

*Networking, social media and professional experience are the keys to brand power, according to reigning REIQ Residential Salesperson of the Year Mark McGill*

People buy off people, not brands. That being said, you are your own “brand” within your company. Having a professional background as a registered architect, I always saw myself as a “consultant” rather than a salesperson. People were coming to me to profit from my knowledge. How could I best convey that concept to the public? My “brand” was that I had skills as a registered architect, offering a consultative approach to assist buyers and sellers getting the right answers to questions regarding renovations, town planning or even possible ideas to maximise the full property of the property. I pushed this angle right from the start as my point of difference over more experienced agents in my area. I couldn’t compete on results and experience in my first year, but I had years of product knowledge over them!

While I always attempt to portray “professional”, I would say that I am a bit of joker and I enjoy a casual life, especially living here at the beach. I think it is important to relate to your customer, not be superior but not be an amateur either. Sometimes this means a Sunday appointment in a polo shirt, board shorts and thongs, and sometimes on rare occasions it requires a suit – although here it’s wise to leave the tie at home otherwise you get some strange looks!

As a true believer and advocate of social networking, I use a variety of social networking sites to promote my profile such as Facebook and Instagram. I have a dedicated web page to promote myself as a Sales Architect which I utilise as a web business. The key thing is to talk about stories of success, not bombarding followers with your new listings and open home times. People want the story. Social media allows people to get to know your “brand” and connect with you on a personal, day to day level. I guess the image I aim to present as best as possible, is “professional and approachable”, rather than solely, “I’m a real estate rock star”. This includes limited social events, posting community information, supporting local businesses and celebrating everyone’s success, not just our own.

I also use social media to build referral relationships with other agents, so that we can mutually assist clients in other areas, as on the Sunshine Coast, many of my owners are from out of town and from time to time, need assistance in their local area too.

Primarily the biggest feedback that both sellers and buyers appreciate is my property information booklets which includes as best as possible, all of the property specifications, Building and Pest report, rates, body corporate information, floor plans, finishes and colours, a letter from the seller explaining the circumstances of the



sale, and a copy of any relevant information pertaining to the property. Every feature of the home has a dollar value, sellers appreciate we are conveying information on their home to the buyers properly. Buyers appreciate we have anticipated their questions and have the answers ready at hand, and have something memorable to take away from the property to discuss with the family and friends.

In summary, you need to find your own groove. It may take some time to figure out what works for you. What worked for me was “knowledge” over “experience”. Remember, to the consumer we all sound the same. We all have buyers, a database, a flash website, good signboards and great profile in the paper, and we all upload on reiq.com (I hope!) What is it that your competition can offer that doesn’t sound like the same as everyone else?