



Selling a Country Club Lifestyle? Club Membership Directors Can Help You (You don't have to be a member of the club to network effectively)

Luxury home buyers are often excellent prospects for country club memberships – the club may be an important part of the lifestyle the buyer desires. To enhance your selling ability and your service to your prospects, target clubs in the area where you work and get to know the club Membership Directors.

When you have a prospect looking at homes in the club area (especially out-of-towners), utilize the Membership Director as a resource. This is especially effective for prospects who are looking for a country club lifestyle as part of their luxury home purchase. You don't have to be a country club member to network with the clubs in your area. Membership Directors are appreciative of the opportunity to show their facilities to qualified member prospects and your clients will appreciate your helping them find a club that matches their needs.

Membership Directors can be sale enhancers by helping you sell the area lifestyle. They can help reinforce buying decisions and be excellent sources of buyer and seller leads. Network with them and you'll find club Membership Directors can be valuable networking partners. What's more, networking is easy.

Start by taking time to introduce yourself to the Membership Directors. Explain that you sell in the area and that many of your buyer prospects will also be interested in information on club membership, so you would like to network with them. Then contact the Membership Director when you have prospects interested in a country club community.

Ask the Membership Director to:

- 1. Schedule lunch at the club for your prospects so they can get to know the club and its facilities.**

When you are showing buyer prospects, but need to juggle other tasks, line-up some additional properties to show, or just make some phone calls, being able to drop off your prospects for lunch at the club not only allows them to familiarize themselves with the

club and meet the Membership Director -- who will help you sell the area or reinforce a buying decision that's about to be made -- it also frees you for an hour or two to take care of business. Generally the club will be willing to provide a complimentary lunch and club tour for your prospects and will usually do it on short notice.

2. Team prospects up with members for golf, tennis, or other activities

If your prospects are looking for a country club lifestyle, Membership Directors will often agree to schedule tennis or a round of golf for your prospects to help them evaluate a club. They'll team your customers up with existing members who can be counted on to extol the benefits of the community and the club. This allows prospects to identify the clubs which are the best matches for them. At the same time, it demonstrates the added value service you offer.

3. Cooperate with you on a welcome or closing gift. Often they'll bear the cost and enclose your card as well as that of the Membership Director.

Clubs will often provide gifts for you to present to your upper-tier buyers (these are also tools for selling club memberships). Sample gifts might include a complimentary dinners at the club following property purchase, moving day picnic baskets or congratulations cakes prepared by the club's kitchen.

4. Refer Business to you.

Ask the club's Membership Director for buyer and seller referrals. Some people shop for country clubs before they shop for homes. The Membership Director is also often aware of members who are planning on leaving the area. Not only can you help these homeowners sell, you can also refer them to their new locations. Provide your business cards to the Membership Director and ask him or her to suggest you and hand out your cards when coming across buyer or seller prospects. If you are able to get a club membership list, add it to your center of influence and farm the list.

5. Provide information about the club which you can add to your relocation packets, use to enhance your Website, and use to help position you and the country club community expert .

Add information about the clubs in your area to the community relocation packets you send to out-of-towners. Include club information in special information books you create for your upper tier listings, and add club information to your Website.

If you are in an area with multiple clubs, research the clubs and create a comparison chart to help match customers with the facilities in which they are most interested. After all, different clubs relate to different lifestyles. Develop a checklist of questions, do research, then create a club comparison checklist or matrix. Here are some questions to get you started.

Questions you might ask:

- What one-time and annual or monthly fees are charged?
- What dining facilities does the club have?
- What sports are available? (Golf, tennis, swimming, handball, squash, etc...)
- What pro and shop services are available?
- Does the club have a junior program for children?
- What member tournaments are scheduled for the various sports?
- When is the club not available for member sports (special tournaments, etc)?
- What other services are available (spa services, child care, etc...)?
- What is the dress code?
- How many members are there?
- What other clubs offer reciprocal privileges?
- If the club is in a club community, does a homeowner have priority over a non-resident for membership? Priority for tee times?
- If a homeowners sells, can he/she transfer membership to the new home buyer?

To enhance your position as an expert in luxury home properties, consider becoming an expert in the country club lifestyle options available in your community and start by networking with club Membership Directors.