

What are successful loan originators doing?

A survey report by Loan Officer Hub & MGIC



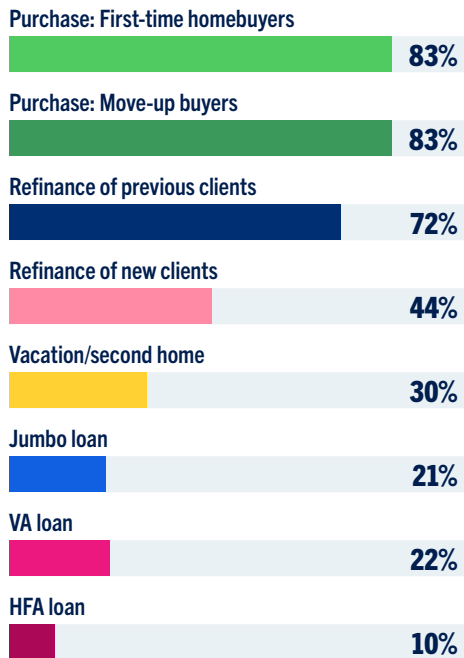
This survey was conducted in October 2021, as the frenzy of an incredibly competitive housing market finally began to wane. While interest rates rebounded slightly from all-time lows in December 2020 and January 2021, the housing market remained very strong. Low inventory and high demand led to bidding wars and soaring prices – all against the backdrop of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

Amid all that, 101 loan originators took the time to give us their insights on marketing, referral partners, challenges and goals. You may be surprised at some of their answers, especially compared with the results of our [2021 survey report](#).

While market trends can have a huge impact on how originators allocate their time and attention, one thing is clear: **successful loan officers know how to adapt and grow.**

How loan officers use marketing and social media

Most loan officers focused their marketing efforts on new purchases and refinances.



Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Insights

Compared to the survey conducted one year ago, refinances of previous and new clients climbed 10-20 percentage points, perhaps reflecting the refinance boom of early 2021.

"I keep in touch with the generations. I just refinanced the dad and am doing a purchase loan for the son. It's important to build trust with existing clientele and not be transactional!"

Relationships matter. Over 92% of respondents chose word of mouth as a successful marketing medium.

The top 3 marketing mediums



Other marketing mediums

- 19% Postcards or mailings
- 8% Radio
- 6% Billboard
- 6% Paid online ads
- 3% TV

Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Social media is important for some...and irrelevant for others.

44% of loan officers listed social media as a successful marketing medium, and 23% said it was an effective way to build relationships with real estate agents. Yet 33% said they never use social media at all.

Most effective social media platforms for loan officers

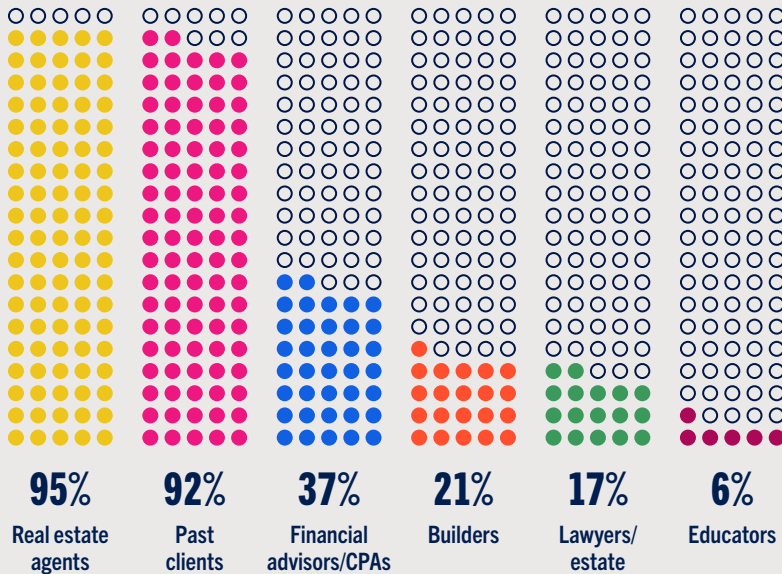


Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Loan officers and referral partners

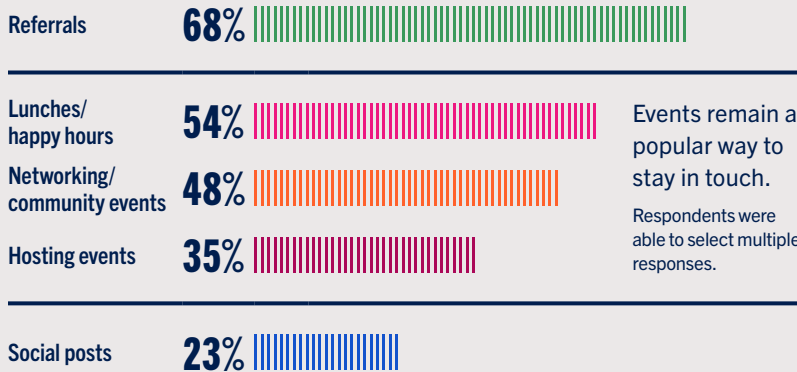
Loan officers say real estate agents and past clients are their best source for generating referrals.

Top referral sources

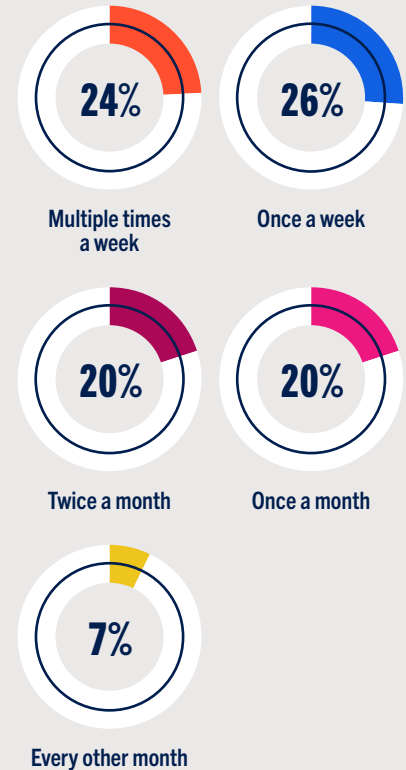


Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

How loan officers build relationships with real estate agents



Top LOs frequently stay in touch with their best referral partners



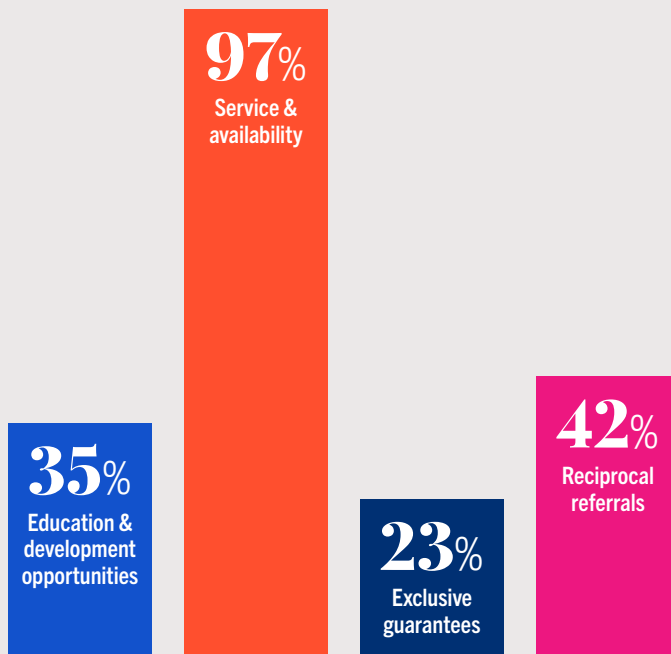
Insights

This year only 24% of respondents said they keep in touch multiple times a week, compared to 60% last year – perhaps due to high volume.

“I sit on the committee for my local Association of REALTORS® that welcomes new agents. It gives me a chance to meet with new real estate agents right away and be among the first bankers they encounter. It’s so much easier to make bonds with new agents – some will drop out, but others will become loyal referral partners.”

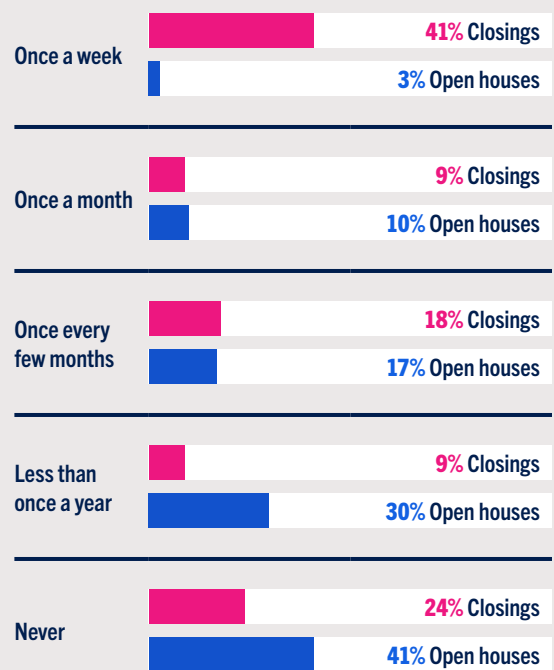
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What loan officers feel provides the most value to real estate agent referral partners



Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

How often loan officers attend closings and open houses



"LOs have started to go to closings again but I have been slow to get back to them. Instead, I send a little congratulatory video through BombBomb™ to the borrowers and the real estate agent."

BombBomb is a trademark of BombBomb LLC.

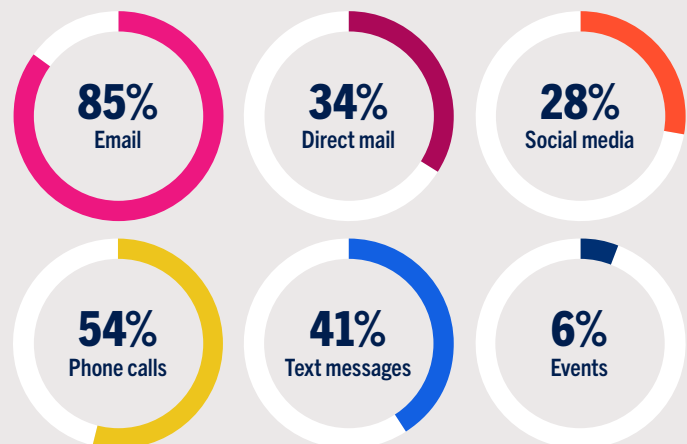
Communicating with borrowers

Top 3 most effective methods



"I'm old-fashioned – I like to see someone and shake their hand. But over the years my interview style has changed, and now I give everyone the option to communicate based on their preference."

Loan officers use a variety of communication methods to re-engage with previous clients



Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

The current moment and the path ahead

The challenges of 2021

The continuing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic combined with historically low interest rates and a lack of housing inventory led to unique circumstances for loan originators this year.

Originators listed a variety of factors when asked about the biggest challenges they faced, but several themes did emerge.

- Timely appraisals
- Lack of inventory
- Keeping up with volume
- Not being able to meet consumers, referral partners and colleagues face to face

“I am busier this month than I have ever been in November. I’m not seeing over-asking bids, and homes are maybe sitting on the market for 5 days instead of 5 hours, but volume is still super high.”

“Our whole industry, post-COVID, will need to have more of a digital presence. We’re all on the precipice of change.”

73% say managing their pipeline requires most of their time on a weekly basis

Areas causing the most delays in pipeline

37% Receiving documentation

31% Appraisal

26% Not a significant issue

10% Processing

5% Underwriting

Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Insights

Appraisal delays were a hot topic in survey comments across multiple questions, pointing to the significant challenges lenders faced this year.

Trends that impacted loan officers in 2021

62%

Online application/
documentation

54%

Virtual vs. in-person
connection

45%

Appraisal value

10%

Virtual notaries

13%

E-closings

Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

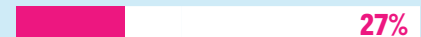
Planning for 2022

Biggest challenge in creating a business plan

Finding the time



Predicting the market and keeping up with market trends



Not applicable



Define goals



2022 business plans focus on the basics

- Growth
- Improving the customer experience
- Referral partner development

Successful loan officers are always developing their skills

Ways that LOs continually improve

Mentor



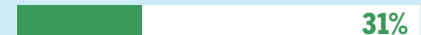
Talking with peers



Industry news



Industry podcasts



Classes (in person and online)



Conferences



Respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Who are these successful loan officers?

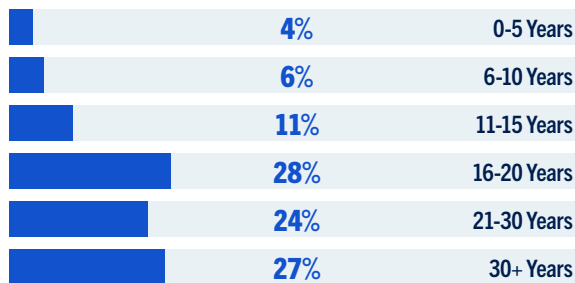
Demographics of survey respondents

Surveyed LOs reported working in large mortgage banks that employ between 200 to 5,000 people. The majority (80%) have a team that works for them. 90% of the respondents have been loan officers for 11 years or more. The largest percent of respondents (38%) are age 50-59.

Employer type



Years as a loan officer



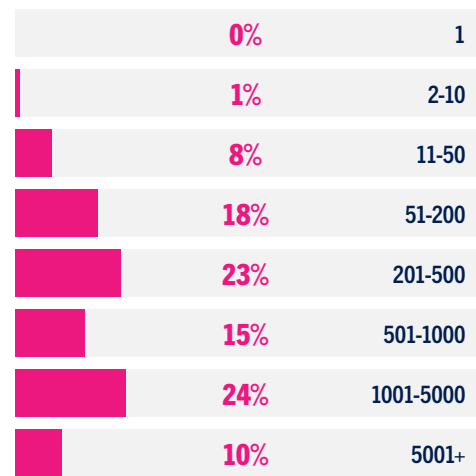
Number of people on team



Respondents' ages



Number of employees at company



Special thanks to Tonia Butkovic, Terrence Seawell, Nyra Miller and Stephanie Matthews for providing personal comments in follow-up conversations.



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