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The Power of Follow-Up:

Cultivating Relationships for Referrals and Repeat Business in Real Estate

BY ROXY FELLER



In the world of real estate, closing a sale is just the beginning of a valuable relationship. While it may be tempting to celebrate a transaction and move on to the next client, **the real opportunities often lie in follow-up and ongoing relationship-building.** Cultivating these connections not only enhances your reputation but also drives **referrals and repeat business.**

Here's why **follow-up** is vital and strategies you can implement to

effectively maintain relationships after the sale.

Why Follow-Up Matters

1 / Building Trust & Rapport

After closing a deal, clients may feel both relief and uncertainty about their long-term relationship with you. Following up helps reaffirm their trust, showing your commitment **beyond** the transaction.

2 / Positioning Yourself as a Trusted Advisor

Keeping in touch positions you as a knowledgeable resource. Whether

they have questions about home maintenance, the local market, or future buying/selling, being their go-to advisor strengthens your relationship.

3 / Encouraging Referrals

Clients who feel valued are more likely to refer you to friends and family. Positive experiences lead to **word-of-mouth recommendations**, which are incredibly powerful in real estate.

4 / Enhancing Loyalty & Repeat Business

A personal connection increases the likelihood that past clients **return** when they're ready to buy or sell again.

Maintaining the relationship turns one-time clients into lifelong customers.

Effective Follow-Up Strategies

1 / Personalize Your Communication

Tailor follow-ups with details from past conversations. Mention their **family, preferences, or interests** to show you care about them as individuals—not just as transactions.

2 / Schedule Regular Check-Ins

A simple call, text, or email asking how they're enjoying their home or if they have any questions can go a long way in maintaining the relationship.

3 / Share Valuable Information

Send clients helpful content, such as **market insights, home maintenance tips, or local events.** Providing ongoing value reinforces your role as an industry expert.

4 / Leverage Social Media

Engage with past clients on **Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn.** Comment on their updates, share insights, and post about your own milestones to keep the connection alive.

5 / Host Client Appreciation Events

Organize **barbecues, holiday parties, or virtual gatherings** to show appreciation. These events

help strengthen relationships and introduce you to new potential clients through referrals.

6 / Create a Referral System

Make it easy for satisfied clients to refer others. Offer **referral cards, incentives, or small gifts** to show gratitude for their support.

7 / Celebrate Special Occasions

Acknowledge important dates like **birthdays, anniversaries, or home purchase anniversaries.** A simple card, email, or small gift keeps you top-of-mind in a meaningful way.

Follow-Up: The Key to Long-Term Success

Follow-up in real estate is **not just a routine task**—it's a crucial part of building long-term success. By prioritizing post-sale relationships, you **cultivate trust, encourage referrals, and secure repeat business.**

Implementing these strategies will not only strengthen your professional reputation but also create a **sustainable, thriving career.** In real estate, clients remain clients long after the sale—**invest in those relationships, and they will invest in you.**

Don't let valuable relationships fade after the sale. Building lasting client



relationships doesn't have to be overwhelming— I can help! Learn how to create a simple, effective follow-up system that drives referrals and repeat business. Reach out today and take the first step toward a thriving real estate career!



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From **CORPORATE SUCCESS** to **HOME TRANSFORMATION**

The Story of **Kristen, Paul and Renovation Sells Treasure Valley**

For Kristen Sartori and Paul Dynes, the journey to business ownership wasn't just about creating a company—it was about building a life they love while making a meaningful impact. As the owners of Renovation Sells Treasure Valley, they are bringing a fresh, efficient, and results-driven approach to home renovation, helping realtors, homeowners, and investors maximize their properties' value with minimal investment. But their story runs much deeper than just business; it's a reflection of determination, passion, and the pursuit of a purpose-driven life.

The Journey to Boise

Kristen and Paul both hail from a suburban town outside of Detroit, Michigan. Their upbringing was shaped by strong families who instilled in them the values of education, discipline, and hard work. Both had thriving careers in mechanical engineering and technology, managing high-level projects in the automotive industry. Paul even earned two automotive patents for convertible roof innovations, a clear insight to his problem-solving mindset and ability to bring ideas to life.

However, despite their corporate success, they yearned for

something more—a lifestyle that allowed them to be more present, active, and engaged in their passions. After visiting Boise in 2012 for just a few hours, they knew they had found their new home. The mountains, the outdoor adventures, and the strong sense of community sealed the deal. They took a leap of faith, leaving behind everything familiar to create a new chapter out west.

Finding Their 'Why'

Kristen's 25-year career in corporate America was rewarding, but she, like many professionals, eventually hit a wall of burnout. The desire to

build something of her own, to control her time, and to do work that aligned with her personal interests led her to explore entrepreneurship. Paul, equally passionate about entrepreneurship, having personally remodeled and profited from several homes, was ready for a change as well.

"Starting Renovation Sells Treasure Valley was about more than just business," Kristen shares. "It was about using our skills in project management and home transformation to truly help people—homeowners, realtors, and investors—get the most out of their largest asset. More than that, it was a way for us to embark on this journey together."

What Sets Them Apart

Kristen and Paul have built their business on efficiency, trust, and results. Their streamlined process includes timeless design, flawless execution, financing options and fast project completion.

"Our goal is simple: Minimal investment, maximum return," Paul explains. "We help realtors and homeowners take homes that need a little updating and turn them into market-ready properties with a significant increase in value."

Their ability to provide fast, high-quality, and cost-effective renovations has made them a trusted partner in the real estate community, with 50% of their business coming directly from industry professionals.

Passion for People & Community

Beyond the renovations, what truly fuels Kristen and Paul is their love for connection. They are active members of the Boise Chamber of Commerce, Brokers Council of Idaho, and the Boise Real Estate Investors Network. But they also keep life fun, playing



“OUR GOAL IS SIMPLE: MINIMAL INVESTMENT, MAXIMUM RETURN.”



kickball with their son and his friends in the Treasure Valley Sports League and nurturing their love for the great outdoors.

“When we’re not working, we’re out exploring Idaho—hiking, skiing, mountain biking, and even building out our van for camping trips,” Kristen says. They’ve also recently picked up pickleball, an activity they’ve become “completely addicted to” in the past year and a half.

Family, Balance & Gratitude

Work-life balance isn’t just a buzzword for Paul and Kristen—it’s a core principle. Despite the demands of business ownership, they make time for family dinners almost every night and prioritize

their children’s activities. Their 30-year-old son and 15-year-old daughter both share their creative spirit, and even their three-year-old Australian Shepherd is a central part of their active lifestyle.

The Power of Genuine Connections

In an age of digital marketing, Kristen and Paul still believe in the power of one-on-one connections. Their favorite way to grow their business is by meeting people over coffee, not with an agenda, but simply to build relationships and find ways to help each other.

“You never know when a connection will turn into an opportunity—not just for yourself,

but for someone else,” Kristen says. “That’s what business should be about.”

Final Words of Wisdom

When asked to describe themselves in three words, they choose: Collaborative, Creative, and Dependable. And their favorite quote? A simple yet powerful one: ‘Never give up, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.’

For Kristen and Paul, the tide has certainly turned, bringing them to a place where their passions, skills, and values align. Renovation Sells Treasure Valley isn’t just a business—it’s their way of making a difference, one home at a time.





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NAR 2024 Year in Review

A NEW ERA BEGINS

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The Sitzer-Burnett settlement was a focal point as national, state and local associations worked together to keep members and consumers informed—and association leaders laid the groundwork for the path ahead.

The National Association of REALTORS® released its 2024 Year in Review earlier this year. The 33-page report is an assessment of the organization’s past year, highlighting member benefits across eight areas—and promising a new mission-driven era.

Last year brought significant milestones for the association, including settlement of the Sitzer-Burnett lawsuit, implementation of residential practice changes for members, and approval of Culture Transformation Commission recommendations to bring greater accountability and transparency. All this came as members worked to navigate a challenging market, with limited inventory, higher interest rates and shifting living and work patterns.

“The past year tested our resilience as an industry, as an association and as individuals,” NAR President Kevin Sears said in a letter that opened the report. “As we embark on 2025, I want to express my gratitude to you—our members, the broker community, the local and state associations, and our MLS and industry partners—for the incredible work you’ve done to push through these challenges and help set the stage for our industry’s future.”

Building Trust, Collaboration
NAR CEO Nykia Wright said the association must evolve to meet the needs of members “today and tomorrow” while building on the momentum generated last year. “In 2024, we cut costs and passed our first balanced budget in at least 10 years,” Wright said. “We also conducted in-depth research to begin laying the groundwork for a new member experience.”



She added: “The work to redefine our broker relationships; better leverage our relationships with state and local associations to optimize member value; build on our strategic partnerships with aligned Institutes, Societies and Councils; demonstrate our appreciation for the many volunteer leaders who are instrumental to driving our mission forward; and reposition our staff to meet the ever-growing needs of these stakeholder populations will shape our 2025 activities.”

Wright has engaged two new partners in the effort: In early January, NAR announced that Sherry Chris, former CEO of Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate and ERA Real Estate, would join the association as a special advisor to help strengthen relationships, build trust and enhance collaboration with brokerage leaders. On Jan. 15, Jarrod Grasso was named senior vice president of industry relations for NAR, a role dedicated to enhancing the association’s relationship with state and local association leaders. Grasso joins NAR after serving the New Jersey REALTORS® for more than two decades, most recently as their CEO.

Supporting Member Success
In 2024, to assist members in preparing for practice changes outlined in the settlement, NAR launched facts.realtor to provide updates and guidance. The resource includes more than 120 FAQs, a legal video series that garnered more than 800,000 views, and more than a dozen consumer guides, in English and Spanish, for members to use while working with clients. The association also provided its Accredited Buyer’s Representation (ABR®) designation course at no cost to members; nearly

162,000 REALTORS® took advantage of that benefit.

More than 1,000 NAR members joined a grassroots effort—as surrogates—in 2024 to help educate consumers about the practice changes. Those interested in joining the program can email surrogates@nar.realtor.

In the advocacy arena, NAR scored significant wins: defending private property rights, securing the OK for VA buyers to compensate their brokers directly as the Department of Veterans Affairs studies the issue further, and supporting industry-friendly policies and candidates at all levels of government. The REALTORS® Political Action Committee—which backed 50% Democratic and 50% Republican federal candidates—achieved a 97% success rate in the 2024 election cycle.

Underpinning NAR’s advocacy success is a highly regarded research team that provides thought leadership and produces key housing market data and research reports. In 2024, NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun, Deputy Chief Economist Jessica Lautz and their team spoke at more than 400 in-person and virtual visits across our 1,100-plus local and state associations, brokerages and third-party organizations. NAR’s research content generated 1.9 million website visits, 240,000 report downloads and 100,000 social shares in 2024, signifying the appetite members and consumers have for reliable housing data and research reports.

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Mike & Jennifer

LOUIE HICKEY

FROM
SUCCESSFUL
APPRAISERS TO
ARCHITECTS OF
COMMUNITY

Jenn grew up in California, where she was an accomplished soccer player. In 1995, she moved to Idaho to play for Boise State University's newly formed women's soccer team, and she found a second home in the Treasure Valley. A fun fact: her mother is one of only five women honored on Idaho's coin for women veterans, making history as the only living veteran represented.

Mike and Jenn's journey into real estate was a natural evolution from their shared background in appraisal. Mike first entered the industry by chance—while working in retail, he met an entrepreneur launching a real estate appraisal office. With no prior experience but a strong drive to learn, he quickly rose through the ranks, eventually going on to train a team of appraisers and founding a successful firm, which expanded into Hawaii. Jenn joined Mike in the appraisal business, and the two formed a close professional partnership that grew into a lasting friendship—and eventually, a relationship.

When the 2008 financial crisis shook the appraisal industry, Mike and Jenn decided to pivot together into real estate sales. The timing was challenging, but their deep industry knowledge and relentless work ethic set them apart. They quickly became known for their ability to pre-sell homes, even in a struggling market—an approach that caught the attention of builders and led them naturally into new construction sales.

With a keen understanding of market trends and buyer

PHOTOS BY JORDAN REICH • WRITTEN BY NICK INGRISANI

Mike, a fourth-generation Idahoan, comes from a family with a long history in the area. Garden City, named for the Chinese gardens that once thrived there, holds personal significance, with multiple dedications honoring his family's contributions. His father, an Army veteran turned hospital administrator, instilled in him the value of hard work and dedication—principles that would later shape his career.

psychology, Mike and Jenn built strong relationships with local builders. They didn't just sell homes—they invested in the success of their partners, offering financial support, strategic marketing, and a level of dedication that went beyond traditional real estate transactions. Their efforts paid off. By the time the pandemic hit, their reputation was firmly established, enabling them to sell 187 townhomes before a single one was built.

“Our job is to mitigate risk for our builders and clients, making sure they are making smart decisions. They became like family to us and we put their needs first, making sure they were constantly growing.” — Jenn



involved in initiatives aimed at sustaining the industry.

Jenn is the head of membership for The Building Contractors Association of Southwest Idaho (BCASWI) Professional Women in Building, an organization Jenn helped create. Among its initiatives is the Pet Homes Parade Kid Edition, an annual event where children build and auction

dog houses to raise funds for trade school scholarships. What began as a local effort has grown into a nationwide movement spanning 34 states, supporting the next generation of skilled laborers.

“We want kids to understand that a career in the trades is not a backup plan. It is a plan A. More millionaires are brought up

in trades than anything else right now.” — Mike

Mike and Jenn set themselves apart from their shared expertise in new construction and market analysis, and their genuine investment in people. Their approach goes beyond transactions—they educate buyers on financial strategies, guide builders toward sustainable



growth, and cultivate lasting relationships.

“We’re passionate about creating new communities and a feeling in a community, knowing that people will live there forever. We’re excited about creating something from nothing and creating futures for these people and kids. More kids graduate from high school if they’re in a home that they own, so it proves that home ownership provides stability and keeps people in a good financial position.” — Jenn

Their partnership, both professional and personal, is a rarity in the industry. Many real estate teams dissolve within a few years, but their dynamic has endured for over two decades. The secret? A shared vision, mutual respect, and an unyielding drive to help others succeed.

“People look at us and wonder how we’ve done it together for so long. It’s a testament to knowing who we are as individuals, and each working extremely hard... we have the same thoughts and morals about where we want to go. It’s about helping people more than anything else.” — Jenn

As they continue to expand their business and initiatives, their mission remains clear: build strong communities, support local builders, and empower the next generation to thrive in an industry that has given them so much. With every home sold, every builder supported, and every initiative launched, Mike and Jenn are not just shaping Idaho’s skyline—they are building lasting legacies in the state.



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JESSICA DURHAM

Redefining Idaho Real Estate Through
Leadership & Empowerment

WRITTEN BY NICK INGRISANI • PHOTOS BY CY GILBERT PHOTOGRAPHY

Born in Washington State, Jessica moved to Idaho at nine years old and has called the Treasure Valley home ever since. Her academic journey began at Boise State University, where she initially pursued a degree in pharmacy. During that time she found a job as a receptionist at a local real estate brokerage which opened the door to an entirely new career path.

Jessica's curiosity at the brokerage quickly turned into a passion. She transitioned into a back office role and then got her real estate license in 2005. By the time she graduated from BSU in 2006, she was already immersed in the industry, working under two seasoned agents who taught her the intricacies of new construction and the art of navigating complex transactions.

When the 2008 recession hit, Jessica took it as an opportunity to diversify her skill set. She returned to school and earned her MBA, all while keeping a close eye on the recovering real estate market. By 2011, she was back to her real estate career in full force.

"I love that we get to help people with their financial literacy, wealth management, and ability to create generational wealth. I'm also a real estate instructor and teach a variety of industry related classes. I believe that helping people navigate a complex financial journey and making it not feel scary is one of the most helpful things we can do."

Her real estate journey came full circle in 2017 when she earned her broker's license. At the time, Jessica was pregnant with her second child and saw this as a strategic move to prepare for the future.

"I noticed that many of the brokers in town were approaching retirement, so it was about ensuring that our industry continues to thrive here. So that when the time comes where I need to step



into the broker position I'd be ready to do that."

That foresight paid off in 2022 when Jessica launched Grove Realty, a boutique brokerage built on the values of collaboration, education, and personalized service. She made the call to open her brokerage on a Thursday and had her business running the following week. But behind that swift action was years of preparation. Now, they've already made waves in the Idaho real estate market thanks to their unique culture.

"We've created a culture where no matter where you are in your career, there's room to grow. Whether you want to double your pipeline or refine your skills, we're here to support that growth. We're small enough where I can coach and help agents specialize, but also big enough to take on major projects."

Jessica's emphasis on education is a cornerstone of her leadership. As the owner of Les Bois Real Estate School, she is the only instructor in Idaho certified to teach all four broker courses, including broker law—a rare achievement for a non-attorney.

"Teaching is one of my greatest joys. In real estate, teaching allows me to continuously refine my skills while sharing knowledge with others. It's a two-way street where I learn just as much from my students' experiences."

Her brokerage's approach is equally focused on education and client care. Every client's journey is unique, so the team tailors its approach to meet them where they are. Whether working with first-time buyers or seasoned investors, the goal is to guide them through the process and help them build generational wealth.

"One thing I've always tried to stress to agents is that it's not a one-size-fits-all—no two transactions are the same. Of course we have systems in place, but need to meet each person where they're at and help them through their journey in real estate."

"We've created a culture where no matter where you are in your career, there's room to grow."



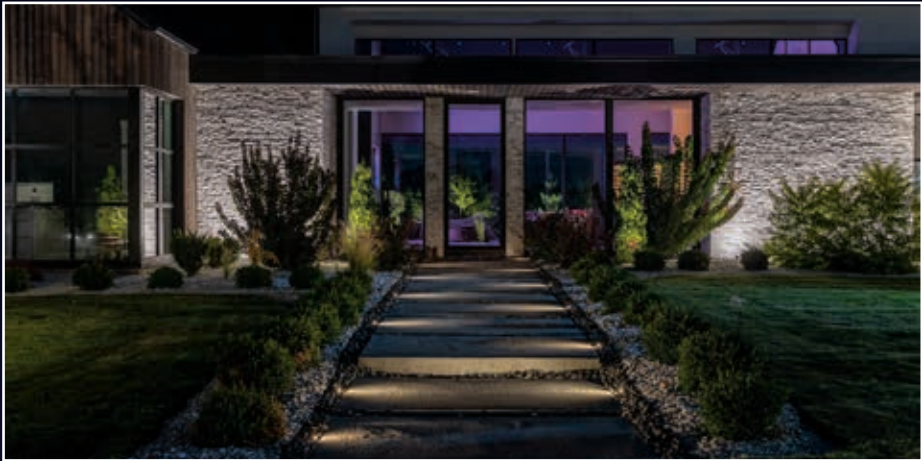
Looking ahead, Jessica is excited about Grove Realty's expansion into eastern Idaho and an upcoming condo project that promises to be a major undertaking. She's also focused on continuing to grow the education arm of her business, tailoring programs to help agents reach their full potential.

Outside of work, Jessica cherishes time with her family, including her husband and three children, aged 6, 7, and 14. Whether it's hiking in the Idaho mountains, spending weekends at their cabin, or traveling to Mexico, she finds balance by prioritizing the lifestyle that real estate has helped her create.

Jessica's story is a testament to the power of adaptability, education, and genuine care for others. Through Grove Realty and her teaching, she is not only shaping the future of Idaho's real estate industry but also empowering countless others to find success on their terms.



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