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If you are interest in contributing or nominating Agents for certain stories, please email us at tim.ganley@realproducersmag.com



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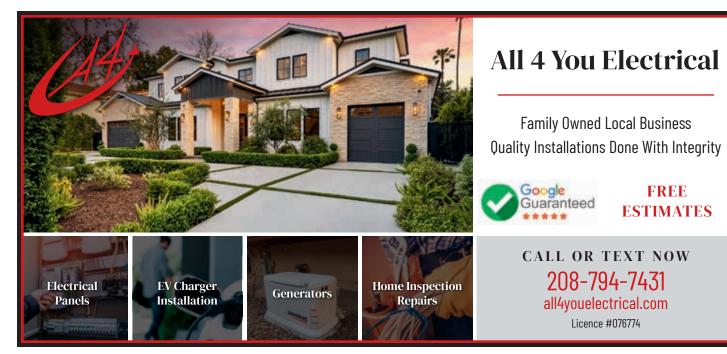
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## **Building Your Personal Brand** as a Real **Estate Agent:**

A Guide to Success in the New Year

BY ROXY FELLER



As the new year approaches, it's the perfect time to refocus your efforts on one of the most critical aspects of your real

estate business—your personal brand. A strong personal brand is more than just a logo or tagline; it's the reputation, expertise, and trust you build in the minds of your clients and prospects. In a competitive industry, your brand is what sets you apart and positions you as the go-to expert in your market. By taking intentional steps to create and refine your brand, you can make 2025 your best year yet. Here's how to get started.

#### 1 / Define Your Niche

Identify your target audience and specialize in a specific market segment, whether it's luxury homes, first-time buyers, or commercial properties. A clear focus helps you craft messages that resonate and builds your credibility as an expert in that area.

2 / Develop a Unique Value Proposition What sets you apart from other agents? Your unique value proposition should articulate your strengths, whether it's your deep market knowledge, personalized customer service, or innovative marketing strategies. Make sure this message is clear and consistent

#### 3 / Create a Professional **Online Presence**

across all your materials.

A strong online presence starts with a user-friendly website. Showcase your listings, share testimonials, and tell your personal story. Optimize your site for search engines (SEO) so potential clients can easily find you. A well-crafted website is often the first impression you make, so invest in making it exceptional.

#### 4 / Utilize Social Media

Social media is one of the most powerful tools for building your brand. Choose platforms that align with your target audience-for example, Instagram for

sharing stunning property visuals and LinkedIn for professional networking. Post regularly and share engaging content like property tours, market updates, and real estate tips.

#### 5 / Consistent Branding

Consistency is key. Use the same logo, color scheme, and messaging across your website, social media, and print materials. A cohesive look and feel reinforce your professionalism and make your brand more memorable.

#### 6 / Network Locally

Real estate is a people business. Attend community events, join local organizations, and participate in networking groups. By becoming a familiar face in your community, you'll build relationships that can lead to referrals and opportunities.

#### 7 / Provide Valuable Content

Educating your audience builds trust and positions you as an expert. Create blogs, podcasts, or videos that offer

valuable insights into the real estate market, tips for buyers and sellers, or neighborhood highlights. Consistently sharing useful information keeps you top of mind.

#### 8 / Leverage Testimonials and Referrals

Positive reviews and referrals from satisfied clients are some of the most effective ways to build credibility. Encourage your clients to share their experiences and feature these testimonials prominently on your website and in your marketing materials.

#### 9 / Cultivate Authentic Relationships

Real estate is about more than transactions—it's about people. Engage with your clients and prospects genuinely, focusing on building trust and fostering long-term relationships. When people feel valued, they're more likely to recommend you to others.

#### 10 / Keep Learning and Adapting

The real estate industry is constantly evolving. Stay ahead of the curve by keeping up with trends, new technologies, and best practices. Regularly invest in professional development to refine your skills and adapt your branding strategy as needed.

#### 11 / Engage in Community Service

Participate in local charitable events or initiatives. Not only does this create

#### Make 2025 the Year You Build a Brand

That Inspires Your personal brand is one of the most powerful tools you have to grow your real estate business. As you plan for the year ahead, take time to refine how you present yourself to the world. By defining your niche, creating a professional online presence, and building authentic relationships, you'll position yourself as a trusted expert and attract the clients you want to serve.



goodwill, but it also aligns your brand with positive contributions to the community. Clients appreciate working with agents who give back.

## **Ready to take** your brand to the next level? Don't wait start today.

Take the first step toward building a brand that reflects your values, sets you apart, and drives your business forward. The opportunities are limitless, but it begins with action. Schedule a Free Consultation with me to make 2025 your best year yet!





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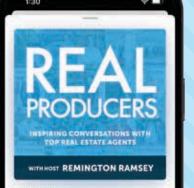
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## YOUR DEDICATED REAL ESTATE ALLY



# SHARON

PHOTOS BY GARRETT LEO, LUX REAL ESTATE MEDIA

At an early age, Sharon Ozuna knew she was unlike most of her peers. While many teenagers were pursuing part-time gigs in restaurants or retail, Sharon saw a clearer vision—she was determined to work in an office. With her mom's support, Sharon landed her first job as a receptionist, where she quickly discovered her knack for creating systems, organizing workflows, and helping others thrive.

Today, Sharon plays an indispensable role in Boise's real estate scene, providing operational expertise that allows agents and teams to function seamlessly. Her journey is one of purpose, growth, and an desire of excellence.

It was at Costco where Sharon's professional career began. She conquered the art of connecting with people and understanding the intricacies of large-scale operations. In 2014, she took a bold step and entered the real estate industry, becoming an assistant to an agent. Over a five years period she helped grow a small operation into a thriving nine-person team, gaining experience in virtually every administrative and operational role along the way—from transaction coordination to operations management.

Reflecting on that chapter, Sharon recalls, "My team pushed me out of my comfort zone in the best way. Their support helped me accomplish more than I ever thought possible, both personally and professionally." One of her proudest milestones during this time? Becoming

debt-free—a goal she achieved through hard work and discipline.

By 2019, Sharon felt it was time to follow her own vision. She dreamed of building a business that allowed her to use her strengths to support agents in a more personalized way. With encouragement from her team, Sharon precisely planned her transition, saving enough to provide herself with a financial safety net.

"I noticed many agents diving into business ventures without financial stability," she explains. "Having three months of savings gave me the confidence and freedom to truly go for it."

Sharon's business centers on simplifying life for her clients, primarily real estate agents. Whether it's streamlining systems, enhancing communication, or simply being the dependable support they need during hectic times, Sharon delivers solutions tailored to each client's unique needs.

"I care deeply about what I do," Sharon says. "When my clients are overwhelmed, I make sure nothing falls through the cracks. If they want to learn how to handle things themselves, I'm always happy to teach."

This rare blend of adaptability and dependability has earned her a reputation as a trusted partner who consistently delivers results.

Running a business is not an easy thing to do, but Sharon has found a rhythm that suits her. She relies on her calendar to keep things organized, dedicating regular hours to work while reserving Fridays for catching up and personal projects. She's also learned to embrace the natural ebb and flow of her business, using quieter moments to recharge.

"It's all about counterbalance," she explains. "Not everything can align perfectly all the time, but in the bigger picture, it works out."

At home, Sharon is supported by her husband, Rudy—her biggest cheerleader. They have been married for 15 years and share lives with two sons: Ayden (20) and Max (9). You can find Sharon traveling, decorating her home, and spending quality time with loved ones outside of working hours. Sharon's vision also extends outside her business. She's passionate about helping small businesses in Boise build stronger company cultures, improve hiring practices, and retain top talent. As a former leader of an administrative mastermind group and a member of a local BNI chapter, she has already begun shaping her legacy.

Networking remains one of her favorite ways to connect. Sharon thrives on building meaningful connections by rekindling old relationships or meeting new faces.

Sharon draws inspiration from one of her favorite quotes by Theodore Roosevelt:

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly... who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly."

For Sharon, success isn't about playing it safe—it's about showing up, taking risks, and giving her all.

Sharon's ability to balance her meticulous schedule reflects in her creative personality. Her unique combination makes her not just an exceptional business partner, but someone people truly enjoy being around.

As her business continues to grow, Sharon remains grounded in what matters most: relationships. "Family, friends, and business connections are the foundation of everything I do," she says.

From helping a client through a chaotic process, brainstorming innovative solutions, or sharing coffee and conversation, Sharon approaches every interaction with warmth, determination, and steadfast support. She's not just a partner in real estate she's an asset to her community.

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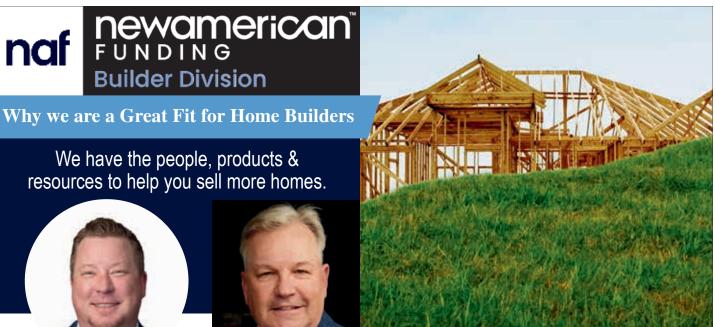




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#### Q: What were your prior occupations before entering real estate?

A: I spent two very different chapters of my life before real estate—one as a Youth Pastor and the other in Corporate Sales with Canon and Xerox. Both taught me valuable lessons that I carry with me every day.

#### Q: What was your total volume and number of transactions last year?

A: In 2023, I closed 11 transactions with a total volume of \$8 million. This year, I've already completed 21 transactions totaling \$13.6 million. For the year of 2024 my team will have closed 52 transaction totaling around \$32 Million, and since our inception we have closed 370 transactions totaling a whopping \$170 Million.

#### Q: Describe your journey to getting into real estate. What drew you to this profession?

A: My background in ministry taught me how to love people, and my sales experience showed me how to communicate and close deals. When I developed an interest in architecture, I realized real estate was the perfect way to combine all three passions. It's been an incredible fit, and I finally feel like I'm doing what I was meant to do.

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### MID-CENTURY HOMES BY ANTHOLOGY

#### Q: Tell us about your past history and the events and people that shaped who you are.

A: My faith taught me how to genuinely love others, and my wife has shown me the power of being intentional in showing that love. I've also had some great mentors along the way. One taught me how to manage sales cycles and close deals, while another gave me the confidence to leave the corporate world and start my own journey.

#### Q: What life events led you to become a real estate agent?

A: After eight years in corporate sales, I grew tired of working within the boundaries others set for me. I wanted to do business my way, and real estate gave me the freedom to create something that felt authentic to me.

#### Q: What separates you from your peers? What do you do differently?

A: I'm bold, curious, and passionate about helping people and making meaningful connections. I also think work should be fun, even when it's



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challenging. I actually enjoy navigating hard situations because it's like solving a puzzle, and finding solutions brings me joy—even in tough times.

#### Q: What are you passionate about in real estate?

A: I love marketing, great architecture, and creating loyal clients who become raving fans. I'm also passionate about representing our industry with excellence.

#### **Q**: What are you passionate about outside of real estate?

A: I'm really into business and marketing. I enjoy learning from people who are running successful businesses and applying those lessons to my own life.

#### Q: What has been the most challenging aspect of working in real estate? A: Managing expectations. No matter

how hard you try to stay ahead, there are times when things don't go as



planned, and someone's expectations aren't met. It's tough because I want everyone to feel good about the process. That's why clear communication is so important to me—it helps people know what to expect and reduces surprises along the way.

#### Q: Tell us about your family.

A: My wife and I have been married for 26 years. We met through a mutual friend when we were 17, and she's

been the love of my life ever since. We've grown and supported each other through so many phases of life, and I couldn't be more grateful for her.

We have four kids: a 21-year-old son, and three daughters aged 19, 17, and 7. They're all so unique and amazing. My oldest two are baristas, my 17-year-old plays volleyball, and my youngest is living her best elementary school life. They keep me busy, and I couldn't be prouder of them.

#### Q: What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?

A: I spend a lot of time with my family and focus on my faith. I also love snowboarding and watching basketball and football—it's a great way to unwind and recharge.

#### Q: What is something others might be surprised to know about you?

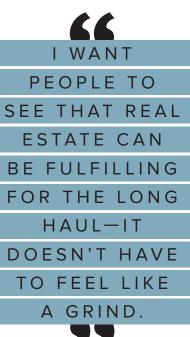
A: My family and I did foster care for 3.5 years and cared for 13 kids during that time. The last child we fostered came to us when she was just two days old. We adopted her when she turned one, and she's been a blessing ever since.

I also have Marfan Syndrome, a heart condition. In 2017, I had openheart surgery to address a risk of my ascending aorta tearing. During the surgery they determined that my heart valve needed to be replaced. Modern medicine is incredible, and I'm so thankful for the extended quality of life it's given me.

Q: What sort of legacy would you like to leave on the real estate industry? A: I want people to see that real estate can be fulfilling for the long haul—it doesn't have to feel like a grind. The choices you make, especially early on, can either trap you or give you freedom. I've chosen to build my business in a way that I love, and I hope to inspire others to do the same.



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This Valentine's Day, we celebrate Annie and Matt Valentine, a couple whose journey in life, love, and real estate exemplifies partnership and success. Their love story began with a setup by a mutual friend—opposites that quickly attracted. Five months later, Matt proposed on Christmas, dreaming of a New Year's Eve wedding. Annie's reply? "It'd mess up my business tax returns!" This beginning laid the foundation for a thriving personal and professional partnership, built on shared humor, practicality, and achievement.

#### Annie Valentine: Adaptability and Vision

Annie excelled as a high school teacher before launching a successful commercial contracting business where she also subcontracted for local residential builders. "This was the beginning of my love affair with new construction," she shares. When she sold the business in 2011, she transitioned to cosmetology, teaching, and collaborating with top industry names. In 2019, a broken hand forced her to pause and reevaluate. "I was out for 10 months, and it made me consider new paths," she reflects. That reflection led her back

to real estate and reignited her passion for new construction.

For Annie, real estate is a calling. "God cares about where we live and the lives we impact. Helping clients find the right home is a big responsibility, and we are blessed to live in an area where building a home from the ground up is an option. If you can't find it, chances are you can build it." Annie's accomplishments speak

for themselves. She has worked primarily in the new construction space. Before taking a managerial role at Tresidio Homes in mid-2023,

she closed 58 transactions and \$41 million in volume the previous year. Her accolades include Keller Williams Rookie of the Year and the 2024 Code of Ethics Leadership Award from Boise Regional REALTORS®.

#### Matt Valentine: From Financial Planner to Real Estate Leader

Matt's journey into real estate was unexpected and unplanned. After college, he sold a stone-casting business in Georgia and became a financial planner at Mass Mutual, enjoying the stability of a 9-to-5 job. Then Annie suggested he help show properties on weekends. "She thought it was better than me binge-watching Netflix alone," Matt laughs. What began as a favor quickly became a passion. After selling his first property solo, he was hooked.

Today, Matt is thriving in real estate, closing 2024 with 59 transactions and \$27 million in production. His entrepreneurial drive and financial expertise fuel their success. "I've been blessed with amazing clients and opportunities," he shares. "Honestly, it feels more like fun than work."

A leader inspires others to achieve their goals—and learns to laugh at themselves along the way." - Matt

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His motto, "Love where you live," reflects his mission to help clients find homes that bring joy and build generational wealth. "Real estate is a powerful financial tool," Matt says. "It's one of the most impactful ways to secure a family's future."

#### Work-Life Harmony

The Valentines attribute their success to complementary strengths, a shared vision, and a passion for new construction paired with clear life priorities. For them, it's about work-life harmony, not balance. "Real estate is a lifestyle that often ends up being twelve-hour days," Annie says. "We work hard but also make time to enjoy life with family and friends while taking care of ourselves and our clients." Matt adds, "The most important thing is taking care of ourselves so we can give to others."

#### Overcoming Challenges and Stepping into Leadership

Annie and Matt have faced profound challenges that shaped their leadership. A near-fatal accident in 1995 left Annie with a brain injury and a broken back, teaching her perseverance. Matt became a single father in 2015 after losing his first wife, learning to embrace life's challenges with grace. "Tragedy has blessed me as a leader by fostering compassion and empathy," he reflects.

Annie views leadership as influence: "We all lead daily by influencing those around us. The question is, does your influence make life better or worse?" Matt adds, "True leaders help others reach their goals, and in doing so, achieve their own success."

#### Building a Family and a Legacy

Whether it's gathering for Sunday dinners or enjoying wake-surfing adventures on Lake Lowell, family time remains a cherished priority for Matt and Annie. "All seven of our kids are very different and special in unique ways. They have overcome some hard situations in life, and we are proud of how resilient they are."

> Each child's unique journey reflects the values Annie and Matt embody through their example. Today, their children are thriving in careers like teaching, firefighting, business, auto body mechanics, and military service embodying the family's values of hard work and service. "Our kids would probably describe us as hardworking, service-oriented, and intentional," Annie shares.



"We've taught them that the 'why' behind what you do matters more than just chasing money," Matt adds.

Looking Ahead: A Vision for the Future Matt is building a small team of agents at Valentine Realty, while Annie has taken on the role of Division Sales Manager for Schell Brothers, a privately owned, prominent East Coast builder expanding into the Boise market.

Described as "rocket fuel" by a colleague, Annie is leading the launch of

Schell Brothers' Boise sales division. "I'm excited to build a strong team culture and introduce a fresh, high-quality product to the Treasure Valley's new construction market," she shares. "Schell Brothers is an innovative company, pioneering the integration of technology with superior building techniques. What stands out most for me is the incredible culture they've built, centered on happiness."

While growing Valentine Realty, Annie and Matt remain dedicated to helping clients "Love Where They Live." Their

passion for real estate and commitment to mentoring have solidified their industry leadership.

"There's success to be had in real estate," Annie says. "If you're willing to do the work, success is within reach."

This Valentine's Day, Annie and Matt remind us that true partnerships, in life and business, are built on respect, shared goals, and commitment. Together, they've turned challenges into opportunities, creating a legacy grounded in love and built by vision.



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