



Top Marketing Tips to Grow Your Specialist Business

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KentReliance
for Intermediaries

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More effective communications for a new world of opportunities

The specialist mortgage market is changing. And that means many new opportunities for brokers to diversify their offering and attract new clients. But a changing market needs a fresh approach to marketing.

Today's forward-thinking broker knows that success is built on a more agile, targeted and responsive model. By embracing new technologies and leveraging new media, you can take control of the way you promote your business. With the increasing sophistication and availability of digital technology, people's media habits have changed dramatically. Online is the new word of mouth and that makes social media a vital tool.

In this guide you'll find top tips and practical, proven approaches to marketing from the UK's leading financial services communications agency, Teamspirit. And the good news is that you don't need a massive marketing budget to start growing your client book today.

Specialist cases – a unique opportunity

We specialise in arranging bespoke mortgage solutions. So, if you have a client with exceptional needs, we'll be happy to discuss unusual, niche and tailor-made lending opportunities with you.



A scientific approach to specialist marketing

Digital advertising has created a revolution in targeted, specialist marketing. Never before has it been so easy to identify and connect directly with the exact people your services appeal to. You can test, update and retarget your advertising for a fraction of the price of a traditional campaign. But even better than that, you have total control of your budget.

In our experience, here are some of the most effective ways of using the internet to promote your specialist services to the people who matter most.

1. Harnessing search engines

In the digital world, search engines are the gateway to your business and how most people will discover you. So that makes how you use them absolutely crucial to your business.

One of the most effective ways of generating leads is by placing small search ads on sites such as Google, Bing and Yahoo. Essentially, these appear when people search for the exact search words you choose. That means you're more likely to be seen by the people you want at the precise time they're actively searching for the services you provide.

No need to break the bank

This is an effective and trackable method of advertising, allowing you to drive potential clients to a page that captures their contact details. Small campaigns like this start from just £200 a month, plus you'll pay only when your ad is clicked.

Test and test again

You can test the ads you create on each search engine, and put your budget behind the ones that deliver the best results. Plus, you can run variants of the same ad to see which search terms work the best. You won't pay more and it allows you to see which are working best for you, and then just use those over time.

Getting started

To start your campaign, search for Google AdWords or Advertising on Bing/Yahoo and follow the simple instructions. Introductory offers are usually available and there are many great guides and tutorial videos to get you up and running.

For more information, visit:

www.google.co.uk/adwords

www.advertise.bingads.microsoft.com/en-uk/home

2. Activating website content

Your website is where your company lives. So, the best way to increase your reputation and get your business noticed, is to fill it with rich, relevant content.

The simplest way of keeping the content new is to set up a blog or news section. And remember to keep it fresh. Search engines love new content and will rank your site further up the search listings if your website is regularly updated with new content. Plus, by publishing a new article each week, you can give people a reason to visit your website regularly.

Effective content includes:

- News articles
- Blogs
- Videos
- Guides
- Educational materials

We recommend...

It's crucial to have pages dedicated to the different types of specialist mortgages. By adding useful information bursting with relevant key words, you will make your website a lot easier to find for new clients searching for a broker.

3. Buying contact lists

If you are looking for a shortcut to get the clients you want, there are targeted lists available out there of exactly the people you are looking for.

There are companies that can sell you the email, mail and often telephone details of specialist audiences that you can contact as you see fit. The people on these lists have given their permission for the list broker to sell on their details to you. And although you can't be sure

that these people are currently in the market for a mortgage, landlords and developers (for example) will often be serial property purchasers. It can also be a good method of building up a list of future prospects.

If buying data, we recommend that you make the most of it by:

- **ensuring the data is recent** – never buy any information more than 18 months old
- **checking the frequency of access to the names** – you can buy lists for one-off or multiple use
- **finding out how often these lists are bought, and by whom** – this can help ensure they're not already being 'over-contacted' as this will diminish your response
- **checking what selections are available on the list** – you can often ask for selections based on postcode, income, job description and more, but selections often come at an additional cost
- **clarifying if you are able to email the contacts directly** – for legal reasons, some lists must be contacted only via the data owner
- **asking where the data comes from** – check where your supplier gets their data from and that it's opted in for third-party use.

Companies that you can buy data from include:

www.datahq.co.uk

www.ukdatahouse.com

The Post Office also offers a reliable and up-to-date data buying service

www.royalmail.com/marketing-services/data-and-targeting



How to reach wider specialist audiences through the media

Although digital marketing is often the most effective method of reaching the audience you want, traditional marketing offers significant opportunities for attracting new clients. Here we look at a few of the more conventional and time-tested methods of marketing, including magazines and exhibitions.

Directors

Directors are a common source of complex income cases. And with many being very high earners, they are a crucial part of your target audience. They have sophisticated tastes and niche interests. Below are two key widely read publications that you may want to approach for advertising, PR or editorial purposes.

Title	Publisher	Circulation
CIO UK	IDG UK	21,000
Environment	Croner	21,100

Landlords

The UK has a large professional landlord industry. With portfolios ranging from one Buy to Let property to hundreds of houses, flats and HMOs, this sector is a prime target for brokers offering specialist mortgage solutions. A full-time job for many landlords, they like to keep up to date with publications, including those below:

Title	Publisher	Circulation
Landlord & Buy to Let Magazine	AEP Media	21,000
UK Landlord	Rubicon Marketing	24,000
Residential Property Investor	Residential Landlords Association	17,500

There are also a number of national and local shows and exhibitions that you could attend or sponsor. Brokers have stalls at the shows or pay to have their details printed in the brochure.

Details of two of the larger events can be found on the following sites:

www.landlordinvestmentshow.co.uk/the-shows

www.propertyinvestor.co.uk



Building a profitable relationship with publications

Having a healthy relationship with specialist online and offline media titles can be a great way to boost your profile – and the reputation of your business. By approaching carefully selected publications, you can make sure you reach exactly the right audience. And the good news is that starting a dialogue is pretty straightforward.

Writing a specialist mortgage column

Specialist websites and publications are always on the lookout for fresh content. As a professional broker, your expert insight is in demand for their target audience. If you can prove you have something original, interesting and insightful to contribute, editors are sure to be interested.

We recommend...

Contact the editor of a suitable publication and offer to write them a regular editorial piece. It's a smart move to have some exciting content ideas ready to whet their appetite. Many publications run on tight budgets and are actively looking for good quality content they can publish affordably.

So, what type of content has the most appeal?

There is a huge variety of subjects you could write about, however the most relevant and interesting often fall into the following categories:

Topical

The property market is often in a state of flux, and that means that topical content is always in demand. Everything from the Budget, interest rates and changes in house prices can have an impact on how the market moves, so keep an eye on the news and respond with well-informed content that solves a problem and expresses an opinion.

Tailored

If you are writing for a very niche audience, often the best approach is to write content that relates specifically to them. For example, if tax regulations concerning ExPats change, write a column that gives them guidance in a challenging time.

Case study

People understand real-life scenarios far better than abstract concepts. So, tell them about a problematic specialist case you helped with. Explain the client's needs, the challenges you encountered and how you solved them. This will position you as an expert and someone who gets results.



Maximising your social media presence

The advisory industry is all about that personal, tailored level of service, and that makes social media an essential part of your marketing strategy. It allows you to connect with potential clients in a personal, effective and engaging way. In fact, having a social presence is now crucial for all brokers. It can build your business, strengthen your reputation and bring you closer to your ideal audience.

But making the most of social media takes time, effort and consistency. So, it's important to make it part of your daily activities. To ensure you achieve the success you want, we suggest you start by setting yourself some targets. Effective targets include:

- getting a set number of connections on LinkedIn or followers on Twitter
- targeting specific key people, industry influencers and groups
- posting content a set number of times per week.

While Facebook has a value, we recommend initially focusing on LinkedIn and Twitter, as they are more business-oriented. Below are some tips, based on Teamspirit's award-winning social media activity.

Leveraging LinkedIn

For businesses and professionals alike, LinkedIn is the most important social network. It allows you to connect with clients and industry peers, helping you expand your network and grow your business.

Setting up your personal LinkedIn profile is free, easy and essential. You can add all of your qualifications and experience, so make sure you remember to emphasise your expertise in placing specialist cases for ExPats, Complex Income, HMOs and more.

Did you know?

Clients are increasingly researching brokers through LinkedIn before approaching them directly.

To make your LinkedIn presence work as hard as possible, we recommend:

Build your network

A good place to start making connections is your existing client base. Go through your contacts and send them a connection request. This will permit you to communicate with them individually and as a group.

Spread the word

Ask existing clients to give you a recommendation on LinkedIn for your specialist subject area, thereby reassuring future prospects of your credentials and expertise in these areas.

Be vocal and visual

Publishing fresh posts and content on LinkedIn demonstrates that you are actively involved in the market. It will make people turn to you for expert advice and keep you at the front of their mind. People are naturally drawn to images, so use an image along with your post where possible, to increase response.

You can also comment on news stories, update people on what's happening in your business and more. You can place posts that direct people to specific content on your website. But be careful, compliance and the law and regulation of financial promotions put restrictions on you directly promoting products.

Join LinkedIn groups

It's worth searching on LinkedIn for groups of specialist audiences and apply to join them (eg landlords, property developers, directors and ExPats). This will help you better understand their needs and allow you to reach and influence the group members.

Advertising on LinkedIn

LinkedIn allows you to target specialist groups unique to the network with small-space ads and carefully measure the responses you get. You can include both copy and images, but the space is limited, so make it short and to the point.



Taking better advantage of Twitter

Twitter is a hugely important medium for businesses offering expertise and insight. It offers an effective way to build your reputation and grow the influence of your business. It can also help you speak directly with people seeking advice, which could generate significant new business leads.

In our experience, Twitter is an essential part of a business' social media presence. Our top tips for making Twitter work for you are:

Build your audience

A good place to start is by going back through your past client list and 'following' them. They in turn are likely to follow you.

Increase your influence

Spend an afternoon looking for groups and influencers that you want to be allied to and follow them. Then start talking to them in an open, interesting and relevant way about the market. They should start talking back.

Spread your content

Aim to post at least once a day. You can link to your website, your new blog or promote your latest service. You can also use Twitter to comment on market changes and economic news, and re-tweet content you think your followers will find interesting. Take care with promoting products in line with the law and regulation on financial promotions.



‘Find a broker’ sites

One of the best ways to get your business and services noticed is to sign up to a ‘find a broker’ site. These offer an independent and trusted way of reaching potential clients searching for your speciality services.

Two of the best are [vouchedfor.co.uk](https://www.vouchedfor.co.uk) and [unbiased.co.uk](https://www.unbiased.co.uk). These offer a way for brokers to reach people looking for the specialist services they provide. Users can search for mortgage brokers in their local area, and, in the case of [vouchedfor.co.uk](https://www.vouchedfor.co.uk), rate and review brokers they have used.

Although there are often costs associated with joining these sites, they promote themselves heavily and get a lot of traffic. This can help you get exposure you wouldn’t get on your own.



Generating referrals from existing customers

If you're looking to generate new business leads, the best group to target is your existing customers. They know you, trust you and are often delighted to hear from you. By staying in better touch with your loyal and lapsed clients, you can ensure that each time they need help with a mortgage case, it's your number they call. Plus, they are more likely to recommend you to other people who need the help of an expert.

There are a number of proven tactics to get the most from referrals:

Referrals are all about timing

Referrals are a time-tested way of getting new business. So, make generating referrals an integral part of your daily agenda, not an annual activity.

Tests revealed that one of the best times to ask for a referral is just before the loan or home purchase is closed. At this point, you are still actively involved with the client and have their full trust and attention. So, while you are delivering an excellent level of service, ask for a referral.

Stay in touch with your clients

For many brokers, once a mortgage case is placed, the communications stop. This is a big mistake. Your relationships with existing clients are some of your most valuable assets. And by keeping in touch via email, letter and social media you can generate referrals, sales of additional products and be front of mind when their mortgage period expires.

Aim to touch base with clients at least once every three months. Content that is proven to keep a relationship active includes:

- thank you letters
- satisfaction surveys
- newsletters
- news
- offers.

Help your customers give you a referral

More often than not, if you've provided a good service, then your clients will be happy to give you a referral. However, they may miss the opportunity if they don't have anything they can pass on. It's worth producing a simple flyer that they can download and pass on.

In our experience, the information you should include is:

- business name
- your name and qualifications
- contact details (phone number and email address)
- the core services you offer
- website address
- social media and LinkedIn profile details
- client testimonials.

Kent Reliance – what we do

At Kent Reliance, specialist mortgage cases are our bricks and mortar. We are passionate about providing the best tailored solutions and proudly consider ourselves experts.

As more clients require specialist mortgages designed around their unique circumstances, we're dedicated to sharing our insights and experience and helping brokers feel completely at home with the specialist market's distinct needs.

We are proud to offer brokers an exceptional level of personal service.

To find out more:

Visit **kentrelianceforintermediaries.co.uk**

Call **01634 835791**

Email **brokers@krbs.com**

If you're currently not a Kent Reliance broker you can see the full list of our distribution partners at kentrelianceforintermediaries.co.uk/contact-us

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