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Real Estate Investing Podcast

Why VAs, Marketing and Automation are King

Hosted by: Joe McCall and Alex Jounghlood

Featuring Special Guest: Tracy Caywood

- Joe:** Welcome! This is the Real Estate Investing Mastery Podcast. Hey, everybody. Welcome! This is the Real Estate Investing Mastery Podcast. Glad you're here. Alex, how are you, my man?
- Alex:** I'm doing good. How about you, Joe?
- Joe:** Really good! I'm actually recording this in my brother-in-law's office in Austin, Texas. And, I love coming down to Austin. It's good to see family. And, it was supposed to be a little warmer down here, because we were from St. Louis. And, it's just as cold. If not, colder...
- Alex:** Aaaaah! Yeah, it's very cold here right now. It's very cold. We have frost on the ground. [Laughs]
- Joe:** Yeah. What's up with that? And Tracy, you're in Florida, right?
- Tracy:** Yeah. We're not even going to talk about the weather. [Laughs]
- Joe:** No, it is kind of...
- Alex:** It's like 70° over there. [Chuckles]
- Tracy:** I actually like the cold weather as I've been to Florida my whole life. So, it's only so hot. So anytime we hit 50° or 60°... Oh, man! I hate that I open all the windows, and I turn every... I mean, I never turn the heater on, even when it's... I just love the cold.
- Joe:** That's awesome!



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- Tracy:** So, maybe I need... Maybe I need to move.
- Joe:** [Chuckles]
- Alex:** [Chuckles]
- Joe:** Yes, you're right. It is... It is kind of lame to talk about the weather. This isn't called like the Weather Investing Mastery Podcast.
- Tracy:** Yes. [Laughs]
- Alex:** That's right. We want to talk about real estate. [Laughs]
- Joe:** So Alex, have you spoken?
- Alex:** Get their Fast Cash Survival Kit, right?
- Joe:** Oh, yeah. That's right! We have a Fast Cash Survival Kit. And, you go to Real Estate Investing Mastery.com. Alex, you're still using that same VA?
- Alex:** Ha! Actually, no. We have parted ways. [Laughs]
- Joe:** No way!
- Alex:** Yeah. It's okay though. You're heartbroken for him or for me?
- Joe:** Oh, him. No, both of you. Like you guys were best buds for the longest time. I was going to say in our Fast Cash Survival Kit, we talked about how we use our VAs.
- Alex:** Yes!
- Joe:** And, how we make them do work for us, right? So, did you just? Did your guy run out of work to do or what? What's going on?



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- Alex:** Oh, no! Oh, no, no, no. I mean, I still have VAs that work with me. But, my head VA... We had parted ways. Not to get too detailed with it. Well, basically, I looked at my Skype usage and what he was reporting to me. And I said, "Well, these numbers don't line up here with your hours. Can you show me where these hours are coming in?" And, it was off by quite a bit. And when I asked him to verify that, he kind of said, "I guess I'm done." So... [Chuckles] You know what that means. But, you know.
- Joe:** Somebody from the podcast probably found out who he was, and hired him.
- Alex:** [Laughs] Yeah! That's true. That can happen. [Laughs]
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** It happens a lot. And, I've had my VAs tell me. Some of my students and clients have asked them, I think, if they would want to work for them, and they would offer them a raise.
- Alex:** [Laughs]
- Joe:** I'm just. I'm like just...
- Alex:** No, I don't think that's what it was. It's just when you're asked to verify something and you can't.
- Joe:** Yeah.
- Alex:** And, you're embarrassed about it. Then, I guess you fold up shop and go home. So, that's what happened.
- Joe:** That's too bad.
- Alex:** It's not like I said, "Do you? You're fired!" I just asked for verification. He just...
- Tracy:** He fired himself.



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Joe: He fired himself? Yeah. So, what are you going to do now? You're going to hire a new VA to replace him?

Alex: I do. I do have another VA that's not as good as him by a long stretch, but good enough to go through and call some hang-ups. And that's really... I mean, when you look at it, you get the low hanging fruit that comes through, and you deal with those. And, they're really easy to deal with. But, the real money in the VA, I would say, is that they go through and call all the stuff that you don't want to call, like the one that called and hang up. And once they called in and said, "They wanted too much. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah." And, this VA that I have definitely improved your work, because... I mean, she called... She've brought in... There was a hang up that she called in and turned into a \$40,000 deal. There was another one that turned into a \$32,000 deal. [Chuckles] So, she works for way considerably less than what he was working for. And, doesn't grunt work and doesn't complaint about it.

Tracy: Wow!

Alex: And, even though she's not as good as negotiating. But, she's good at calling those people, getting them on the line, and putting them back into the funnel as opposed to if we were just say, "Oh, they hung up. No go." Yeah, so... And, that's where the work for the VA comes in.

Joe: Well, you know, we have Tracy Caywood on the line us, from Property Mob fame. And, we'll probably ask her... We'll probably ask you Tracy how you use VAs, if you don't mind. Is it?

Tracy: Oh, okay.

Joe: It's an interesting topic. And, maybe you don't. But...

Tracy: Oh, no. I'm good. I'm good.



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Joe: Okay. Good. Good. Because, it's an important topic. And, it's not as... It used to be like everybody was talking about VAs. It was like the new hot, trendy thing. Remember, back three or four years ago?

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: And, even less. But, it's still a very important part of our businesses. It's an important part of mine. In fact, I have probably seven VAs working for me right now in my real estate business, and my "Done for you" marketing business and coaching business. But anyway, I wanted to read real quick, if you guys don't mind, some reviews we've got recently. Remember, if you about 5, 10 episodes... 15, 20 episodes, I don't remember... We had an episode titled, "Leave a Review - Get Free Stuff!" And, not only if you leave us a review, good or bad. You'll leave us a review; we'll send you some books that we've written. I've written. Alex, I don't think you've written any books yet, have you? Not to rub it in or anything, but you just got to give Alex a hard time.

Alex: Yeah. Yeah, no books written yet.

Joe: Okay. I'm just sorry I just had to bring that up. Because, yours truly...

Alex: Oh, that's okay.

Joe: [Laughs] Just my kid. All of these books were webinars that we had transcribed and turned into books. But, they're really, really good books. But, you get them for free if you leave us a review in iTunes. And, it's pretty easy and we'll also send you some videos and some stuff that Alex and I have done. The Fast Cash Survival Kit... If you just leave us a review. And, we have a couple here that I want to read. This is from a few days ago from beginnow. He says, "Five stars. Just what I was looking for! I just learned about the term remote wholesaling, and I'm totally excited. This is exactly what I am looking for to create wealth in my real estate investing endeavors. Thank you Joe and Alex for giving me access to learning more about this avenue of investing, which will give me more freedom to work from home or travel with my family in the future. I've listened to a few of the podcasts and can't wait to devour all of them up. Hopefully,



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offering me enough information and giving me the courage to put things into action. Aloha!" I was just in Hawaii, beginnow. And maybe, I'll see you in Hawaii sometime soon.

One or two more here. "This is the best real estate investing mastery podcast." That's cool! Five stars from LGDonzi. "I've listened to a lot of real estate podcasts, and I have to say these are the best ones. These guys give real information that you can use, and have really helped me get motivated. Their low key style, without any guru talk, and keeping it simple is just great. Thanks for all you do and keep the podcasts coming. Thanks!" That was an awesome nice review. Thank you LG! Appreciate it. And, I don't know if I've read this one before. But, I'm going to read it again because it's good. "Best Content Period!" Five stars by Try Vision. "If you haven't tuned into Joe's and Alex's Podcast yet, you're missing out! I'm not an information junkie but I've listened to every episode they've done because the content is that good. There's always something new to learn and to implement in your business. I highly recommend to newbies and experienced investors alike to tune in. I've been able to start my wholesaling business and get deals done based on what I've learned from the podcasts." That's awesome! "Now, I'm working on scaling and making it more efficient with the help of Podio." Uh-oh. [Laughs]

Alex: [Laughs]

Joe: Tracy, did you hear that? [Laughs]

Tracy: I did. I did. That's awesome! [Laughs]

Joe: Sorry, We'll talk about Zillow and Podio here in a minute. Because, they're both really good tools. "Keep delegating guys because I and many others really appreciate the time and effort that you put into delivering these quality podcasts. You guys are the best! Happy Holidays to you and your families!" Okay, thanks Try Vision. That's awesome. We got a bunch more like that. So, if you want to leave us a review, please do so at RealEstateInvestingMastery.com. Go to iTunes. Go to Stitcher. Leave us a review. And, we really, really appreciate it. Tracy, are you still there?



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Tracy: Yes.

Joe: Okay, cool. It looks like Alex is trying to come back in. We'll see if he can get back in or not. He's typing something. We've been having technical difficulties. But Tracy, I'm glad you're on the show. We've been wanting to talk with you for a while. You're very active in the "Wholesaling houses full-time" forum, and you'd give a lot of good advice to people. I've always appreciated looking or reading the stuff that you put out there on your blog, in Facebook. So Tracy, you're in Florida. Is that right?

Tracy: I am. I'm in Jacksonville Beach, Florida. One of the few natives.

Joe: Really?

Tracy: Yeah. As far as the...

Joe: That's a big city.

Tracy: Yeah, it's a big snowbird state.

Joe: And, would you recommend in the mountains or near the ocean?

Tracy: [Chuckles] Hmm. Hmm. I rather live at the ocean.

Joe: Oh, okay.

Tracy: Yeah. I rather live at the ocean. I live 573 footsteps away from the Atlantic Ocean, from my front door. So, I can say like in the summer, I don't go there to the beach because it's just too hot. But, anytime between... That's like May through August, or I would say June through August, I'm at the beach. I mean, we just walk down there and drink coffee.

Joe: Nice!



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- Tracy:** It's just amazing. I mean, I like the mountains too. But, if I have to choose one, I would... The beauty of the ocean is definitely one that's about I like in the ocean.
- Joe:** Yeah, it is nice.
- Alex:** The ocean is definitely better than the mountains.
- Joe:** No.
- Tracy:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Joe:** I think I'm going to have to say I'm different. I'd prefer to be in the mountains.
- Alex:** Ha!
- Joe:** It's just...
- Tracy:** It's hard.
- Joe:** Yeah. But, that's the beautiful thing about it.
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** It's just majestic. And...
- Tracy:** Yes.
- Joe:** But, the cool thing about what we do is we can work from wherever we want. And, if we wanted to take a week off, a month off, or even just work from somewhere else for a month or two, we can do that. I mean, Tracy or Alex, could either of you, if you wanted to? If you really wanted to work from another state for a couple of months?
- Tracy:** Oh, yeah.
- Alex:** Oh, yeah. For sure.



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Tracy: Yes. Yeah.

Joe: I mean, isn't that awesome? [Chuckles] Who else can say that?

Tracy: It's brilliant.

Alex: No, it's a combination of making sure you got all the right people in place too. I mean, that really comes in to the play, and play. And, VAs are people that you work with. It all comes down to that.

Joe: Yeah. That's right! And, that's something I'm really appreciative of and grateful for. And, it's awesome. It's a great time to be in this business too. It's a great time to... Making sure that you have the systems in place. You're doing the marketing consistently. You got the people in place to handle the calls and to do the dirty work for you, in the sense. But Tracy, could you tell us a little bit about how you get started in real estate? What were you doing pre-real estate days?

Tracy: Sure! It was back in the heyday of... No, I'm just kidding. I don't know if that was heyday. 1998...

Joe: Uh-huh.

Tracy: I was 25 years old.

Alex: That is a heyday.

Tracy: Yeah, that was one of the heydays. I was 25 years old, and I worked at a Fortune 500 company doing billing reconciliations. So, the old 9:00 to 5:00 job, painting house, and all this. And, I had two-year-old son at the time. And, I did not like people... You know, if he got sick, I couldn't get to pick him up. I guess... Actually, he was older than that. At 1998... He was born in 1993, he was five! He was five-years-old. So, he was... If he got sick, I have to ask permission to go pick him up from day care or whatever the deal was like. Quickly, I discovered I did not like that lifestyle. So, I started looking for ways to work at home. That was like the first adventure. I honestly need to work at home. I



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didn't know what I was going to do at home. So, I did go through several scams. Building the earrings at home, or you order that in a newspaper, and they send you the kit.

Alex: [Laughs]

Tracy: And, you can build the earrings, and they pay you \$0.50 for every pair of earrings that you've built. Me and my husband both at the same time decided if we were going to do this... We were a very new relationship back then. We just wanted to be together all the time. So, he's going to build earrings with me.

Alex: Wow!

Tracy: And, we got kids putting all on the bed, and look at all these little beads, and strings. We never got one earring put together really. Oh, yeah. This isn't it. We're not going to be able to sustain anything building earrings. So, we mixed that. Then, we started the, believe it or not, we did the \$1 chain letter.

Joe: Oh!

Alex: Oh my goodness.

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: [Laughs] Okay, so...

Alex: Will that work? [Laughs]

Tracy: Common, it worked. Back in 1998, that was... I mean, the Internet wasn't like prevalent. I mean, the information was not as rich if it all any at least. It's still dial-up kind of back then.

Joe: Yeah!



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Tracy: I mean, we were broke. No money. Barely couldn't afford our rents. It was... We were struggling real hard just to get by.

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: So, we had dial-up Internet. And, it was "Bang. Bang. Bang." waiting for AOL to connect. It's just... The Internet wasn't a place to go and get information.

Alex: It was like 36,000 kbps to 56,000 kbps.

Tracy: [Laughs] No forums, and Facebook groups, and things like that where all the information is readily available today for anybody who wants to learn how to make money in real estate. It's just wasn't there.

Joe: Right!

Tracy: So, we were looking in newspapers, and infomercials, and all these crazy things. So, the \$1 chain letter didn't work. But, I did think that the amount there was going to be dragging our bag, across his shoulders that's full of envelopes full of \$1 bills. It was just that convincing. That sales letter was.

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: It didn't work. And, we did see the... Yes, this is how I get my start. It's the no money down Carleton Sheets infomercial...

Alex: Yeah.

Tracy: ...On late night TV. And, we saw his infomercial. We're like, "Oh, man. That looks legit!" I don't know anything about real estate. Zero! We didn't have... It was a \$199, and we did not have \$199 to buy the course.

Joe: Hmmm.



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Tracy: And, we asked my mother-in-law to get it for us for Christmas. That was what we wanted for our Christmas present. So, she did. She ordered it and had it sent to our house. And, we opened up the course. It was so much of jargon, and pulled out the big chart, and listened to all the cassettes. We started calling for some of my owners and we didn't know what the hell we were doing. I remember standing in the driveway talking to Dan, my husband like, "How do people get paid on a second mortgage?" I mean, I just couldn't... I can't get it. I can't figure this out. It was really... To me, like owner financing strategies are advanced. It's kind of a sophisticated entry point for real estate.

Joe: Was that the main thing he was teaching to get started?

Tracy: Yeah, it was owner financing. Yes.

Joe: Wow. Okay.

Tracy: It was owner financing and rental... You know, buying them on owner financing, and then rent amount.

Joe: Oh!

Alex: It was taught by this guru? And, who was the teacher?

Tracy: Carleton Sheets.

Alex: Oh, Carleton Sheets. [Chuckles] Yeah. It's terrible. [Laughs]

Tracy: Yes. The "no money down" guy. Yeah, that was his course. So, that was over our heads. But, we did say yes. We're on to something in real estate. This is totally legit. We wanted to pursue this. And then, we found in a dang nickel newspaper, page rater, whatever you call them, a real ad for wholesaling course by Kevin Myers. It was \$69 and we bought it. It came in a 1-inch binder. [Chuckles] A three-ring binder... You know, he just printed it and punched it together. And, that was when wholesaling was born for us, for Kevin Myers' course. It was just really easy to understand, and everything he said



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was totally understandable. And, he gave us an action plan, and we took action on it. And, I can remember we had no money whatsoever. So, one of his things was to... Of course, do some direct mail marketing. That's how we generate leads. We couldn't even buy postcards.

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: It means, it was bad. We were broke. We were living paycheck to paycheck in the red. So, we bought 4 x 6 index card from Office Depot, and printed them on our printer. Just let them print all night. We got the code enforcement list from the city. That was one of the recommendations in the book. Started printing our index cards. And, whatever money we had to use for marketing, we'd send out that many postcards. So, if he had \$20 extra that week, that's how many postcards we just send out. Every time we had extra...

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: ...We would mail out postcards and generate leads. It's almost ringing to our house. We didn't have cellphones back then. And, we'd just break our neck trying to get us found. So, we started working. People started calling us. And, we just faked it till we made it. It was easier than owner financing, but definitely more identifiable as far as a motivated seller than anything we had ever seen. So, we got... It took us... However, it took us about three months to talk to a seller that was motivated enough. And, I guess feel comfortable enough to even make an offer that was... Makes sense?

Joe: Right!

Tracy: When I know that meant even... That I don't have a mentor. It's just... It was crazy. We're just all on our own. We're self-taught using this one little book. So, I finally got a contract on a duplex at Warzone. Not the best place to get your first deal. But heck, I didn't know back then what the difference was.

Joe: Right!



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- Tracy:** I didn't know. I'm just like, "Yes! He's going to sign our contract." And, we ended up wholesaling it within just a few days. And, we've made \$1,200.
- Joe:** Wow! What year was this?
- Tracy:** '98.
- Joe:** Wow! Okay.
- Tracy:** And, it was auctioned right about the same year.
- Joe:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.
- Tracy:** Yeah. Yeah. So, it was in '98. It gets crazier though. Because once this happens, and we... Because we've been working together, me and my husband. Once we closed that first deal, we made our check, we both quit our jobs.
- Joe:** No way! [Laughs]
- Tracy:** Both of us, we were so young and naive. I mean, kids these guys are really smarter than we were. [Laughs]
- Joe:** Wow!
- Tracy:** The deal is, we just both quit. Now... And, we sent our notice for work this time, and I'll continue to work. We just keep doing this. All I have to do is just keep doing this, and we'll just keep making money. \$1,200 you know... That was... We made that in one deal. That was about what I was making all month back then.
- Joe:** Yeah.
- Tracy:** We maybe not even that. I think I've made \$225 a week before they took my tenth, before they take taxes out. He didn't have his best shot either. He's working at a restaurant. So together, we're not making that much money. So, this was great. Except,



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we had no idea of what was about to happen. As far as the story of hashtags, the struggle was real.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: Trying to get the next deal and not knowing... We were just so dumb. Not knowing that it might be another month before we close another deal. Or, how long is it going to be? And, how much money are we going to have to spend to make or get another deal? Anyway, to make the long story short, we struggled for the... With this... For probably two years. It's just...

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: ...Getting the jacks, spending it all, and just not learning a lesson about budgeting, marketing expenses, paying your bills in advance, and planning for a roller coaster ride at wholesaling can be. It's just... It took us a while to finally get it and say okay. We even at one point knew we had to get marketing money to get more leads. And, we were on the road to a pawnshop pawning our son's PlayStation to get marketing money and run out of gas.

Joe: Oh my gosh!

Tracy: I'm not kidding. These are all true stories. Running out of gas trying to get marketing money.

Alex: Hard times!

Tracy: Yes. So, needless to say, we got everything found. We both said that we're not ever going back to work no matter what. We're going to make this work, and that we're both... We worked out as a team in our whole real estate careers together. Dan's just not... He's not Type A. He doesn't like... He's a wallflower. But, we both committed to this, and never went back. I mean, we never got a job. Had our jobs, neither one of us, since 1998. And...



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Joe: Wow!

Tracy: After the first... First year, we made \$12,000. Second year, it was like \$55,000. We went by the third year and a year after that, it's been six figures. We finally... We've caught on like, "Okay, we got this. We know what it takes." We went to every Ron LeGrand event you could ever... He has ever had, except his commercial real estate boot camp. We've been to all of his stuff. So, he's really... He's really our godfather.

Joe: Oh. Do you still go to his events?

Tracy: No, I don't go anymore. I could literally recite his events. We've been to them so many times. I know what he's going to say. I know his responses. I know what he's going to wear. I've been to all events. So, I don't... I just don't want to go there anymore.

Alex: You're going to his seminar. [Laughs]

Tracy: Yes! [Laughs] I will see those video sometimes on Facebook to see what he's up to. He's awesome to me.

Joe: I like Ron LeGrand a lot. But, why doesn't he just retire? Why is he still going at it?

Tracy: [Laughs] I don't know. He's look those car lot guys. He just keeps going.

Joe: [Laughs] I like... I mean...

Tracy: He knows it.

Joe: Yeah, I guess he just really does love it. But I mean, he's got to be in his 70s now?

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: And, I don't know. I mean... Maybe, he just doesn't want to stop. But, it seemed to be like, "Let's just work a little less." He works really hard.



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- Tracy:** He's a workhorse. He is.
- Joe:** Uh-huh.
- Tracy:** He really...
- Joe:** Uh-huh.
- Tracy:** He really is. And, he's my direct competition in Jacksonville. Because, he lives in Jacksonville where I do. So, ego homebuyers... And, I and his name comes up. And... Well yeah, that's Ron LeGrand. [Laughs] So, it's kind of cool.
- Joe:** So, he's the...
- Alex:** He's got other people under him better doing those stuff.
- Tracy:** Oh, yeah. He's got a ton of people.
- Alex:** It's not like he's at the house doing this thing. [Chuckles]
- Tracy:** No! He's not.
- Joe:** Ha! So, that's interesting. He's still doing marketing. But, he's got other people going out, looking at the houses, making offers, and stuff.
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** Okay. Yeah, this might be... Normally, I ask this question at the end, Tracy. But, this may be a good time to ask you now. Like, if you were to do it all over again... And, if you were to look back in 1998, and you were... If you had a mentor, what would you have done differently? What would you wish your mentor would have taught you and trained you to do?



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- Tracy:** I definitely need to know that you have to be consistent and not let the system quit running. Because, we did not do that. We would find a deal, find a buyer, cash the checks, spend it. And then, start over.
- Joe:** Hmmm. Hmmm.
- Tracy:** Start over. Now, we got to do some working. All our money is gone. Let's do some work.
- Alex:** Ron LeGrand called that the marketing machine, right? You got to get the marketing machine going.
- Tracy:** The marketing machine. Yes! That, you know... And, we have to do it all over again. And to say, without going through the growing pains that we did. It would definitely be just that one piece of advice. What have kept things at least semi-smooth and so rough to not know. If it leads you, you're going to call me. Because, I haven't done any marketing. Step number one, locate prospects. So, definitely that. And then, maybe also, management of money. You know, not to spend it all.
- Joe:** Right. Okay.
- Tracy:** We went shopping every time we used to close deals. Just shop, and shop, and spend, and spend it all. And, go and have a party. So, we just had no discipline. It was... I feel like I came out of it... I don't know. The 50s or trying to do just...
- Joe:** [Laughs]
- Tracy:** I just didn't know. It's just no one to guide you in the right direction. But, we made it happened. But, we may have just to think.
- Joe:** Would you have done? Obviously, you learned early on. Maybe, it took you a little while. But, you learned early on how important marketing is.
- Tracy:** Yeah.



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Joe: And so, you've got... If you're consistent with the marketing, the leads will come and that will solve like 99% of your problems.

Tracy: Yes.

Joe: Interesting. Do you think that wholesaling is a good thing for beginning investors to start with?

Tracy: I think it's the best thing for investors to start with. I think it's the easiest way to make money. I think it's the easiest to comprehend. And I guess, the fastest way to a check as long as you take action on what you learned. Then, yeah. I definitely think wholesaling is the best way to get your feet right in the business.

Joe: Yeah. What kind of marketing would you tell a beginning investor like you were at the time, to start doing, and be consistent with?

Tracy: Direct mail. Direct mail.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: Direct mail will never... It will never fail. I just started right in the world of technology. So, I do like the Internet marketing. But, for a new investor, I don't think it's... You know, you can't just throw up a website and people will start filling out your form. But, you can directly market to distressed sellers.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: And, that's definitely the best plan of action as to choose... I always tell people, you know, choose three or four small, highly targeted lists. And, start marketing to them. And, you're going to get responses. And, they're all not going to be motivated. Then, they're certainly not going to be qualified. But, that's where to start.

Joe: Yeah.



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Tracy: It's direct mail. It's inexpensive and it's highly effective. It's just not... It will never die. Direct mail is always going to be the king of lead generation.

Joe: Yeah. I think what ties into this really well too is... You're a big Zoho user. And, you probably understood early on too, the importance of like, not leading any leads fall through the cracks. And, the importance of follow-up. And, Zoho allows you to do that. Is that right?

Tracy: Yeah, it does.

Joe: So, what would you say? How important it is to do the follow-up piece of this? Like, somebody calls. They're not ready to do a deal now. But, I'm assuming you mean consistency in the same for following up with the old leads. Is that right?

Tracy: Yeah. Consistency with the... I have two... I have like three follow-up plans. One is follow-up with direct mail. So, I never just mail anybody one piece of mail. I'll get six pieces at least.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: And then, once they call in, they go into one of two follow-up systems. One would be that we made it to the point where I made an offer on a property. And, they just said no. I mean, if I got to that point and they just wouldn't accept my offer, they go to an e-mail autoresponder series, and telephone follow-ups. And then, another one is just... If they call in, and maybe the house is listed, or they're asking too much right now, or they're just not at the motivation level I want them to be... They're going to a different follow-up. So, there's certainly some people that I don't follow up with at all. I just...

Alex: Whoa!

Tracy: "Take me..." That's the "Take me off your list."

Alex: Oh, okay. Okay. All right. [Chuckles]



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- Tracy:** Yeah. Yeah. Not the people that gave me information about their house. If they go that far, then I'll follow-up with them. But, "Take me off your list," and things like that, I just mark them as bad and won't waste my time on them. But, any other seller that I have conversation with, they get a follow-up.
- Joe:** Right!
- Tracy:** They got a follow-up for six months.
- Alex:** Yeah. Do you have a "Take me off your list," "Do not call," "Do not mail," list that you stick to? Have you had problems with that if you like want to...?
- Tracy:** You know what? I don't take them... I don't take them off the list.
- Alex:** Oh. Huh! Ha! Ha! Have you had any problems with that?
- Tracy:** I haven't. And, I... People ask like, "How do you take the people off the list?" Well, I don't. And, my reasoning is... If I don't eat pizza, and Domino's sends me a coupon for their pizza...
- Joe:** [Laughs]
- Tracy:** And, I call them on the phone, and say, "Take me off your list!" They'll not go and take me off their list. They're going to keep me on their list.
- Alex:** But, are you sending like a personalized, "Hey, Tracy Caywood. I want to buy your house at 123 Main Street?"
- Tracy:** Yeah. Yeah. My mail is personalized with their name and address. But, a lot of direct mail companies personalize it. It has my name on it when I get the postcard. But, to answer your question, I've never had anybody... I don't know. Problems, I guess? What would someone do if I call my own list?



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- Alex:** Well. Actually, I think people haven't called the cops. Well, I haven't had the cops called on me. The worst I had... And, I did this the other day. I was like, "You know. I'm going to put my Better Business Bureau logo on my card, on my postcard to boost the response rate."
- Joe:** Oh! Uh-oh.
- Alex:** And, guess what?
- Tracy:** Yes. [Laughs]
- Alex:** Somebody did. They complained to the Better Business Bureau. [Laughs]
- Joe:** And that shows up in your complaint history, doesn't it?
- Alex:** I know! Even though it's taken care of and resolved, it shows up as a complaint and advertised, which isn't just.
- Tracy:** That's terrible! You can't make everybody happy. So, why try?
- Joe:** Wow!
- Alex:** Yeah. So, what do you think about that? With the Better Business Bureau logo? Would you take it off? Would you leave it there? I mean...
- Tracy:** [Laughs] I don't know if I remember. But, I'll probably take it off.
- Alex:** Oh! [Chuckles]
- Tracy:** And, I've had enough. I mean, I won't add it. That's crazy! That was the only place you could tell them too though, I guess.
- Alex:** Yeah!



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- Tracy:** So, it is... I don't know what to do. Call them BBB.
- Alex:** And, the first time I do it... [Laughs]
- Tracy:** [Laughs]
- Joe:** Yeah, I probably would take it off. I probably wouldn't leave it. That's crazy.
- Tracy:** Yeah, because...
- Alex:** So, you won't leave the BBB on there?
- Joe:** No, I would not.
- Alex:** Interesting!
- Joe:** You know, I don't think... Did you notice an increase in response rate?
- Alex:** I guess not. Really not. It was a different kind of mailing that I was trying. So, it would be hard to pit it against the other. But, it was a lot of homeowner on the rocks in there. So...
- Joe:** Yeah.
- Alex:** ...Not necessarily absentee. But, yeah. But, you got some interesting situation in there, Joe. [Chuckles]
- Joe:** With? Well, yeah. I don't talk about those. [Chuckles]
- Alex:** Oh, okay. All right. [Laughs]
- Tracy:** [Laughs]
- Joe:** [Laughs] I'll talk about those offline. But, yeah. It involves...



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Alex: Offline! I get it.

Joe: It involves getting letters from attorney generals.

Alex: Yeah! That's pretty out there.

Joe: Well, I wasn't even really alarmed. They just... The letter was just...

Alex: Alarmed?

Joe: "Hey, we got a complaint. What's going on?" That's all it was.

Alex: Yeah.

Joe: And, how did you get this list that you mail to? And... So, I just wrote a friendly two-paragraph letter back saying...

Alex: Hmm.

Joe: "I got this letter from public records of landlord to own properties. I'm an investor, and I'm looking to buy some properties." And, that's it. I never heard anything back from anybody. But, anytime they get a complaint, they have to investigate it.

Alex: Yeah.

Tracy: Uh-huh.

Joe: It doesn't matter how. I knew. I could tell it was a foreign letter. It was written by some assistant to an assistant. And... But, yeah. They had the...

Alex: You mean, get the big man. [Chuckles]

Joe: No, I didn't get the big man or woman. But, it was from...

Alex: Ha!



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- Joe:** You know, I have their letterhead. This was in two different states.
- Alex:** Wow!
- Joe:** And, the reason why is... We do a lot of marketing for other people so if you see that stuff... You know, it's funny. It was a bunch of mail from... The return address was my UPS store, okay?
- Alex:** No.
- Joe:** And, my UPS stores asked me to take their address off the postcards because they were getting flooded with calls. [Laughs]
- Alex:** Oh, no. [Chuckles]
- Tracy:** [Chuckles]
- Joe:** People were complaining about receiving my postcards and calling the UPS store, and saying, "Who is sending this postcard to me?" "I'm sorry, this is a UPS store. I have no idea." So, they asked to... What I actually did... I have two UPS stores. And, one of them is my own personal business. And, the other UPS store is the one we send the mail from. That's the return address. And, I told the guy when I signed up for the account. I said, "This is the problem I was having at the other UPS store." And he said, "Oh, I don't care. Don't worry about it." And so, yeah. We've been sending mail from that UPS store for six or eight months now. Quite a bit of it. So anyway, Tracy, you've been wholesaling houses a long time. There's not too many people that I've met who have been wholesaling houses since the late 90s.
- Tracy:** Yeah, I'm old.
- Joe:** Well, I didn't mean that way. No. No.
- Tracy:** No, I'm just kidding. [Laughs] I'm just kidding.



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Joe: You're experienced. You've seen it all. I could imagine...

Tracy: You're saying... Yeah.

Joe: I'm sorry. I was going to say, I could imagine there's not much you haven't seen. Been there. Done that.

Tracy: Well. You think that, until something crazy comes out.

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: But, anyway... Oh, man. I've never seen this before. But, yeah. I have probably been through one of every scenario imaginable. It's with people, and the properties, and titles, and scenarios. I definitely have seen... I've got some stories for sure.

Joe: Now Tracy, are you licensed?

Tracy: I am. And, I was going to mention that quick story too, because I have a licensed broker. I'm not accidentally in the realtor business though.

Joe: Okay.

Tracy: I just... I was when I... And, I got my license in '99. So, I thought that education would enrich my business. And, I did some traditional real estate using my license. I really use it until three years ago. I said, "It's just not worth it to me anymore. I make more money as an investor." And so, I kept my license. I'm a broker. I have my own office and I have many agents under me. I really just use it for MLS. I risked my contracts in the MLS, and I use it full comps. That's it. That's all I use my license for. But, along with that comes the... For the Department of Business and Professional Regulation and the Real Estate Commission. And, someone complained because I sent... The house was listed, which I didn't know. I don't prescreen all these direct mail addresses before they go out. But, it was listed with a realtor and I sent them a yellow letter. And, signed my name to it. And, they looked me up and discovered that I was licensed. And, they filed a formal



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complaint against me with FREC, the Federal State Commission for my letter. They filed. I was trying to get the listing from them.

Joe: Hmmm. Hmmm.

Tracy: You know what it says. You know, "I want to buy your house." They said it was all just a front. I was trying to give them a call so that I can get the listing. I've got the whole story on my website to read about. It's kind of funny. But... So, I had answered them. And, it was actually at that point when I call a legal hotline... We got a legal hotline for realtors. And asked, "Do I have to put on my letter?" And, I know this isn't going to apply on all 50 states. I know it's not going to. It's always a topic in the forums, and groups, and stuff. That, "Do I have to disclose to them that I'm a licensed realtor on my letters, my direct mail, where I'm acting as a principal and an investor?" And, I was told by the legal hotline for the realtors that, "No, I do not!"

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: That legally, I have to disclose that I'm a licensed real estate agent before I enter into a contract with the seller. I have to know...

Joe: Right!

Tracy: ...Before that. And, I mean in direct mail, I don't even have to use my name. I can say, "Hey, I want to buy your house. My name is Signet Danku. Direct mail was just to get a response. So anyway, that's... When I discovered that, "Maybe, they told me not." I don't know. But, it was a legal hotline for Florida realtors.org. They said, "No. You do not have to." If you're a principal in a transaction, and this is your business, you do not have to disclose that you're a licensed broker on the postcard.

Joe: Right! Honestly, you disclose it too, when you're talking to them.

Tracy: Yeah.



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- Joe:** Or, when you get it under contract. But, yeah. That's crazy. They'll get me started on realtors who do that kind of stuff.
- Tracy:** Yes! [Laughs]
- Alex:** [Laughs]
- Tracy:** Yeah. They'll keep me going. But, that was funny like... The consumer's complaint. And, the realtor's complaint. And, there's always somebody complaining. But...
- Joe:** Well, I had... I was talking to a president of the Real Estate Board. I would say which one? A president of a real estate... Local real estate board. And, this person was telling me that, if you've not been sued at least once a year as a realtor or complaint against... I'm sorry. She said, "If you've not have a complaint filed against you or being sued at least once a year as a Realtor, you've not been a Realtor long enough."
- Tracy:** [Laughs]
- Joe:** "And, you're not doing enough deals."
- Tracy:** Oh, my goodness. Well said.
- Joe:** That was from a president of a local real estate board.
- Tracy:** Oh, I think...
- Joe:** And, who you would think would follow everything according to the letter of the law? And, she does. But, that's just... You got to have thick skin in this business, whether you're a realtor or an investor.
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** And, it's sad. But, what's the worst that can happen? Because I see a lot of this with beginning investors. They get a threatening letter. They get a complaint, and they freak



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out. And, I can understand why. But really, what's the worst that can happen? They can... The law sometimes does say that if you're a broker without a license, you could spend six months in jail. But, that... I'm not saying that has never happened...

Alex: [Laughs]

Joe: But, the chances of that happening is really, really low. And usually, that only happens to like repeat offenders that have been totally obnoxious and doing it like over, and over, and over again, in your face.

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: But, it's usually just a slap on the wrist. It's a fine. Because, the people who are on those real estate commissions, they... Everybody who does a lot of deals gets complaints filed against them. It's just the nature of the beast. Would you agree with that, Tracy?

Tracy: Yeah. Absolutely. I haven't had one complaint per year. But, I've had my share. I mean, you can get complaint about every wrong thing you can think of. I mean, giving out a lockbox code. If I give you a lockbox code, I got a file complaint against me for that. One time, a vacant house that was an REO, the refrigerator went missing, and I had a contract on that one. And, I was flipping the contract, and because I had a contract on... I'm an investor and the refrigerator went missing, which I don't know where the hell the refrigerator went. They filed a complaint against me for that. So, I've had my share of sitting in front of the ethics board and all this stuff. And, I just kind of roll my eyes like, "Oh. This is so stupid."

Alex: You should've told them the Joe piece. Just say, "Hey, is your refrigerator running?"

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: [Laughs] I should've. That would have been great.

Alex: Close the door! [Laughs]



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Tracy: You know, I'm in a good icebreaker. "Is your refrigerator running? You got to go catch it."

Joe: [Laughs]

Alex: [Laughs]

Tracy: [Laughs] Oh, man.

Joe: So Tracy, some would say that's exactly why I don't want to get my license. Because, there's this stupid ethics board. I'm not saying... I'm sorry. I shouldn't say it's stupid...

Tracy: Yeah.

Alex: [Laughs] It's a wonderful ethics board.

Joe: But, sometimes what they investigate are what... Right! And, I think ethics are important obviously. But, I'm just saying. Some people would say, "That's why I don't want to get my license. Because, I don't want to have to answer to an ethics board like that." What do you say to that?

Tracy: Oh, you know what? I've pondered into this so many times in my life. And, I've said so many times, "Oh, forget them. I'm just going to let my license go. I don't need it." I mean, I really don't need it to continue doing what I'm doing. I don't think the ethics manual, whatever they call it, really stops people who are unethical. Whether you have license or not, just... It's really over the top with their rules. But, I don't know. I probably someday... Probably real soon. Will let my license go, and not use it. I really just keep it so I can... My assistant can put listings in the MLS. It's really a great exposure in getting the houses quickly.

Joe: Well, that's important... That's important too. I think. Because, I know... I've met a lot of guys who are wholesaling a lot of properties. And, they're starting to put them on the MLS. They get them under contract, and put them on the MLS. If you are your own broker...



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- Alex:** That's a great tool!
- Joe:** It's a great tool to find buyers. And, a lot of times, buyers from the MLS will pay more.
- Alex:** They always will. That's how it works.
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** So, if you are your own broker and you can list your own properties...
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** It just makes it a whole lot easier. Doesn't it?
- Tracy:** Yeah, it does. Because, it's also an orthodox the way you've been listing properties. So, to find a realtor that will do that for you. It's probably like pulling teeth, because they're... Most of them, not everybody knows that realtors are listening and not leaning for... I'm not calling anybody out in particular. But, in general, they're very traditional and have conventionalist ways of thinking, and just will not do that.
- Alex:** No! You can list a property as a contract to owner. There's a spot to check off on the MLS that this is a contract owner, right?
- Tracy:** Yup. It's right and ours. It says, "Equitable interest." You just check the box. Well, they don't know what that means. So, you usually have to give them a little seminar if they send you an offer. And, they've got the seller's name on the contract, because they did a lot of autofill and it pulls out of the tax records. And, you have to say, "No, you can change the name on the contract to this." And then, they want to know why. And so, you have to give them a mini-seminar. But, I usually don't have any problem with... I mean, I got one. Actually, it's closing on the 5th that she was totally cool with it. She's like, "Oh, okay. Well, send me... If you're signing the contract, then send me a copy of it. And, Let's..." She made the will and clause in the contract. So, she knew exactly what was going on. But, it's worth it if you're your own broker. Yes, because you don't have



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anybody to answer to except FREC. And as long as you're not breaking any other rules, then you'll be fine.

Joe: Right.

Alex: I do agree.

Joe: Tracy, we were talking a little bit about virtual assistants before in this podcast. Can you talk a little bit about how you're using virtual assistants right now?

Tracy: Oh my God! I love virtual assistants. I can't live without them. I started... I had my first virtual assistant in 2008. It was the first virtual assistant I ever have. I got him on oDesk. His name is Dindo. And, this is really when I want to start automating my business, and I didn't really know what I was doing yet. But, it was where it began. I hired Dindo just ago into the probate, because probates in Florida are public record. And, we don't have to go there manually and look them up, and put the stuff in the spreadsheet. That was about... It formally has... Duval County, maybe 125 or 150 probates every month. And man, I just got tired of doing that every month. That's with me and Dan, or sometimes we got our pair of kids to do it. So, we hired Dindo to do that every month, and just gave him a task, and said, "Here's the instructions." We even did a video to show them exactly where to get the information. And, just start pulling the list every month and e-mail it to us the first week of the month, every single month. So, we started getting our probate lists on for us automatically. And, that's when the light bulb came on. I was like, "Holy shhh! This is crazy."

Alex: [Laughs] Well, that's the best feeling when you wake up in the morning. And, you look at that e-mail and everything's listed right there. And, you're just like, "Wow! This will be taking me so long to do!" [Laughs]

Tracy: Yeah. He was charging us like \$3 bucks an hour. He still works for us. He's still my VA. I still have Dindo. So, he's been around since 2008. But, I now have four VAs in total. I have Arif, who... These are all... They're all not in the United States obviously. Arif...



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Alex: Arv? Arv like A-R-V? Like A-R-V? [Laughs]

Tracy: Oh my God! That would be so cool! But, it's A-R-I-F. Arif. [Laughs]

Alex: Oh! [Laughs]

Tracy: I'm going to change his name on Skype to Arv. But, it is Arif. So, he's like a data extractor. I don't buy any of my lists. I build them through public records and things. So, it's lot of manual stuff. I just don't like to buy lists that a lot of people can get. I do a little bit of work to get them. So, he's like a data extractor. He has a little software script that can pull data from the probate website. And, he gets my quitclaim deeds and eviction. So, he just extracts this data. And then, sends it over to Dindo. Dindo builds the Excel spreadsheets and gets them all ready to mail. Like for Click2Mail, he formats them properly. And then, once they're all done, he sends them over to Ezra. She's my main VA. She's my full-time VA. And then, she files them away in Google Drive. And once, she's planning for mailing. So, she'll upload them to Click2Mail, schedule the mailings. Enter them in Zoho, in our campaign tracker, and set the follow-ups to be sent out. So, it's really a great system. It's very well-oiled. And, the marketing was just done every single month. We just... Because we're carbon copying all the email, we know it's getting done.

Joe: Yeah. Tracy, you mentioned some of the list that you mailed to. It sounds like you don't mail to the same list that everybody else is mailing to. Am I right?

Tracy: Yeah. I try not to. Like, I hate... I don't want to use the word "hate." But, I dislike absentee owners only because they're easy to get, and everybody mails to them. So, I like to go to the opposite direction of the herd.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: And, have a little least amount of competition as possible. Though you know, I always still have competition because there's only so many list that you can mail to.



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Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: And, they're only this many. And, you just have to pick and choose which ones you want. So, I don't mail the absentee owners just because it's so big. I instead, like small lists that I can mail to six times, and still stay within my marketing budget, and know that in six months, this is going to make me some money. So, I've mailed to evictions... Quitclaim deeds, which I kind of... I don't know. I don't want to say I stumbled on. They're kind of stumbled on. I kept hearing the word, "quitclaim deed," as I was talking to the sellers. And like, "You know what? I'm just going to mail quitclaim deeds." Because, we don't know what's going on at quitclaim deeds. We just know that that was a transfer of the property, but we don't know why. So, I started mailing to them. And, the story is... Of quitclaim deeds is very diversifying. If you look at what the reasons are for getting quitclaim deeds in these properties, there's a lot of motivated sellers in there.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: You know, a private lender that just took the house back for a quitclaim deed. They want to try to recap some cash. Or, older people who are going to nursing homes don't want probate issues. They quitclaim it to their kids. It's just so many different stories. So, I really like quitclaim deeds. That's one of my favorite. I've been doing that for about a year and a half now. And, I know a lot of people are kind of following suit with that. But, I love it!

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: Quitclaim deeds are awesome! Tax liens is one. And then, we still do the code enforcement lists. And probates, which is really competitive. I'm thinking about abandoning that after looking at my campaign. I was looking at it yesterday. I'm like, "Ummm..." Probates are... There's not very many of them. And, I don't know. They're just so competitive. Everybody's talking about probates. Online, it's a big topic. So, I kind of want to... Everybody sends them a yellow letter, and talk about their house.



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- Alex:** It has become the new absentee.
- Tracy:** Yeah! When you go to their house, there's like five letters sitting on the counter like, "Oh man, this is not good." [Chuckles]
- Joe:** But you know, what's interesting is... I took a look at all of the deals we did. This was a few months ago. I looked at all of the deals that we did in the previous six months. And, we tried to mail all of those special lists as well. But, most of my deals came from the regular, old-fashioned absentee owner list.
- Tracy:** Yes.
- Joe:** And, I was totally shocked by that. Because, it is true that most... The type of owner that's most likely to be motivated is a landlord, right?
- Tracy:** Yes.
- Joe:** Because, either they inherited the property or they bought it, thinking that if they would rent it, they would be rich. And, they find out the realities that it's hard to make money owning rentals and it kind of sucks. So, if you did them at the right time, you could probably get a deal from them. But, the problem is, you're competing against three or four other investors at the same time. But, it is... I kind of have a love-hate relationship with the list myself as well.
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** I think if you're doing enough marketing, you should market to those smaller lists. But, don't ignore the absentee lists. That's what I'm telling people these days.
- Tracy:** Yeah. Maybe, I'll... I haven't mailed the absentee in probably six years since I've mailed on many. I'll give it a try. I know people make money from it. I say, "Don't disregard it," because I do. I'm not... There's more than one way to make money here. But...



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- Joe:** Yeah. How about this? Think about this. Most people, when they're pulling absentee owner lists, will try to pull up absentee owners who have equity.
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** Or, who bought the property over 10 years ago, right?
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** So, why not target absentee owners that bought the house between 2008 and 2012? And, why would you do that? That's kind of what I've been doing a lot of lately. It's because of a couple of reasons. Number one, if it was an absentee owner, and they've bought between that time, they probably paid cash. Because, banks were not really hard to... Banks were just not lending to investors between those years.
- Tracy:** Yeah. Yeah.
- Joe:** And so, if they bought it, they paid cash. But, the chances of other investor mailing to them is very slim. So, I have a lot less competition on those newer absentee owners.
- Tracy:** Hmmm.
- Joe:** Something that you might think about.
- Tracy:** That's true. Because, I also know a statistic that in those years, it was like 35% of all transactions were cash.
- Joe:** Uh-huh.
- Tracy:** And, not just investors. But, owner occupants too. When... 2008, 2012. So, hmmm... Something to think about.
- Joe:** Well, now. With you in Florida too, do you exclude condos? Or, are you mailing to condos?



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Tracy: Yeah. I don't mail to condos.

Joe: Okay. You don't see... Do you see any kind of resurgence, or any kind of interest coming back to the condos in Florida?

Tracy: Absolutely!

Joe: Hmm.

Tracy: I just... Everybody has their thing. Everybody has their niche that they get in. Yeah! I mean, condos are big here. Because, it's a snowbird state. So, I just don't... I don't mail to them. I don't mail to condos. I don't mail to LLCs, Trusts. Anybody that looks like an investor, I don't want to buy the houses from the investors. Unless, they come up in my quitclaim deeds. So, I just have a... My criteria are pretty hammered down, and that's what I stick to. But, I do eliminate condos.

Joe: Okay. Tracy, what have you found to be...? And, we sure appreciate you sharing all this stuff with us. What do you find to be like your average conversions or your numbers like? How many postcards do you need to send out to a deal? Or, how many leads do you need to get a deal? Do you look at those numbers?

Tracy: Oh my God! Yes. Because it's the end of the year, we just pulled all this stuff up yesterday. And luckily, Zoho has all the numbers. So, that's really easy for us. In 2014, it's about the same every year. The numbers with us... It's always about the same. I had to spend \$571 to get a deal. It costs me... Well, let's say, every time the phone rings, I make \$180, whether it is a deal or not.

Joe: Wow!

Tracy: Just every time the phone rings. Every lead that calls in, we just took the profit to, "Do I have to buy the number of phone calls we got?" etc. How much is every phone call worth? Because, you get frustrated if, "Will all of this people call?" And, where's my numbers? How many liens it took? It took 52 leads to get one deal this year.



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- Joe:** That's pretty good, still. But, what is a lead for you? Is that a hang up?
- Tracy:** No. No. No. Somebody has left that information.
- Joe:** So, do your postcards drive into a 24-hour recorded message? Or, do you answer the phones?
- Tracy:** Oh, hell no! They go straight to PATLive.
- Joe:** Okay.
- Tracy:** Everything goes to PATLive.
- Joe:** So, everybody who calls pretty much gets to a PATLive operator?
- Tracy:** Yes.
- Joe:** Okay.
- Tracy:** And then, they enter that lead information into Zoho. So then, I can get enough lead information captured even if it's a hang up. But, I delete hang ups. Because, I don't really want them. You know, count this lead in my numbers. But, I don't really want to. So, I just delete those.
- Alex:** Did you hear my introduction, Tracy? [Chuckles]
- Tracy:** What? What was that?
- Alex:** It was a VA going back and calling those hang ups. You just never know. She closed out two deals that were close to six figures. [Laughs]
- Tracy:** I wrote that down.
- Alex:** You got to call them.



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Tracy: Yeah, not to delete the hang ups.

Joe: Well, you can still pull that information up to, I imagine...

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: From your call records. But...

Tracy: Yes.

Joe: That's something I have my VAs do as well. And, I also have my VAs send a text message whenever they call somebody back, and they get a voicemail. My VAs will send them a text message as well.

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: "Hey, I just like your voicemail. Do you have a house that you want to sell?" But, I'm... Yeah, that's funny. I don't like calling the hang ups either. That's why I have somebody else do it.

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: But, I do have my VAs do it. And, be consistently doing deals from it. It could be three months later. It could be... One of the things we do too is we send text messages out, like once every month, once every couple of months. We send out a text message to everybody who called and hung up.

Tracy: What service do you use for that?

Joe: We use a couple of different services. One of them I can't recommend, because it's a huge pain in the butt to get them to let you do it. So, maybe offline, I could tell you. But, it's just one of those... Just be prepared for...

Tracy: Some bad?



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Joe: ...A big pain in the butt. But, I know some people use CallFire for that.

Tracy: Okay.

Joe: And, one of the things I started doing... Because, Google Voice is making it really difficult for people to send the same text message over and over again. For obvious reasons, right?

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: So, one of the things I started doing is... I did... I bought an Android phone, a cheap Android phone. And, I signed up for some prepaid calling plan from Cricket, which is a kind of a cheaper lower-end Internet or phone service.

Tracy: Uh-huh.

Joe: And, it has unlimited texting. And then, I went to MightyText.net. MightyText.net. And basically, it lets us send and receive text messages from our browser through that phone. And so, I just... I bought the phone. I connected it to MightyText.net through a Gmail account. And then, just basically turn the phone off, and gave the username and password to MightyText to my VA in the Philippines. My VA in the Philippines just sends text messages through MightyText.net for me. And, it comes into the browser to come like an inbox. And, they can then put any leads back into Podio for me. So, they only put the positive responses from Podio. Oh, from MightyText into Podio with the person's information.

Tracy: Hmm. That's...

Joe: So anyway, I also wanted to ask you Tracy about Internet marketing. You mentioned that before. Are you doing pay per click driving traffic to your...? Driving traffic into your websites, things like that?

Tracy: I don't. I don't do any pay per click advertising. I'm fortunate to have organic traffic to my website. I don't get a helmet on the leads from it. Maybe, 10 a month. But I started



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that... We buy in jax.com website. Gosh! A long time ago, maybe 10 years old. So, I have a little bit of ranking authority with Google. And... So, I get organic traffic. Therefore, a lot of different search terms. So, I think what keeps me going there is... Not just trying to use "We buy houses in Jacksonville." You know, I use Google Analytics a lot to analyze what people are searching for. And, the keyword tool that Google lets you use for free. So, if I see people searching for, "How to sell my house out of probate?" then, I write a blog entry for, "How to sell my house out of probate?" And now, I have those long-tail keywords on my website. And, I'm going to get indexed for that particular phrase that people are searching for. So, I do that quite often. So, those key phrases keep me up in the search engines. And, it's really a good strategy to use something other than, "We buy houses in Jacksonville." Because, that's where all the investors are. They are competing after that keyword. And, if you check Google Analytics, you will see that sellers don't really search for that keyword. They don't search for that phrase.

Joe: Right!

Tracy: They we're looking for answers to problems. So, if you think like a seller. And, if I have a house to sell, and I wanted to sell it quickly, what will I search for? I mean, they do go to Google. Everybody goes to Google, and looks for answers to all of their problems. That's... They don't start typing in, "We buy houses in Jacksonville," or "We buy houses in Denver," whatever it is. That's not their mindset. They're, "How to sell the house quickly?", "How to sell the house fast?", "Sell my house for cash," "Sell my house that needs work," "Sell my house that needs repair." So, all of these, "Think like a seller" key phrases do better than come, and more on that everybody tries to go after.

Joe: Right! Right!

Tracy: I mean, I do get, "We buy houses in Jacksonville" searches on my websites. I don't know if that's sellers or not. You can't tell. I can just see that they're searching for that. And then, I can tell what keywords are converting as far as to who's filling out my seller forms. And, "We buy houses in Jacksonville" is not one of the key... Long-tail key phrases that are in the top of my conversions.



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Joe: Okay. So, I want to ask you another question about looking at houses. Do you actually still go look at houses, meet the sellers, negotiate in person? Or, are you trying to do deals over the phone?

Tracy: I do not go look at houses. I have a property inspector. He's not a bonafide licensed property inspector. Like, one a realtor may use. He's just a normal person, who I've trained what to look for. I have a property inspection sheet that he fills out, and answers all the questions that I want to know about the house. And then, he takes... I have a giant checklist of photos. So, he takes all the photos for me, and fills out my property inspection sheet. It actually calculates a rehab cost. And, I actually created this form. It's very... It's a killer. Like, wholesalers have a hard time estimating repairs as if they're not in the rehab business.

Joe: Yeah. True.

Tracy: So, I took a survey on wholesalers and rehabbers. I didn't really ask who was who. So, I got about 100 responses. How much everything costs? How much windows cost? The Century Heat and Air, and flooring and tile, and new kitchen, and all these. Roofs, etc. I built a spreadsheet that, as you're doing the property inspection, all you do is answer the question. Like, do you see any large stains on the ceiling? Does it need a new carpet? Does it need new paint? So, you're just asking these very simple questions. And, in the background, it's calculating a repair cost for us.

Joe: Nice!

Alex: Nice!

Tracy: So, my property inspector goes out and does that for me, and takes photos. He uploads them to Dropbox. And then, he's also a user in Zoho. So, once he's done, he marks the tasks as complete. And, I get a notification. I can go in, and look at the property inspection, and check out the photos. And then, I will call and negotiate the deal over the phone. Every once in a while, I'll go out there right now. If I'm talking to him on the phone and I sense some urgency, then I'll skip the property inspection, assignment task



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altogether. And, I just go there myself. If I feel like, "I want to sell this house today. I'm ready to get rid of this pain in my ass," I'll go right now. But, that is not usually the case. I'll just set the inspection up for tomorrow. I have a link to his calendar. I put it in there. It's automatically booked in between certain times, and he goes and does the tasks for me.

Joe: Yeah! That's nice that you have that stuff. You got somebody to do that for you. And, a property inspector is a great idea to do that. When do you go and look at a house? And, when do you not?

Alex: Well, basically the way I have it set up right now is... I work with a group of Realtors that I can counterbalance listings back and forth with. And in turn, they act as my acquisitions managers. So, if I... And usually, what I give them is... If I have to go out there and have any part in the negotiation of a deal... But, if they went out there, and I just have an overview of the wholesale. If they do everything from the call, to the work, to the appointment, and all that stuff, I'll give them 20%. But, if I feel it's a slamdunk and it looks easy, I might just go out there myself. But, a lot of times, I just hand it off to the realtor and say, "Okay, you go out there. Give him a song and dance. And, see if this going to be more of a listing. Or, if we can get this for the right price." And, they go out there. They take pictures. They do the whole mine. And then, I just pay them a percentage.

Joe: Yeah!

Tracy: Yeah. That's good that you have a Realtor that's doing the listing and negotiating the deal. How do you find? How do you pre-qualify or determine the realtors that are good enough to do that?

Alex: Well. I mean, that just takes time. I'm working with different people. The realtor that I work with now... The realtor that's on this side of things, I should say... He used to be one of the buyers for one of the national companies. Well, not national. They're probably in three different states around here. And, he was a buyer for me, and I actually used to wholesale stuff to him through that company. So, he used to be the



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buyer that will go out, and take pictures, and take rehab estimates, and everything like that. I mean, that was his salary job. So, that's... To get somebody like that, it may be hard to find. But, that's a problem that I'm working with. We want somebody though that maybe has... Well. I mean, that's a hard thing. We could probably get somebody from the beginning and kind of train them as if they were your own. You know, if they're just starting out in the business. But, find somebody seasoned, who's already successful. They're usually probably not going to do that for you. [Chuckles] So, it's just some trial and error, like finding a good VA.

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: Tracy, you've been so gracious with your time. I know we're already over longer than what we told you that we would be. People can find you in Facebook. Your main website is PropertyMob.com. Is that right?

Tracy: Yes.

Joe: And, you do some coaching as well too. Tell me a little bit about your coaching program. Or, do you still do coaching?

Tracy: Yup. I still do coaching. My main focus is to help people automate their business. So, I have a 90-day automation workshop where I'll spend 12 weeks with you implementing and automating... Implementing technology and virtual assistants to automate your business. So that, you're only really only working four to five hours a week.

Joe: Nice. Nice.

Tracy: It's a lot of work initially, in the first 12 weeks. Getting everything set up, and learning how to make the system run for you. But, I had good success with the people that have been through the workshop. They're very happy with it. And also, I have some... I train virtual assistants for real estate investors specifically, and I have them available too.

Joe: Wow! Really?



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Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: So, your 90-day automation workshop... Is that? Are those prerecorded videos that you've done?

Tracy: No. I actually get on live. So, we meet once a week. The next one I have coming up starts on January 26. But, I actually get on... We do GoToMeeting video and it's a live call. And, we... I have a group of five. I take five at a time.

Joe: Nice.

Tracy: I actually go through the course material. And then, I get back online on Thursday for any questions. So, you have Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to implement. And then, if you get stuck or any help with something, then I'm back online Thursday for an hour to answer questions again live. That usually just kind of turns into a Mastermind kind of call. We answer those questions in the beginning. And then, we just talk about other stuff for the rest of the time. So, it's great. I mean, if you really want to automate your business and stop being self-employed, and become a business owner instead, that's the pivotal turn. It's realizing that there's a lot of stuff you got to do to be a wholesaler.

Joe: And, you teach Zoho in that workshop as well, right?

Tracy: Yeah, it's really the backbone of the automation. It's on the automatic workflows, I mean. Keeping everything organized is definitely a big part of it.

Joe: Right!

Tracy: So, yeah.

Joe: And Zoho is a good product. I've always loved... Not always. But, in the last year or so, I've been a huge Podio fan. But, I've looked to Zoho as well, and it is a good product. It really does everything you needed to do. It's just a matter of style or preference.

Tracy: Sure.



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Joe: The fact is, you got to use something. You can't... I operate in the philosophy, and I bowl this phrase from Todd Toback, "No lead left behind." Right? You can't...

Tracy: Oh! That's good. [Laughs]

Joe: You can't let your leads fall through the cracks. And, you need to have something like Zoho or Podio to do that for you. And, maybe it's a Google Spreadsheet. But, start off with something.

Tracy: Yeah.

Joe: And, try to get away from the yellow pads, and paper, and Post-it notes as soon as possible. [Chuckles]

Tracy: I can't even tell you how many leads I've lost before out of Zoho. From losing somebody's phone number, or losing their name, I'm like, "Oh, man. I know it's just in the column bag, and I can't find it." So, it's definitely can... I mean, you can lose a \$30,000 lead.

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: You don't know until the deal transpires, and you get to the closing table. So, you definitely need something, whether it's Zoho or Podio or the F word? [Laughs]

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: I won't say it. The F word. But, whatever it is. I mean, you got to be using something. That's for sure. And, if you're serious, then you got to have a CRM. You got to have one. And, use it. Not just have it, but use it.

Alex: After you're getting leads, you're going to use it. [Laughs]

Tracy: Well, I don't know. Some people that have my Zoho CRM, I ask him. I'm just talking to him yesterday. And, I ask like, "How many deals did you close this year?" He was like, "I



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don't know." Like... "Well, look in Zoho, it will tell you." He was like, "Well, once you get to a certain point, and I convert it over to a contract, I don't track anything else after that." So...

Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: That's not using it fully. So, you just got to use it. It has to become a habit. That's for sure.

Joe: Well, good Tracy. The website to get a hold of you, is it PropertyMob? M-O-B as in boy, dot com. Is that right?

Tracy: Yes.

Joe: Cool! PropertyMob.com. And, you're also very active in Alex's Facebook group, "Wholesaling Houses Full Time." So, if any of you guys are looking for a good group to get involved with, just go to Facebook. Do a search for "Wholesaling Houses Full Time," and you'll find Alex's page there. I think you're one of the biggest active groups on Facebook. Aren't you, Alex?

Tracy: Oh, shucks!

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: [Laughs] I think so too. You get invited to all these groups, and people just add you to their groups all the time. And Alex, you definitely have the biggest and most active group out there. I love that group. It's entertaining, at least. [Laughs]

Alex: Yes!

Joe: I love that group. It's... I think any question that you need answered is there. If it's not there, you can use the search button, and it's there. And if not, just ask. Somebody will answer it.



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- Alex:** It has become its own search engine. It's crazy [Chuckles]
- Tracy:** Yeah.
- Joe:** I just wish Facebook would change the rules and stop letting people invite you, or add you automatically into their group.
- Alex:** Oh, yeah.
- Joe:** I don't know how many groups I'm a part of now. Like, 50 at least, maybe more or hundred. But, it's...
- Tracy:** I think you can change that setting in your own privacy settings. You can tell it, I think. I'm not 100% sure. But I think, it will say, "Don't add me," or "Don't let people add me to groups." Or, send me Candy Crush.
- Joe:** Ah! I know, I've done that already.
- Tracy:** [Laughs]
- Joe:** I mean, all of those games, I've turned off notifications. But Tracy, do you go to Bigger Pockets much yourself? What do you do on there?
- Tracy:** Ah, once in a while. Yeah, every once in a while, I'll pop in over there and see what's going on. But, I'm kind of stuck in the Facebook world.
- Joe:** Now, with Facebook though, I go through these love-hate relationships with Facebook. Because, it's such a time suck. I'm like, "I spare it. I just wasted half an hour to an hour reading stupid things from people." So then, I shut it off completely for a while. And then, I go back into it. How do you still like the productive and be as active as you are in Facebook?
- Tracy:** Time blocking.



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Joe: Yeah.

Tracy: I mean, I have Facebook on my phone, and stuff. I don't... It seems like I spend a lot of time on Facebook because I'm active in there. But, I really... Like I said, I have to start measuring my time. I might need to cook back a little bit. I'm going to have a problem.

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: But, really. I mean, for like answering questions, and networking, and talking to other people, which I think is really important.

Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

Tracy: I mean, I like to go there and answer questions, and engage in conversations. I usually do that at night when my day is over. Not always. But, it's just limiting. I don't really post a lot of personal stuff.

Joe: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Tracy: So, I'm really only in there in the groups. And, I've got a secret Facebook page for my members. And, I do spend some time in there answering their questions and reading their feeds. But, it's a time suck. That's for sure. But, something got to chew it up.

Joe: [Laughs]

Tracy: It's entertainment. I mean, you got to look at it as entertainment, a constant form. It's just that entertainment drip.

Joe: It's also an investment. Because, you're getting a lot of traffic to your Property Mob website from that. I imagine.

Tracy: Yeah. I mean, If I'm looking at my conversions and traffic... Yeah, a lot of it comes from Facebook.



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- Joe:** Good. Well. All right, Tracy. Thank you so much for being on the show. If people want to get a hold of you, they can go to PropertyMob.com. And, that will be in the show notes. Is that the best way to get a hold of you?
- Tracy:** Yeah, it is. Or, I'm on Facebook. [Laughs]
- Joe:** Yeah.
- Tracy:** I'm on Facebook too.
- Joe:** Good. Well...
- Tracy:** Thanks for having me. I appreciate it. That was fun.
- Alex:** Great call. Great call.
- Joe:** Yeah. It was fun, Tracy. It's been a great call. Thanks Alex. And, I hope you guys have a Happy Merry New Year. As we record this, it's a day or two away from New Year. So...
- Alex:** Wonderful day!
- Joe:** I'm looking forward to 2015.
- Tracy:** Me too!
- Alex:** It's going to be a good year.
- Joe:** It is. All right everybody.
- Tracy:** My light is full.
- Joe:** Yeah. [Chuckles] All right, RealEstateInvestingMastery.com. You'll get the show notes from this podcast with Tracy. You can get her information at PropertyMob.com. And, I look forward to next year, guys, and we'll see you later! Thanks Alex! Thanks Tracy!



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Tracy: Thanks guys.

Alex: Thanks Joe. Thanks Tracy.

Joe: Buh-bye.