tell you this personally. Thank you Brian; you are the best!

— **Lisa Racz**  
United Brokers Group  
Chandler, AZ



You and your amazing staff have changed my life in ways you will likely never know and yet, I have not held up my end of the deal. So in order to honor the sacrifices made by all those at Buffini & Company, I will write my 50 frigging notes, make my calls, and do my Pop-Bys. If you can find the time, then so can I.

— **Thomas Mason**  
Keller Williams Flagship of Maryland  
Millersville, MD

JOIN THE *conversation...*

✓ Get *inspired* ✓ Keep in *touch* ✓ Reach your *goals*

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BRIAN BUFFINI / BUFFINI & COMPANY,  
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN

# BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS



**OVER THE PAST SIX WEEKS, I'VE DONE 14 DIFFERENT INTERVIEWS WITH REGIONAL AND NATIONAL MEDIA ABOUT REAL ESTATE.** From the Wall Street Journal to CNNMoney, Money magazine to SiriusXM Radio—to name just a few. All the reporters and interviewers want to ask me two questions:

1. How do you work with millennials in the age of technology and when they don't want to pay for anything?
2. Is the current commission structure in real estate going to capitulate?

One particular national reporter had come to the conclusion that apps were in and real estate professionals were out, that high-tech was more important than high-touch, and that full-fee commissions were a thing of the past, and wasn't about to budge from that position. First of all, I outlined my responses:

**1. Millennials are quite fiscally responsible as a whole, and have a conservative approach to real estate financing.** I also shared that they don't want to be too highly leveraged and are

willing to take the time to save for a down payment. They also want to live where they work and that quality of life is a big issue when they make purchasing decision. In matters of finance I'm actually quite impressed with the millennial generation.

**2. Commissions are paid by the seller, not the buyer.** While millennials represent up to 30 percent of all buyers, they make up less than 1 percent of sellers.

None of these answers, however, could persuade this reporter from the conclusions she had come to about the industry. The conversation was going nowhere until I asked her the following question: "Do you currently own a home?"

→ **70%**  
OF AGENTS ARE  
SPENDING MONEY  
ON SOME KIND OF  
ONLINE MARKETING  
OR ONLINE LEAD  
PURCHASE



→ PURSUING  
TECH JUST  
FOR THE  
SAKE OF TECH  
IS A BRIDGE TO  
NOWHERE.



“No,” she replied.  
“Do you plan on buying a home?”  
“It’s funny you should say that,” she said.  
“I’m in the process of looking right now.”  
She then launched into a litany of the apps she used to look at the homes she’d seen online, and how basically she felt she could navigate this process herself.

I then asked a few basic questions:

- Are you a highly skilled negotiator?
- Would you know if a piece of real estate was a good or a bad deal?
- Do you know all the questions to ask, and things you need to know?
- If you go directly to a seller, are you confident they’ll disclose everything about the property?

Then, I gave her a top 10 list of things that could go wrong in a real estate transaction.

The silence was deafening on the other end of the line. I concluded, “I know you may have all the online tools and apps available, but tech won’t hold your hand or walk you through the process when the stuff hits the fan. And, in every real estate transaction I’ve been a part of in my life, at some point in time, the stuff does, indeed, hit the fan.”

At the end of our interview, the reporter followed up with our PR team that she had decided not to write the article. It also meant that she was not going to write the article that needed to be written.

So that’s what this is!

Today’s agent needs to be tech savvy and able to connect relationally with multiple generations of buyers and sellers: boomers, X’ers and millennials. At Buffini & Company, our

goal is to help agents build a bridge between technology and relationships. The foundation of that bridge is set in the bedrock of exceptional customer service. The pillars of the bridge are the working by referral marketing system. And the road the bridge travels on is the philosophy of Givers Gain—we trust that by serving customers to the deepest level, exceeding expectations, and providing cutting-edge, benefit-based information, they in turn will become our advocates and tell their friends.

A century ago, it was said people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. That simple statement will be true 100 years from now, no matter what new technologies are invented.

There’s a lot of confusion right now. A recent poll showed 70 percent of agents are spending money on some kind of online marketing or online lead purchase. One of the major players in online lead procurement recently released a survey to show the conversion rate of 2.5 percent of online leads. This included a presumed 50 percent closure rate for referred clients the agent would receive. If you take away the typical agent’s referral business, this online lead seller thinks you’re going to sell about 1 percent of those leads. That means that for every 100 leads you generate online there are 99 rabbit trails. That’s a lot of work for very little return.

At Buffini & Company we’ve sometimes been criticized as the old world, old-school company. But, really...is that true?

We’re the only coaching and training company in real estate that developed its own Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. We broadcast our live events in high-definition video, streaming to an average of 1000 locations across North America each time. We have a TV studio which delivers high-definition training and motivation right to your desktop or mobile device. And in 2016, we’re raising the bar even higher...we’re building a new state-of-the-art podcast studio, where we’ll record “The Brian Buffini Show.”

→ OUR MISSION IS TO IMPACT AND IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OUR CLIENTS. WE WILL DO THIS BY ALL MEANS TECHNOLOGICAL WITH A VIEW TO BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOU, OUR VALUED CLIENT.



BRIAN BUFFINI'S  
★ SUCCESS  
TOUR

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TECH  
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REFERRALMAKER | CRM  
POWERED BY BUFFINI & COMPANY

In this new podcast I'm going to explore the mindset, motivation and methodologies of success, and interview some of the most influential and famous thought leaders on the subject of personal growth and development. Can't wait to bring this content to you, your colleagues, friends and family—and stay tuned, because we're looking at launching more podcasts down the road.

In addition to this, we are launching our MarTech Trends™ Conference, which will service 14 cities that we currently do not support with our Success Tour. These events will showcase the most impactful tech and marketing trends in the industry that support building relationships and advocates for the long haul.

We believe in leading by example. We've invested millions of dollars into research and development of the latest tech and market trends to support you. It's our desire to teach and train you how to do the same for your customers.

→ THE FOUNDATION OF THAT BRIDGE IS SET IN THE BEDROCK OF EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE.



TODAY'S AGENT NEEDS TO BE TECH SAVVY AND ABLE TO CONNECT RELATIONALLY WITH MULTIPLE GENERATIONS OF BUYERS AND SELLERS: BOOMERS, X'ERS AND MILLENNIALS.

Our mission is to impact and improve the lives of our clients. We will do this by all means technological with a view to building stronger relationships with you, our valued client. In turn, we want to show you how to do the same.

In 2016, we'll be laying out our blueprint for how to build a bridge between technology and relationships. This is a bridge that will stand the test of time. It's a bridge that will stand up to the earthquake of marketing shifts and changing consumer tastes. And, once in a while, just like the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, it will need a little sprucing up and painting. That's an ongoing and never-ending process.

Just pursuing tech for the sake of tech is a bridge to nowhere. Our goal is to help you build a bridge to long-lasting relationships with your customers, which in turn will build for you and your family the lifestyle you deserve.



# MILLENNIALS & THE REAL ESTATE MARKET

**28%** of home buyers are millennials, people between the ages of 25 to 34, which make up the largest share of any age group.

**33%** of American millennials expect to buy a home within 5 years.

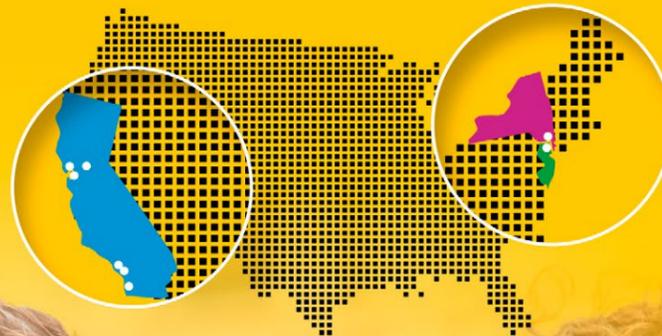


 Homeownership rates for Canadian millennials, people aged 25 to 34, **have increased across Canada over the past two decades.**

In the U.S., it's **23%** cheaper for millennial households to buy a home instead of rent.

American millennials want the **amenities of city living as well as the benefits of green space.**

**Markets where it may be cheaper for millennials to buy than rent:**



- Orange County, CA **5% cheaper**
- San Francisco, CA **7% cheaper**
- Oakland, CA **7% cheaper**
- Sacramento, CA **8% cheaper**
- San Diego, CA **10% cheaper**
- Ventura County, CA **11% cheaper**
- New York, NY-NJ **11% cheaper**
- Newark, NJ **10% cheaper**

 In 1991, more than **50%** of people aged 25 to 34 owned their homes. In 2011, **62.7%** of people aged 25 to 34 owned their homes.

 **93%** of Canadian millennials say that owning a home is a goal.

 **38%** of Canadian millennials would prefer to live in an urban area.

Sources: NAR 2015 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers; Global March 2, 2015; CNN Money, October 21, 2015; CBC, May 21, 2015; 2014 CAR Millennial Survey; TD Canada Trust; NAR Real Estate in the Digital Age

# Get the Right Technology for Your Business

by Joe Niego, Presenter & Trainer



Back in the 1980s, when I started selling real estate, the technological landscape was very different from today. Analog cell phones (not digital) were just being introduced, but were not yet mainstream. There was no Internet access, no Wi-Fi, no email, no multi-use fax/copier machines, no PDFs and no hashtags.

When I started selling real estate, MLS books were used to find homes to show buyers. The front desk wrote incoming messages on small slips of paper. Original contracts were always signed, copied and hand-delivered to the appropriate parties. Closing funds were delivered by check.

Times have certainly changed! Now, the MLS can be pulled up on a cell phone—or should I say—mobile computer. Messages are sent “real-time” via text or instant messenger. Contracts are signed electronically, scanned, sent via email and funds are wired to closings.

However, our real estate landscape has probably been affected most the mainstreaming of cell phones and Internet accessibility. On our cell phones, now smartphones, we can text, tweet, email, scan, FaceTime, take photos, video-tape, YouTube, Snapchat, get the weather, get directions, learn an instrument, read the news, play Words with Friends, listen to music and more. The one function we probably use the least is the “call” feature! The impact of the Internet has been so immense that it has been referred to as the “8th continent.” The bottom line: Information is now readily available to everyone.

Do you wonder how we functioned back in the Dark Ages?!

With the arrival of the Internet and digital technology, one question remains the most frequently asked at our real estate events: **What technology should I be using in my business?**

Reading between the lines, the concern really is:

With the rapid advances in technology, how do we stay “cutting edge” without getting seduced and sidetracked by all the electronic “shiny objects”? How do we use technology to our benefit versus to our detriment? How do we maintain “human” relationships in a digitized world?

Here at Buffini & Company, we recognize these challenges. Therefore, Buffini & Company is launching the MarTech Trends™ Conference, a full-day training session to inform agents how to properly harness the power of technology. At MarTech Trends, we’ll also clear up the “tech issue” you’ve been wrestling with. This conference will be loaded with cutting edge marketing tips and technology strategies to keep you focused, on track and extremely productive.

Here’s what’s in store!



PRESENTERS



JOE NIEGO

That's me! When I began selling real estate in 1980s, I was hungry to be cutting edge in every area of my business, including technology. If the digital age was going to reward those who embraced it, I was going to be one of them. In my office, I was the first to invest in the newest and the next tech gadget—from the PalmPilot to the home printer/fax machine to the 1-800 numbers. I tried them all.

Here's what I learned: Though the technology was advancing at a very rapid pace, some things remained constant. No matter how many new-fangled gadgets waved at my clients, people were still people with the same natural feelings associated with selling or buying a home. The turbulence that accompanies the closing of the real estate deal had stayed the same. Buyers still got antsy. Sellers still got bad-tempered. And I still engaged in transactional battles when insecurities flared up. Much had changed, but much had stayed the same.

With this realization, I began to look at technology differently—how could technology assist me, not replace me—how could technology enhance my business, not “be” my business.

At the MarTech Trends Conference, I will cut through the clutter to show you which of the latest technologies and apps are business-enhancing and worth your time and which are just distractions. Aside from technology, I'll also share with you **The Grid Goal-Setting System**. I shared this system with Brian Buffini. He loved it and I know you'll love it, too!



J'AIME NOWAK

Over the last 15 years, I've watched J'aime Nowak transform from a top-producing agent to one of the industry's most sought-after real estate managers. Since then, she's moved on to join forces with Buffini & Company. She has positively influenced and impacted thousands of agents through her work with mentors and managers. While working with us, J'aime's insights have been priceless. Just recently she has done exhaustive research with our Coaching department. As a result of her findings, J'aime will unveil a presentation titled, **The 5 Secret Ingredients to Higher Productivity**. So, if you are in a sales slump or just looking to bump up your production, J'aime Nowak will help you do it.



BRIAN WILDERMUTH

Technology experts who have the ability to speak in simple and understandable terms are very difficult to find, but not for us. We have Brian Wildermuth! Brian is a 30-year veteran of one of the biggest tech firms in real estate. On his digital journey within our business, Brian has accumulated valuable information he'll share. He has crafted a presentation for MarTech Trends that will give every agent the technology strategy they need for today's market. At the event, Brian will share with you the future of the industry and how to navigate the tech culture to avoid having your commissions slashed and a whole lot more. His presentation is titled, **The Technology Trap**. It's powerful information.

Here are the cities the MarTech Trends Conference will visit:



San Diego

Houston

Phoenix

Orlando

Philadelphia

Denver

Boston

Chicago

Portland

Los Angeles

Long Island

Northern Virginia

Atlanta

San Francisco

Of course, the MarTech Trends Conference is free to all Buffini & Company members and \$99 for non-members! Take advantage and register today! Any friends and/or family you think could use a “pick-me-up”? Refer them to the conference. It will be the best investment they'll make the entire month!

I'm excited to be a part of this powerful day of training, inspiration and networking. You definitely do not want to miss it.

I'll see you there. #NotYourAverageJoe



BY  
BRIAN  
WILDERMUTH,  
VICE PRESIDENT  
OF BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT



TECHNOLOGY IS SIMPLY A MEANS TO HELP FACILITATE CONNECTIONS, PROVIDE INSIGHT AND REMIND PEOPLE WHY YOU AND THEY MATTER.

# AVOIDING THE TECHNOLOGY TRAP

Have you heard the phrase, “the early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.” In today’s fast-paced, hyper-innovative technology world, the early bird is suffering from excessive shiny object syndrome—the desire to have and implement the latest tech tool or trend without regard for the desired outcome. Oftentimes, the promise of these shiny objects is too good to be true. Second mice typically avoid traps by observing the mistakes of those before them, keeping their focus on their goal or desired outcome.

**Nowhere is this truer today than in the real estate business.** Today’s real estate agent is inundated with the latest and greatest technology gadget, tool and online strategy to identify, attract and engage with prospective homebuyers and sellers. Whether it’s social media, online leads or the latest mobile app, the promise of massive

success of being first on the page, catching the “lead” or garnering the most clicks, likes and impressions, is alluring. However, one key component is missing from most agent’s playbooks that leads them into a trap—a focus on the goal or outcome.

The Internet has changed the way real estate is being bought and sold. Not because, as many fear-mongers suggested years ago, the Internet will become a substitute for a real estate professional’s market-awareness and product knowledge. On the contrary. It’s because the Internet has provided a way for consumers to learn more about the real estate process, to have real-time transactional information at their fingertips, to connect them with the right

agent and/or brokerage, to search for homes without leaving the comfort of their own, and to keep agents in front of their customers on a more consistent basis. In the coming year, you will see the trend of improving and compressing the transactional process continue to take shape. All of this heightens the consumer’s expectations of the agent’s ability to exceed their expectations.

In business and life, I was greatly influenced by Stephen Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Successful People*. The first habit is utterly obvious yet seldom employed: Begin with the end in mind. In the case of real estate, the goal is to help people with the biggest and most personal investment in their lives. At the center of it all is one key principle that will stand the test of time—people want to work with people they know, like and trust. Therefore, nothing matters

more than relationships. The ability to form and strengthen them through service is vital to lasting success. Technology is simply a means to help facilitate connections, provide insight and remind people why you and they matter.

In today’s world, where technology defines our way of life, we have a tremendous opportunity to leverage it to a greater end. When you’re creating your technology strategy, go with the option that will help you stay connected to your relationships. Then pair your choice with proven relationship-based strategies. The future of the real estate business comes down to joining business-level objectives and goals to the true purpose of technology. The key then, is building a bridge between technology and our trusted and valued relationships; a bridge that invites structured and purposeful engagement on and offline and avoids the traps and pitfalls of distraction.



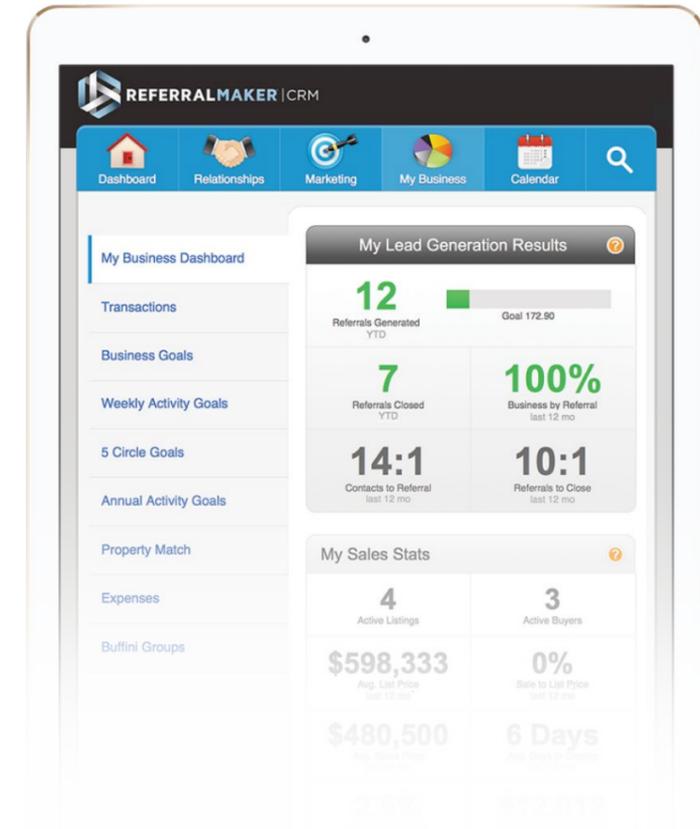
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POWERED BY BUFFINI & COMPANY

Tim & Gina Johnson overcame crippling debt to rebuild their business and live the good life.

by  
Laura Foreman,  
Copywriter

# Smooth Sailing Ahead

**TIM AND GINA JOHNSON BEGAN THEIR JOURNEY IN REAL ESTATE IN THE MID-2000s AFTER THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUBBLE BURST.** At the time, Tim was the vice president of engineering for a small telecommunications company and Gina was the director of sales. They were both laid off from their jobs. “We said ‘what are we going to do?’” says Tim. They began investing in real estate and flipping houses. Since they made money on the first flip, they leaned into their corporate backgrounds to buy

more homes, put together building crews and flip more houses.

Gina became a licensed agent in 2005 and Tim followed suit in 2007, both working for the same small brokerage and selling the homes

they bought and flipped. It was during this time that they learned of Brian Buffini while attending a Turning Point™ event in Atlanta. “I recall leaving Atlanta and thinking Brian is the real deal. If he can do it, we can do it,” says Tim.

Gina completed Brian Buffini’s 100 Days to Greatness® training, and both signed up for One2One Coaching™. “We had enough exposure to the Buffini system that we knew we had to sign up and take our business to the next level,” Tim says.

The Johnsons were riding high on the real estate wave. They owned 10 properties and were building successful real estate careers.

Then, the bottom of the housing market fell out. To keep afloat, the Johnsons tapped into their retirement savings to make ends meet, paying the mortgages on their properties when their tenants were unable to pay the rent. Unfortunately, they had to give eviction notices to their tenants. “It was very hard for me,” says Gina. “I didn’t like the fact that I had to put someone out of their home.”

“We knew it was bad when we were out of reserves and we used up all of our money to maintain the mortgages on all of the properties,” says Tim. The Johnsons listed the properties on the market; however, the tough housing climate

made it difficult to sell them. As a last resort, they began the short sale process, which was relatively new at the time.

As is natural in the given situation, the Johnsons turned inward and began to analyze what went wrong so they could avoid

**“WE TELL MANY PEOPLE THAT WORKING BY REFERRAL IS THE ONLY WAY TO WORK. YOU MUST HAVE A SYSTEM AND A COACH.”**

making the same mistakes in the future. “We started asking ourselves many different kinds of questions: What could we have done differently? What could we have changed? What could

we do moving forward to make things better?” says Gina.

They were out of cash, had depleted their savings and retirement accounts, and had sold the home they were living in. Then, they received a letter from the IRS telling them they owed \$85,000 in debt.

Through it all, Tim stayed in Coaching. “There were times during the crash that we had to make arrangements to pay the Coaching bill, but we knew we weren’t going to give that up!” he says.

It was Tim’s Coach, Cami Napoli, who helped them set goals to get out of debt, rebuild their



**One2One** **TIM & GINA JOHNSON**  
REDINGTON SHORES, FL  
ONEZONE COACHING MEMBERS SINCE 2007



**COACH CAMI NAPOLI**  
CARLSBAD, CA  
BUSINESS COACH SINCE 2002

financial reserves and get their lives back on track. “With the help of Cami, we were able to get all of the debt paid off,” says Tim. “Within the next couple of years, we accomplished all of the goals we put our minds to, and that got us on the path toward our dream.”

An unexpected benefit of their experience was that they learned to master doing short sales. Since they had to undergo the process so many times to sell their properties, they learned the ins and outs of the process and became great at handling them for clients.

In 2011, the Johnsons acquired a boutique brokerage, Waterfront Realty Brokerage, at a low cost. Coach Cami encouraged them to focus on production, set minimum standards for their team and hire an assistant. Since then, they’ve also recruited top-producing agents to help the office remain profitable, even when the Johnsons are away. Over the course of a few years, Tim and Gina have completely revamped the business.

Having Coach Cami in their corner has kept them accountable to the Work by Referral system. “We tell many people that working by referral is the only way to work,” says Tim. “You must have a system and a Coach.” According to Tim, doing this will change your life. “Many people just don’t understand that,” he says. “It’s work and they want the quick fix.”

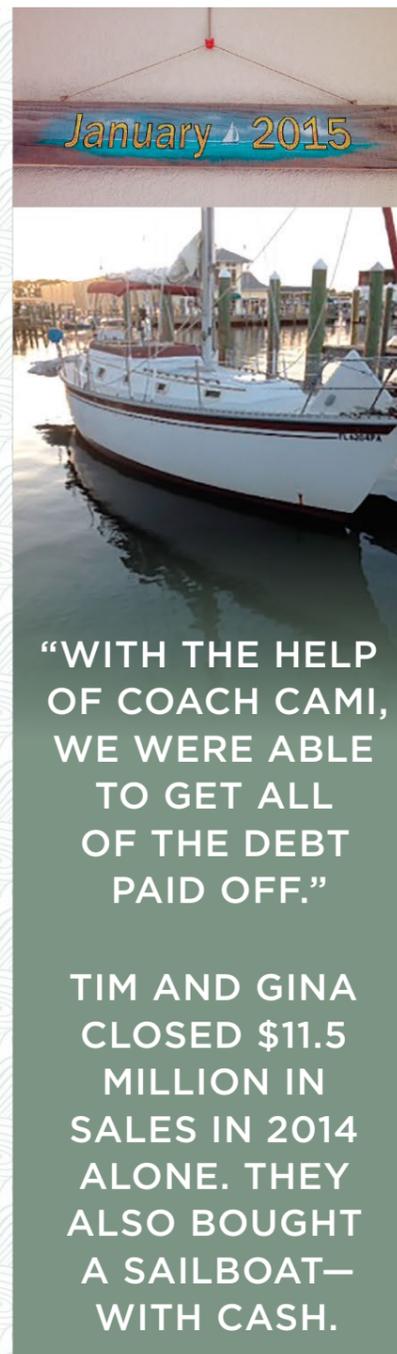
Over time, they began to rebuild their lives—they paid off their debts and have reestablished their financial reserves. However, Gina faced other challenges when

she underwent four surgeries between August 2010 and January 2013, including two back surgeries. Despite this, they were able to stay on track.

Through it all, the adversity they faced helped them see what was important to them. With their priorities in order, they began to pursue their dream: To buy a sailboat and take a month off to sail. Tim has loved sailing since he was a kid, when his family would go sailing in Michigan at his great grandfather’s lake-front property. Sailing allowed them to unplug, renew their spirits and enjoy the simplicity of nature. With Coach Cami, they set a long-term goal to not only buy a sailboat, but also take a month off and set sail for their 10-year wedding anniversary. Oh, and they didn’t want to tap into their savings to buy the boat—they wanted to pay cash.

Having this long-term goal gave them the fire they needed to do their proactive lead generating activities—their calls, notes and Pop-Bys—every day, even when they didn’t really feel like it. Having a “why” kept them focused on that one day when they would be able to turn their dream into reality.

In 2013, the Johnsons purchased a home—a small condo, complete with a boat slip, of course. Then, in 2014, part of their dream came true when they purchased a 36’ Watkins Center Cockpit sailboat. True to their goal, they didn’t have to dip into savings to buy it; they paid cash.



**“WITH THE HELP OF COACH CAMI, WE WERE ABLE TO GET ALL OF THE DEBT PAID OFF.”**

**TIM AND GINA CLOSED \$11.5 MILLION IN SALES IN 2014 ALONE. THEY ALSO BOUGHT A SAILBOAT—WITH CASH.**



“I’ll never forget the day they told me, ‘we bought the sailboat, paid cash and we didn’t touch our reserves,’” says Coach Cami.

Tim and Gina closed \$11.5 million in sales in 2014 alone. In addition to buying their sailboat outright, they also paid off the last of their IRS debt.

“We tell folks to jump in and do the activities as planned and instructed,” says Tim. “It took us too long to really adapt to the system. Had we been ‘true’ adapters early on, we may have avoided the pain of the crash. We didn’t have enough time to make our business ‘bulletproof’ before the crash.”

Although their numbers are down slightly this year, it’s for good reason; they’re taking time to spend with family in Ohio and Michigan. “It’s because of the Buffini system and balancing all five circles that we can do that,” Tim says.

While Tim admits that their story is a painful one to tell, he’s glad that they’re able to help others. Their story also serves as a constant reminder for them to never go back to that dark place again. The challenges Tim and Gina have faced over the past decade have helped them to recommit to the referral system and build a business that will be able to weather any storm.

Now that their business and lives are in order, they’ve paid off their debts, and they have money in the bank, what’s left on the list? “It’s time to go sailing again,” says Tim.

**“IT TOOK US TOO LONG TO REALLY ADAPT TO THE SYSTEM. HAD WE BEEN ‘TRUE’ ADAPTERS EARLY ON, WE MAY HAVE AVOIDED THE PAIN OF THE CRASH.”**

➤ WATCH TIM & GINA JOHNSON’S INSPIRING STORY:  
[BUFFINIANDCOMPANY.COM/STORIES/TIM-GINA-JOHNSON](http://BUFFINIANDCOMPANY.COM/STORIES/TIM-GINA-JOHNSON)



# DON'T DRIVE SCREWS WITH A HAMMER

by David McGhee, Vice President of Coaching & Membership Services

What technology should you be using in your business? How much time should you spend with technology? How do you know if you're wasting your time and money on technology?

As Vice President of Coaching and Membership at Buffini & Company, I'm asked questions like these all the time. And, the answer to all three is, it depends.

I have the privilege of working with 50 of the best Business Coaches you'll ever meet. One thing that every great Coach provides is perspective; the proper use of technology is about perspective.

So, here is my perspective about technology.

## TECHNOLOGY IS A TOOL

Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, once said, "The first rule of any technology used in business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify that efficiency. The second rule is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify that inefficiency."

Put another way—don't use a hammer to drive screws.

How does that apply to Working By Referral? If you have mastered

the basics of the Working By Referral System, if you have the daily habits of contact, care and community in place, if you are already efficient in your lead generation, then technology, when properly applied, can help you be even more efficient.

But, if you don't, all the technology in the world will not help. In fact, it is likely to make you less efficient. You'll find yourself wasting time, energy and money, and receiving little results or benefit. Instead of mastering your tools, you become a servant to them.

In the words of Henry David Thoreau, "Men have become the tool of their tools."

## A TOOL IS USELESS IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE SKILL TO USE IT

When it comes to technology, all too often, I see people place far too much importance on the tool over skill. The truth is rarely will a tool make you more skillful. It is in acquiring top skills that you become a master of the tool.

Imagine this scenario: You have the opportunity to play a round of golf with Jordan Spieth or Lexi Thompson, the best golfers in the world. To make

it fair, Jordan and Lexi agree to play with a cheap set of hand-me-down clubs and you get to play with a set of custom clubs fit especially for you.

Who would win that round of golf? Nine out of 10 (and likely 10 out of 10), the best skilled player with the worst tools, will beat the less skilled player with the best tools. Tools are useless without the skills to use them.

## A COUPLE OF FINAL THOUGHTS ON TECHNOLOGY

Albert Einstein once lamented the use of technology, saying, "I fear the

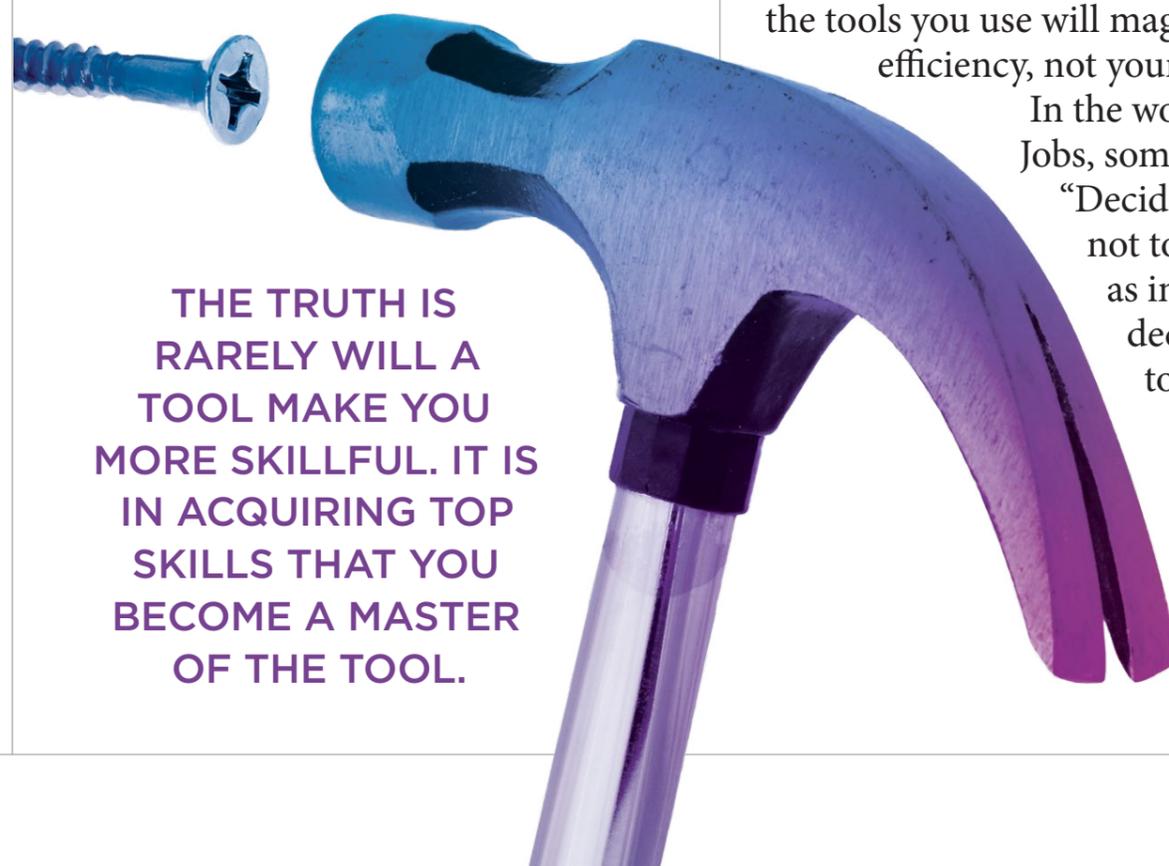
day that technology surpasses human interaction."

That is one of the biggest mistakes I see people make in the utilization of technology in their business (and even their lives). People are using tools like Facebook, email, and text messaging to avoid good, old-fashioned, voice-to-voice and face-to-face communication.

Technology definitely has its place in our business, if it is used properly. The key is to choose the right tool for the right job, and to realize that the tool is only as good as the user.

With so many technological tools available today it is important to be selective. It's important to ensure the tools you use will magnify your efficiency, not your inefficiency.

In the words of Steve Jobs, sometimes, "Deciding what not to do is just as important as deciding what to do."



THE TRUTH IS RARELY WILL A TOOL MAKE YOU MORE SKILLFUL. IT IS IN ACQUIRING TOP SKILLS THAT YOU BECOME A MASTER OF THE TOOL.

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Referral Maker® PRO includes:



1

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2

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3

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### Business Coaching & Training

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Personal Heritage Profile™	✓		
In-Depth Business Analysis	✓		
Advanced Business Strategies Webcasts	✓		
10-12 Peers in Group Coaching Sessions		✓	
Online Training & Resources	✓	✓	✓
Business Plan	✓	✓	✓
Monthly Training Podcasts & Webcasts - Brian Buffini	✓	✓	✓
Buffini & Company Magazine (Biannually)	✓	✓	✓
Buffini TV	✓	✓	✓
B.I.T. O'Brian Video Clips (Business Inspirational Tips)	✓	✓	✓
Help Desk Support	✓	✓	✓

### Professional Marketing Tools

Referral Maker® CRM	✓	✓	✓
Monthly Referral Maker Marketing Kit™	✓	✓	✓
eReport Emails	✓	✓	✓
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# ACHIEVING SUCCESS BEYOND HIS YEARS

AS A NEW AGENT, BEN ROGERS ADOPTED THE WORK BY REFERRAL SYSTEM TO BUILD THE BUSINESS OF HIS DREAMS.

## BEN ROGERS

MECHANICSVILLE, VA

ONEZONE COACHING MEMBER SINCE 2014

**R**eal estate is in Ben Rogers' blood: both his father and grandfather were REALTORS®, builders and developers. Although it only seemed natural that Ben would pursue the same path, he kept his options open before he decided to get into real estate. "Real estate gave me the opportunity to still make as much money as I wanted to, but also gave me the opportunity to give back, volunteer and do the things I've always wanted to do," he says.

Ben started his real estate career in 2012, right after graduating from Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia. As with most new agents, he did whatever he could to generate leads. "I was cold-calling, door knocking, sending mass mailers. You name it, I did it," he says. However, he wasn't finding much success. "I didn't receive many leads, as you could imagine," he says. "Working as hard as I was working and not getting a paycheck for five months was very difficult."

To save money, Ben moved in with his parents. "With real estate, I learned very quickly that I might end up being at my parents a little while longer than I originally expected," he says. In his first five months in business, he had closed one deal. "I hated open houses

and I hated asking random people if they wanted to buy or sell houses," he says. "It wasn't fun for me."

**"REAL ESTATE GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO STILL MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS I WANTED TO, BUT ALSO GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK."**

Instead of quitting when frustration set in, Ben decided to be proactive and do something about it. That "something" meant working by referral. "I had heard of Buffini & Company before, but didn't know much about it other than it was a real estate coaching company," he says. While browsing Buffini & Company's website one day, he saw

an ad for Peak Producers® training and was intrigued. "I didn't have the money, so I went to my dad and asked for \$400 to take Peak Producers," he says.

He got to work as soon as he received Peak Producers in the mail. "I locked my door, put on my headphones and tried to be very focused with it," he says. "Day by day, week by week, it ended up getting easier and easier."

Most importantly, he learned that building relationships with clients leads to more referred leads that eventually become sales, something that the most successful agents know and understand.

Over the 12-week course, he did all of the daily activities outlined in the program. "After 12 weeks, I had moved out of my parents' house, bought myself a new car and was able to pay my father back," he says.

When he finished Peak Producers,



One2One

One2One

**“ONE OF THE BEST THINGS BEN DOES IS HE KNOWS HIS NUMBERS AND TRACKS EVERYTHING.”**



## COACH BILLY VAN RAAPHORST

CARLSBAD, CA  
BUSINESS COACH SINCE 2005

**“EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHAT PROFESSION, NEEDS A COACH TO HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE AND HELP BRAINSTORM FOR NEW IDEAS.”**



➤ WATCH BEN ROGERS' INSPIRING STORY:  
[BUFFINIANDCOMPANY.COM/STORIES/BENROGERS](http://BUFFINIANDCOMPANY.COM/STORIES/BENROGERS)

he signed up for Referral Maker® PRO and continued to adhere to the referral system. “I never missed a mailer, watched all the webinars I could, and eventually got my entire database into the Referral Maker® CRM,” he says. It paid off—he closed 25 deals in 2013 and had three more going into the following year.

He upgraded to One2One Coaching™ in early 2014. “I was able to confidently pop by to my clients, plan client parties and learned to enjoy working by referral,” he says. His Coach, Billy Van Raaphorst, doesn't accept any excuses and reminds Ben that he has a way to go to get to the kind of results he's capable of getting.

“Ben gets better through experience; when we talk about doing something he takes action and learns from it. I think he is a sponge and a shark all in one. Ben soaks up a lot of information and uses it

immediately to hunt, if you follow the analogy,” Billy says.

One of Ben's goals in 2014 was to hire a buyer's agent. He hired a buyer's specialist, who happened to be a good friend, and formed the Rogers-Long Team. The pair closed 46 deals in 2014 and had 12 pending going into 2015. Their momentum continued into 2015. “I set a goal for us to close 65 deals in 2015,” he says. “We blew it out of the water and closed 86 transactions. This year, we're shooting for 100!”

He also hired an assistant. “Stacy, who is one of my past clients, began working for me in July and has done a fantastic job,” he says. “She will be a huge part of our business plan for 2016 and will help me and our team in reaching our goals.”

Part of Ben's success lies in his commitment to the referral system. “He comes to the calls prepared

and does not fight the system; rather, he embraces it and makes it his own,” says Billy. “One of the best things Ben does is he knows his numbers and tracks everything. He is by far and away one of the most driven and coachable people I have ever met, and that is a great combination.”

Ben and his Coach brainstormed ideas for inexpensive Pop-Bys that returned the investment many times over. For Mother's Day, he spent \$38.50 on 15 Pop-Bys, which generated three closed referrals and \$11,400 in commissions in the two months that followed.

Looking back, Ben can see the progress he's made in such a short time. “Now, I truly feel like I'm running a business,” he says.

What advice does he have for someone who's struggling? “Get into Coaching,” he says. “Everyone, no matter what profession, needs a coach to hold them accountable and help brainstorm for new ideas.”

“Life has improved drastically for me since I have committed to working by referral and Coaching,” he says. “I turned 25 last February and I feel like I'm running a business that most agents who have been in the business for 25 years would dream of!”



**“I SET A GOAL FOR US TO CLOSE 65 DEALS IN 2015. WE BLEW IT OUT OF THE WATER AND CLOSED 86 TRANSACTIONS THIS YEAR.”**

# My Life with Brian

by Beverly Buffini

Twenty-five years ago, when we were first married, a young, ambitious Brian Buffini turned to me and said, “I promise you one thing—you’ll never be bored.” Little did I know how true that statement would be!

Whether you’re new to Buffini & Company or you’ve been with us for our 20-year journey, you’ve probably heard our story before, but there are a few things you should know to better understand the heart of the man.

Before we were married, Brian and I became good friends while attending a Bible study. At the time I was focused on two things: my relationship with God and volleyball. I had no interest in developing a relationship, and I guarded myself against anything or anybody that would

distract me from pursuing my dream of making the final cut for U.S. Olympic Volleyball team. Although we were “just friends,” Brian was relentless—he pursued me and, eventually, won my heart.

Looking back, I didn’t have a chance: He was cute, funny, loved the Lord, had a bit of an Irish brogue—which I loved—but, more importantly, he wouldn’t take no for an answer. He always looked for ways to surprise me; on our first date, he picked me up in a stretch limo!

Six months after we began dating, Brian drove to the Del Mar boardwalk on a beautiful summer evening. When we reached the end of the path, we sat down to enjoy the sound of the waves crashing against the shore. As we were sitting there under a full moon, I could see Brian out of the corner of my eye sliding off the rock and onto one bended knee, and to my surprise he started serenading me with the beautiful tune, I Only Have Eyes for You. He asked if I would be his bride.

Over Thanksgiving, we flew to Georgia so he could ask my dad for my hand in marriage. Football is on TV practically 24/7 over the Thanksgiving holiday, and my dad is an avid sports fan. Every time Brian attempted to talk to him about us, he was interrupted by “touchdown!” On our last day, Brian anxiously blurted it out during a commercial break, catching my dad’s undivided

Nothing great in the world has ever been accomplished without passion.

— Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel



attention. After a pretty intense discussion, my parents finally gave their blessing.

Brian got his real estate license around the same time we were married. I was finished with volleyball and working in the loan servicing department at Wells Fargo Bank. We were living a good life and enjoying our early days of marriage. Brian started working in a real estate office in the Hillcrest area of San Diego, where he received very little training. He worked long hours and did whatever he could to find clients: cold-calls, door knocking, even his own radio advertisement. Although he began to achieve success and eventually became the top agent, he wasn’t feeling like a success. He was so intent on finding the next customer that he forgot to cultivate the relationships he had with past customers. Since he was working seven days a week, we hardly spent any time together and when we tried, his pager was always interrupting us. We cut our vacations short to come back and



save an escrow or two. This was not the life we had envisioned for ourselves.

Brian went away for the weekend to reexamine his career path. He reflected on his original vision when he first got into the business, what he had hoped to achieve and what he wanted his business to do for his family. Brian thought about what his grandfather, Harry, a fifth generation house painter, taught him. He would point to Brian's work, look him dead in the eye, and ask, "Can you put your name to that, Brian?" Overwhelmed with thoughts of not living up to his grandfather's expectations, he realized he couldn't put his name to the business he had built. Brian resolved from that day forward to do business like he had been taught by his father and grandfather: to exceed his clients' expectations and invest in his most important asset, his relationships.

His business grew. He even began speaking at different real estate offices and conferences to share his story and systems. I went to Arizona to experience one of the events where he was speaking and was moved by what I saw. I told him, "Honey, this is your calling. You have a powerful message that people need to hear. Thousands of lives will be impacted by it."

The pain of the mistakes and the lessons Brian has learned over the years have helped him create systems and strategies that allowed the company to succeed, despite insurmountable odds. These five pillars of Brian's success can also transform your business into something special and successful: passion,



a clear vision, a simple mission statement, preparation and executing your plans.

1

**Brian exudes passion.**

His enthusiasm for the business and enthusiasm for each client's success is stronger today than ever before. Are you excited about your business? If not, take time out, especially at year's end, to assess not only your business, but also your level of excitement for your business.

2

**Every year we get to see Brian's vision come alive at MasterMind.**

Have you cast a clear vision for your company? Does it help you maintain your core values in the volatile world of business? When technology or volatility threaten to change the way you do business, a solid vision is essential; it's the glue that holds your company together.

3

**Buffini & Company's mission statement, "to impact and improve the lives of others," simply and clearly communicates the purpose of our organization.**

Brian's greatest desire is to see others reach their highest potential. What is your mission statement? If you

don't have one, capture it in a few sentences.

4

**Alexander Graham Bell said, "Before anything else, preparation is the key to success." Brian is a**

5

**According to Stephen Sondheim, "Everything depends on execution: having just a vision is no solution."**

I believe that Harry would be very proud if he could see Brian's family and business today. I'm glad that Brian pursued me and taught me that a good life ends and begins with relationships, and I'm so thankful for him and proud of the businessman, husband and father he's become over these 25 years.

Buffini & Company was built to serve. We would not be where we are today without the hundreds of dedicated servant leaders. Brian and I pray not only for those inside the walls of Buffini & Company, but for all those outside the walls and around the world. My husband has been true to his word—we've never experienced a dull day in the Buffini household. It's truly been a good life.



Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.

— Warren Bennis



## FINDING SUCCESS IN THE BASICS

SHAWN CHAPPELL, A TEAM LOAN OFFICER, HAS FOUND SUCCESS BY STICKING WITH THE BASICS OF THE REFERRAL SYSTEM.

Shawn Chappell hadn't been in the lending business long before he was introduced to Brian Buffini. "I went to a Turning Point™ in Chicago in 2008 with long-time Member, Maria O'Dell," he says. New to the business, he was learning the ropes and wondering where his next deal would come from. He signed up for Self-Paced Coaching at the event.

When the recession hit at the end of 2008, homeowners were anxious to refinance their homes. As a result, his phone was ringing off the hook. This carried his business until 2010. "By then, everyone who wanted to refinance had," he says. "The phone wasn't ringing as much and it was time to get back to basics."

Getting back to basics meant reconnecting with the work by referral system. "I use the system as an agent would," he says, adding that it's a system that works for any business. "I do fewer Pop-Bys than a real estate agent, but I also do more events," he says. And, he's always asking for business.

In 2012, Shawn signed up for One2One Coaching™. "I hit a plateau," he says. "I wanted to take my knowledge of the referral system to the next level." Shawn credits his Coach, Ward Harrington, for helping him use the system more effectively. "It's been the little things—the dialogues and advice—that have produced the biggest results," he says. "I'm always learning something new, and it helps me maintain perspective."

Shawn's biggest challenge so far is being systematic, specifically following up with clients. He's found that Referral Maker® CRM has helped him stay on top of it all. "I'm always on it," he says. "It allows me to set up campaigns easily so I can stay in touch with the

**"IT'S BEEN THE LITTLE THINGS—THE DIALOGUES AND ADVICE—THAT HAVE PRODUCED THE BIGGEST RESULTS. I'M ALWAYS LEARNING SOMETHING NEW, AND IT HELPS ME MAINTAIN PERSPECTIVE."**

right people." He also likes that Referral Maker lets him know who's referring him. "It 'quarterbacks' the business," he says. "I know where my business is and can easily address anything that comes up. I'd advise anyone who's struggling to use Referral Maker CRM and get to know it at a greater depth."

"Referral Maker has helped my business immensely," he says. Since he knows who's referring him, he knows where to focus his attention. "I always know my numbers. Referral Maker tracks my activities and numbers. Tracking is knowledge and knowledge is power," he says. He credits the tracking function of Referral Maker CRM with helping him get a better understanding and perspective of his business.

While Shawn admits that he's focused primarily on his business in this phase of his life, he does see

the potential for Coaching to have an impact on other areas of his life. "I'm able to maintain a nice lifestyle and have purchased some investment properties," he says. Coaching has

also helped him develop a plan for his career.

As far as his business goes, he's where he wants to be. This past year, he saw double-digit growth. As for this year? "We want to grow 10-15 percent, but we're content with marginal growth," he says. "The business is doing well, and we're still able to get out of the office and enjoy life."



“GREAT THINGS IN BUSINESS ARE NEVER DONE BY ONE PERSON,  
THEY’RE DONE BY A TEAM OF PEOPLE”

STEVE JOBS

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than those not in a Group

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**A**s I write this, I am flying at 37,000 feet in the middle seat of a completely full Boeing 737. Oh, the road is so glamorous, isn't it? I'm heading to Toronto for our final stop of Brian Buffini's Success Tour 2015. I am truly blessed to have this opportunity to connect with our Members and first-timers at an event like no other! This has been a year of

on the outside of our Buffini bubble. Although I'm both tremendously excited and downright terrified, more than 20 years of experience in personal growth and development allows me to see this is the best way to start off the new year ahead. When was the last time you felt like that? How is your momentum building so far?

Before anything else, my first strategy for you is to

# STRATEGIES FOR

by  
**J'aime Nowak**,  
*Director of  
Corporate  
Development  
and Training*



change and transition. Buffini & Company continues to reinvent our services and products to help our clients earn eight times the national average in the real estate industry. So fantastic! We've hired some incredibly talented people to help us further our mission to impact and improve more lives. And the momentum is building as we prepare to blast into the New Year! The company has freed me up from much of my job description "on the inside" so that I can do what I really want to do—take my message on how this Referral System transforms businesses and lives to more audiences

decide what you really want. Get clear on what you're going after. It's helpful to get out your journal and answer this question for yourself:

**WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON THAT HAS YOU OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE AND PUSHING YOURSELF CLOSER TO YOUR GOALS AND DREAMS?**

I'm excited to be part of a world-class cast of presenters that will be bringing **Buffini & Company's MarTech Trends™ Conference** to the marketplace. More and more companies with lots of marketing dollars are throwing their technology and promotional products into the real estate space. With that amount of noise, it's easy to lose focus. This conference will deliver what Buffini & Company has done for 20 years. We'll do the painstaking research and cut through the overwhelming clutter of systems, resources and tools that are available to you to help you



**“THE KEY IS TO KEEP COMPANY ONLY WITH PEOPLE WHO UPLIFT YOU, WHOSE PRESENCE CALLS FORTH YOUR BEST.”**

—  
EPICTETUS

make good choices and harness what really builds a great lead pipeline and a fundamentally strong, profitable business for the long haul.

I’m thrilled to share “The 5 Secret Ingredients to Higher Productivity” based on our top-notch Coaches

# SUCCESS

experiences helping people achieve their full potential. Our Coaches have *over a million coaching hours to date!* Every one of us could use a few excellent tips in the efficiency area, right? And there is nothing like a live event, which is my second strategy to have an incredible year. The energy, the content and the community gets you in the right frame of mind to process, plan and commit to the next steps on your journey. I make it a point to intentionally surround myself with achievers and like-minded people and attend great events to keep my fire and motivation burning bright throughout the year.

**WHAT ENVIRONMENTS AND COMMUNITY WILL YOU CREATE AND CHOOSE TO BE PART OF TO LIFT YOU UP, ENCOURAGE YOU AND HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE IN YOUR PURSUIT OF SUCCESS?**

I hope you’ll join me, Joe Niego, and Brian Wildermuth for a full-throttle one-day event in 14 cities around America. And, in the meantime, I’m laser focused on my third strategy for a fabulous year—the preparation, practice and study of my craft so that those who choose to invest their day with us will get so much more than they expected. We want them to happily tell their friends, family members

and work associates of this event and encourage them to register. Giving a great presentation doesn’t just happen. It takes time, focus and concentration as well as reflection and gathering of feedback so that we can refine and make it tighter, clearer and more compelling. Is practice fun? Not really. Is it necessary? Absolutely. For you, for me, for anyone looking to be at their best. So, as I challenge myself to block out the time to prepare, I challenge you as well. When was the last time you refined and practiced your listing presentation or the conversations you have with great recruiting prospects? In fact, let’s take it a step further and answer this:

**WHAT SKILLS DO YOU NEED TO DEVELOP OR MASTER TO TAKE YOU TO THE NEXT LEVEL IN YOUR BUSINESS?**

My good friend, Joe Niego, says, “It’s the skills that pay the bills.” And I would completely agree that the professional who is at the top of their game is the one who commits to his or her practice and preparation before the game (or commission) is on the line.

Welcome to 2016! Let’s make the most of our opportunity. I hope you have some amazing things already happening in your heart, your mind and with your actions. Decide what you truly want and surround yourself with others who are on the same positive path. Connect with them at powerful live events so you can stay inspired and motivated. Then, take it up another notch by committing to the work necessary and making practice part of your ongoing professional development. You can make your year as successful as you decide it to be. I can’t wait to see you soon and hear about your progress. It’s a good life!



**“ONE IMPORTANT KEY TO SUCCESS IS SELF-CONFIDENCE. AN IMPORTANT KEY TO SELF-CONFIDENCE IS PREPARATION.”**

—  
ARTHUR ASHE



# BRIAN BUFFINI ASKS DIANA NYAD

Diana Nyad is a long-distance swimmer, journalist, motivational speaker and author of several books, including *Find a Way: One Wild and Precious Life* (2015). In August 2013, Diana made history by swimming from Cuba to Key West, Florida, a distance of 110 miles, at the age of 64. This summer, she'll embark on a walk across America with EverWalk, her initiative to get Americans walking every day.

## What's your advice for achieving your dreams?

Robert Browning said, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp." The idea is we feel most alive when we're imagining ourselves doing something we probably can't. But, to reach farther than we can is the stuff of life—it's the stuff of not being mediocre.

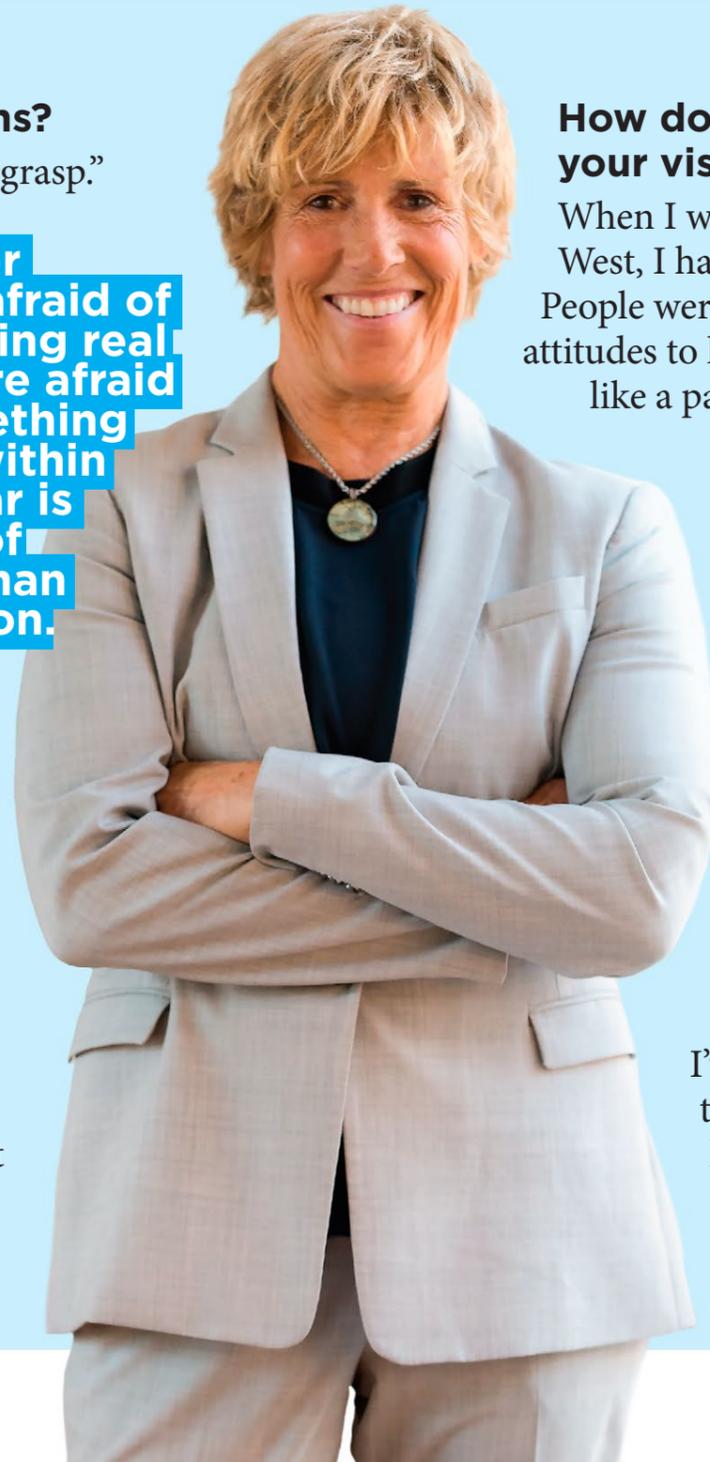
## What would you say to someone who is held back by fear?

Whether you're afraid of something real or you're afraid of something that's within you, fear is a part of the human condition. It takes the shape of the chatter in our brains that says "you're not good enough." The more time you spend worrying and being afraid, the more time you waste with what the poet Mary Oliver calls "your one wild and precious life." Say to yourself, "I don't care what anyone else thinks. It's MY life and I'm going to live it!"

## How do you overcome negativity and other obstacles?

Negative thoughts exist in a Pandora's Box; once you let one seep out, all the rest come flooding out with it. Don't sit around letting negativity get to you. Once it starts, it becomes a habit.

Whether you're afraid of something real or you're afraid of something that's within you, fear is a part of the human condition.



## How do you build a great team that follows your vision?

When I was building my team for my swim from Cuba to Key West, I had a vision and I asked people to follow that vision. People were brought onto a team because they had skills and attitudes to help them fulfill that vision. Mutual respect and feeling like a part of the team are crucial elements to building a successful team.

## What is EverWalk and why did you decide to walk across America?

EverWalk is a way to help kids and adults turn walking into a habit, one that they will continue to do with their families and in their free time. We're walking from Disneyland in California to Washington, D.C. next summer. When we arrive in Washington, D.C., we want to inspire Americans to become a nation of walkers. This is a movement of social change to improve the collective health of America.

## What does success look like to you?

I've changed my definition of success over the years. In terms of defining myself and success, it's deeper than having a ledger of accomplishments. I'd like my urn to read, "Diana Nyad: She was the best friend anyone ever had." That would be success to me.

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His entertaining & informative podcast featuring the mindsets, motivation and methodologies of success

[thebrianbuffinishow.com](http://thebrianbuffinishow.com)

# THE IDEA X-CHANGE



## How to Use Technology to Stay Engaged with Your Clients

by **Laura Foreman**, *Copywriter*

Although the real estate industry has changed in the 20 years Buffini & Company has been in business, one thing is for sure, **relationships are as important now as they were then, if not more so.** Many real estate professionals use technology to help them stay engaged with their current, past and potential clients. We asked a few of our tech-savvy Members: How do you use technology to engage with your clients?



**Dan Faulkner Jr.**  
John L. Scott Real Estate  
Issaquah, WA

One thing we have had success with is having a photo booth at the pie party. There are props so people can have fun and the photos are instantly texted to the person, and they are also encouraged via signs to share them on social media. We had tons of social media engagement this year, so much so that we had other real estate professionals messaging us asking us how we did it.

We also do video blogging. I try to do a monthly Constant Contact e-newsletter, and feature a video periodically.

We have a WordPress blog. We've also experimented with having Facebook groups for attendees of our client parties.

### Nick Kyte

Coldwell Banker First Ottawa Realty  
Ottawa, ON



I use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn) in different ways to engage with my followers and network. I also post videos on properties, neighborhoods and other related topics for all my listings.

To build relationships, I use the tools (calls, notes, Pop-Bys and biannual client appreciation parties), which then allows me to strengthen these relationships. Social media allows for instant face time and I love putting out helpful information and content for my network.



**Alyce Dailey**  
Keller Williams Gateway  
Baltimore, MD



I recently started an online mastermind group with a few female clients. This is just getting off the ground, but it has been a lot of fun! I also host a virtual Buffini & Company small group. Mostly, I use Facebook to build relationships with my clients.



**Vishal Doddanna**  
Keller Williams  
Columbia, MD

I use Google Hangouts for virtual consultations with clients who are out of town or unable to meet with me in person for a valid reason. I'm able to communicate with them face to face and share my screen at the appropriate times.



**Ben Correa**  
Urban Nest Realty  
Las Vegas, NV

I find social media is a good way to connect with clients by posting items on social media or responding to clients' posts on websites such as Facebook. I just started doing the videos. I have been part of networking groups for years and it has been a huge success to my business.

**Joseph Diosana**  
Keller Williams  
Houston, TX



Technology gives me an instantaneous way to deepen relationships. Using the communication platform, BombBomb, I create custom videos for electronic newsletters and to accompany invitations for client events or business mixers. For my most recent client event, "Great Pie Giveaway," each client was able to choose their pie, indicate what time period they were stopping by and submit a video testimonial.

For client-specific or transaction-specific follow up or general check in, I use the on-demand video feature to send an AdHoc using BombBomb via my Gmail account.

One project I am working on is a series/library of video emails (e.g., video explaining the next step in the process, a few resource links) for the entire contract-to-close and listing-to-contract process. Each video will be about 30 seconds with two to three links, one paragraph and a meaningful subject line such as "Inspections: Should I Be Worried?" or "Appraisals: Pricing, Value and Worth..."

Oftentimes, my clients are out of town or overseas, so we have to use virtual meeting platforms such as Skype, Join.me and/or Glip to facilitate an online conference. It's like they are in my office and I'm describing Houston on my computer.



## GET MOTIVATED WITH THESE GREAT TIPS FROM BUFFINI & COMPANY CERTIFIED MENTORS



MENTOR TIPS

### ERIK KAISER

RE/MAX Terrasol  
Huntington Beach, CA



I like to make sure they never miss a training or special event we have at the office. As new agents are coming into the business, an office always has to stay innovative. I offer webinar trainings and masterminds meetings online and allow any agents who missed our brainstorms or trainings to view the replays and hold them accountable via action steps and time spent in the webinar.

I use MailChimp as an email contact and set up a voice mail of any event on one of my Kall8 numbers. I use slybroadcast to send out a voice message (blast) with the Kall8 number as the listed number, which the agent can call back to for any dropped or missed calls if they don't receive the voice message on their phones or they just see a missed call. I also post any videos or messages into our "Secret Facebook" business page, and normally I also post something similar to my professional business page which lets other agents know what we are doing as an office. I also will use the same system to promote the office to other agents we wish to invite to provide an opportunity to get to know the broker, Leo Betancourt, our culture and the office agents.

I'd recommend making any technological communication as personal as you can and back it up with in-person meetings and belly-to-belly meetings.

### KEITH WRIGHT

Century 21  
Wright & Associates  
Beaverton, OR



There are over 1 billion smartphones right now, and this expected to quadruple in the near future. Many experts predict video will be 75 percent of the traffic that is on mobile devices. Video makes you the authority. Most importantly it gives the viewer the opportunity to get to know, like and trust you before they meet you. When you share your video across multi channels like YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Flickr, Tumblr, etc. and multi platforms like iTunes, Podcast and on blogs, your impact and leads increase dramatically. And for the most part, it's ALL FREE!

Video has put me in front of agents that wouldn't return phone calls. I friend them on Facebook and they watch me for a while, as I deliver value. Then, I send a personal message for coffee and confirm the appointment with video.

### BILL STEDDUM

Century 21 Judge Fite  
Mansfield, TX



Technology can only enhance relationships—it cannot develop or maintain them. Technology can help us learn about good and bad situations in real time but, it cannot replace a simple handwritten note, a personal visit or a phone call.

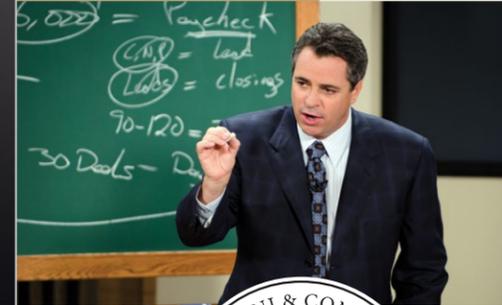
Our common message to our real estate professionals is you MUST make calls, write notes and do Pop-Bys. Use technology to ensure your message is on point and to help you develop talking points.

If you're going through a terrible situation, what is going to make you feel better—a "like" or "comment" on your Facebook or a personal note or phone call of encouragement from a friend? Of course, the personal note or phone call would make any one of us feel better.

Use technology to your benefit and to keep you in front of life. Never let technology replace your personal touch.



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### TESTIMONIAL

"Our office production is up 50% using the Peak Producers step-by-step action plans"

**Sonia Leonard**

*Broker/Owner | Southlake, Texas*

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SUCCESS  
STORY

# USING PEAK PRODUCERS TO HELP ASSOCIATES REACH NEW LEVELS OF SUCCESS

MIKE ZUCCATO • RE/MAX REALTY SERVICES, INC., BROKERAGE • BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

Mike Zuccato began his real estate career in 1992, after his uncle, who had opened one of the first RE/MAX offices in Canada, encouraged him to get into the business. His first year he made \$140,000, and by his third year in the industry, he was making \$250,000. In 2006 Mike managed his uncle's business while he was undergoing treatment for an illness. Unfortunately, his uncle's condition worsened, and in 2007, Mike bought the company. "I was determined to take the solid business foundation he had built over 27 years and grow it," he says. "I wanted to build an even greater synergy in the office, which is high producing and high energy, and I wanted to improve on the practices."

When Mike saw Brian Buffini for the first time, he connected with him immediately. He began using the 100 Days to Greatness® training program in his office. "I had just taken over the largest real estate office in Brampton," he says. "Using the 100 Days to Greatness program took a big job off my plate."

Although Mike was sold on the program, no one else in the office had used the program before and weren't sure what to expect. In the first 18 months, over 100 agents completed the program and word of its effectiveness—and the humor that Brian uses to drive each topic home—began to spread. Classes filled up from the buzz generated in the office. "Our associates are well-trained and systemized, and we continue to push them to improve and hone their skills," he says.

These days, Mike runs a Peak Producers® class each year. "We get a lot of interest from the associates who have joined us," he says. He uses the program to help his agents get to the next level.

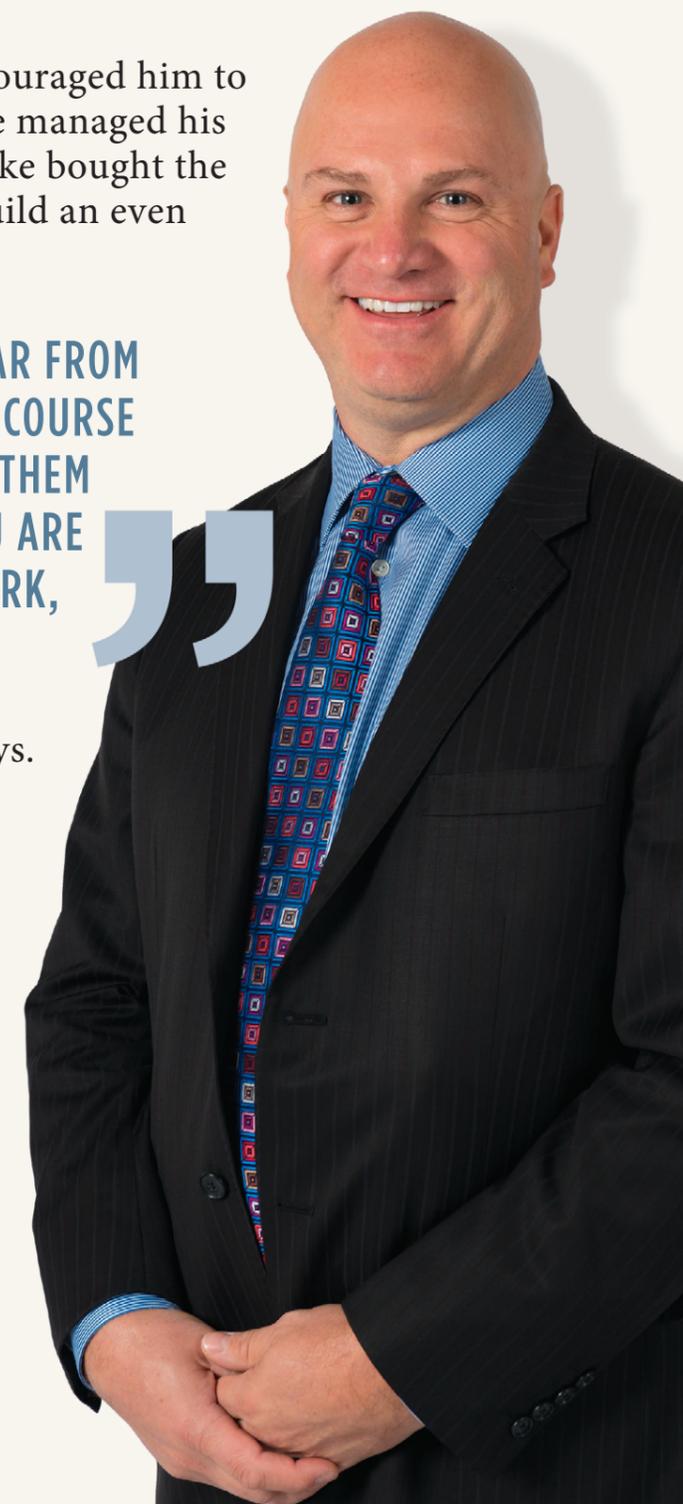
Although Mike can't be sure exactly how much the Buffini training has added to his company's bottom line, he knows it has definitely led to increased profits and increased the commissions of his agents. "The program increases the associates' energy and enthusiasm, and builds good real estate habits, which result in an additional \$35,000 to \$50,000 in commission, on average, for each associate that takes Peak Producers."

The company has grown to 200 associates since Mike bought it. "The associates we have are all high-producing, high-energy associates, so our 200 top producing associates do more business than some of the larger offices within the Toronto Real Estate Board (TREB)."

According to Mike, offering Peak Producers is a great tool to recruit agents. "The most common line I hear from those who have taken the course is that the program made them feel 'busy', and when you are busy doing real estate work, good things happen," he says.

What advice does Mike have? "I learned from my father, who came to Canada as a 12-year-old boy, two four-letter words that will define your life: 'want' and 'need.' Most businesses 'need.' Build a business that 'wants' and you will have quality of life."

“THE MOST COMMON LINE I HEAR FROM THOSE WHO HAVE TAKEN THE COURSE IS THAT THE PROGRAM MADE THEM FEEL “BUSY,” AND WHEN YOU ARE BUSY DOING REAL ESTATE WORK, GOOD THINGS HAPPEN.”





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### TESTIMONIAL

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**Ben Andrews**  
*Agent | Happy Valley, Oregon*

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# WINNER'S CIRCLE

WORKING BRIAN BUFFINI'S REFERRAL SYSTEMS FOR SUCCESS

**Julie Corrado**

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage  
South Windsor, CT

## Q Where were you when you started with Buffini & Company, and where are you now, in terms of your business success or success in the other five circles?

I started with Buffini & Company in 2008, selling 43 homes a year and had \$8,918,500 in production. I had the goal to get out of \$60,000 of debt. I had taken all the money out of my retirement account to pay off my debt, so I had no retirement money and nothing in savings.

I kept working the system, selling 52 homes a year and increasing my sales price. In 2012, I doubled my business to 94 homes and \$19,497,800 in production. In 2015, I'll be at 112 sales and \$27,037,325—three times where I was when I started in production!

I paid off all of my debt within a year of joining. I now have money in retirement and savings, and am paying down my mortgage faster.

## Q Why did you ultimately decide to get a Coach?

I was calling FSBOs all the time and it was draining. I was putting in a lot of work and not getting results. The clients were so difficult to work with as they never wanted to hire a real estate professional. An agent in my office, who always heard me making the calls, said to me one day that if I were to go to a Buffini & Company Turning Point™ with him and put that same level of effort into my database that I was putting into FSBOs, my life would be so much better. I went to a TP and



“ I always thought I was offering good service, but realized I had to improve communication. Although I was selling homes quickly, I wasn't staying in touch and doing any unexpected extras. ”

was hooked right away! I knew these systems were just what I needed.

## Q What challenges have you faced and how have you overcome them?

I always thought I was offering good service, but realized I had to improve communication. Although I was selling homes quickly, I wasn't staying in touch and doing any unexpected extras. It took time to improve the quality of clients in my database and work the system with them, but the referrals and repeat business really started coming.

## Q What are you doing to win in this market?

I take Peak Producers® every year since it was

rolled out, and it's so important for me to have that annual refresher. The better the services I offer, the more my clients will want to refer me. I'm also in a small group. Hearing their stories has been very motivating for me.

## Q How is your Coach helping you win?

My Coach knows what motivates me. Having someone there helps me stay on top of things. She knows my goals and helps me set more, and she reminds me to do the things I say I'm going to do.

## Q What specific Buffini & Company resources have been particularly helpful for you?

I love doing the Thanksgiving Pie Party; I have 120 people come by every year. I also love doing the Pop-Bys. I use Referral Maker® CRM and the app a lot, especially for Pop-Bys.

## Q What advice do you have for someone who might be struggling?

Get into a small group. Having people answer questions and share their advice is so helpful. It's great to have the synergy with people who are going through the same things as you. And, lean in to your Coach.

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# LESSONS FROM THE LEGENDS

## AN INTERVIEW WITH LIZ RHODES

Alain Pinel Realtors | Palo Alto, CA



### Q HOW HAS YOUR BUSINESS CHANGED AFTER YOUR YEARS IN COACHING?

I've been in Coaching for nearly 18 years. Before Coaching, I acted like an independent contractor and hoped to get more business. Since Coaching, I've been running my business instead of my business running me. I'm in charge of my business because I'm in Coaching.

### Q HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COACHING?

I'd never written goals before I started Coaching. Sure, I had probably thought of goals, but I never took the time to write them down. Having goals and seeing them happen has been helpful. I also rely on the Heritage Profile and have learned from that as well as the CDs.

### Q WHY DO YOU STILL NEED A COACH?

You always have to be sharp and improving in this business. I always want to be the best or better. My Coach prevents me from getting stagnant and provides accountability. Plus, she gives me great dialogues to use with even my toughest clients.

### Q HOW DO YOU STAY COACHABLE?

Even though I'm older, I've never stopped learning. I'm always growing, changing and improving, and that's critical to success. I really believe in the system. It has helped me be the person I want to be. You have to believe in it and never stop changing and improving.

### Q HOW DO YOU CONTINUE WORKING THE SYSTEM, BUT KEEP IT FRESH?

I was asked to teach a Peak Producers® class. It's one of the most amazing things I've done that's part of the Buffini programs. I think I benefited from it more than the students! It's because I'm so committed to growing and improving that I took on the role of teaching the class. I've agreed to teach it once a year. I've always gone to events like Turning Point™ and the MasterMind Summit®. And, I'm currently leading a Buffini small group, which has been so beneficial. If you're not in a small group, you should be in one. My group has been able to share and learn from one another.

“SINCE COACHING, I'VE BEEN RUNNING MY BUSINESS INSTEAD OF MY BUSINESS RUNNING ME. I'M IN CHARGE OF MY BUSINESS BECAUSE I'M IN COACHING.”

### Q WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO SOMEONE WHO FEELS LIKE THEY'RE NOT MAKING PROGRESS?

Quit doing it your way. Do the activities, go to events, take Peak Producers and listen to the CDs. I always tell people to listen to the CDs six times. Who knows, the fifth time you may hear something new that you can to apply to your business.

### Q WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO JUST STARTED COACHING?

I can think of two things. One, be honest with your coach. Two, do what your Coach says. If it hasn't worked your way, it's time to branch out. I've stayed consistently busy throughout my career and I'm relational by nature. I enjoy selling a \$200,000 condo as much as I enjoy selling a \$6 million home because I like the people so much. The system works because I've done those two things. You have to be open to doing it another way in order to see success.

# I'm in One2One Coaching

“After being in the business for over a decade, I knew I needed to take my business up a notch so I signed up for One2One Coaching. Despite being diagnosed with cancer, having surgery, and starting chemo, I still managed to hit the goals I set with my Coach and had my best year ever in real estate! I’ve blown my goals out of the water, increased my average transaction price, and paid off my debt. And, one last thing, my business this year was 100 percent by referral!”

**MICHELLE HOPSON**

Dave Perry-Miller and Associates  
Dallas, Texas

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