



By B.J. Bounds
Senior marketing communications specialist
Calyx Software

Your LOS Could Be Your Next Marketing Tool

Check now to see if your loan-origination software has these five options

Marketing is necessary for business growth, though it's often expensive. To save money, many mortgage brokers have relied on methods such as word-of-mouth marketing from past clients or placing their business cards strategically in Realtors' offices.

There is so much more you can do that is budget-conscious and easily available, however. In fact, you often can use tools you already have to reach your marketing goals.

One tool that many brokers don't realize they can use in their marketing efforts is their loan-origination system (LOS). Many of today's LOSs can help you not only originate and process your current loans but also sustain your pipeline and grow your business without breaking the bank.

Many LOSs have the following five features, which can help you in your marketing efforts.

1. Integration with your Web site: A recent Ipsos poll found that 66 percent of U.S. adults purchase something online at least a few times a year. If potential borrowers are going online in search of a new mortgage, will they find you there?

Make sure your Web site explains your business and gives pertinent industry information and mortgage-shopping tips. Your site should be a source for information and provide tools such as calculators that will keep clients coming back.

Above all, you can integrate your Web site with your LOS. This way, you can ensure that any application information entered on your Web site transfers into a new 1003 uniform-loan-application file in the LOS.

2. Contact database: There are many useful database tools available. But keeping

your contacts in one system you use daily will help keep you organized.

Your LOS can be your source for all your contacts, including prospects and borrowers. Consider importing all your contacts from your e-mail software directly into your LOS database. This will give you access to the recipients for all your marketing materials in one place.

Also, by marketing directly from your LOS, you can track all activities so you know exactly what went to which contact and when.

3. Customizable marketing forms and templates: You often can customize and process marketing templates for functions such as introductory letters, refinance notifications and post-closing letters via your LOS. You also could create new letters in your LOS with word-processing editing capabilities, including merge fields, logos, pictures and graphics.

Many LOSs also can import letters and documents from your word-processing program, which enables you to plug in specific data, such as loan information or property address, anywhere you need them in the document.

4. Distribution options: Addressing your marketing materials, whether for snail mail or e-mail, is often simple via an LOS. You can use your system to print letters, tri-fold mailers or postcards and often can include personalized addressing with a mail-merge function.

Using e-mail marketing, rather than direct mail, is another way to save money. You can choose to e-mail letters or forms that are built into the LOS software, send ones you have created already or start

from scratch. By interfacing with your e-mail account directly, your LOS can send the e-mails to the contacts you choose. Be sure to educate yourself on and comply with spam laws, such as the CAN-SPAM Act, so that you don't get blacklisted, however.

5. Mailing-label creation: If you have brochures, postcards or mailers ready to go, they don't need to go to waste. Many LOSs allow you to print mailing labels. You just need to select the contacts you wish to merge from your contact database and then print the labels to mail the appropriate material for each group you select.

Marketing your business is necessary, but it does not have to be cost-prohibitive. Maintaining your current pipeline is just as important as seeking new business, and you cannot always depend on referrals from past clients.

Brokers who use the tools they have available to them, including within their LOS, to market their business in their neighborhoods and on the Internet often will find that they can reach more clients and prospects effectively and cost-efficiently. ●

B.J. Bounds is the senior marketing communications specialist for Calyx Software. In addition to media relations and copywriting, Bounds is a contributing author to the Calyx Software blog, CalyxCorner. She has more than 10 years' experience in sales and corporate marketing with a focus on technology that spans several industries. For more information on Calyx Software, contact (800) 362-2599, or visit www.calyxsoftware.com or www.calyxcorner.com.