

Marketing Your Home Inspection Business for Growth

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A DAY IN THE LIFE



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A Day in the Life of a Home Inspector

Version 1

- Make coffee
- Drive to a home inspection
- Do a home inspection
 - Interact with clients and Realtors
 - Inspect the home
 - Get paid
 - Write a home inspection report
- Drive home
- Answer the phone
 - Book a home inspection



A Day in the Life of a Home Inspector

Version 2

- Make coffee
- Drive to OAH I Conference
- Upgrade yourself as a home inspector/business owner



A Day in the Life of a Home Inspector

Version 3

- Make coffee
- Mow the lawn
- Update QuickBooks
- Go to Home Depot
- Take the truck for an oil change
- Wait for the phone to ring



A Day in the Life of a Home Inspector

Version 4

- Make coffee
- Visit four Real Estate offices
 - Drop brochures
 - Fill candy bowl
 - Greet receptionist
 - Say “Hello” to Office Manager
- Survey clients from last week
 - Add testimonials to web site
 - Tweak business to overcome objection
- Add another service to your offerings
- Let clients and customers know about enhancements



Let's Grow Your Business

- Day 1 – Straight revenue
- Day 2 – Future growth
- Day 3 – Wasted opportunity
- Day 4 – Investment will yield rewards



Working for Yourself Requires Discipline for Success

- People with jobs work 37.5 to 40 hours per week.
- Business owners have to work harder and longer, especially to grow
- What is success worth to you?
 - 8 hours a day?
 - 10 hours a day?
 - More?
- Growth requires effort

Accountability

- Who holds you responsible?
 - Family?
 - Partner?
 - Employees?
 - Mortgage company?
 - Utilities?
 - Credit cards?



Accountability

- Focus on goals and dreams
- Don't focus on debt and responsibilities
 - Too limiting
- Do you need a business mentor?



Get A Reason

- Get a reason to make a lot of money
- Make changes
- Get feedback
- Make more changes
- Work hard
- Don't let up
- Success



THREE WAYS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS



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Three Ways To Grow Your Business

1. Market share expansion
2. Product/service expansion
3. Market segment expansion



Three Ways to Grow Your Business

MARKET SHARE EXPANSION



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Market Share Expansion

- Get more clients in the markets that you already serve
 - New agents
 - New homebuyers



Find More Clients and Customers

- Get more clients to call
- Most common
- This is what start-ups must do
- Requires effort



Clients vs. Customers

- Clients pay you
 - Buyer
 - Seller
- Customers refer you
 - Agent
 - Lawyer
 - Lender



Market to Clients?

- Simple
- Hard to identify them
- Easier for a mature home inspection company



Market to Agents?

- Easy to find them
- Good Return on Investment
- Potential Conflict of Interest?



Sales Process

- Six components
 - Prospecting
 - Approaching
 - Qualifying
 - Presenting
 - Closing
 - Managing objections



Prospecting Leads

- Web sites
- Real Estate Boards
- Inspections
- Newspaper ads
- Awards
- Signs



Approaching Leads

- Cold calling
- Visiting office
- Talk to the other agent attending your inspection
- Helps if you have a common connection



Qualifying Leads

- Is this someone who would benefit from your service?
- Ask questions



Presentation

- Explain benefits
- Solve a problem
- Help them with their business

- Be quick
- Be flexible



Hot Button Technique

- What is the one thing that is most important to your customer
- Agent wants inspector to keep things in perspective
- Where's your focus?
- Forget the other benefits, keep pressing the hot button!



Closing

- Always Be Closing

“If you ever need an inspection, to please give me a call”

Too passive



Ask for the Order

- “Can I count on you to give me a try?”
- “Can I ask you to add my name to your referral list?”



Ask for the Order

- “Would you allow me to perform an inspection for one of your clients so you can recommend me with confidence?”
- “Can I ask that you give me a call if your usual inspector is ever booked, on vacation, or unavailable?”



Ask for the Order

- “I can tell that you take a lot of pride in taking care of your clients. Our approaches seems like a good fit and I believe that recommending a qualified home inspector is an excellent way to show your clients that you care. Shall we try working together and see how it works?”



Manage Objections

- Take the opportunity to ask more questions
- Take the opportunity to find out more about their needs



The Law of Six Objections

- The law of six says that in any market, there are usually six standard objections to using you
- Identify them
- Solve for them



The Law of Six Objections

- You are too expensive
- You don't offer
- You don't have enough experience or qualifications
- I don't need a home inspection
- I already have a home inspector that I use
- You can't be there when I want you



You are too expensive

- “My regular inspector is cheaper than you”
- Let’s re-phrase that:
- “Why should I pay more for you?”



“I am not interested”

- “Tell me why I should be interested”



The Law of Six Objections

- Be prepared to answer those objections.
- Turn them into questions that you can answer.



Selling is a Skill

- You will improve with practice



Fear of Selling

- What are you afraid of?
- What is the worst-case scenario?
- Can you live with that?
- Do it
- It probably won't be that bad
- You will improve



Three Ways to Grow Your Business

PRODUCT/SERVICE EXPANSION



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Product/Service Expansion

- Sell more things to the clients that you already have



Sell More Stuff to Each Client

- Sell additional services at the time of the inspection
 - CO testing
 - Water quality
 - Air Quality Testing
 - Septic systems
 - Radon

Sell More Stuff to Each Client

- Sell additional services at the time of the inspection
 - Radon testing
 - Water quality
 - Water softener
 - Appliances
 - Indoor Air Quality testing
 - Insurance claims



Sell More Stuff to Each Client

- Termite
- UFFI
- EIFS
- Swimming pool
- Septic systems
- Radon
- Warranties
- RecallCheck



Repeat Business

- Follow-up Services
 - Maintenance checkups
 - Radon testing
 - Periodic inspections
 - Indoor Air Quality Tests
 - Energy audits



TEAM Approach

- Consider commercial inspection approach
- Be the coordinator of other services
- Offer WETT Inspections tomorrow without any WETT Training at all
- If clients and customers ask you for a service on a semi-regular basis, there is a demand for it.
- Why not offer it?



Three Ways to Grow Your Business

MARKET SEGMENT EXPANSION



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Market Segment Expansion

- Sell your services to new groups of clients



New Groups of Clients

- New home buyers (new construction)
- Builders
- Home sellers



Consider Repackaging

- Different clients often require different package
- New home buyers
 - Tarion
 - Photos
 - Standards
 - Training

Consider Repackaging

- Sellers
 - Pre-Listing Inspection
 - Summary
 - Onsite Experience



Consider Repackaging

- Builders
 - Photos
 - OBC
 - Report format/recommendations/timeframes



Another Way to Increase Your Bottom Line

SETTING YOUR PRICE



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Setting Your Price

- There are only three strategies
- Price lower than your competition
- Price higher than your competition
- Price the same as the competition



Pricing Low

- “Penetration pricing”
- New businesses
- Competition already has business
- Low enough to create an effect
- Not low enough to lose money



How Low?

- Operating costs
 - Your time
 - Profit
-
- Cover all of these on every inspection



Pricing High

- “Skimming strategy”
- You get what you pay for?
- Not true, but people believe it
- Upscale market
- Premium service



How High?

- What will the market bear?
- Appear premium
- Avoid price gouging
- Research
- Experience
- Observation
- Intuition
- Tracking



Price Resistance

- Some price resistance is not only acceptable, but good
- No price resistance is bad



Pricing The Same

- “Competitive pricing”
- Selling higher will cost you profitable business
- Selling lower will cost you profitable margins
- You need another differentiator



Clients Cannot Evaluate Service Companies

- Unlike a physical product that can be held or tested or have specifications.
- Clients will latch onto whatever they can.
 - Communication skills.
 - Personality
 - Clothing
 - Smile
 - Manner
 - Speed
 - Convenience
 - Price

An Example

[Example](#)



Will You Turn People Away?

- Your regular customers will not shop around
- If they do, you have an opportunity to explain why there is a difference.



Other Factors

- Inflation
- Other inspectors will follow



Discounts, Coupons & Promotions

- Short-Term Incentive to Increase Sales
- Discount on Home Inspection
- Discount on Follow-up Service
- Try out service for the first time?
- Reward regular customers?



Don't Let Your Existing Business Leave

CUSTOMER AND CLIENT RETENTION



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Retaining Agent Referrals

- Follow-up letters and calls
- Solicit feedback
- Office talks
- Keep in touch!



Retaining Agent Referrals

- Remember – spend effort on agents before spending on home buyers.
- Focus efforts on agents that are worth the most to you.
- Putting new agents in the front door while old agents go out the back door is not a good way to grow



How Much Is an Agent's Referral Worth to You?

- Costs a lot of money to acquire each agent
- Costs the same to acquire a prolific agent as a poor agent
- Once we have them, we must keep them!



Which Agents Are Profitable?

- One star for every three bookings in the last six months
- One star for every two bookings in the last slow season
- One star for every three online bookings in the last six months
- One star for every two value-added services booked



5 Star Customers

- Focus your attention here
- Rewards?
 - Priority booking?
 - Discount on every x inspections?
 - Holiday reception?



What Do Customers & Clients See?

- They judge you on
 - Phone etiquette
 - Your appearance
 - Your smile
 - Your voice
 - Your manner
 - The report presentation
- They assume that you are competent



Keep Relationships With Clients

- Capture repeat business and referrals
- Sell other services to your customer
- How can you stay in touch?



Service Marketing

- Difficult to justify price differentiation
- Customer may participate in the creation of the end product
- Difficult to evaluate the service quality



What is a Great Inspection?

- A Great Technical Inspection Is Not a Great Marketing Tool
- Customers and clients only measure the things they understand?
- They don't know how clever you were to find the almost invisible crack in the heat exchanger.



Dissatisfied Customers

- Vast majority of dissatisfied customers do not complain
- Average dissatisfied customer tells ten people
- Majority of dissatisfied customers will complain will be retained as customers if their complaint is resolved

Therefore...



Therefore...

- Actively solicit feedback
- Opportunity to resolve the issue
- Retain customers



Biggest Service Complaint

- Wait times
- Appointment time
- Returning calls
- Delivering reports



Wait Feels Longer

- Unknown duration
- Nothing to do
- Unknown reason
- Your fault



How?

“Where did you hear about us?”

“Did we meet all of your expectations?”

“Was there anything that you especially liked?”

“Was there anything we could have done better?”



How?

- “Would you feel comfortable referring us to others?” (Reward?)
- “Thanks again for choosing us and for your time today. Bye for now.”
- Phone calls are time consuming.



And your phone rings....

SALES



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Say the Right Things

- Everyone does better with sales scripts and coaching
- What's the most common first question?
- **“How much do you charge?”**



“How Much for an Inspection?”

“Your question suggests that all inspections are the same, and that is a very logical assumption. But may I take a minute to tell you the differences between inspections, so we make sure you can get exactly what you need?”

- Then discuss your Competitive Advantage.
- Ask them about the home.
- Quote fee.



Ask For The Business

“And that’s why our service represents the best value and our fee represents a small investment with a very large return.

So, does Monday at 9:00am work for you?”



“I See Other Inspectors Charging \$250!”

“You are right. We are not the least expensive company. May I tell you why?”

- Then describe your competitive advantage, highlighting differences between you and others.
- Explain that you are priced competitively with your competition.
- Those \$250 inspectors are not your competition



Price Objections

“And that is why we are the best value in the profession. We provide the greatest possible return on your investment. So, shall we set that up for you at 9:00am on Sunday?”



Price Objections

“The other thing that we have found is that competitors set their fees against ours. Some people compete on price. We compete on value because we believe we provide more than anyone else. (Provide examples. Use Competitive Advantage.) Does that make sense? So, shall we set that up for you at 3:00pm on Friday?”



Feel, Felt, Found

- The oldest trick in the book
 - “I know how you **feel**. Many of our clients **felt** the same way at first. But after the inspection, they **found** that we exceeded their expectations and provided great value.”
 - “You can see some of their comments on my web site, www.benjysinspections.com.”



Okay, Thanks

- They are ready to hang up.
 - “I understand that you are not ready to make a decision. What questions do you need answered before you can make your decision?”



They Called to Be Sold

- People are torn – they feel obligated to shop, but they don't like doing it.
- They would love it if the decision was easy.
Make it easy.



The Most Recent Conversation

- Most recent conversation is the strongest in their minds.
- If they call you and then call another inspector, there is a good chance they will never call back!
- Convert them to a sale on the first call



Low Price Strategy

- Initial price quoted is low, but bare bones
- Build fee with ancillary services
 - Thermal imaging
 - Termiteinspection
 - Water test
 - Costs
 - Photographs



Losing Them?

“If you are calling around to other home inspection companies, there is a fantastic tool on my web site that you can use to evaluate different home inspectors. You can find it at www.benjysinspections.com. And please use someone who is a member of the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors.”



The Half Commitment

- “I understand that you are not ready to commit yet, but my schedule is quite tight for the next few days. Would you like to make a tentative booking so that a spot is held? If you decide to book elsewhere, just give me a call by eight o’clock tonight.”



Keeping in Contact

- “I understand that you are not ready to book an inspection yet. I have some valuable information that will help to select the right home inspector for you which I can send you right away. Could I please get your email address?”



Testimonials

- Offer Proof
 - Testimonials are invaluable
 - Use it on agents and clients
 - Use them in all of your marketing materials



Turn Objections Into Questions

- Hear it out completely
- “That’s a great question!”
- Respond with a question, not an answer
 - “Good point Mr. Hewson, I am glad you brought that up. May I tell you why...



Risk Reversal

- The home buyer is assuming all of the risk
- They are buying something that they can't judge or evaluate
- Assume that risk yourself!



Risk Reversal

- “I am so comfortable that you will be satisfied with our service that I’m willing to stand behind it personally. If you are not happy with my service by the end of the inspection, you don’t have to pay.”



Risk Reversal

- Immediate effect
- Risk: You will not get paid – but on an inspection that you may not have booked in the first place



Who are you?

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



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Who Are You?

- Competitive advantage
- Unique Selling Proposition (USP)
- Value Proposition



Competitive Advantage Statement

- Identify your competitive advantage
- Focus your marketing on that statement



FORMULA FOR A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

A statement that explains what your company is best at.

Your Business Name	+ What you're best at	+ Why
Honda	is best at developing precision engines and power trains	because its products are the leaders in reliability and technological advancement
Bikram Yoga	is best at productizing the yoga experience and practice	because it's packaged for franchising
Google	is best at optimizing searches for any type of information	because it continues to innovate and push technology past what was thought possible

Competitive Advantage

- Benjy's Home Inspections is a full-service home and property inspection company, offering not only basic home inspections, but packages that include well and septic testing, thermal imaging, environmental testing and swimming pool inspections. We are your one-stop shop for all of your due diligence needs. One call does it all.



Competitive Advantage

- Benjy's Home Inspections has the fastest response time in Orillia. Home inspection reports can be available within twelve hours of your phone call to us. We get you the information that you need quickly so that you have more time to consider your purchase decision.



Competitive Advantage

- Can use numbers, especially if they can be compared
 - Benjy's Home Inspections had inspected more homes in Parry Sound than any other home inspector. Benjy knows Parry Sound houses better than anyone.
 - Benjy's Home Inspections has a client satisfaction rating of 97%, better than anybody else in the industry.



Competitive Advantage

- Must be true
- Must be unique
- Must be of importance to clients and customers



Can't Think of One?

- That's a problem.
- What would you like your Competitive Advantage to be?
- Can you do that?



Features vs. Benefits

- Client Perspective
- Features
 - Describe Our Service
 - Features deliver the benefits.
- Benefits
 - What Customer Finds Desirable
 - Benefits solve a problem, meet a need or satisfy a want.

Features Vs. Benefits

- Homebuyers want peace of mind
- The benefit you provide is reducing the risk in buying a home
- The features are the detailed inspection and comprehensive report



Features Vs. Benefits

- Agents don't want you to kill the deal.
- The benefit you provide is keeping homebuyers rational during an emotional process.
- The feature is balanced, non-alarmist communication with findings that are presented in perspective.



Market Using Benefits

- Benefits are harder to explain and take up more words
- You are an OAHM member – so what?



Make the benefit apparent

- Example:
 - Feature: I am available 7 days a week
 - Benefit: Agent can have the inspection done more quickly and thus save time and money
 - Benefit: Homebuyer doesn't have to take time off work if a weekend inspection is more convenient
- Customers can't convert features to benefits
- Make the benefits more apparent



Many Options

- We never keep you waiting – if we are late, the inspection is free!
- Available with 24 hours
- Bring coffee and donuts
- Free tape measure
- Money back guarantee
- Double money back guarantee

Many Options

- Free 90-Day Warranty
- SewerGuard
- Buy Your House Back
- We Cut Your Lawn
- Include costs in report
- Include video in report

Final thoughts

TRACKING AND RESEARCH



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Tracking

- Track all activities and the results
- Do more of what works
- Do less of what does not work



Research

- Competitors
- Prices
- Features
- Benefits

- Market demand



One Thing at a Time

- Don't get overwhelmed and confused by multiple strategies



Copy of Presentation

- Email me
- Address and web site in outline



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CLARKE ENGINEERING

Home Inspection Practical Field Training

Besner Homes
Trusted Home Inspections

FACILITATED BY BESNER HOME INSPECTIONS AND CLARKE ENGINEERING

A four-day practical home inspection training and mentoring program



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This program has been specially developed to meet the needs of new home inspectors and recent graduates of home inspection training programs. New home inspectors often find themselves well-equipped with up-to-date technical knowledge and theory, but are missing a critical component—the ability to confidently take that classroom knowledge or home study learning and apply it to real-world situations, in actual houses, with real reports to write and real people to present findings to.

Marcel Besner, RHI of Besner Home Inspections and Graham Clarke, RHI, P.Eng. of Clarke Engineering are your trainers for this hand-on training experience. Both of your trainers are practiced home inspectors and experienced instructors in the home inspection program at Seneca College.

This training program is a four-day event. Each day, a group of home inspectors will spend the morning inspecting a Toronto-area home. The afternoon is spent preparing written home inspection reports for constructive critique, and engaging in group discussion regarding technical aspects of the home as well as verbal report presentation.

The next training session will be held on two consecutive weekends: April 25, 26 and May 2, 3. Participants will receive a letter confirming their completion of practical training/mentoring.

Program fees are \$1,100 plus HST. To book your place, see the contact information below.



FACILITATED BY BESNER HOME INSPECTIONS AND CLARKE ENGINEERING

Besner Home Inspections
www.BesnerHomes.com
416-880-9830

Clarke Engineering
www.ClarkeEngineering.ca
416-220-7550

Home Inspection Mentoring and Business Consulting

- Do you need a mentor to meet the OAHI Practical Training component?
- Do you feel like you got a great home inspection education at school, but aren't sure that you are applying that knowledge properly and on the right path now that you are out inspecting on your own?
- Do you know what they didn't teach you in school about home inspection?
- Are you worried about liability?
- Are you using your time effectively?
- Are you making as much money as you could be?

What if you had the opportunity to have a 25-year veteran of the home inspection business working for you? Now, you do!

My name is Graham Clarke, and I'm here to help you! Formerly Vice-President of Engineering at Carson Dunlop, the oldest and largest independent home inspection company in Canada, I'm now helping home inspectors make the transition from start-up to success. If all you need is a couple of supervised inspections to fulfill your Practical Training requirement, I can help you with that. If you need an experienced home inspector to look at the way that you do inspections and write reports, I'll congratulate you on recognizing that, and I can put together a peer review package for you. Or if you want a more in-depth review and analysis of your inspection business, I'm your man.

What makes me qualified to help you?

I started my career as a home inspector way back in the spring of 1989. Between then and now, not only have I performed thousands of home inspections myself, I've managed a multi-inspector home inspection business and approximately 70,000 inspections have been performed under my supervision. Also, consider these points:

- I have been training home inspectors at Seneca College since 2001.
- I am a member of the CSA committee developing their Home Inspection Standard.
- I was a member of the Expert Panel commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Consumer Services to develop recommendations on Home Inspector Regulation.
- I am a Past President of the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors and helped develop the current Membership Qualification System.
- I was the founding Chair of the National Certification Authority, which developed the National Certification Program for Home Inspectors.

Does it sound like I might have some knowledge and experience that you can apply to your business?

If you are ready to take the next step, call me, text me, or send me an email. My contact information is below. I do have a limited number of opportunities available, and I'm focused on looking for individuals who are committed to building and improving their home inspection business. If this sounds like you, I'd love to work with you.

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