Managing the recruitment process

By Rob McMahon

Recruitment can be one of the most challenging aspects of the real estate business. Finding prospects, building a relationship with them and organizing training programs all costs time and money.

A recently released product aims to improve return on investment in all aspects of this process, from making initial contact to identifying training needs.

AlignMark, a company that specializes in human resource capital, recently developed a product specifically targeted to the real estate industry: Intelagent. The company describes it as a "fully integrated web-based recruitment system."

"The program reduces turnover and allows recruiters to make better hiring decisions," says Don Kottick, AlignMark's vice-president of products and services.

Brokers and real estate companies may be familiar with Alignmark through its Real Estate Simulator. First launched in 2001, the product is an approximately 45-minute online job simulation in the "day in the life" of a real estate agent, which allows users to compare themselves to the best in the industry. Developed with the help of professional psychologists and industry professionals, the simulator uses video segments and questions to gauge an agent's potential success in the industry.

"The beauty of the assessment is that it is very difficult to cheat," says Kottick. "We've proven that higher scores means more money people can make as a Realtor."

By measuring an individual's I.Q., personality profile and their industry-specific sales ability, Kottick says the simulator accurately predicts their success in the real estate market – as benchmarked from highly successful agents. He said assessment results from a similar hiring program the company developed for the New York police department were found to be legally defensible in court.

After identifying the need for a real estate recruitment management system, AlignMark developed Intelagent, which builds on Real Estate Simulator's strengths. It allows brokers and recruiters to track and manage new and experienced recruits in its system. It tracks the progress of recruits so companies can tailor their contacts to the specific requirements of these individuals. A user-friendly interface allows companies to manage contacts in a much easier way than using an Excel database or pen and paper. As a centrally managed recruitment management system, Intelagent allows users to control every aspect of the recruitment process from one computer screen for single site or multi-branched operations.

"Intelagent allows brokers to manage their entire recruitment process," says Kottick. "It's a complete content management system...Most recruiters have no idea how many people they have in their pipeline."

Users can set up Intelagent to track everything from the number of prospects to the frequency of their responses. To continuously find and cultivate new prospects, Intelagent uses "e-farming". From its command screen, the program allows users to schedule contact with a large number of prospects.

For example, users can schedule mailouts to ensure continuous contact with prospects through email "drip" campaigns. The "drip" aspect refers to the frequency of action – after targeting groups of prospects users can set up contact every few weeks, or months, depending on their needs. To pique a prospect's interest, emails offer educational or marketing material, and include a survey question designed to collect information.

"Intelagent sends out different campaigns through email that allows brokers to cultivate their pipelines," says Kottick. "Recruiters can keep in touch with a large pool of prospects to maximum effect, with minimal effort...The emails provide value to individuals as well as build brand equity and awareness."

This continuous recruitment campaign allows the program to steadily accumulate information on possible employees – their suitability as real estate agents, the number of languages they speak, their location and so on. For prospects who may require improvement in certain areas, the program provides suggestions and links to tailored training plans.

Kottick says users can look forward to continuous improvements to Intelagent, with new features added all the time. For example, one recently added feature enables users to schedule and plan career nights to promote the industry.

For more information: www.alignmark.com/Intelagent/index.html. ■REM