



Survey Results: Online Networking and Referrals

A survey of luxury agents on their use of and attitudes towards
online social networking

1/20/09

The Institute for Luxury Home Marketing
1409 S. Lamar, Suite 215
Dallas TX 75215
(214) 485-3000
www.luxuryhomemarketing.com

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Summary of Key Findings

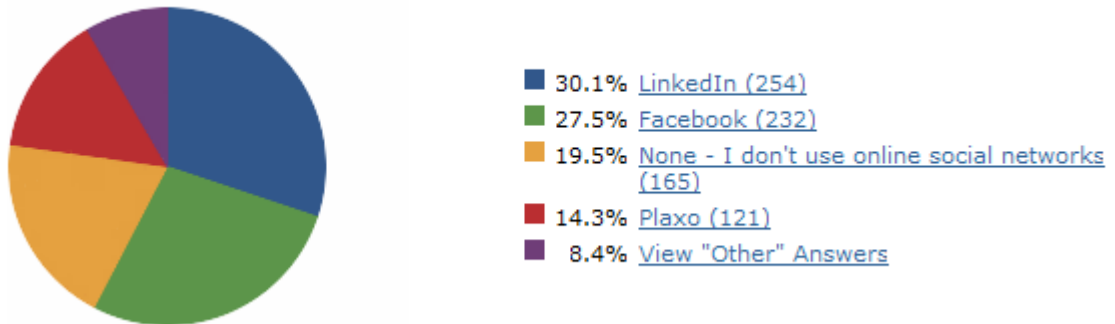
- More than **80%** of respondents are using social networks in some way.
- About **20%** report having given or received a referral or otherwise generated business via social networks.
- **58%** of respondents are on LinkedIn, Facebook, or both—making them the two most popular networks by far, with an almost even split of respondents on each.
- Very few real estate specific social networks were mentioned, though *Active Rain* was by far the most frequently cited with 3.4% indicating usage.
- Among respondents who indicated that they have generated business via social networks there was a preference for LinkedIn when faced with the choice of a single network for our Member networking group (49% LinkedIn vs. 37.7% Facebook).

Survey Results

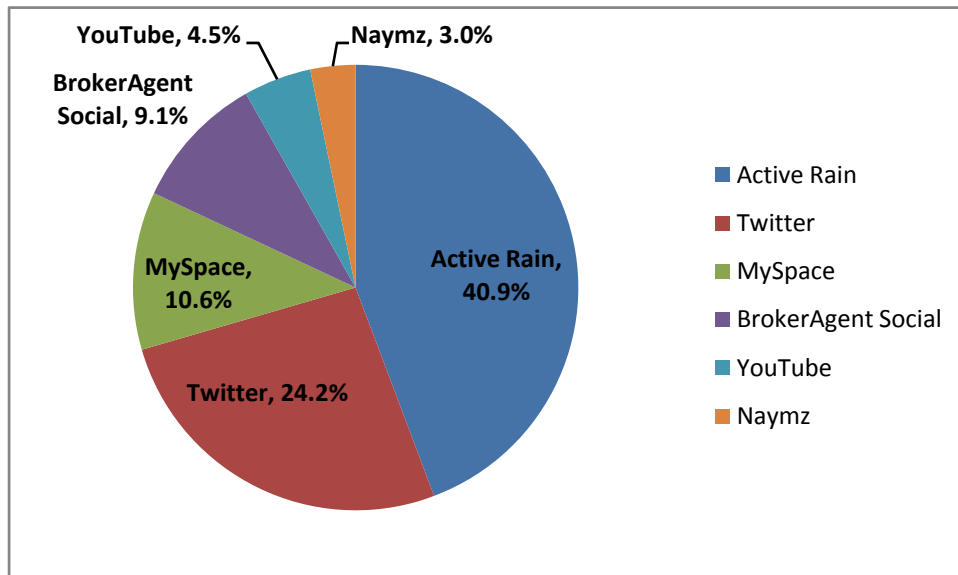
There were seven questions in the survey.
The results are summarized below with comments.

Question 1

1. Which social networking websites do you use?



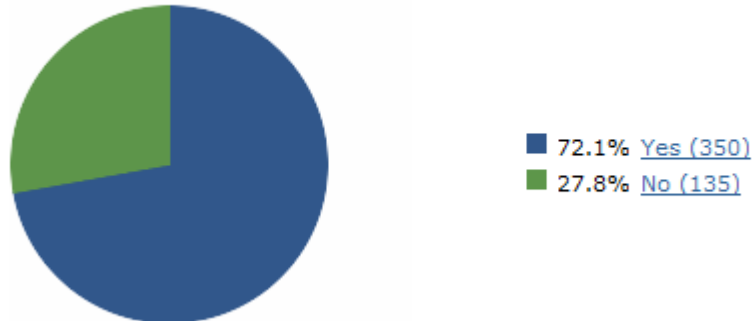
80.5% of respondents are using social networks. That a pretty big number! We intentionally did not list the many smaller social networking sites, or the many real estate sites that now exist. We didn't want to overwhelm folks with choices, and more importantly we wanted to see what they would write in as "Other". Here is a summary of the "Other" responses:



There were some other sites mentioned, but not by more than one person.

Question 2

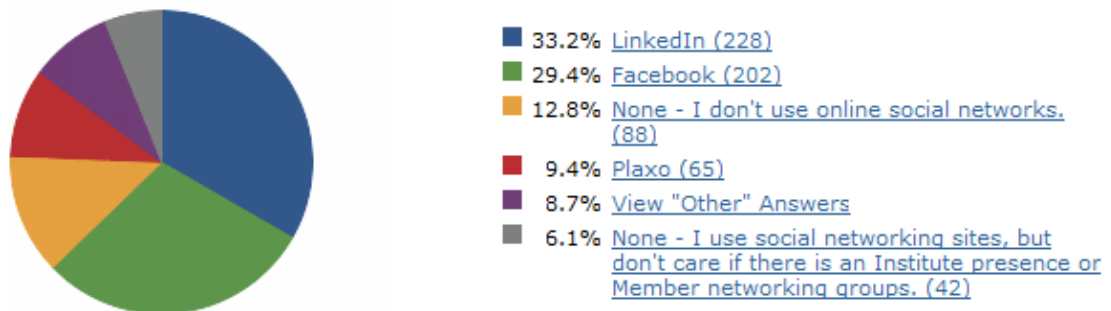
2. Do you think you'll be using the same social networking sites a year from now?



More than 1 out of 4 respondents expect to have stopped using some or all of the social networks they are currently using within a year.

Question 3

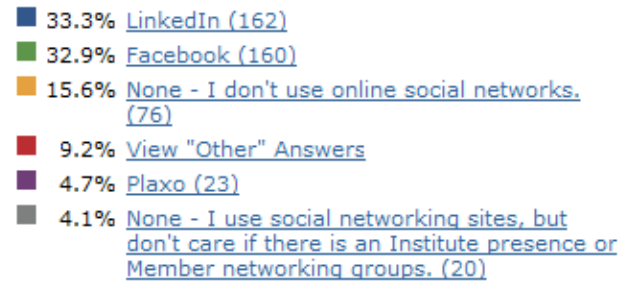
3. On which social networking sites would you like to see The Institute create/maintain Member networking groups?



An almost equal split between LinkedIn and Facebook—with LinkedIn enjoying a slight edge, and the two of them together representing almost 2/3 of responses. Of the 8.7% indicating "Other": 24.5% suggested ActiveRain. The majority of other responses indicated some variation of "don't know", "it doesn't matter", or "any site with a professional orientation."

Question 4

4. If you had to choose just ONE social networking site for the Member networking group which would it be?



Facebook and LinkedIn are so close here, each with about 1/3 of responses. Of those who chose “Other”: 44.7% indicated “I don’t know,” 15.8% indicated Active Rain, and the bulk of the balance indicated that we should “create our own site”, with a few other individual sites mentioned by the remaining responses.

Filter 1: Which social networking websites do you use?

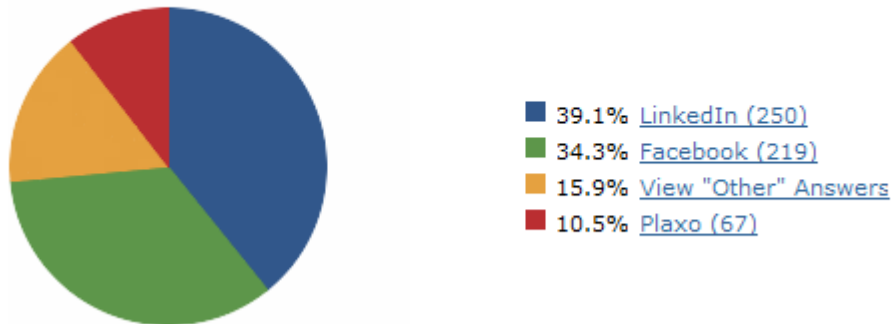
Filter 2: If you had to choose just ONE social networking site for the Member networking group which would it be?

		Filter 2					
		Facebook	LinkedIn	Plaxo	None - I don't use online social networks.	None - I use social networking sites, but don't care if there is an Institute presence or Member networking groups.	Other
Filter 1	Facebook	117	85	11	2	6	9
	LinkedIn	77	134	14	2	11	15
	Plaxo	32	50	20	2	8	7
	None - I don't use online social networks	34	22	2	72	5	15
	Other	28	23	2	2	3	10

Interestingly, a quick cross-tabulation reveals that, among those who indicated in Question #1 that they “don’t use online social networks,” on this question 37.3% chose either “LinkedIn” or “Facebook” while only 48.0% chose “None.” So, even among non-social network users, over half indicated a preference, with 22.7% choosing “Facebook” and 14.7% choosing “LinkedIn.”

Question 5

5. If we updated our online Member Directory so that you could have links to your profile on any social network, which one(s) would you want us to link to?



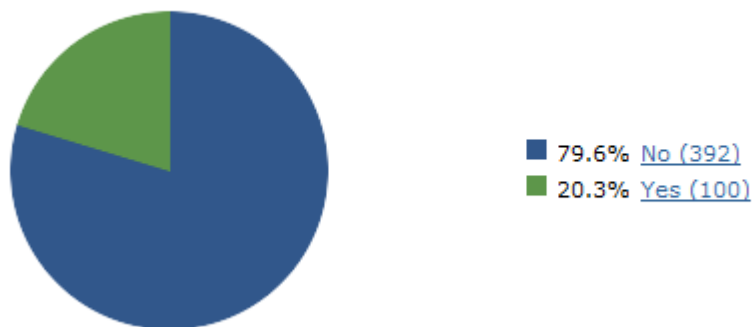
Another split with LinkedIn and Facebook dominating. The good news for members here is that with the new version of the Member Directory that is under development, Members will have the ability to link to any social networks of their choosing from their profile.

As for the 15.9% that indicated "Other":

- 25.4% indicated "I don't know"
- 15.5% indicated "None"
- 14.1% indicated "ActiveRain"
- 5.4% indicated "Twitter"
- 5.4% indicated "BrokerAgent Social"

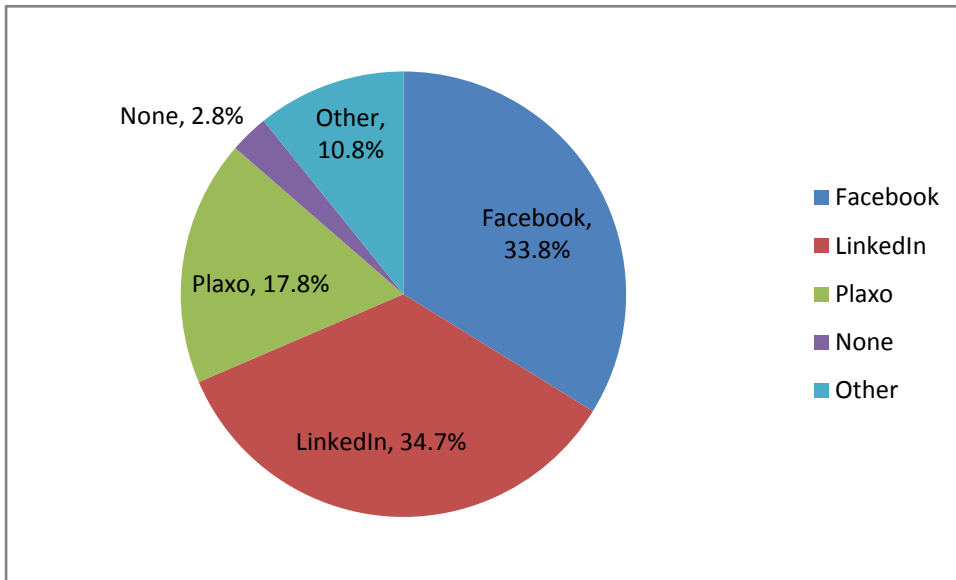
Question 6

6. Have you ever given or received a referral, or generated business via a social network?

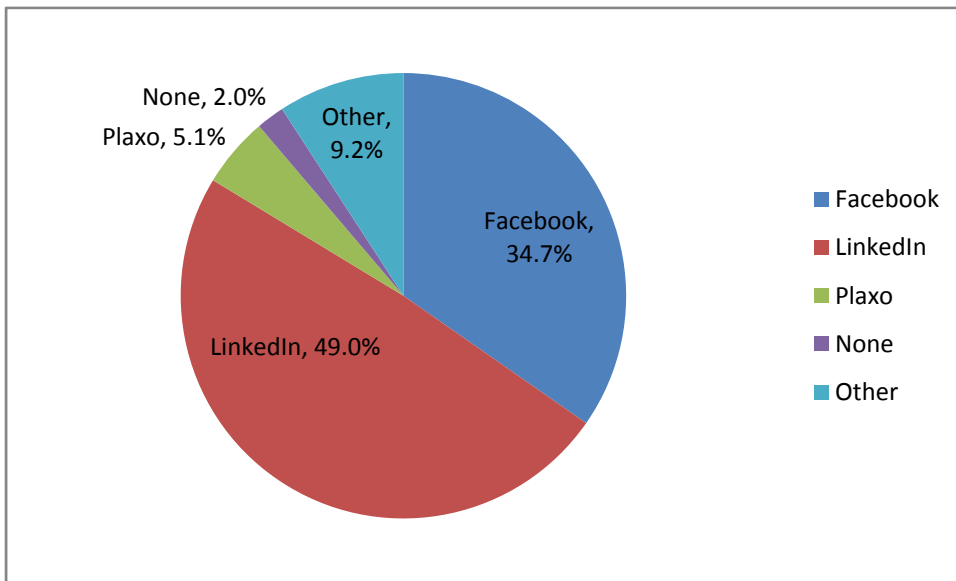


1 in 5 of the respondents has done business via social networks.

Here's a breakdown of the reported social network usage preferences of those agents who have indicated that they have done business via social networks:



And here's a break-down of their preferences if they had to choose just ONE social network for our member networking group (question #4). More of these folks prefer Facebook and LinkedIn, with a much stronger preference for LinkedIn.



Question 7

7. Please share any additional thoughts or comments with us.

[View Answers](#)

There are too many comments to share all of them here, but here are a handful of representative excerpts:

- *Social networking is the wave of the future - get in!*
- *I do not like social networks. I think they are trashy and inappropriate for upscale or downscale marketing. Create your own social network....luxury social network....something appealing to the wealthy and upper end agents.*
- *I do not see Active Rain included in the choices above and it is a good site and real estate specific too so, it is very useful among agents.*
- *I guess I am an old timer, but I feel these sites are cheap and who in the upper tier would want their personal life made public? I know it is the way to go with young folks, but at age 54, I think I will opt out.*
- *There is nothing more effective then working lead generation by meeting people face to face or over the phone.*
- *Social networking is a must in today's society...*
- *It is getting very time consuming to keep up with all this!!!!*
- *However old-fashioned this may sound, I believe Real Estate is about personal relationships with business done face to face....*
- *Hurry and get on the social media bandwagon!*

About the Survey

Margin of error: +/-4% Confidence Interval: 95% Surveys were sent to just over 3,000 of the Members of The Institute for Luxury Home Marketing. 473 completed surveys were gathered from 12/16/08 to 01/05/09. A random sampling methodology was not employed. No warranties are made as to the accuracy of this information.

About The Institute for Luxury Home Marketing

The Institute is the premier independent authority in the training and certification of real estate agents working in the luxury market and has trained over 8,000 agents worldwide.

As an independent organization, membership is open to all luxury home and estate agents, regardless of firm.

The Institute offers the [Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist \(CLHMS\) designation](#) for member agents who complete our specialized CLHMS training and have documented performance in the top 10% of their markets.

CLHMS members who demonstrate skill in the million-dollar-plus market can receive added recognition as members of The Million Dollar Guild.

The Institute also publishes the [ILHM National Luxury Market Report](#)—the only real-time national index and report covering exclusively the luxury market.

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