

Using Print Plus Craigslist and Kijiji



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Using Print Plus Craigslist and Kijiji in Your Marketing

Craigslist is used in the U.S. and also parts of Canada, while Kijiji is pretty much exclusively Canada, but with the same purpose. Sometimes you'll even see the same property listed on both of those systems.

What are your goals?

Whenever you have a marketing campaign—this is true for every single one—begin by determining what your goals are. How many responses do you want? How many conversions do you want to have? How many sales do you want to make?

Whatever the case, if you're looking to sell a duplex, for example, you might say, "I'd like to get 40 responses." Perhaps 10 of those will turn into prospects, because not all will want what you're offering. Gather their contact information as a prospect, though, because they may want something you have to offer in the future.

Also identify goals based on possible outcomes from this particular marketing campaign. It's not just about selling one listing. It's also about getting more people into your database, so remember everybody who responds should become a prospect. Think of advertising as a way to build your database as well as sell your current listings.

Don't ever run an ad without thinking about your goals first. I promise you, when you have your goals in mind, you'll do a better job of creating your ad.

Who is your ideal prospect?

The next step to creating a great ad is to understand the ideal prospect you're going after. Create a profile, sometimes called an "avatar." Who is the avatar for this particular ad campaign? Let's say you own a rental and you're renting an apartment. You've got a four-plex and each unit has two bedrooms, so you're hoping to rent out one of the vacant two-bedroom apartments. Think about it. Certain people will rent two-bedroom apartments, while others won't, so you want to create your ad to attract the people you want and repel the people you don't.

Somebody wanting to rent a four-bedroom home probably has kids. Somebody wanting to rent a one-bedroom apartment or an efficiency probably does not have children. Keep those things in mind as you create this profile first and the ad later. If you try to create an ad that will speak to everyone, you're really not saying anything to anyone.

It's an old adage in marketing that when you're writing a piece of copy (an ad), you want to write as if you're writing to one person. Write as if the person you want to attract is sitting right in front of you. Use words like "you" and "your." Don't say "everybody" or "everyone" or

“neighbors” or “friends.” Don’t say those things because you’ll get lower-level responses. That’s the key secret to creating successful ads.

What will you advertise?

Typically, we’re selling a house or leasing an apartment, or offering some type of service like a free list of rentals in an area, or perhaps a free list of duplexes in a postal code. How about offering some sort of content or educational information? In the checklist for this session, you’ll have direct access to much of the content on flipping, buying rentals, wholesaling, even on property management or people who want to self-manage their own rentals. You can use these resources to attract your prospects. We’re making it really easy for you to get valuable content into your clients’ hands so they can learn about investing, and learn the same methods you’re being taught so they will become even easier to serve.

This means you’ll have a very powerful co-symbiotic relationship where you’re operating on the same page, using the same terminology, and using the same methodologies and tools. This is going to allow you to be a much more profitable realtor. In any case, that’s what we mean by offering a free information bonus.

Next, and I want to emphasize this, when it comes to print media, I do not encourage you to use the major publications. We don’t use the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*. We only use local publications like *PennySaver* and *Green Sheet*, and they’re all over the U.S. and Canada. Some municipalities have a different name for them, but they’re basically a paper that comes out on the stands in grocery stores or is delivered in the mail. Believe it or not, they have really good readership. They’re also a lot less expensive than the major publications, where the real estate section used to go on for 20–30 pages. With the growth of Craigslist and Kijiji, the real estate section in major papers started reducing dramatically. In any case, the local *PennySaver* and *Green Sheet* are real winners.

Online ads

Now, before we get into the printed material, let’s take a look at some online ad examples.

In the London, Ontario Craigslist at the moment there are ads in different categories: “Community,” “Services,” “Discussion Forums,” “For Sale,” “Housing,” “Jobs,” and so forth. Now, if you’re going to create an ad, look on the left where it says “Create Posting.” However, if you’re going to be creating multiple postings—which you should—start by clicking “My Account” and open up an account.

From “Create Posting,” you’ll click on “Housing Offered” or “For Sale by Owner,” for example. Under “Housing Offered” we find “Real Estate by Owner” and “Real Estate by Broker.”

People have always asked me: “What if I’m selling my own property myself and I am a broker?” That’s a good question. In every state, every province where I’ve been, it doesn’t matter if you’re

doing it for your own property or not. You have to disclose that you're an agent. So click on "Real Estate for Sale by Broker."

Your post's title should be something that's benefit-driven and catchy. Don't just list features like "three-bedroom, two-bathroom townhome in Hyde Park." That's okay and it'll work, but if it's benefit-driven like, "Prestigious, Hyde Park, three-bedroom, close to transportation," you'll have a stronger response.

Next, you want to list more benefits. You could say, "Five minutes from Western Ontario University," or "Ten minutes from Northgate Mall, five minutes to Upper Richmond Elementary School," something benefit-driven, followed by features, followed by a call to action.

- 1) Start with benefits.
- 2) Follow with features, but not all the features, just the basic stuff.
- 3) Finish with a "call to action," which means make an offer. Give these people something to do.

Remember, the purpose of your ad is not just to show what you're selling. It's to gather new contact information, so you should always offer something else of value like: "For a free list of homes in your area, click here," or "Visit [www...](#)" These will not be hotlinks though, as that was eliminated years ago.

Remember to list the price, square footage if you have it, and open house dates. You've also got to type in your license information if you're a licensed agent. Add your email address so people know how to connect with you. You should definitely have a number for people to call, though you may not want it to be your personal cell phone. Then show a location, though I don't provide the actual, specific address. I would not do that.

Review other ads for ideas

See how other listers wrote their ads.

At the time of writing, there's one with a nice, pretty picture showing the outside of the home. It shows the real estate sign with the property management broker's information and the building in the background. When we click on it we see the property is on Wellington Road, right up in the heart of London, Ontario. It's a great-looking picture. Expand it to see the phone number. This guy's smart because he embedded contact information within the picture itself. Of course, Craigslist always gives you a map.

"Stunning one-bedroom for rent on Sandringham on the corner of Wellington Road in London, \$1,165 a month." That's actually a really good deal. "Heat and hot water included. Available April. Building features: elevators, parking, wheelchair-accessible."

They'll probably rent this property quickly because I know the market there and people are moving in droves. But the listing doesn't focus on a lot of benefits here. It only uses one word that evokes emotional appeal, which is "stunning." Well, stunning can mean a lot of things. What he might have said was, "Walking distance to shopping on Wellington Road, five minutes from downtown London." Whatever the case is, provide benefits first. That's the most important thing, followed by features, then closing with a call to action.

Let's look at another one. As of the time of writing, there's a post that features a pretty picture. "Luxury Lifestyle 'The Beck' Great Home!" A thousand bucks a month. The listing has great pictures, which is another important thing. There's a nice-looking kitchen. Terrific bedroom picture. Great bathroom picture. This listing is going to go fast, especially with text like: "It's also the best for barbeque entertaining or just sunning yourself." That's classic, benefit-driven advertising. This agent just appealed to two different groups of people—someone who likes to barbeque and those who like to get a suntan.

Then the listing goes into features: 2,200 square feet. That's a good-size apartment. "Two great bedrooms. Private den/TV room." Notice words like *great* and *private*. "Sunroom and kitchen all with access and sight lines to that private terrace." This is one you want to copy: great pictures and a benefit-driven ad.

Now let's look for a house for sale on Kijiji, since we just saw a rental.

As of the time of writing, there's a rent-to-own, looking pretty good. "Sleek Modern Design in Upper Richmond," "Dramatic Open..." You know what? Actually, I know exactly where this location is and it's just absolutely going through the roof... \$1,318,800. Four years ago this would have been easily \$758,000 at the most. Land has just gone sky high out there.

Sometimes people will list foreign properties. Let's look at "Vacation Paradise" in Flamborough, which is a different area. It is only \$80,000. They've got some good pictures. This looks like a nice campsite area, like an A-frame. It opens up right out to the woods. Boy, I could sure get used to that.

The description touts: "Vacation paradise found! Rare offering of this specially-designed, A-frame, three-season cottage home within a unique nature resort." That's a pretty loaded statement. They use *gorgeous* and *paradise found*, but one thing that really sticks out is *unique nature resort*. That's the kind of thing people want to see when they're buying this type of a property. "Private, peaceful, calm." This is a pretty good ad. "Olympic-sized outdoor pool." He's got benefits and features all mixed in. Usually, you want to lead with benefits and follow with features though.

But there's no call to action. Always add something like: "For full report on property visit www.LouisRacette.com" so they go to your website and can get the full report... for which they've got to enter their email address. That's the benefit of a call to action.

PennySaver and Green Sheet ad examples

Visit a grocery store, strip mall, or laundromat and look for a *Green Sheet* or a *PennySaver*, your local weekend publication. Typically, they come out on Saturdays, but some locations will come out on Wednesdays. Grab one, take it home, flip through it and look for ads that catch your attention.

Probably, your eyes will be drawn to the ads that have a border around them. Your eyes are just drawn to it and professional advertisers know this. Always surround your ad with a border. It costs a little bit of money, but it's worth it. You might ask why you should spend \$15 or \$20 instead of \$10, but the ad without the border probably won't even get you a single phone call, while the one with the border could land five calls. If you're going to run an ad in printed material, always do it the right way.

Start with a border. The headline should also be in bold. It should be benefit-driven. You can also use italics in the ad copy but I generally don't like italics. Choose a font that's easy to read and is complemented by your bold headline. Color choice is also important. Some publications don't have the option of using color, but with the ones that do, you definitely want to use color.

Guess what the number one color is? It's actually red. Now, I know a lot of people will say, "Don't use red because it's like *Caution* or *Stop*," but the fact is that red gets people's attention. And that's exactly what we're trying to do, so that then they'll read what's in the ad. By the way, if you think about Keller Williams real estate, it's all about red, and that hasn't stopped anybody. KW is now the largest brokerage company in the world.

Give them a call to action. Make an offer: again, a free list of properties, a free home evaluation, free report on this property. Whatever the case is, put that in red because they're more likely to take that action.

So again, border around the ad, headline in bold, the rest of the copy just basic font, and then a call to action in red. I promise, I'm living proof that if you follow this example, you'll have higher response rates.

Call to action

There are other items you can give people. Let's say you are selling a rental property like a duplex or a four-plex or a tri-plex, or even a single-family home. Think about the people who would be interested in your ad. What is it that they need and want? This is someone who is interested in buying a small rental. Well, they need analysis sheets. They need forms. They need calculators. Well, you can offer these in your ad.

Now, it's easier to do this in printed media than it is on Craigslist. Craigslist will sometimes flag you if you're being too blatant about offering a service inside a housing ad. This is where you

have a grey area, but we're really not offering a service. We're offering something for free that the reader can use as a free tool. That's how we're able to get away with it.

There are lots of calculators at your disposal, forms and information sheets, analysis sheets for rentals and flips, so you have the permission of the vendor. If you're a trainer, you can provide those to your clients and you should provide them to your clients. You want informed and educated clients, so offer them calculators, forms, spreadsheets. Just visit the course website, and in the Silver Level membership area, click on "Members."

Results

Now, at this point in running your ad, you want to check your results every day on Craigslist or Kijiji. If you're running a print ad, you're going to get your results based on phone calls. The real test is who actually calls you or emails you or grabs one of your free reports or your calculators. The bottom line is you want to keep up with your results, track them and measure them, because you can't improve anything that you don't track or measure.

Next, add all these prospects to your database, every single one. Always add them to your database. For those who engage with you, you want to create further engagement and establish your authority and credibility.

You can begin to offer extra things to these prospects now, including links to free books on our membership site. Download the electronic version—it's free. Send it to your clients. In fact, if I were you, I would just download all five books: flipping, buying rentals, wholesaling, managing rentals, self-managing rentals, and give these to your clients over time. It's going to help them become more informed and educated. That's one example of something you can do to provide information to your clients.

You can give them links to a subject-specific playlist on YouTube. There are 105 videos on my training channel, "Real Estate With Gary Wilson." For example, you can see "Tips for Rental Profits." Click on that playlist and you'll see all the videos on buying rentals. Each video is an average of five or six minutes, short little clips to give micro-focused instruction.

Sharing valuable content like this with your prospects will allow you to have ongoing dialogue with them. This is really important. It's a whole different philosophy than asking for business. At some point, you'll ask for business when the time is right, but you have to build rapport first. Build a relationship. In today's world, people don't want to be *sold*. They want to be *served*... and they'll let you know when they're ready.

I'm not saying to be passive about this. You should take a very active role by offering them valuable content, forms, calculators, spreadsheets, instructional videos, books on the subjects. Give, give, give, give, give, and I'll promise you, you will receive.

Let's say you've given them three videos and a book. You might want to follow up with a call or text saying, "Would you be interested in a list of properties in your area?" Make them an offer like that. That's the next step in the buying sequence.

For everyone who responds and asks for help, you first want to determine what type of investor they are. Are they mostly interested in flipping? Are they more interested in buying rentals? Do they simply want to just wholesale? Then you'll know what further content to give them.

More importantly, you can set up an interview to qualify them. Always, as soon as somebody reaches out to you and says, "Hey, I want to do this. What do I do next?" don't just jump right in and start giving them properties. Do an interview. Interview them first. Explore Module Two of your training material where you'll find a 12-step process on how you interview somebody, prepare them for investing and qualify them for timing, motivation, readiness, willingness, ability.

Use the opportunity to interview them and determine what seat on the bus they belong in. You're the driver of the bus. You're in control and you will have a flipper bus and a rental bus and a wholesaling bus and a property management bus. Out of those prospects, some of them will be qualified today. They're ready, they want to go now, and they're pre-approved and they've got cash or whatever. They'll get front seats on the bus and everybody else goes behind them. You'll spend your time with the people in the front of the bus.

Every time you interview somebody, always have them follow up and send you an email recapping the conversation, and then work with the ones who email you. For the ones who do not email you, you want to think twice about serving them.

If you're really engaged and you've got listings to sell, or you're renting apartments for people, or you're a landlord, or you're managing properties for others, or you're simply doing leases for people, you can use these tools to advertise and do it very inexpensively—with high readership rates, high response rates.

Always remember to follow these three steps in your ad:

- Lead with benefits
- Follow with features
- Finish with a call to action.

If you miss any one of those three things or they're out of order, you won't get as good results, I can promise you.