agent MATTERS

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Weekly Newsletter





NEXA Lending

NMLS #1660690



Your Source of What Matters



This week's Agent Matters looks at why four of real estate's biggest competitors are joining forces to launch Open Real Estate and what their push for listing transparency could mean for the future of MLSs and private listings. We break down how a simple pre-listing email can help agents build trust before meeting sellers, why focusing on your best clients creates stronger businesses, and how looking outside the industry can lead to better ideas. You'll also see how conversational AI search is revealing what consumers really want, why marketing to other agents can create more opportunities, and how AI stocks and this week's Fed meeting could drive mortgage rate volatility.

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STORIES THAT MATTER

Four Brokerage Rivals Team Up on Open Real Estate

Four of real estate's biggest competitors just joined forces. AGNT CEO Leo Pareja, Real REMAX CEO Tamir Poleg, Keller Williams CEO Chris Czarnecki and HomeServices of America CEO Chris Kelly announced Open Real Estate, an industry-led platform designed to simplify how listings are entered and shared.

"We compete quite viciously every single day, but the subject of protecting the American consumer is really important to us," Pareja said.

Launching in early 2027, the platform lets brokers enter a listing once using standardized fields and share it simultaneously with other members, local MLSs, portals and authorized sites through IDX. Listings must be submitted within one business day of signing a listing agreement. Brokers can limit a listing to fellow participants, but then can't market it publicly anywhere else. Participating brokerages will share earnings equally.

The founders insist it won't become a national MLS or consumer portal. "This is not a walled garden or another marketplace that favors one company over another," the group wrote in an open letter.

To some critics, the move feels more symbolic than substantive. Poleg pushed back, noting the founders have committed substantial capital. The first cohort of prospective members includes Brown Harris Stevens, Lamacchia Realty, Samson Properties, Windermere and Iron Valley Real Estate.

Even Compass, which is currently suing several major MLSs, is "absolutely welcome" to join, the founders said.

Why This Matters:

If Open Real Estate delivers, you could enter listings once instead of juggling multiple systems. It also signals that major brokerages are organizing a united front for transparency against private listing strategies. Watch the next six months closely.

STRATEGIES THAT MATTER

Let Sellers Meet You Before You Walk Through the Door

One agent who has signed 30 listings this year sends a pre-listing email before nearly every appointment, usually the day before. The goal isn't to win the listing over email or send a massive presentation. It's to give sellers a chance to learn about the agent, see past sales, read what clients have said, and get a feel for the marketing before the meeting. The email even says there's no homework. But when sellers do go through it, the appointment starts with familiarity instead of from zero.

Hand-pick the comps instead of sending an auto-generated report. Include recently sold and active homes nearby so sellers have neighborhood context before you talk about their house. The bigger benefit is to you. Manually selecting comps forces you to understand the competitive landscape, so you already know about the house down the street that sold six months ago or the one that looks like a comp but really isn't.

Make your proof relevant to their house. Instead of sending everything you've ever done, share what speaks directly to where the seller lives. For one Norwalk, California appointment, that meant a report of team sales in Norwalk over the previous 24 months. Add a link to your Google reviews so past clients do the talking for you. There's only so much credibility you can create by talking about yourself.

Show one relevant listing video instead of saying "follow me." Pick a video from the same city or a similar style home so sellers can picture what you'd do with theirs. If they like it, they'll naturally find your social channels on their own.

Why This Matters:

The more sellers know before you arrive, the more time you can spend on what actually matters to them: their house, their goals, and their next move. This email also builds a research habit you should already have. You walk in prepared, they feel like they already know you, and the conversation starts several steps ahead of the agent who shows up cold.

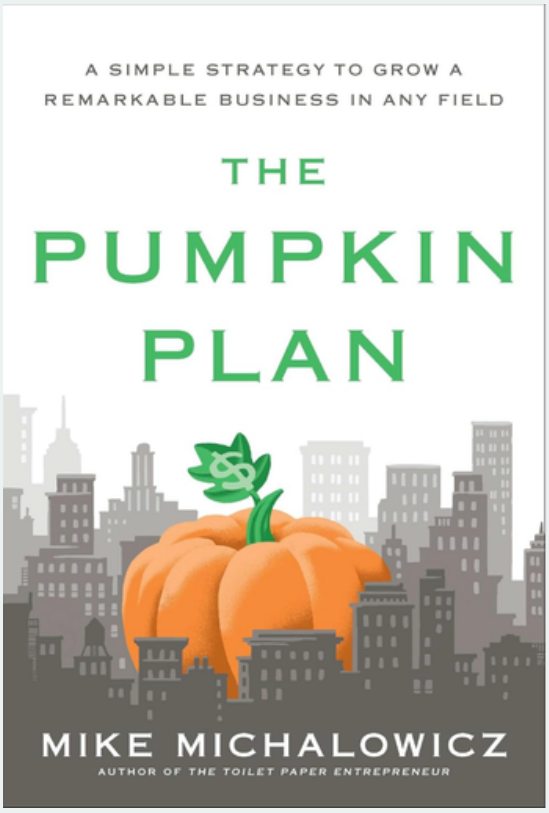
“Overnight success is usually the part people see, not the years that made it possible. **Patience is staying committed when progress feels invisible, results come slowly, and nobody is paying attention.** The work compounds before the recognition arrives. Most breakthroughs look sudden only because people missed everything that happened beforehand.”

LESSONS THAT MATTER

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BOOKS THAT MATTER

The Pumpkin Plan: A Simple Strategy to Grow a Remarkable Business in Any Field - Not every client or opportunity deserves equal attention. The Pumpkin Plan teaches real estate agents how to identify their best clients, focus on profitable relationships, and build a stronger business by doing more of what works instead of chasing everything.



PODCASTS THAT MATTER



Why Real Estate Needs More Outside Perspective - Some of the best ideas for growing a real estate business come from people who have never sold a house. In this episode of Real Estate Insiders Unfiltered, Cory Vasquez, President and Chief Marketing Officer of Realty ONE Group, challenges the industry's tendency to look inward for answers. She explains how learning from other industries can improve leadership, marketing, crisis communication, and decision-making. Cory also shares why authentic branding requires more than following trends and why getting uncomfortable is essential for growth. For agents and leaders, the lesson is simple: stop limiting where you learn and start confronting the parts of your business you've been avoiding.

AI THAT MATTERS

Renters Are Telling AI Things They'd Never Tell You

One renter told an AI search tool she's a single woman making $17 an hour. Another shared they live on disability and bring in $3,000 a month. That's not something people type into a search filter.

A new Apartments.com report analyzed 5.2 million sessions with its AI search tool. The headline: AI search users convert to leads at a 241% higher rate than traditional searchers. (The report doesn't explain the comparison, and AI users may simply be more motivated.)

The era of anonymity is over. Renters introduce themselves. They describe their kids, pets, partners, employers, and budgets. One searched for a stair-free one-bedroom for an 80-year-old grandmother.

They negotiate inside the conversation. Instead of rerunning filters, renters weigh tradeoffs on the spot. A large studio instead of a one-bedroom. A bigger budget for a great gym. They spent 47% more time per listing and viewed 177% more 3D tours.

Voice wins. Renters who speak instead of type submit 2.2 times as many leads.

Affordability means all-in cost. Renters want total monthly cost with utilities and parking, move-in costs, and whether they'll qualify. Utilities rank among the most discussed topics.

What this means for agents: Homebuyers are heading the same direction in ChatGPT and Claude. AI can only match buyers to what your listings and content actually say. Spell out the details: total costs, commute times, lifestyle fit, what's included and what costs extra. Write the way buyers talk, not in industry jargon.

Bottom line: AI search is becoming the trusted friend buyers confide in. Make sure your content gives it something to say about you.

VIDEOS THAT MATTER

Most real estate agents create marketing with buyers and sellers in mind, but they may be overlooking another valuable audience: other agents. In this video, the host explains why building relationships and visibility with fellow professionals can help sell listings and create opportunities. Agents will learn how to make properties memorable, reach professionals who already have buyers, and build a reputation that strengthens their business. Sometimes the right audience isn't the consumer, but the agent who knows them.

WATCH NOW



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MARKET UPDATES THAT MATTER

Last Week's Mortgage Rate Recap: Rates improved 👍

Mortgage rates crept a little higher during the week before turning around on Thursday as AI stocks sold off and investors moved money out of stocks and into the safety of bonds. That helped mortgage rates improve and end the week a little lower.

This Week's Mortgage Rate Forecast: Rates could be volatile ⚠️

The big event this week is Wednesday's Fed meeting, but AI stocks could continue to have a big influence on mortgage rates. Oil prices haven't had much of an effect on rates recently, but that could change this week. With so many things in play, we are likely to see some day-to-day ups and downs in rates and possibly a bigger move for the week.

What’s affecting rates this week:

Stocks: The big sell-off in AI stocks has slowed for now, but if stocks start falling again, it could help mortgage rates this week. However, if stocks rally, it could push rates higher.

Oil: Oil prices haven't had much influence on mortgage rates recently, despite being near six-month highs, but that could change after this week's Fed meeting.

The Fed: The Fed is not expected to hike rates at this meeting, but we should expect markets to react to the Fed's policy statement and Fed Chair Warsh's press conference.



Thank you!

Forward or Reverse... Let's Make It Work!

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