



The Darryl Davis

February 2020

# POWER AGENT<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE<sup>™</sup>



Featuring

# JOHN LAJARA

**RE/MAX<sup>®</sup>**  
IN THE CITY

[ThePowerProgram.com](http://ThePowerProgram.com)



The Darryl Davis  
**POWER AGENT**<sup>®</sup>  
**MAGAZINE**

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# A Letter From Darryl Davis...

Dear **Power Agent**® Members,

Welcome to this month's **Power Agent**® Magazine. We're thrilled to bring you some of the best agent-to-agent strategies in the industry from some of the most top performing real estate professionals in the country! My team and I are humbled and appreciative at the *incredible generosity of agents* who are so willing to **share the tools, mindsets, and solutions that have helped them rise to the top and stay there.**

To listen to the recording of this interview, please visit the [Podcast tab](#) in your Power Program Classroom.

We thank you for being a **Power Agent**® Member! As you know, for less than a dollar a day – you receive:

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- Full access to our **Members Only Facebook Group** of networking professionals
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If you have questions for me or our team, please visit [www.AskDarrylDavis.com](http://www.AskDarrylDavis.com) or use the email address below to reach us. If you have any ideas or suggestions or would like to contribute an article or news piece, please do not hesitate to contact my office. We always welcome the thoughts of our members.

If your organization would like to bring me in to share listing inventory-building, results-producing skills that can prepare agents for ANY Johnet, please have them contact my Director of Opportunities, Julie Escobar at Julie at [julie@darryldavisseminars.com](mailto:julie@darryldavisseminars.com) or [visit my website here](#) to learn more.

Need assistance? Call us at 800-395-3905 or email us at [info@DarrylDavisSeminars.com](mailto:info@DarrylDavisSeminars.com).

Until next time, I wish you all the best and nothing but success and of course, I'm here to **help you design a life and career worth SMILING about!**

Powerfully Yours,



# Meet *John Lajara*



**John Lajara**  
**JohnLajara@Remax.net**  
**Direct: 917-848-4655**

Having been in the Real Estate Industry for 10 years, John Lajara has mastered its science. His business platform is designed to minimize margin of error and avoid set backs during every transaction. His ultimate goal is to build long-term relationships with his clients and other stakeholders such as attorneys, mortgage brokers and colleagues. His business design has helped him produce over 60 transactions a year. In 2018, he landed in "America's Top 100 Agents" and was the #1 Hispanic Realtor In Downstate NY.

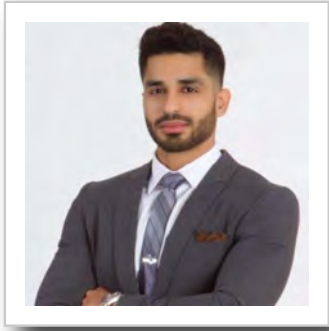
It's no secret that he holds a tremendous passion for the industry. He has built a team of Real Estate Agents who, with his leadership, allows them to effectively deliver guidance to the community in which they serve. Some of the NY markets they specialize include: The Bronx, Lower Westchester and Upper Manhattan.

## **Certifications**

CBR- Certified Buyer Representative  
CDPE- Certified Distressed Property Expert

**Languages:** ENGL, SPAN

**Specialties:** BB, CON, FP, INV, LUX, RELO, SS



# ~ an interview with ~ **JOHN LAJARA**

- Darryl Davis: Well, hey gang. This is Darryl Davis. We've got another great interview here with John Lajara from RE/MAX. Hey John, how you doing?
- John Lajara: Hey, how you doing, Darryl? Everything good?
- Darryl Davis: I am super duper. I am very excited. Here, let me just move my screen around a little bit. I am very excited that you're here because I know how busy you are, and I know we had to reschedule this, so thanks for doing this.
- So, let's just dive into this. So why don't we first start off with, give your contact information in case agents want to refer business to you, they have questions, they want to reach out to you. So go ahead.
- John Lajara: Definitely, yeah. So I'm with RE/MAX In the City, we specialize mainly in the Bronx, Westchester, and Manhattan North. Direct number is 917-848-4655, and you can reach me via email: JohnLajara, Lajara is L-A-J-A-R-A @Remax.net. JohnLajara@Remax.net.
- Darryl Davis: All right, cool. Now, John, let's give a little background for everybody. So how long have you been in real estate now?
- John Lajara: Going into 10 years now.
- Darryl Davis: Okay. What did you do before you got into real estate?
- John Lajara: I used to do tax preparation with my mom, so I used to work out of her business doing, like, immigration, multi-services and stuff like that, so I kind of had business background prior to real estate.
- Darryl Davis: Why did you get into real estate?
- John Lajara: I was just looking for another form of, like, business level that just challenged me, and I liked the fact that it was flexible, like, people have flexible hours, that I thought, right? Everybody thinks you've got freedom. Not in the beginning, and not when you're building a team, but eventually that's the goal. And I saw people were making really good money, as well. So it looked like something that if I did, with time, it would be something that would give me financial freedom.
- Darryl Davis: Okay. So let's go through your accomplishments so people can get a sense of your struggle, or if there was struggle, how you progressed. So in your first year, if you can recall, what did you do, roughly, in your production, and then, either your second or third? So give us an

## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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overview of your progression.

John Lajara:

Well, when I started back in '09, it was not the right time to get into real estate, as you know. It was a complete market where... and I was so naïve I didn't know that the market crashed and all the stuff like that. So the first two years I struggled a lot, because as most realtors, we got into the business, and you're becoming an independent worker, so you have to figure pretty much everything out. Unless you're with a team, you're kind of, like, out there, and most brokerages, at that time I was working, didn't really provide too much support. They kind of, like, just "lead generate, lead generate, lead generate." That's all they really promote, but they don't give you the foundation or the right follow-through. So for me, it was a little bit challenging trying to figure it out. And quite frankly, in the first two years, I only did maybe, like, three sales. It was something I was just doing, trying to figure it out. I was still working with my mom to make some extra income.

And right at the two year, the brokerage... he had a new office, and I asked for an office space there. So I figured that was going to help my production. It really didn't, and quite frankly, one of my buddies that was in that company switched to Exit Realty at the time. He moved back in 2011, and when he moved, he didn't do much in Century 21, where I was at. And I see all of a sudden this guy's been listing a lot of properties, he's selling a lot of properties. I'm like, "What the hell is this guy doing differently than me?" He was in the same company.

So I did an interview at Exit Realty at the time, and I just had a completely different vibe of everything. I mean, the brokerage and the support that they offer, they were going to give me. As soon as I made a switch, pretty much boom, everything just switch. I think what it was for me was, the broker that I worked for in the beginning, I felt like I was working for a boss, like, with a 9:00 to 5:00. In his meetings, you had to wear a tie. It was very structured, and kind of, like, a very demanding atmosphere. It didn't allow me to prosper. And what was, quite frankly, is that a lot of these people back in the days that were top producers, have exceeded most of their production. These were people back in the days that would not even reach out, support, or even answer questions, stuff like that.

So I think once I switched offices and I was able to find the right people to help me grow, that's what got me to where I'm at. And I'm sure a lot of those guys, as soon as they saw me growing, they were like, they were shocked. Because, I mean, two years I was in that company I didn't do nada.

Darryl Davis:

You didn't do anything.

John Lajara:

I didn't do anything, so yeah, it was just a quick... Sometimes we just need a different atmosphere, a different environment change.

Darryl Davis:

And I want to highlight that, too, because I don't want people to think that it was Exit, or if it was the other one. Because there's plenty of agents that I've seen that, let's say Exit, that isn't successful. The same thing is true about RE/MAX. Now you're at RE/MAX. So, you said it, I want to highlight it. It's really not the company, per se, it's how the company makes you feel working there.

John Lajara: Correct.

Darryl Davis: If you feel like this is family, you feel encouraged, getting support, you like the people you work with, it makes you want to be productive.

John Lajara: Correct.

Darryl Davis: So yeah, so I tell agents that the right company is not any one specific company, it's tailored to you. Whichever one you walk into and you feel like, "Wow, I would love to work here," that's the right company.

John Lajara: Right, like, in Century 21 it felt like I had to be someone that I was not. And when I went to Exit, it was like I was becoming more like myself, and figure out the right tools to be more of myself to grow in the business.

Darryl Davis: Yeah, very good. So then, all right, so you started kicking with... so that was in your third year? Fourth year?

John Lajara: Yeah, after I left two years, then I got in 2011, from 2011, '12, then pretty much everything started changing from there.

Darryl Davis: Give me an idea of your production level then.

John Lajara: Well, I went from first year maybe 60, 70, 80,000. Then fourth year I hit the six figure mark. And then, I had three continuous years that I was hitting pretty much like 175, 180, and I just couldn't surpass that damn number. And there's a reason you can't surpass that number. It's because when you're one agent, and you're doing all the buyer sales yourself, you're doing all the listings yourself, and you have no admin, you're going to cap, there's only so much that you can do with your time. And then, that's when the idea sparked where I'm like, "Okay, I need an assistant." Once I got the assistant and I was able to delegate a lot of the admin work, where I didn't have to, like, load my own listings, all this other admin work, then I was able to hit, boom, the 200 mark, and grow from there.

And then from there on out, I started then trying to grow from the team aspect of real estate, where, like, I think we get to a level where we feel that we surpass a certain skill level, or we just don't want to do it no more. For example, I'm a very high DIC personality. So a lot of the guys that are D's, you know, they're not really too much buyer's agents. Even though I think I'm good, like personable-wise and working with people, I just didn't want to work buyers. I just didn't want to do it. So then I'm like, "Okay, I'll get a buyer's agent in the team," then started delegating that out.

So throughout the life of the 10 years, I started noticing it's like, a lot of things I surpass and grow, and look for other ways to grow in the business, I just start delegating those things out, so that way I can grow in other avenues. Because if you keep trying to do everything yourself, the rule of thumb is that you're going to always cap out at a certain amount. Because there's only so much time in the day, and if you're doing everything yourself, how much more business can you do?

Darryl Davis: Exactly. Exactly. So let's jump back to that third year, fourth year. Where was most of your business coming from in the beginning?



## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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John Lajara: Well, quite frankly, when I got into the business... It's funny, because I never thought I'd be a power agent. I started out with your book, *How to Become a Power Agent*. So I read the book, got to learn about prospecting, objection handling, analogies. So quite frankly, that's how it was. So most of the business came in the beginning from *For Sale by Owners*, expires. I'll tell you the truth, in the beginning, I didn't know what the hell I was doing. I was just calling these people, I was going there. At the time, I didn't have the proper listing presentation, I didn't have the right approach. All I kept was just calling. After you mentioned that a few times or through your training, if you bark enough, right, and the more people you call, eventually someone will tell you to come over.

Darryl Davis: That's right.

John Lajara: So that's how it was. I called a lot of people, and then it happened to be that I called this expired. She told me to come right over. There are certain appointments you go to where it's not skill, it's just, you connect with the person, they like you, and they give you the listing. And that's how I got the listing.

Darryl Davis: Felt good though, didn't it?

John Lajara: It felt good. But that's the challenge people have, is like, I think when you're starting out in the beginning, you don't know what you're doing, so you don't want to call because you don't know what you're doing. But I feel like that's part of the game. You have to throw yourself out there. And a lot of times in anything you do, you have to figure it out. So if you don't go through that process, how would you ever discover where you're messing up at? Because that's what I started doing. I started going to a few appointments and I'm like, "Well, what am I doing wrong where I cannot get the appointment? I will make notes of this."

And with time, I started then reading a lot of things, and "Oh shoot, I'm doing this wrong," and then I started learning that in certain appointments you have to get continuous yeses, right? Like, you close them little by little. I didn't know. When people were saying that, I'm like, "What the hell does that mean?" You close the lead multiple times. I didn't know, psychologically, when you close them multiple times, you're selling them, gradually throughout the whole presentation, that when it comes towards the end, you don't have to close them hard, and they just want to do business with you.

So once I started learning all those things, then I'm, "Okay, now I've got it," and then I started converting people. But I only learned that because of my failures. You know? It's like Michael Jordan said, he's the greatest basketball player because he missed 7,000 shots. So you become successful through your failures, but, it's easier said than done. But most people won't do the hard work, and you've got to work for it-

Darryl Davis: This is great for a new agent to hear this. It's like learning how to ride a bike. You can take classes on how to ride a bike, and you can watch videos on how to ride a bike, and you can read a book about riding a bike, but that's not going to give you the ability to ride the bike.



John Lajara: Exactly.

Darryl Davis: You got a lot of college, but you don't have bike riding. So you've got to get on the bike and actually do it, and when you do it, you fall, and eventually you get balance. And it's the same thing what you saying here, is like, you had to go through falling off the bike, and studying it, "What am I doing wrong?" to get that balance, and, there you go.

John Lajara: Exactly. Well, you said something good when you had the [Long Alley 00:11:52] training, because I took my team there, and you mentioned something that was so, like, pivotal for me, when you said, like, make believe there was a section of sellers, and you made them all get up. And then you told the people that on the other side, that's where they were focusing their business with. There's nobody selling when they can just literally go for the people that are already selling. But we get stuck on that whole thing. It becomes fear.

But I'll tell you the truth. Back in '09-11, we didn't have YouTube, we didn't have a lot of these things that we have now. Like right now, if you want to learn how to prospect, you want to learn objection handling, I mean, there's resources after resources. You could go to YouTube and look up How to Call For Sale by Owners. I didn't have that in 2009. So we have a lot of things now that if you just really look into it, you can discover what those things are. And then, look at different trainers, and wherever you find that you fit the most, take that and start applying it. I think that we are at a better time now than we were before, and I think we have to make use of that information that's available to us.

Darryl Davis: Now how many listings did you get this year, roughly?

John Lajara: This year? I mean, we average between three to four a month, so we're... And in September, let me see, three to four, that's nine. I would say anywhere between 27 to 30, around in there.

Darryl Davis: That's really good. And what's your average sales price now, or list price?

John Lajara: So our single families are in the fives, and then our multi's goes up to, like, seven, eight hundred. But when we did our average median sales price, it was right around, like, 500,000. That's our median price range.

Darryl Davis: Okay. You have a team right? Or you're building-

John Lajara: Correct.

Darryl Davis: So when did you start building that? What does that look like now?

John Lajara: So here's the story behind the whole team thing. I tried to build one back in 2016. I had someone that was working with me, got him to join. Quite frankly, I did it the whole wrong way. I got my brother involved, who was, like, a rental agent, his friend. I developed this whole team around people that I knew. And we're, "Yeah, yeah, we're going to kill it." We're not even really basing it on skills, or were they the right people for the job. So quite frankly... because I pursue a music career as well... and I stepped a little bit out of the business. And a few months went by, and everything just went, like, sour. And the other person who I left in charge, as far as partnership, they didn't deliver. So we split, and in 2017, I had to rebuild the business.

## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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Also, quite frankly, it was funny. When we made the switch, I went to Douglas Elliman. And the reason we went to Douglas Elliman was because my partner had the vision of, like, I already outgrew the Bronx, so we were, like, "Okay, let's go to Manhattan, and let's start doing the luxury homes, the million," like, we're like pumped up, "Yeah, yeah, we're going to do this up." They go, like-

Darryl Davis: Great when you're young, see, you're a young guy, so you're like, "We're taking on Manhattan now."

John Lajara: Yeah. It was, yeah, as you know, you go into a new market, it's not the same thing. So then, when I had to rebuild the business, I went back to RE/MAX. The reason I did that was, Douglas Elliman gave me a lesser split than I was getting at RE/MAX. And if I was already doing the business I was doing in the Bronx, why was I got to take a lesser split? I was like, this doesn't make financial sense. I went back to RE/MAX.

And then I had to rebuild from there. Then 2018, I still had my admin, I had two buyer's agents, so I was the main listing agent, and I had two buyer's agents. 2019 now, I have two listing agents, they do buyers there and then, and then I still have the same two buyer's agents, then I have my assistant who is now my admin transaction coordinator. And then I just had to hire an admin now, like a lead manager. Because what happened was, my assistant couldn't be marketing, admin, transaction coordinator, and lead manager. There was no possible way. So I had one of the team members temporarily be the lead manager. And that wasn't working out, so then I hired someone for it, and then now it's basically a full, nice team.

But this year has been just challenging, because I had to build systems. Because here's the challenging part, Darryl. I know what I have to do, and how to grow the business. The problem is, now I have to think about how do I do it, once I'm trying to step away from it, and then I had to structure everything from scratch. And that's where I think that a lot of people that are looking to build teams eventually, is if they're going through the process now, they should start creating manuals now. Because if you start doing that later on, that becomes very overwhelming. Because there's so many sections in the business, like how do you work a buyer, how do you work a seller, how do you do an open house, how you submit an offer, how do you do a purchase memo, how do you call For Sale by Owner, how do... It's like, when you start doing this, that'll take you months, just to do that. So I think that you have to start... Well, if you're not looking to grow a business, but I think people should put that all together, so in the time they start looking to delegate the work, they already have a basis of it. And then they can pass that knowledge to the people later on.

For me, it was very challenging doing it all from scratch. That's where I spent a lot of my time, and actually set myself back from last year's goal. I'm about 97,000 behind last year's goal. But luckily, the last few months we started planting the seeds, put a lot of deals together, and then they started kicking in the third quarter, and the fourth quarter looks like. If everything closes, we'll catch up right back to last year, and then 2020 will be the thriving year.

Darryl Davis: Good. One of the things that I tell agents that they're thinking about bringing a team on, is the first person you hire, if it's that admin person, which is I think the first person, a lot

of people they'll do a buyer's agent first, ba, ba, ba. The good thing about a buyer's agent, you're not paying out of pocket, you're working... so that makes sense. But whoever you bring on, you should have them create a Google Doc online, and as they're doing the job, or as you're teaching them, you have them take your notes. So they're, in a sense, creating the training manuals as you go along.

John Lajara: Okay, that's good.

Darryl Davis: So now next buyer's agent you hire, you've got it written from the first one. The first assistant doesn't work out, you let them go. Well, they've already started taking the notes for the next one, et cetera.

John Lajara: Right, exactly.

Darryl Davis: So building a team, how has that been for you? How is that different, the challenges, what you learned from that, going from just worrying about yourself?

John Lajara: The challenge that becomes is where you get people to understand the systems that you create, to appreciate it to a level that you do. And the problem is they don't appreciate it, or they don't go base on it, is because, like all my systems, literally, if I show you everything that I do, everything is created either through a loss of a deal, a mistake, or an error. So I'm the type of person that if I make a mistake, I create a platform right away, how to fix it. I talk about it with my assistant, "How do we fix it?" Boom. And then we pass that along to the team members. Now I tell the team member, "Hey, look, this is how you got to do it." But for them it's just like, "Oh, John is just telling me to do this," right?

Darryl Davis: Right.

John Lajara: But I know behind the scene, what it entails to do it, because if you don't, it leads to this. So the challenge becomes, it's like, I know why I do what I do. It's because I know there's a consequence behind it. But the team doesn't see it that way. Sometimes the team's, I feel like... I don't know. Sometimes the team members have to go through their own failures, so then they can say, "That's what John meant."

Darryl Davis: That John was right.

John Lajara: John was right.

Darryl Davis: It's basically being a parent.

John Lajara: Kind of, yeah. I mean, pretty much.

Darryl Davis: Like a kid, they don't listen to you, then they make a mistake, say "Oh, I should have listened." Yeah.

John Lajara: Yeah. And it's funny, because it's not that they're bad. Every team member has a strong point, but it's trying to make them almost a replica of who you are, which it becomes impossible. But I guess the challenge becomes is, you then discover what they're good at, and what they're able to do, and then you delegate, or just don't expect too much of them. Because that's where I was going crazy, is because I had so much expectation, and that expectation was driving me nuts. It was overwhelming me. It was creating a lot of stress. I'm like, "Damn, why they can't get the..." I'm just driving myself nuts.

## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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And I got to a point where it's like, it's pretty simple. It's like, I know what this person's good at, this person's good at, this person's good at, what are they realistically going to make. And you look at each team member. Can they hit the goal that you're looking at, and that's it. You don't over expect anything from anybody. That's what I got to learn and discover with a team member, don't over expect. Just find out what they're good at, and see what they're able to do, and if you have to find someone else to fill in the missing gap of whatever income you're trying to make, you have to find that person. Don't expect too much of that person, which is not going to be able to deliver it to you. That's what I learned.

Darryl Davis: A great broker taught me something once. If you want to know how much somebody's... When you're interviewing an agent, ask them how much money do they need just to survive, to pay their bills at home. Ask them that question. And whatever that answer is, that's the number you can count on that they're going to generate, as a team member. I guess managing a team is probably different skill sets that you're learning than when you're just being an agent yourself. Is that true?

John Lajara: Yeah. Managing, making sure that I had the right systems, because there was a lot of things that just... I had the chemistry with my assistant. She knew how I wanted things done. But then when it came to a team member, I had to dummy it down. A lot of things I had to dummy it down for them, a lot of the tasks that we have. I even put, like, little notes and instructions. Like, I keep it there so they don't mess it up. So, yeah, it's become a lot of the management, and making sure that they understand the systems, to not wing it or do things the way they want to. It's like, "You've got to do it this way, because this is how it works." I mean, I'm not going to teach you something that is going to work against you, because if it works against you it works against me, and why would I put a team together that I want to work against me?

So it's mainly, like, management and systems. That was the challenging part. I feel like I was able to overcome that this year, and then next year is really more, how do I make them become better? Where are they lacking at? But we don't have to keep going over, like, old manuals, and "How do you do this?" I think we went through that. And if I was to hire someone new, we have all the manuals, and we have all the training for that.

Darryl Davis: All right, cool. So now, let's rattle off a few specific strategies or techniques that you do. When it comes to getting listings, are you still calling FSBOs and expireds?

John Lajara: So, right now, the listing agents on my team, that's what they do. They mainly call FSBO expires. My assistant makes it pretty easy for them, so, like, RedX, or... What's the other? There's another system, what is it called? There's another system. Either way-

Darryl Davis: It doesn't matter, I don't recommend them, so I don't care.

John Lajara: So yeah, RedX... Oh, what happened?

Darryl Davis: I don't know.

John Lajara: RedX... I'm sorry.

Darryl Davis: Yeah, we're losing our sync-up.

John Lajara: I got it.

Darryl Davis: Go ahead.

John Lajara: Right, so RedX, so she looks up the numbers and she imports them to Mojo. So Mojo becomes very helpful for us because they just come into the database and they start making the calls, FSBOs and expireds. Most of my business right now, luckily, it comes mainly from referrals. I build my database, and... It's quite funny because I got ten years. I really tapped into the referrals about maybe four or five years ago. The first five years I'm the typical agent where it's one transaction right after another, and then you start noticing that all the top producers, they're like, "Oh referrals, referrals." I'm like, "I feel like I keep just generating new business. I'm not getting any business from the people that I worked with in the past." Yeah, silly, because you're not reaching out to them, you're not building a nurturing relationship with them. So that's when I got to learn that. So most of my business comes from that. And I partnered up with a couple of these companies, I'm not sure if you've heard of them, but like UpNest, HomeLight...

Darryl Davis: So UpNest, HomeLight...

John Lajara: They're referral partners. So what they do is, like, let's say if someone was Googling "Top Agent in my local area," so what they do is they locate the top agents. They'll probably assign, like, two or three agents to that lead, and basically then we'll get the inquiry. And then, well, we go after an interview, obviously, to compete with the other two, but we've been getting a lot of business from that as well. And if the lead gets a-

Darryl Davis: Are you getting, so, those are... power agents ask that a lot. They, like, is it worth paying for leads like those? And some of them said they get mostly buyer leads. Is that the case with these guys? Or no, you're getting listing leads, too?

John Lajara: I'm getting a high level of sellers versus buyers. So here's the catch with this. Not any agent can join these networks. How you get into these networks is, you have to be among the top agent of your community. Because at the end of the day, remember, they're not charging a fee, they're just getting a referral fee, 25 or 30%. So the thing is, why would they risk giving the lead to a new agent, where that new agent could possibly mess up the lead and then they lose the referral fee? So for you to join that network, you have to be among the top in your community. So when I joined them, they check MLS records. They want to know all the sales you did, what's your listing versus buyer volume, they want to see all that. So what I can tell newer agents is, try to build your portfolio now, so maybe in three to four years, you can go after these networks, and then join them to get another allocator of referrals separate from your referrals, your past clients, your FSBO, and the expireds.

Darryl Davis: Great idea. Now what have you been doing to get more referrals from your past clients?

John Lajara: Past clients? So, I came up with a pretty cool way. So, whenever I close a client now, or I... Well, in the beginning, I give the clients a questionnaire, and what I get with the questionnaire is basically all their personal information. I always get their date of births. The reason I get their date of birth is because that is one contact during the year that is automatically, that is one of the special days you call the people. Then, I also go through, like, what are their, like, special hobbies? What are their social media? Why do I get that? It's because... so here's what I do. Like, if I know that I had a really good client and his birthday is, let's say, Christmas, December 25th. Let's say I want to call him every quarter. I go with the basis of the Christmas, right,

## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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December 25th first, and then I put in my Top Producer, I want to call him every quarter, so that's every three months. So I set it out to March 25, June 25, September 25, so automatically, Top Producer's already giving me the call reminders.

And that's what people have to learn is, that you have to set those calls up from the get, so that way you don't have to think about it. Because where I challenge at was getting all these people from the past, that I never set them up, and I had to start getting their date of births, put in all these call reminders, how I wanted to call them. It's like, when you can start now allocating those calls, it's like they're automatic, and as you start working with more clients, you don't have to think about, "Oh, when do I have to call Darryl? I haven't stayed in touch with Darryl for a long time." No, you're already putting in Top Producer. You're going to get a call from... to call Darryl every three months.

And, the reason why I follow my clients on social media, is all right, I called you on December 25, right, your birthday. Now, what am I going to talk to you about in March, June, September? You closed on your house, right? I'm going to call you about, "How's the house going, Darryl? How's the neighborhood?" After a year, or two years, I'm going to talk to you about the same stuff? I've got to bring some relevance to the conversation. If I follow you on social media, then I can say, "Oh, shoot, Darryl went to the Poconos-

Darryl Davis: Aruba.

John Lajara: ... Aruba. He was on vacation. Boom, I call you. "Hey, what's going on, Darryl? Darryl, I saw on Facebook you was in Aruba. How was that, buddy? I'm actually looking to go over there soon. Can you give me some insights on that trip?" Like, now I can bring some relevance to the conversation, and it's not always about the house or about, you get me? You talk about other things related to their daily life.

Darryl Davis: That's great. That's awesome. And for people that don't know, when you're saying "Top Producer," that's a CRM, a contact manager. It's funny, some agents don't even know what a CRM is. So, it's a database. Contact Relationship Marketing, I think is what the M stands for, I don't know. But basically, it's where you keep all your leads, and it automates your follow-up. So there's a company out there called Top Producer, is one of them, and that's the one you're using. Cool. Well, that's very simple, very powerful, just call-

John Lajara: Yeah, that, and I have a newsletter. So I learned through time that the consumer has to remind themselves, at least every three to four weeks, what you do, so you also have to support that with a newsletter. So I have a newsletter, as well, that I send out to them. So every month they're reminded, "John Lajara does real estate. John Lajara does real estate." So, by combining that with the phone calls, you deepen the relationship with the client, because they're always getting something of value from you, and you're also keeping the personal touch.

I did learn the hard way is that, I felt that if I put them in the newsletter, that I would get the referral business. Wrong. Because a newsletter is just a content sent to them, but there's some people that may not even get it, or they may not read it, or whatever. So, I learned that a newsletter in itself won't get you the referral business. You do have to combine it with personal touches. They have to see you. They have to hear from you. And for me, like, I don't have the time to always visit my clients and stuff like that, so I keep it pretty simple. When's their date of birth, how many times do I want to call them during the year, am I following them on social media, and I'm done. I already know I'm calling them on their birthdays. If I'm following them on

social media, I already know I've got relevant topics to talk to them about-

- Darryl Davis: Now see, I love this. So you don't do like big parties or big gifts or mailings or any of that other stuff, this is basically very clean and simple, is that what I'm hearing?
- John Lajara: Well, I do that, and I am doing a Client Appreciation Party. I try to get that done at least once a year.
- Darryl Davis: Oh, okay. Thank you.
- John Lajara: So the way it typically works is, okay, I close the client, I give them a gift. Then I put them in the newsletter they get sent from me every month. I got the recurring calls during the year, and if I'm ever in the neighborhood, I'll drop by. And then I try to do a Client Appreciation Party. So basically, if I can't visit my clients during the year, if I can get them in that face-to-face environment with other people, then I do that as well. So I do add that as well.
- Darryl Davis: Okay. All right, good. All right, super. But still, very simple. It doesn't have to be that complicated, right?
- John Lajara: No. I think when it becomes challenging for people is that they don't plan out the frequency of how many times they want to stay in touch with that client. I think they rely based on when they feel they want to call them. And that's okay for a new agent, right? You close one client, two clients, three, four, five clients. You close ten clients during the year. Yeah, the first year you can stay in touch with all ten. Because in your head, that's only ten. But what if you have five, eight, ten years in the business? You have 600, 800 people in your database, past clients. How the hell are you going to remember all those people to call? There's no way. You need systems to help you with that.
- Darryl Davis: You can almost do a formula. Like, if people move, let's say every five years, and if you've got, like, a hundred people in your data base that you're working, you should get five deals out of those hundred people if you're working them. And, of course, this is how you increase your business. You do 200 people, now you're at ten deals. Of course, you've got to wait for that fifth year for it to start paying off, because-
- John Lajara: Correct.
- Darryl Davis: Yeah.
- John Lajara: And then something I've done pretty cool is, when I do get the referral from the client finally, and I do make the close, I do try to give them a gift. The gift is an incentive as when they know that they're already giving me a referral, they're already having something back in expectation. Something like, "John would deliver this if I give him a referral." So, it's almost like you get your past clients and your database working for you, because they know that they're looking out for you, that you're going to also look out for them. So that's worked pretty well for me, as well.
- Darryl Davis: Awesome. Very good. This is great stuff. On the listing appointment, is there anything that you feel that you do that's really solid, that really helps you get those listings? Whether it's a phrase, or something you focus on, or you say on almost every appointment it seems to come out?
- John Lajara: Right. Well, yeah. For me, well, it becomes easy now is because I already have a name, a reputation, so that sells itself. But I'm going to dummy it down for those people that don't have that. I think that we have to put a pre-listing package together for our listing appointments, because I started realizing that when I was going on the appointments, I had to go in there and



## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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sell them on RE/MAX, number one company in the world, nobody sells more than RE/MAX. Then I've got to tell them I'm the number one sales agent in the Bronx, number one... I'm spending, like, 20 minutes just selling them on these things. And I went back to them, I'm like, "Wait. But..." You know what it is Darryl? There're certain markets that don't use it. I don't know if Long Island, they use it still, whatever? But there's certain markets that don't use it. And we shift away from that. And I feel like a pre-listing package sells us before we get there. So even if you're not, like, a number one ranking agent in your company or whatever the case is, a pre-listing package you could talk about what the office does. Right? Where you stand in the market place, or market share, your marketing, all that stuff, so when you get to the appointment, they already know about you. They already feel comfortable with you.

The problem with a lot of the people is that you're going in there, and these people, FSBOs and expireds, they know nothing about you. And as you know, they've already got their guards up. So when you're going in there, I think you're making it harder for yourself to get the business, because you have to break that ice. And hopefully you break that ice during the appointment. I feel like if you send a pre-listing package that does half of the job for you, when you get in there, I think if you could just focus on, like, the questions and building the rapport, and they start to like you, they like you and then they already know about the company, I think you start merging that likeability and then you increase your chances of listing them. That's when they're working-

Darryl Davis: Are you doing pre-listing package? Or are you saying for agents...

John Lajara: Well, I started doing it recently, now, the last couple of weeks.

Darryl Davis: Oh, you have?

John Lajara: I have.

Darryl Davis: And how is that, has it been working?

John Lajara: It's been working phenomenal. The reason I say that is because, like, what's giving me the edge is my reputation and where I stand, but what I'm saying-

Darryl Davis: And you put that into your listing packet.

John Lajara: ... right, exactly, but now I'm going back to those people that, let's say, "Oh, but Darryl, I'm not number one in the area, or I'm not this," but you could put a pre-listing package around what... there's something always that you can sell. It could be about your office, it could be about-

Darryl Davis: Yeah, the number of sales or markets that your office [crosstalk 00:36:46].

John Lajara: ... right, exactly, yeah, so I feel like if you do that, you're just increasing your chances by 50%, I think.

Darryl Davis: Now let me ask you, how have you been getting those delivered? And so, like, if you set up an appointment... See, how I used to do it, is I used to call. Like, if I were going to call FSBOs right now, I'd call them right now, and I'd set up an appointment for right now. I would just go over. So there wouldn't be time to drop off a pre-listing packet. So what's the time, how's it work? I'm just curious. How does that work?

John Lajara: No, that's good. So, no, you're right about that. There are certain appointments that doesn't give you, that allow time to do that. So if you have an appointment that's within the same day, you're not going to be able to do it. These are more appointments that, like, if I speak to them today, and they want to meet me on Saturday, and there's all that threshold, like, I'll go and deliver it, or my team member will deliver it. Or if they don't live at the house, we'll email it to them, as well, electronically. So these are just appointments that are set out 24, 40 hours or more in advance. But if it's the same day, then we don't do that.

Darryl Davis: Got it. Cool. Who's in the room there with you?

John Lajara: Oh, no, no, I'm getting a meal done here, so. You're good Darryl, you're good Darryl.

Darryl Davis: All right, so now, let me see. I have a list of other questions here. If you were talking to a new agent, what would you recommend to a new agent that you think they should do? What are some of the top things to get them started?

John Lajara: There's an advice I would give. I think it's for a lot of people. It's something they may not value at the time. And it's basically building your database, right? What I mean by that is basically, as you know, you join real estate right away and it's, like, lead generate, lead generate, cold call, all this stuff like that. But I feel like people don't really tap into the people that they know, as much, right? They'll probably tell a few people, friends, whatever, but they don't really tap into their database or reach out. So I feel that as you do emerge and you start calling these FSBOs and expireds, you should also allocate time for sphere of influence, in the beginning. Acquaintances and stuff. The reason I say that is because, when you start building the database, right, you do the same things I just mentioned. Date of births, frequencies, because at the end of the day, people are people, so as long as you stay in touch with people and they remember what you do, eventually the referrals will come.

It doesn't have to be a past client versus a neighbor that lives next to you, or your mom. They're people. So, I feel like people have to start building a database from the get, have a supportive newsletter, and stay very in close contact with those people. Because, remember, in the beginning, you're going to have 25. Then eventually you'll have 50. You have a hundred. And as that number grows with time, you'll see the referral business grow quicker. Because, I think you just mentioned a highlight number, which is five years. I think that if agents did it this way from the get, and they stayed in close contact with that database, like, really stay in close contact, I think agents could get referrals a lot quicker. I think they could do it in two to three years. It doesn't have to be five years. I think it takes five years just because in five years we're trying to develop this whole system how, and now, and tap into them. And the reason it becomes five years is because now it's a numbers game, and because it's a numbers game, now the odds of you getting referrals is greater.

But I feel like if you can start with a small number, but the small number's a good quality of people, and you stay in touch with them, I think you'll start seeing it a lot quicker. That's my firm belief. And I'm testing it out with my team now, that I'm really pushing them to do that. It's not the easiest thing, because you'll want to get the now business, the For Sale By Owners and the expireds. They're like, "I'm going to stay in touch with my cousin, they're not going to give me any business." But you know, that's the mindset right?

Darryl Davis: Right, right.

John Lajara: So I'm testing them out, because I want to beat that five year mark. I want to do it that they start seeing referrals in two to three years. So I think that's one of the best advices I could

## interview with John Lajara (continued) ...

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give someone. And get a really good newsletter. There's newsletters out there that are very personal, and they look like, that, you're writing them. And I get a ton of feedback from my past clients and sphere of influence they're like, "Wow, you put an amazing newsletter. This is very informational," and they think it's yours.

Darryl Davis: Well, which one do you use?

John Lajara: I use Fast Newsletter. I was using Service for Life. I don't know if you've heard of the company?

Darryl Davis: No.

John Lajara: Right. So what they do is that they look at, like... it's very informational. So they'll talk about, like, health, fitness, finance, they'll throw in a couple of real estate reports, articles, they'll throw in trivia questions... it becomes this very, like, very personal newsletter.

Darryl Davis: You said the Fast Newsletter?

John Lajara: Yeah. Fast Newsletter. Why I transitioned is because Service for Life was, like, 90 bucks, and Fast Newsletter was 10 bucks, and it's almost just as, it's almost similar. So if they look into that, that's a good... Most people may start out not have \$90 to invest, but if you look into Fast Newsletter, it's only \$10, and it's really good stuff.

Darryl Davis: I mean, that's great advice. So for a new agent, or anybody, not just new, but any agent that's looking to financially build their business, FSBOs, expireds, but also referrals and friends and past clients. But most importantly, put it into a CRM, a contact management, so you can keep track of it, create to-dos, when to follow-up four times a year, call them, and throw the newsletter in there so every month they're seeing your name, face, and what you do for a living, right?

John Lajara: Right, yeah, it's good stuff. I mean, think about it. They see you every month, either electronically or monthly, and they're hearing from you every quarter. I'm saying every three months, but there's some people I stay in touch with them monthly. These are, like, my highlight, like, top-notch referrals. I call them monthly. There's some people, as you know, that are not the best clients. You are not, most likely, going to see any referrals from them. I'll call them two times a year. So again, if their birthday is December 25th, and I'm going to call them two times during the year, I'll call them every six months. So I'll call them June 25th, and then I'll call them again December 25th. So, I think the frequency becomes, based on the level of quality of the client. So if it's your best quality client, you should have more frequency. If it's a client that you don't really feel you're going to get much referrals, but you want to stay in touch with them, you can lower the amount of frequency contacts. I would do it that way.

Darryl Davis: Yeah, that's great, John, that's great. Well, listen, we are... I so appreciate you doing this call, and give your contact information again so people can reach out to you.

John Lajara: Yeah, so it's 917-848-4655. The email is JohnLajara@Remax.net, and my website is Amazing New York Homes, plural, but as dot com, AmazingNewYorkHomes.com, and we service Bronx, Westchester, and Upper Manhattan.

Darryl Davis: There you go. And there's another tip, too. Get your own branded website domain name, right?

John Lajara:

Oh, yes, for sure, yeah.

Darryl Davis:

That's good. Well, John, I'm going to end the recording. You stay right here. Thanks again for doing this. Thanks everybody for watching. Don't forget to keep smiling, and we'll talk to you soon. All right.

 Thank you, John!



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