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Investor Agent Live Weekly Q&A Webinar

Welcome. Most of you are investor agents, but we saw what was happening with the economy. There are also Flippers and Rental folks here. For about a year now, I wouldn't call it "inside information," but it's felt like we're headed for another economic dip. Well, now the word's out. Some states are already in the recession, some are teetering on the brink, others are actually okay. We don't know how long it will last, or how bad it will be. But that's really the big reason why I've been focusing on this program.

Canada has actually entered into their recovery last spring and summer, but if you're in Canada, don't get excited yet. If you know who Kevin O'Leary is, he's one of the guys on *Dragons' Den* and *Shark Tank*, and he put out a message a few weeks ago that basically said, "I wouldn't buy a property in Canada in 2016 if you paid me."

For owner-occupants or people flipping homes, I would say heed the warning. Wait until prices drop. But for people buying and holding rental properties? My gosh, I'd be buying properties everywhere in North America. I am actively investing in almost everywhere in North America that I think is a good deal. I'm focusing on rentals because I don't care what the market does. The real estate market, the stock markets? When I buy rentals, the market doesn't matter to me.

The first-time homebuyer market is the real issue. It has never really recovered from the recession. There are a couple factors why. First-time homebuyers used to be in their mid to late 20s. Out of college but straddled with debt. Now that debt is at unbelievable highs, and they're not getting starting salaries to compensate for that. So they're straddled with debt, and trying to buy cars, pay down debt, and save money at the same time. It's ridiculous. Even in construction they have made the choice to not focus on first-time homebuyers. There's a greater profit margin at the higher-end or luxury market right now.

Now here's the big "ah ha." If the first-time homebuyer markets are being affected, what's happening to the move-up market? Because all those first-time homebuyers are buying existing

homes or resales, and those people who were trying to resell their home now aren't as able to move up, the move-up market is now being impacted too.

It's a weird scenario of tight inventory, with a smaller pool of available qualified buyers. This is why you want to focus on the investor relationship right now. Out of the mass of real estate agents, it still only 5% of us, and in some areas it's even fewer than 1%.

Yet across the board, the investor business—and I'm not talking about commercial, just residential rentals... one to four units—accounts for about a third of our business. What we want to focus on is helping you capture your share of that marketplace, and so for the next couple of weeks we're going to focus on marketing campaigns. We're going to start from the basics. One of the things we're going in this session is workshops.

In your training content, Module Four has a summary of about a dozen of the marketing campaigns. In the case of a workshop, if you login to MyInvestmentServices.com, you'll find all the prior webinars, catalogued by subject matter. Look for the ones focused on workshops. Re-listen to them, and take notes.

Now, we're going to focus on them again. I want you to entertain the idea of hosting an Investor Workshop. Other students who haven't had a lot of confidence have done them, and they still do well. Once you get it up and running, the average turnout's 20, and it grows from there. We have an agent in Northern Virginia who has 600 people coming monthly to his workshop. Mine topped out at 200, and I thought that was great. But 600 is phenomenal. Everybody can do this in every market.

First thing's first though. Let's assume you're preparing for your very first workshop, okay? What I want you to do before you spend any money, time, or energy on marketing, is focus on your current, existing contact management database. Clean up your database. Get rid of incomplete contacts or phone numbers and emails that are no longer any good, or there's been no response. You don't want them clogging up your database.

Ask yourself, "How do I know this person?" and "What do I know about this person?"

Once you have a clean database—and it doesn't matter if you've got 100 people or a thousand, the number is not what's important right now—ask yourself, "How likely are they to be interested in investing?"

A "1" would be least likely, "10" would be most likely. Here's why I want you to do that. Once you have that, call the 10s and invite them to your first workshop. If you get less than 10 people, then call the 9s and invite them too. If you still have less than 10 people, then call your 8s. Essentially you want to focus on the 8s, 9s, and 10s.

Those are the folks you invite to your first workshop. So people you know, you know them, they know you, you've done business with them in the past and you have some degree of certainty that they have an interest in investing. You'll know for sure when you call them.

Yes, you can email them. Yes, you can text them (and as a little side note here, you really want to pay attention to how people like to communicate. Some people like texting, some people like

direct communication over the phone. Others like face-to-face communication. If you can determine their preferred style, make a note on your database for that client.)

When you reach out to invite them to your event, say, “Hey, I’m going to be having a workshop. I thought about you and I thought you might have an interest in investing. Would you like to participant in this? Here’s what we’re going to do.”

You’ll get a really solid idea of the interest level and how many people to expect. When you get over 10 people interested, you’ll need to secure a location. Here’s a script I use for talking to libraries about meeting space. Always keep in mind that in order to get a room for free at the library—a community venue, focused on the community—your event has to be community-oriented. And *non-profit*. You can’t charge any kind of an entry fee or membership dues. You also do not want to sell properties in that workshop, or promote your own listings. The reason is you need to be embrace the library’s philosophy and format in order to use their space.

You should say, “Hey, I’m a local agent in the area, but that is not what I’m doing this for. What I’m doing this for is to create a free, non-salesy forum for local investors to come to and discuss their investing activities with each other, and seek help and share ideas in a friendly, open environment that’s non-threatening.”

And when you mean what you say and you use these words, you’re going to be able to get a room at a library. We have plenty of people who do just this. That’s one venue.

You can also hold your event at your local municipal building. They typically have a community room you can use for free, as long as you’re a citizen of that community. Also check community centers, though they might charge you a small fee. Fire halls are a possibility. Your local volunteer fire company typically rents their hall as long as your event is non-profit, one night a month, for example.

You can often use your local schools and frequently the church where you are a member. Ask the administrator if you could rent out the community room or a conference room for free once a month. Typically they’ll do that as long as you’re a member and, again, as long as it serves the community and is non-profit.

In any case, once you get your location secured, you want to reserve it one month in advance of your first meeting. I always like to have a month to prepare. You can do it in two weeks once you’re up and running, but the first time out of the gate you want to give yourself a month.

Now go back to the people you’ve already communicated with and say, “Okay guys, we have our venue, we have the date, we have the time.” Give them plenty of notice, via email and follow up with either a phone call or a text three weeks out. At two weeks out, send another reminder and maybe put something in an email. Perhaps you Google search “real estate news,” and find a good report on something that’s happening in the world of real estate. Attach the link in your email reminder, so there’s something of value there as well.

Do the same thing one week out, and then a final reminder either the morning of your event, or the night before. Use their preferred communication method to remind them to be there. You

don't even need www.MeetUp.com at this point. Right now we're just exercising this marketing vehicle to get people there.

The reason I want you to focus on people you know at first is because they will come to your support because they know you and like you and trust you. They may even bring a friend to the first meeting. It's not required, though. What you want to do is basically get out there swinging the bat.

I never used to remember to bring cookies and drinks for my meetings, because I'm a guy and I don't think of those things, although now I do because I've been trained properly. Just check with your venue first to see what you can bring in. It's not a requirement, but some people may appreciate it. Who doesn't like a cookie and a cup of tea, right?

For your very first meeting you're not going to know what to talk about. The good news is: you don't want to talk a lot. You only want to speak for a few moments. Because if you're doing all the talking, you're not accomplishing one of the greatest benefits of this open forum, which is getting people involved, and getting them to feel comfortable discussing what's currently going on in their investing activities. The more that they get involved, the more engaged they'll become. The more tied to this event, the more they will keep coming back again and again and again.

So what should you do for the first one? I would actually do some canvassing through your MLS system ahead of time. Start about a week in advance and print off properties you might think are good investments. It's going to be easier to do rentals because you can find them listed with some of the basic preform information—what the rents are, what the expenses are, etc. Print those off and don't worry about being 100% correct at this point. Just bring these in to use as an exercise in form analysis. The sheets that determine cash flow, for example. Bring enough copies for everyone.

Let's say you choose two rental properties—one you think might work and one think would not work. You can explain why. Maybe bring three, but I wouldn't bring more than that. Hand out the MLS sheets and some blank cash flow worksheets. Get them used to using the real basic, simple form first, the cash flow worksheet. Hand it out. Hand it out like candy. Give them several blanks. Don't just give them three; give them 10 each, okay? You can even stick your business card on top of it before you copy it so the cash flow worksheets are branded to you.

Then let them go through the exercise of filling out the cash flow worksheet for each of those 2-3 properties. Allow them the opportunity to go through the cash flow worksheet and see for themselves why it might or might not be such a good deal. The bottom line is you want to give them something to do while they're there. Get them engaged, get them involved, get them sharing notes, communicating, asking questions.

That's basically going to be the bulk of that first meeting. Remember, before you hand out those sheet, you want to get up and just speak for five minutes. Let them know you have a vested interest in investors in the community because it's what you do for a business. Also recognize there are some tremendous opportunities out there for people who are willing and eager to learn. Tell them you wanted to provide a safe, non-risk, non-threatening environment for people to

come together and share their ideas and share their challenges and help each other out, and you're their guide. You're the person who's helping all of this come together, okay?

Then I recommend you bring in an article from, say, the *The Wall Street Journal*. Or better yet, search "real estate news" on the internet. You'll find literally hundreds of reporting networks out there, and some of them focus specifically on real estate news. There's a magazine called *Real Estate Investor*, or visit www.BiggerPockets.com, get some real neat articles. Print it off, make copies, and just go over it just briefly. Keep this to five minutes.

So to recap: introduce yourself, give them the layout of the land, tell them the agenda and the basic rules for the meeting. Remind them nobody's coming in here to sell properties, right? Speak for five minutes on whatever article you brought, and then give them the listings and worksheets. Say, "We're going to go through some exercises here. I want to make sure everybody's comfortable looking at a listing for a property and trying to determine if it's the kind of thing you want to pursue further... which means calling the listing agent, getting more information, and perhaps going see the property." And then go through the properties. Do the cash flow worksheets with them, go through them step by step.

The last thing you're going to do at the end is open up the floor for discussion. It's going to be easy to do because most people, after they go through the exercise, are going to come up with questions. Get them comfortable speaking up, raise their hands. Just say, "Do you have any questions?" It's that easy. You've got a natural segue into an open forum after they've finished filling out those worksheets. You can say, "Okay guys, let's compare these. Which one looks like the best? Which one looks like the worst? Why is that? Why does it look like the best? Why does it look like the worst?"

Once you've done that, ask this next question. "Who here has bought a rental before and it didn't work out for you? Was it a good deal, was it a bad deal, or are you not so sure?" And don't just ask them yes or no questions. Ask them who, what, where, when, why and how questions. Most people are willing to share information at this point. They love talking about their experiences. And the people who've never invested before are going to gobble it up.

The biggest benefit of this third part of the meeting is that it's going to allow other people to feel more comfortable discussing what they're currently investing in. You might find somebody who says, "You know what? I'm so glad I did this, because I just bought my first rental and I didn't know what I was getting into. Now one of my tenant's not paying the rent, I found out that the furnace..." or whatever. There are all kinds of things that come up. What you want to do is give people the atmosphere where they can share what's working and also get advice on solving problems, helping them with challenges. Remember, other investors will come to the rescue, and all you've got to do is create the format, create the forum. You don't even have to say much. All you're doing is you're acting as a mediator.

When you arrive at these workshops, come prepared with a sign-in sheet with just three columns: name, phone number, and email address. If you want to add a fourth column for area, you can, but for the most part people are going to be from the same area where you're holding the meeting. Let people know you're going to communicate with them based on what they put on

that form. It also gives you a record of who showed up. You can check your RSVP list to touch base with people who didn't attend and find out what happened.

So now you've got your attendance sheet. You've got people who have a cash flow worksheet with your contact information. They've got samples of properties and then they've got a pertinent, meaningful article they can use and take home. They had a good meeting with good discussions, and maybe you fed them cookies.

Now, before everybody leaves, say, "Hey guys," and ask them. "Show of hands here, who here likes this format?" Most people are going to of course say, "Yes." Then you ask, "Who here would like to do this again? Raise your hand." When they confirm say, "Great! Let's do it same time, same place next month, but next time feel free to bring someone with you. Friend, neighbor, relative, coworker, somebody from church or school or what have you." Ask them to communicate who the friends are ahead of time so you can confirm with them also via email or text or phone call.

Questions:

Peter asks, "Do you see more results from the booklets or these workshops in terms of clients?" Yeah, here's the difference between what we call "contact marketing methods" and "non-contact marketing methods." "Contact" means you are in front of them, face-to-face, belly-to-belly, it's in-person, it's live, it's direct communication. The results are always faster from workshops and it's because they get to see you, so that know you, like you, trust you that's vital in business is accomplished far more quickly. They see that you're a regular guy just like them, and you're taking time out of your day to help them. You might have elderly parents and children too. You can make personal connections. This is a faster path to new clients through the workshop, absolutely.

Now compare that to the booklet you send in the mail to a niche group of people. It could be oncologists, it could be podiatrists, it could ophthalmologists, or chiropractors, what have you. That booklet generally takes a few months to build up enough recognition in people's minds of who you are and what you're doing, and build up enough interest and intrigue and maybe just enough of knowing you and even a little bit of liking you to actually generate a response.

The booklet will take longer. After a couple of mailings, if you're in an area and you're within a mile or two of a local office of someone who's been getting your booklet... my gosh, stop in and visit them. Say, "Hey, I'm Peter, I'm the guy who's been sending you that real estate investment booklet. What do you think?" And start up just a real short, brief conversation. You don't want to take up a lot of their time, because number one, they're surprised that you're there, all right? And number two, they're business people. They could be busy. Instead, you say, "Hey, look, you know, no worries. How about if I just set you up on a search in your area, just for you, of properties to suit your needs, okay? No obligation, it's totally free." I'd be shocked if you didn't get 9 out 10 "Yes's." Then follow up with, "Great! I'll call you later. When will be a good time? Because I need to ask you three questions that will help me tailor this search just for you, for the right properties in the right area, okay?" That's all you want to do. Just set the appointment.

That technique works wonderfully once you've been sending the booklet out a few months. Because the booklet's non-contact, when you combine personal communication, it's a very powerful tool. I would highly encourage you to show up in person, let them see your face, let them see you're a real person. All of a sudden they begin to know you, and like you... the trust is much more easily accomplished.

Combining a use of booklets and workshops allows you to reach two different kinds of potential investors. Think about it: a lot of professional business owners, are not going to have time to go to attend a workshop. Use the booklet to communicate with those guys, particularly the really high-wage earning, self-employed service providers who are busy. The workshops are great for folks like engineers, teachers, firemen, and policemen. Those guys are awesome candidates for workshops.

After the meeting

What you do after the meeting is very, very important. You always want to follow up with an email—I prefer email—the next day. Don't wait, do it the next day. Just send them a simple thank-you. "Thank you for participating. I love what I do. I love serving people and this gives me a very low-risk, non-threatening, free format for you, my clients and friends, to participate in. It allows me to serve and help other people. I hope you liked it, so I look forward to seeing you again next month. And by the way, here's something else for you," and you can include in the email some attachments of some other forms, maybe the rehab forms for flips, or a link for the Rental Property Reporter, which is more of an advanced technique for analyzing rentals. Give, give, give. Think Zig Ziglar. I promise you it'll develop good, long-term relationships and loyalty.

Don't be surprised if after your first meeting, you get people coming up to you and saying, "You know, I really appreciate you doing this and I really do want to invest. Would you work with me?" Okay? It's going to happen.

Questions:

Linda asks, "What three questions do you ask about the search when you call them?" Literally what I do is once I get them on the phone, very quickly build rapport by reminding them who you are. "Hi, I'm Gary. I met you today, I'm going to set you up on a real estate investment search, but I need some basic information first." Number one is, "Do you believe you have a stronger interest in flipping homes or in buying rentals?" The second question is geographic: "Okay, would you like to keep it around where your office is located?" You might suggest if they're looking for rentals, to try to be around hospital or university systems. Or if that's not possible in your town, maybe you want to be close to shopping centers, or schools. A lot of times they're going to respond, "Well, I just want to have it around where I live because I don't want to have to go far." That's a bad answer because where they live might be great for affluent individuals, but not very good for people who want to rent. Follow up by asking about price range. "Is there a particular price range you'd like to focus on?" That might open up some more dialogue, and if it does, then it's awesome. You want to find out, fairly early on, if these people

are qualified to be able to buy properties. What do they have in the way of savings? What is their credit rating? Do they know what their credit rating is and will they qualify for a loan? Some may have an available business line of credit they can tap into to purchase income-producing assets, which are held as business purchases? Very legitimate. In any case, you'll narrow down flipping versus renting, a geographic location, and the price range.

Just remember, you're building rapport with these people. It's a dance, so be sure to ask at least one opening question. A who, what, where and when, why or how question. Perhaps, "What is your inspiration for focusing on rentals?" Get them talking.

Where to go from there

In phase two, let's talk about how you crank it. We're going to add a little high-octane fuel to this method to crank up your numbers. But I don't want you to do this until you've done the first part. Start with people you've already met. They're friends, neighbors, relatives, but hopefully people you've worked with in the past through the lease of your real estate license. That's always how you cut your teeth on this approach. It doesn't matter if you get a transaction from that first meeting or not. The value is in the exercise.

Next, we like to utilize www.MeetUp.com. It allows you to create your own meet-up group. You can also find existing meet-up groups. From the website, click on "Find" and search your area. For me, within five miles of Virginia Beach, you can see the Virginia Peninsula. That's where NASA, Langley Air Force Base, Hampton and Newport News are. As you can see there's a handful of investor groups already out there using www.MeetUp.com.

So choose "Find Meet-Up Groups" to see all the ones that are out there that you can join. You can sign up and become a member of those meet-up groups, which can be a very good thing because you may want some of those participants to come to your future meet-up, your workshop.

Next, click "Start Meet-Up Group." I'm going to use Virginia Beach, Virginia. You'll be asked to fill in "It's a meet-up for people interested in..." You can either type in a description, or you can scroll down and select keywords and phrases that are already available to you. You could select "Real estate investor meetings." That's kind of dull and boring. Instead, you could also consider "Investing for retirement," "beginning real estate investing," "getting started as a real estate investor." If I was you I would pick some of these categories, because a lot of people are interested in investing. They just don't know where to start.

You could also consider starting a niche group. You might want to pick "US Navy," "veterans," or some other groups to combine with "beginner real estate investing," or "getting started as a real estate investor." This would attract veterans and former military who are interested in investing in real estate. In any case, you can choose up to 15 keywords.

Click through the form now. You'll create a name for what the members will be called. I'll call mine "real estate investors." Then Save and Continue.

Next we'll get close to the payment stuff. You'll be asked to "Choose Your Plan." It's limited to 50 members and four organizers for the \$10 a month subscription, or you can go as big as you want for \$15 a month. It's up to you. I can tell you, we've had people blow past 50 in a matter of months.

In any case, it's easy to set up. Here's why it's so powerful. Once you've held your first workshop at a local venue, you're going to come back to set up this MeetUp group and post a message that lets people know about your next group meeting on date/time. When you put it out there, MeetUp is going to use your keywords and phrases to let relevant people know about your event. How does it get any better than that? You don't have to call anybody. You don't have to email anybody now. MeetUp notifies everybody in its system who matches your keywords.

This is a great way to help facilitate and allow you to build a membership, a community of members, of people who would invest.

And you can do this in multiple niches too, by the way. Some of our students hold a different workshop every week of the month. Maybe retired air force on week one, then air force reserve on week two, active duty air force on week three, which is probably too big of a group so on week four they take time off.

Let's say you want to work with hospital folks. Week one you can meet with nurses, week two oncologists, week three radiologists, whatever.

So that's how you do MeetUp. Define your niche. Set up your location reservation for a recurring regular meeting, and post your MeetUp message so everybody gets it. And every month make sure you prepare about a week in advance. Think about your 5-minute subject, your topics of discussion, and what you'll pass out. It could be 10 minutes, it could be 15, but the more you talk and the less they talk, the less valuable this method's going to be. You've got to get them engaged, get them rolling up their sleeves, and get them involved.

Quick tips

Always bring a sign-up sheet, always bring something for them to do, and something for them to take away. Always do follow-up. Thank them for coming. They're giving up an hour away from their families too, just like you. It's all for a good cause, so always do the follow-up.

When you have eight people attending, they'll all fit at one table. Easily controllable. But when you get to 20 people it's going to challenge you. That's why I only want you to do your first workshop with a group of people who you know first.

When you get to, say more than 12 people, you want to break people up into tables and here's how you do this. Two tables is easy. One table talks about flips, while the other talks about rentals, and then you can let people get up and go back and forth to change tables. It's an open discussion, and you can jump back and forth between tables too.

When you get to over 20 people you're going to want three tables. You can start diving into more specific subjects, like one table talks about rehabbing, another about getting new financing, and a third about landlord/tenant issues. Your people will tell you what they want to talk about. At some point you can talk about wholesaling. For example, the states of Ohio and New York are working on legislation that is going to ban wholesaling. If that happens—and I believe it's going to—in short order you'll find all the other states falling in line over the next few years. The big ones will go first, like California. Other states, like North Dakota, maybe Wyoming, are not really going to care as much.

Again, doing workshops is a two-step process. Step one is to work with people you know and what you know and where you are. Start small because there are going to be things that'll pop up that you're not prepared for. It's just going to happen. It's not a matter of if but when. And if you got eight people around you who know you, no big deal, okay? Once you've got that nailed down, then you can bring in MeetUp to help add high-octane to your session attendance.

Questions:

Jamie asks, “With rotating weekly groups, are you paying \$14.99 per group?” Yes, you pay for each group.

Linda asks, “Gary, is there a day and time that seems to work best for the workshops?” Yes, it's been our experience (with the group, not just me) that Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are absolutely the best nights. Also, 7:00 PM seems to work really well. Secure the room for two hours, 7:00 to 9:00pm. When you promote it, let them know it's an hour workshop with a half-hour of follow-up Q&A if needed. Because you'll have people hanging around. Leave that remaining half-hour unpublished. You want it there because you're going to have people come up to you, particularly after the second and third month. People are going to start getting comfortable with you. They're going to know you and like you, trust you. They're going to come up and say, “Hey, I'd like to talk to you in private.” Okay?

You want to be able to stay right there, and if the discussion is around them using you as their agent or helping them list a property they've been wanting to sell or help them buy their first property, you know, at that point, what I would do is have the initial conversation but don't do any contract work.

Don't sign any buyer's agency agreements, don't do anything other than gather information and say, “Let's get some information here. I will call you tomorrow at...” and you pick the time. You always want to follow up within 24 hours. And then you can secure the business relationship. Now that's for profit, and you'll want to make sure that's done off-premises so you maintain your integrity, honoring the code of ethics with the venue you're using. In other words, while your event is non-profit, you can still satisfy that consumer's need the next day to work with you.

Russ asks, “Can you use a large training room at your office?” I'm glad you brought this up. Okay, we do have students who've used a room in real estate offices for their workshops, and they absolutely do work. Now I will tell you, my personal preference is to use a neutral site. That's why I like churches and schools and municipal buildings and libraries because they're neutral. But I'm pretty sure some of the attendees are going to have a little bit of hesitancy as



soon as they see the big real estate marquee outside. They'll start thinking, "Oh, what if this is another salesy kind of thing?" That's the only drawback with using your office.

If you haven't done a strategy call yet, just let me know when you are ready. We will go through your particular circumstances and get you started.

If you are interested in other real estate investing strategies: flipping properties, wholesaling, and property management, please call 1-800-931-2605.

You can email me directly at Gary@myinvestmentservices.com, or visit our website, myinvestmentservices.com.