

# NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

We are thrilled to share our CBIA Agent Newsletter with you! This newsletter is more than just a communication channel; it's a platform to share insights into the latest market trends, industry updates, and opportunities for professional development through featured training sessions, exciting challenges, and invaluable tips to elevate your real estate game.

We want this newsletter to be a valuable resource, so don't hesitate to share your thoughts, suggestions, and success stories. Your feedback will shape future editions and make this newsletter a reflection of our vibrant CBIA community.

## GROW YOUR BUSINESS

### I NEED MORE LEADS!

Zillow put out a startling statistic in their consumer insights report. In the past year, only 8% of sellers used an agent they've worked with before, meaning 92% of your clients choose to list with someone else.

Consider the last few deals you closed: the majority of these people who know you and trusted you to assist them with one of the biggest financial decision of their lives have moved on to another agent. How much lost income is this to you? What many agents fail to understand is that retaining the clients you already have is much easier and definitely less expensive than chasing new leads. So, how do you fix this problem?

First of all, you need to understand why this happens. The fact is that most agents fail to stay in touch with their clients once they sell them the house. Most times, it's years before these people will be ready to sell again and *you just assume they'll call you*. And that couldn't be further from the truth. We know competition is extremely challenging in today's market. Your clients are getting emails, phone calls, and are seeing ads everywhere from agents who promise a lot. Even if you were absolutely wonderful, there's no guarantee they will return as your client in the future.

So what do you do? Remember that CRM I wrote about a few months ago? You have to use one to stay in touch with your clients if you want their repeat business. Otherwise, they're going to sign with another agent—one who makes more of an effort. Your silence and lack of communication are the biggest threats to your business. You must stay present and keep communication flowing in a meaningful way. Stop "just checking in" and find something relevant to reach out about that would be *valuable to them*. Having these conversations gives you insight as to their future plans.

Take the opportunity by intentionally engaging with your past clients and your sphere of influence. Keep showing your value and set yourself apart from your competition.

### Cultural Awareness: China

Understanding cultures is imperative when working with clients. Depending on how they were raised, which country they come from, or what their heritage means, they will process information differently. Asian culture can be tricky for many of us when trying to understand our client and get them to the closing table. Overall, there is a strong commitment to the extended family. Tradition comes from wisdom and morality, and maintaining harmony is vital.

Asia is vast, and business practices vary from country to country. The Chinese value punctuality in both business and social settings. Introductions tend to be formal, and they do not like to be touched by people they do not know. Most people you meet should be addressed with a title and their name (Doctor, Mr., Madam vs. Mrs. since Chinese wives do not generally take their husband's surnames). Being late or canceling an appointment can have consequences.

When writing contracts, be cognizant that the Chinese write the date with the year first, then month, then the day. When working with them, you will need to be patient because they are cautious and need to feel they have a strong relationship with you before business can be completed. Do not exaggerate your ability to deliver, and remember that humility is a virtue. Understand there will be a lot of negotiating and they may continue to try for a better deal even after you have a signed contract. Do not show impatience or emotion, for they will see this as an advantage.

Gift giving is a sensitive issue. Gifts of food are always appreciated (but never bring food if invited to their dinner party). Avoid giving clocks or any sharp items like knives (this means you are severing the relationship). Try to wrap the gift in red, which is their lucky color (pink and yellow are also acceptable). Do not use white, which is the color associated with funerals. Also, never give a set of four of anything - the number 4 means death in Chinese!

Carla Rayman Kidd - [carla@cbislands.com](mailto:carla@cbislands.com)

## WELCOME NEW AGENTS

### St. CROIX

Olivia Victor - [olivia@coldwellbankervi.com](mailto:olivia@coldwellbankervi.com)

### St Barth

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## COLDWELL BANKER ISLAND AFFILIATES UNIVERSITY

### Change Your Words, Change Your Results

#### Reframing Client Conversations for Greater Impact

In the ever-evolving world of Caribbean real estate—where buyers are often international, sellers need education on pricing, and relationships drive referrals—**how we speak to clients can make or break a deal**. The words we choose not only shape perception but also build trust and influence action.

This month, I want to challenge you to shift your language—not to sound like a script, but to sound like a **true professional advisor**.

#### From Scripted to Service-Oriented

Let's begin with a simple reframe that changes the entire tone of a client conversation:

##### Old approach:

*"Are you working with a realtor?"*


##### New approach:

*"Has anyone sat down with you to walk through the buying (or selling) process in this market?"*

**Why it works:** The new language positions you as an expert offering a service—not just trying to "claim" a client. It opens dialogue, builds rapport, and creates space for value.

#### Replacing "I'm Just Following Up"

We all say it. And we've all ignored messages that start with it.

 *"I'm just following up..."* can feel vague, impersonal, and easily deleted.

**Instead of saying...**

*"I'm just following up..."* → *"Have you had a chance to consider the next step in your buying/selling journey?"*

**Try saying...**


*"I was thinking about your goals and wanted to share something that might be a great fit."*

*"You mentioned wanting [specific feature]—I found something worth a look. Can I send it over?"*

#### ☐ Bonus Tip: Make the Follow-Up a Continuation

**Every follow-up should feel like the next chapter in an ongoing conversation.** That means referencing:

- Their timeline
- Their price range
- Their "why" for buying or selling
- Any property or concern they mentioned

 **This is why taking great notes is critical.**

Whether you're using a CRM or a well-organized notebook, treat every detail like gold. Clients feel valued when you remember specifics. This builds trust and keeps you top of mind as *the* professional they want to work with.

#### Other Language Upgrades to Use Now

**Instead of saying... Try saying...**

"Can I help you find a home?" ..... "What does your ideal Caribbean lifestyle look like?"

"Do you have a budget?" ..... "Have you spoken with a local lender to explore what's possible here?"

"When do you want to list?" ..... "What's motivating your move, and what timeline does feel right?"

"We don't have that in this area." ..... "Let's explore areas that offer a similar lifestyle or value."

#### ☐ Caribbean Markets Require Guidance, Not Pressure

Clients often face the following:

- Foreign ownership laws
- Currency exchange and financing concerns
- Long sales cycles
- Lack of MLS

You're not just here to "sell." **You're a trusted guide in unfamiliar territory.** The more consultative your language, the more your value shines.

#### Your Challenge This Month

Pick one common phrase you use with clients.

Reframe it to reflect service, clarity, and connection.

Practice it. Use it. Watch how clients respond.

Want help refining your phrasing? Email me if you need assistance.

Kelly Eckersen - [kelly@cbislands.com](mailto:kelly@cbislands.com)



Did you know that all of our training and coaching programs are **completely free** for Coldwell Banker agents across our islands? Whether you're looking to sharpen your skills, boost your productivity, or get expert guidance on growing your real estate business, we're here to support you—at no cost to you!

If you're interested in scheduling a one-on-one consultation, email me at [kelly@cbislands.com](mailto:kelly@cbislands.com)

## SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

### 10 Tips for Winning Video on a Budget

Video marketing is no longer a luxury—it's a necessity. But for small businesses, the challenge isn't just creating videos; it's doing so without breaking the bank. The good news? You don't need a Hollywood budget to make an impact on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Here are 10 tips on how you can produce high-quality video content affordably and effectively.

#### 1. Use Your Smartphone Like a Pro

Forget expensive cameras—your smartphone is a powerful video tool. Most modern phones shoot in high resolution and even offer built-in stabilization. Improve quality by using good lighting, shooting in landscape mode (unless you're making vertical content for Reels or Shorts), and investing in a basic tripod.

#### 2. Leverage Free and Low-Cost Editing Tools

Editing doesn't have to be complex or costly. Tools like **CapCut**, **iMovie**, **DaVinci Resolve**, and **InShot** offer free or budget-friendly options that allow you to trim, add captions, and enhance your videos without hiring a professional editor.

#### 3. Tap Into User-Generated Content (UGC)

Encourage customers to share their own experiences with your brand through video testimonials, unboxings, or reviews. This not only saves production costs but also builds trust and authenticity—two key drivers of engagement.

#### 4. DIY Studio Setup

A clean, well-lit space with a neutral background is all you need for a professional look. Use natural light or affordable ring lights, and minimize background noise with a simple lapel mic (\$20 can make a huge difference in audio quality!).

#### 5. Repurpose and Recycle Content

Turn one video into multiple pieces of content. A single long-form video can be cut into YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, and LinkedIn snippets. Transcribe it for blog posts, or extract the audio for a quick podcast episode.

#### 6. Use Animation and Screen Recording

For explainer videos, use free animation tools like **Canva**, **Animoto**, or **Powtoon**. Screen recording apps like **Loom** or **OBS Studio** are perfect for tutorials and product walkthroughs.

#### 7. Collaborate with Micro-Influencers

Instead of spending big on celebrity endorsements, partner with micro-influencers who resonate with your audience. Many are willing to create video content in exchange for products or small fees, making it a cost-effective way to expand reach.

#### 8. Keep It Short and Sweet

Attention spans are short, so keep your videos concise. A 30-second video with a clear message often performs better than a long-winded one. Prioritize a strong hook in the first 5 seconds to keep viewers engaged.

#### 9. Go Live and Engage

Live videos on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube require zero editing and encourage real-time engagement. Q&As, behind-the-scenes peeks, and product demos work great for small businesses looking to connect with their audience in an authentic way.

#### 10. Optimize for SEO and Social Media Algorithms

Use relevant keywords in your video titles, descriptions, and captions. Add engaging thumbnails and use subtitles for accessibility. Social platforms prioritize video content, so take advantage of their algorithms by posting consistently.

#### Bonus Tip

**Timing Matters:** Having great video content is one thing, but posting at the right time is just as crucial. Based on Buffer's analysis of over a million YouTube videos, here are the best posting times.

- Wednesday at 4 p.m. is the best overall time.
- Monday and Thursday at 4 p.m. are also strong alternatives.
- In general, weekdays between 3–5 p.m. perform well as people wrap up their workday and scroll social media.

#### Worst Posting Times:

- Avoid 3 a.m. to 5 a.m.—audiences are asleep.
- Sundays have the lowest engagement of any day of the week.

For platform-specific analytics, YouTube Studio provides insights into when your audience is most active. Posting consistently at the same time each week also helps build a loyal audience that knows when to expect fresh content.

A strong video content strategy across YouTube, Meta, and LinkedIn is essential for modern businesses. Video enhances engagement, strengthens brand awareness, improves SEO, and drives higher conversions.

You don't need a massive budget to succeed with video. With the right tools, creativity, and a focus on authenticity, small businesses can produce professional-looking content that resonates with their audience—and wins on today's biggest video platforms. Start small, stay consistent, and watch your brand grow through the power of video.

Matt Gentile, CEO - MyBFF Social - [matt@mybffsocial.com](mailto:matt@mybffsocial.com)

### Do you have any ideas on something you would like to share in our newsletter?

A success story? An innovative new marketing program? A remarkable new listing or sale? Please let us know.

### CBIA Island News Facebook page

Did you know we have a Facebook page that shares information on the islands? This information is for you to put in your newsletters or use on your social media. To join this private Facebook page just for CBIA, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1132501950801034>

Please email Carla at [Carla@cbislands.com](mailto:Carla@cbislands.com) to let her know your office so that she can approve you as part of the group!



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