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Pres. message: Networking, it's all about your business

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I am often asked why I spend so much time as a volunteer with so many civic and business groups. Well...it really is all about the networking. I use networking as my primary source of marketing, and I'm suggesting that if you don't already, that you try it soon! Consistent networking has allowed me to not have to make a "cold call" in more than five years. For example, I am on the board of directors of my local residential Board of Realtors and get two to three referrals a week from residential practitioners. I am also actively involved in the Massachusetts Association of Realtors which provides me with a great source of referrals from all over Massachusetts, many of which I refer to commercial Realtors in other parts of the state.

Other ways of networking involve obtaining national designations like CCIM, SIOR, and CRE. I also obtain referrals from all around the country through these organizations. Networking groups like Business Networking International (BNI) are other good sources of leads. I have had many great referrals and closed many deals through these, more local, groups. Your local chamber of commerce is another great source of referrals for your commercial business.

However, all that being said, picking the right organizations and using your time wisely, is a key element. You can overextend yourself very easily, if you're not careful. Remember, time is an infinite resource, and you must schedule it wisely.

One of the most gratifying feelings is getting a referral and satisfying both the client and the person that gave you the referral in the first place. That creates a tremendous amount of goodwill and snowballs into many more referrals. Over the years, the dues I pay and the time I spend in these groups have been my marketing budget, and it has never let me down. So, if you're willing to put in the time, and the investment, you too can reap the rewards of networking, especially in the economic climate of today.

Sandy Brown, CCIM, CBR, RECS, is president of REALTORS Commercial Alliance of Chelmsford, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540