GENSTONE
REALTY

Responding Successfully to Website Inquiries

Two Options on Handling Incoming Inquiries

When receiving an inquiry from a website or yard sign, first ask if the inquirer wants to tour the property. If so, set up the time for the tour. If they don't want a tour, be sure to set up an appointment to discuss their needs.

Website Inquiries

With website inquiries sometimes associates feel those are not solid enough because buyers start looking at websites to get a sense of the market early in the buying process. A website referral service company I started with a website lead contact center, we called those who inquired about a property from the website. We discovered 18% of those leads were ready to act within 60 days -- 27% in 90 days – that's 45%. The others were planning to act beyond 90 days or were just inquiring for research or other purposes.

When a person inquiring about a property voluntarily gives an agent a valid name and contact information, 80% are typically serious about moving sometime in the future.

Be a First Responder

For website inquiries, the best scenario is your response comes while the inquirer is still sitting with their computer, tablet, or phone on the website.

This is because the lead may continue to send other inquiries on other agent's properties. Be one to respond first since the statistics show between 35 and 50 percent of sales go to the quickest agent.

Five minutes is the best for contacting the online real estate lead but converting the lead as well. After 30 minutes, the potential for success shrinks 21 percent.

However, even if you don't reach the lead right away, keep trying because you don't know what was happening with that potential lead at the time it was sent. They may still respond to your answer.

Getting Appointments from Website Inquiries

Zillow reports that 88% of home buyers search for properties online, and 85% depend on agents to help them find the property

When a potential buyer inquires about a property found online, our desired result of any lead conversation is to set an appointment

This statistic should give the incentive to meet with a lead you receive:

- 70% of buyers purchase from the agent they meet with first.

How Our Associates Receive Website Inquiries

There are three situations for receiving website inquiries:

1. A call, text, or email about your own listing on GenStone Realty's or your website.
2. An email about another's listing from the GenStone Realty website:
    - From an inquiry by one of your registered buyers
    - From an inquiry about a non-GenStone associate listing assigned to you from the rotation among associates in your area
3. An email about another's listing from national sites like Zillow, realtor.com, or other specialized sites where you have registered as a "Premier" or other paid status to receive leads.

Focus on the Person, not the Property

Remember, this potential lead asked for information, so just introduce yourself and tell them you are responding to their request by giving the address and any other identifier of the requested property.

In your conversation, focus on the person, not the property they contacted you about.

By focusing on the person and understanding their wants and needs, you can move beyond a specific home — and guide them to other options that they might love.

Establish a relationship as quickly as possible by asking questions.

The ratio of speaking should be 75% by the lead, 25% by the associate because you ask questions to discover their:

- Desired location
- Timing and motivation to buy
- You are not trying to sell the property
- You are trying to establish you are the right associate for this buyer

Initial Response to a Website Inquiry

Whether the lead indicated either a tour or information from the website request form, most of the time, ask first if the lead wants to tour the property.

If the lead does, it's an appointment.

As the first associate they meet, you have a 70% chance to sell them a property after conducting the Buyer Consultation using the GenStone Buyer Presentation.

If a showing is possible, use "Conversation Guide – Buyer Tour."

If the lead is not ready for a showing for that one, use "Conversation Guide – Gathering Buyer Information."

Buyer Tour Conversation Guide

Objective: Get a Tour Appointment, Find out Location, Determine Timing/Buyer Motivation

Is this ___*[lead name]*__ ? **This is** *[name]* **with GenStone Realty***. [speak this slowly with enunciation]*

I see you made an inquiry about *[address]* from a website. Is that correct?

When would you like to tour the property? *[Determine a day and time that also works for you.]* **I will arrange that for you.**

I will email you additional details about that property as soon as we finish. *[The public version of the MLS sheet].* **Which email do you want me to use?** *[Note the email and repeat it back.]*

*[Choose one of these **"Location"** questions you like best, use both, or draft your own.]*

- **What attracted you to this area?**
- **Is this the only area where you are looking?**

*[Lead response and then any follow-up **"Location"** questions based on the answers.]*

*[Choose one of these **"Timing/Buyer Motivation"** questions you like or draft your own.]*

- **Are you looking to buy sometime soon?**
- **If you were to move, when do you think that might be?**
- **In a perfect world, when would you see yourself being in a new home?**

[Lead response and then any follow-up "Timing/Buyer Motivation" questions based on the answers.]

[Lead Name],* here is what I am going to do. I'll email the information I promised. Then I'll get us set up to tour that property at** *[selected day and time]. I'll arrange the time *with the seller* to confirm the appointment. As soon as I have the confirmation, I'll call you to give you the news. Does that sound OK?**

Again, my name is _____ with GenStone Realty, and my phone number is _____ if you have any other questions.

[So we don't have to discuss the middleman listing agent with the lead, we say "arrange with the seller" because we do that through the listing agent.]

Website Inquiry - Gathering Buyer Information Conversation Guide *(no Tour)*

Is this ___***[lead name]***__ ? **This is *[name]* with GenStone Realty***. [speak this slowly with enunciation]*

I see you made an inquiry about *[address]* **from a website. Is that correct?**

Would you like to tour it? *[Not now. Just want information.]*

To give you additional details about the property, I will email you an information sheet on the property as soon as we finish. *[The public version of the MLS sheet].* **Which email do you want me to use?** *[Note the email and repeat it back.]*

What attracted you to this property?

What attracted you to this area? *[Lead response]* **Is this the only area where you are looking?**

[Lead response and then any follow-up "Location" questions based on the answers]

[Choose one of these ***"Timing/Buyer Motivation"*** *questions you like or draft your own.]*

- **Are you looking to buy sometime soon?**
- **If you were to move, when do you think that might be?**
- **In a perfect world, when would you see yourself being in a new home?**

[Lead response and any follow-up "Timing/Buyer Motivation" questions based on answers.]

Where are you living now?

Do you rent or own a property?

[If owning], **Is it currently on the market?**

[If no], **Do you plan to list the property first and then purchase a home, or buy first and then sell yours?**

What price range are you considering? *[Lead response]* **How did you decide that?**

What type of property would meet your needs?

Have you selected an agent yet? *[If yes]* **Are you 100% committed to that agent?** *[If no, continue.]*

I am sure you have questions about the market and other properties you haven't seen. Some of the best properties either sell before hitting the market or sell right away. ***Were you aware of that?***

[This is a significant point for buyers who think everything is online and don't need an agent to find a property. It gives them a reason to meet with you.]

I would love us to get together for 30 minutes to give you an idea of the current market, what's involved in the buying process, what it might cost, and how to navigate through to closing.

Together we can determine a solid buying plan for you to know about all properties that fit your needs so you can move into the right home. How does that sound?

I have availability _____, or would _____ work better for you?

[Arrange a location or set up a Zoom meeting. Zoom has a free account with unlimited one-on-one meetings. If there are three or more connections, then the meeting length must be less than 40 minutes.]

Response to a Yard Sign Call

First, be aware that only 7% of buyers found the property they purchased from a yard sign. That means don't try to sell the property just because it's your listing. By doing so, you will appear to be helping the owner, not the buyer.

Since the objective of lead calls is to get an appointment, if they want to tour the property, set up an agreeable time to show it.

Use the *"Website Inquiry – Buyer Tour Conversation Guide"*

When the Buyer Doesn't Want to Tour It Yet

Use the buyer's answers to your multiple questions to find out what they want in a property. Provide answers to questions the lead has about the property, then follow up with a question to determine needs.

For example, "This property has a large yard. Would a large yard or a smaller yard be better for your situation? Get them talking about themselves by asking questions to establish a relationship with you.

The approach is a modified version of *the "Website Inquiry - Gathering Buyer Information Conversation Guide"*

Why Show Your Listing

There are three reasons to set up the showing right upfront before asking a lot of qualifying questions:

1. The owner of the property will have a showing you set up
2. The property will sell itself if it's a match
3. Your not trying to "sell" the property allows the buyer to think you are on their side even though you represent the seller

(*This advice applies only in states where the listing agent can show their own listing.)*

After the showing, you have an opportunity to present the GenStone Buyer Presentation as your information and qualifying consultation.