



DNA of
#CRE

2017 DNA OF #CRE MARKETER REPORT



DNA^{of} #CRE

2017

For the last three years, Buildout and theBrokerList have conducted the annual DNA of #CRE survey to learn more about the industry, the way CRE professionals do their jobs, the challenges they have to overcome and the tools they use to be successful.

This year, we wanted to learn more about how CRE marketers specifically do their jobs. To get a pulse on what's happening in CRE marketing, we asked marketers around the country about:

- Their best practices
- What they expect for the future of the industry
- How they're planning to market their property listings — and their firms as a whole — in 2018

Our first DNA of #CRE Marketer Report will help you compare your marketing tactics to those used in other brokerages, benchmark your practices against others and see what 2018's hottest marketing trends will be.

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT ABOUT CRE MARKETING IN 2017?

Key takeaways from the 2017 DNA of #CRE Marketer Report

- By the end of 2018, all CRE marketing teams will display property listings on their company's website
- Eighty percent of firms are planning to use videos and/or 3D tours in 2018, and of the marketing teams that used video tours to promote their property listings in 2017, almost 90 percent used drones
- Approximately 20 percent of CRE marketers didn't analyze their email marketing metrics, and about a quarter didn't monitor their website analytics
- Blogging and original content creation are becoming more popular, and are likely to be industry best practices for marketers by the end of 2018

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**ABOUT YOUR
LISTING PROCESS**

01

In 2017, 70 percent of marketers housed company listing information on an online database, and almost half spent five or fewer hours per week on data entry.

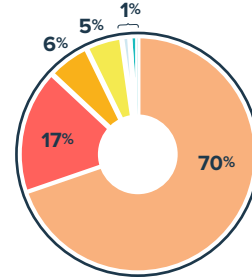


Most of our 2017 DNA of #CRE marketer respondents told us they used an online database to house their company's listing information. Just 17 percent said they used an in-house database, and less than 1 percent still used paper forms or no database at all. As property database tools have become more sophisticated and streamlined, it's now much easier for marketers to manage information for multiple listings.

To maintain these listings, about 40 percent of respondents said they spent one to five hours per week entering data, and about half said an in-house marketer or administrator on their team entered data manually. Approximately 43 percent of marketers said they used an online service to manage listing information distribution to multiple platforms in 2017.

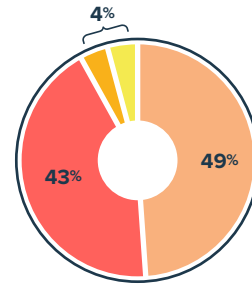
WHERE DID YOU HOUSE YOUR COMPANY'S LISTING DATA?

- Online database
- In-house database
- Spreadsheet
- Other
- None
- Paper forms

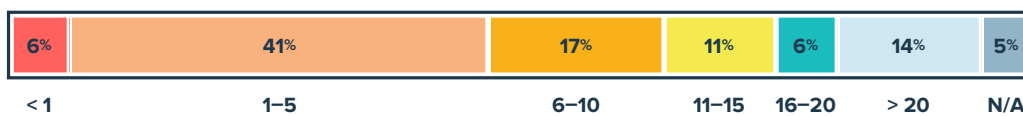


HOW DID YOU DISTRIBUTE YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO MULTIPLE PLATFORMS?

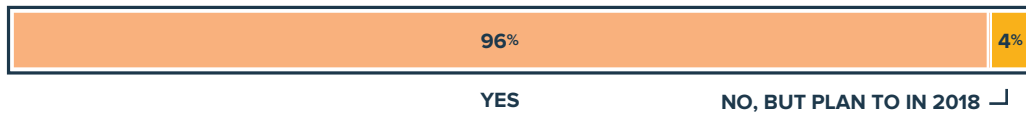
- Manual data entry by in-house marketer/administrator
- Using an online service
- Manual data entry by brokers
- Other
- Did not list on listing platforms



HOW MUCH TIME PER WEEK DID YOU SPEND ON DATA ENTRY FOR LISTINGS? (HOURS)



DID YOUR BROKERAGE DISPLAY LISTINGS ON THE COMPANY WEBSITE?



IF YES, WHAT PLATFORM DID YOU USE?



Clearly, displaying listings on your brokerage’s website — not just third-party marketplaces — is a common CRE industry marketing tactic because it allows you to attract buyers to your website, keep them there, generate leads and close deals faster. More than half of respondents said they used Buildout to display listings on their company websites, and almost a quarter used in-house coding or a content management system (CMS).

Almost half of marketers used videos or 3D tours in 2017, and most will in 2018.

Just under 50 percent of marketer respondents said their firms used videos or 3D tours in 2017, and over 30 percent said that even though they did not use these tools last year, they plan to adopt them in 2018. So, by the end of the year, these property marketing tactics will be increasingly prevalent across the industry and expected by clients.

Of the marketing teams that used video tours to promote their property listings, almost 90 percent

used drones to create those videos, either in-house or with the help of an outsourced firm.

Additionally, most marketing teams exclusively took their own property photos to use in promotional materials in 2017, while 26 percent had brokers provide photos for them and 6 percent used a combination of in-house photography, photos from brokers and websites, and third-party professional photography.

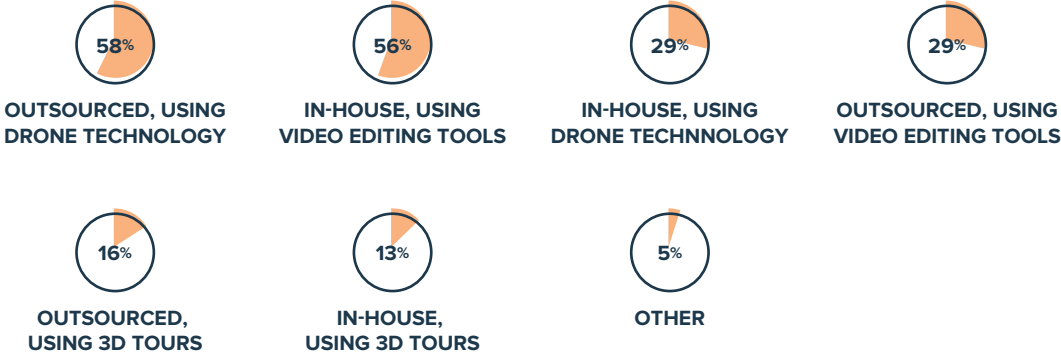
DID YOUR MARKETING TEAM TAKE PROPERTY PHOTOS TO USE IN PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS?



DID YOU USE VIDEOS OR 3D TOURS?

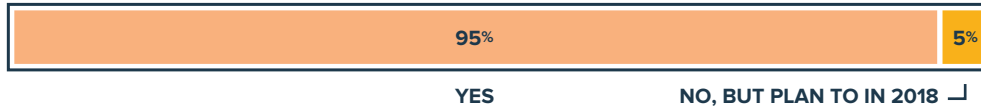


WHICH METHODS DID YOU USE TO PRODUCE VIDEOS OR TOURS?*

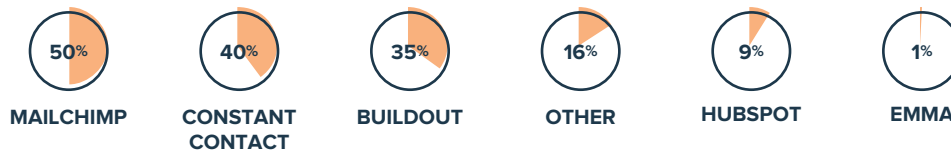


*Respondents had the option to select all.

DID YOU USE EMAIL MARKETING FOR YOUR LISTINGS?



IF YES, WHAT EMAIL MARKETING PLATFORM DID YOUR COMPANY USE?*



*Respondents had the option to select all.

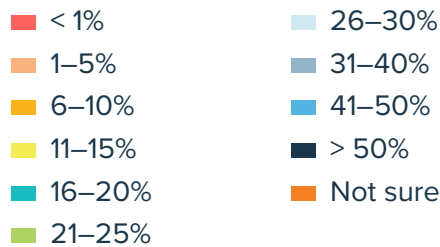
Just under 95 percent of respondents told us they used email marketing to promote listings. The final 5 percent said that, while they didn't use email marketing in 2017, they plan to in 2018.

Of those who used email marketing in 2017, about half used MailChimp, 40 percent used Constant Contact and 35 percent used Buildout. Other email marketing tools that were used by CRE marketing teams in 2017 included HubSpot, Xceligent, iContact and Emma.

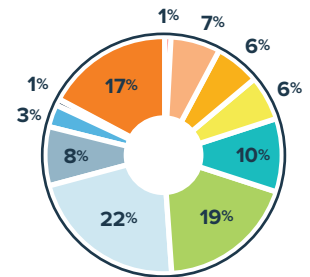
Our survey respondents told us their average open rate of emails typically fell between 21 percent and 30 percent, and their average click-through rate (CTR) was between 1 percent and 10 percent. You can use these numbers to assess the performance of your own email marketing compared to other firms in the country.

Also notable, 17 percent of marketers did not know their average email open rate, and 22 percent did not know their average click-through rate. To maximize ROI of your marketing tactics, your firm should benchmark the performance of those metrics regularly to better understand where you can and should make improvements.

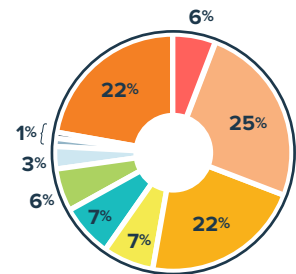
Strong open rates typically indicate particularly compelling subject lines, and above-average CTRs are evidence of engaging calls-to-action and well-targeted email lists. If your metrics are falling below average, you can take related steps to improve your email marketing performance to meet industry benchmarks.



AVERAGE OPEN RATE?



AVERAGE CLICK THROUGH RATE?



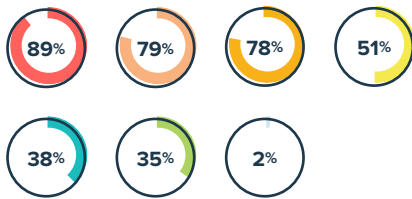
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JUST UNDER 95 PERCENT OF
RESPONDENTS TOLD US THEY
USED EMAIL MARKETING TO
PROMOTE LISTINGS

DID YOU MARKET YOUR COMPANY'S LISTINGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?



Of the CRE marketers we surveyed, about 74 percent said they used social media to market their company's property listings in 2017. Of the platforms they used, the vast majority said they used Facebook (89 percent), followed by Twitter (79 percent) and LinkedIn (78 percent). Just over half of respondents said they used Instagram, and, breaking into the CRE market, about 2 percent said they used Snapchat in 2017.



IF YES, WHAT PLATFORMS DID YOU USE?*

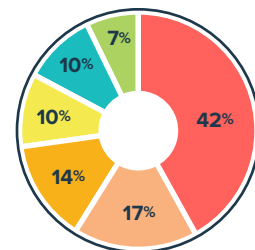


*Respondents had the option to select all.

Many of the respondents who did not use social media to promote listings said they either plan to begin using social media in 2018, or they used it for overall company marketing -- not listings. About 17 percent of marketers who did not use social media to promote properties said their brokers market their own listings on social media.

IF NO, WHY NOT?

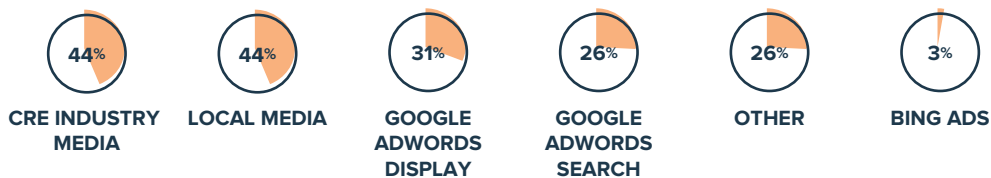
- Other
- Brokers market their own listings on social media
- It is not my role/responsibility
- I don't have time
- My company does not permit social media marketing
- Not sure how to use it



DID YOUR COMPANY RUN DIGITAL AD CAMPAIGNS FOR LISTINGS?



IF YES, WHERE DO YOU ADVERTISE?*



*Respondents had the option to select all.

In 2017, 36 percent of CRE marketers ran digital advertising campaigns through Google or relevant publications to promote listings, and 32 percent more plan to this year. So, digital advertising campaigns could become a CRE marketing mainstay in 2018, when approximately 68 percent of marketers are likely to be using digital ads.

The marketers who did use digital advertising in 2017 told us in our survey that they mostly placed ads in CRE industry media like Bisnow, Connect Media, GlobeSt.com and in local media.

DID YOUR COMPANY USE ANY TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING CHANNELS TO MARKET LISTINGS?



YES



NO, DO NOT
PLAN TO IN 2018



NO, BUT PLAN
TO IN 2018

IF YES, WHICH TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING CHANNELS DID YOUR COMPANY USE?*

- Direct mail
- Newspaper
- Magazine
- Outdoor
- Television
- Other
- Radio



*Respondents had the option to select all.

While digital advertising is on the rise for CRE marketers, traditional advertising may be on the decline. In 2017, 63 percent of marketing teams used traditional advertising channels like direct mail, newspapers, magazines, outdoor or television to market listings. Of the 37 percent that did not use traditional advertising in 2017, only 11 percent plan to use it in 2018.

Direct mail was the most popular (84 percent) tactic used, followed by newspaper advertising (49 percent) and magazine advertising (41 percent). Just 3 percent used television to advertise their CRE property listings.

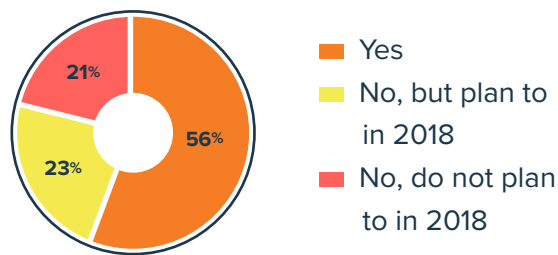
**ABOUT YOUR
COMPANY MARKETING**

02

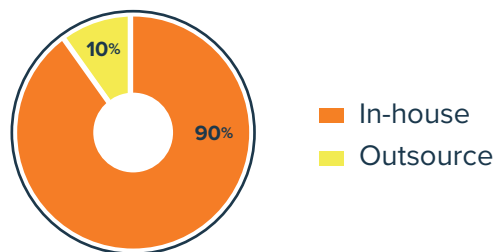
Of the marketers we surveyed, 56 percent said they hosted a company blog in 2017, and of those that did not, 23 percent plan to in 2018. This demonstrates blogging is becoming an industry best practice, as only about 21 percent of brokerages expect to not be blogging by the end of 2018. Blogging and original content are gaining traction because when done well, they can provide a boost to your overall website traffic through SEO and solidify your firm as an expert in the niche industry you serve. With strong blogs and original content, marketers can attract investors, buyers and tenants to their firms' websites and, in turn, help gain more business for the firm's brokers.

The marketers whose teams ran blogs were more likely to write those blogs in-house, and 55 percent noted a positive change in web traffic since they started their blogs. Similarly to our email marketing metrics findings, 24 percent of marketers didn't know if there was any change in their brokerage website's web traffic since they began blogging. These brokerages should begin keeping track of this information because web traffic is valuable data to have at your disposal when planning what marketing tactics are most successful in driving traffic to your website.

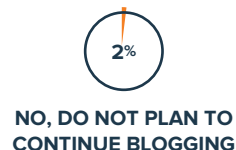
DID YOUR COMPANY HOST A BLOG?



DID YOU WRITE BLOGS IN-HOUSE OR OUTSOURCE?



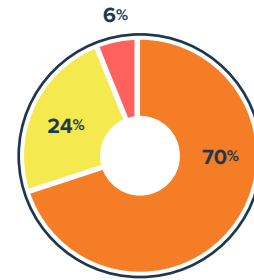
HAVE YOU NOTICED A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN WEB TRAFFIC SINCE STARTING YOUR BLOG?



Seventy percent of surveyed marketers told us their firm produced original content like white papers, infographics and reports in 2017, and 24 percent who did not already create this content said they plan to in 2018. Ninety-one percent of that original content is produced in-house, and 84 percent said content is a lead generator.

Even more marketers — 31 percent — were unsure if their content affected their web traffic. This is valuable information that could help CRE firms determine the ROI of developing content.

DID YOUR COMPANY PRODUCE ANY OTHER ORIGINAL CONTENT?



- Yes
- No, but plan to in 2018
- No, do not plan to in 2018

IF YES, DO YOU GENERATE YOUR OWN CONTENT IN-HOUSE OR DO YOU OUTSOURCE?



IN-HOUSE



OUTSOURCE

DO YOU USE THIS ORIGINAL CONTENT AS A LEAD-GENERATING TOOL?



YES



NO

HAVE YOU NOTICED A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN WEB TRAFFIC SINCE STARTING TO DEVELOP ORIGINAL CONTENT?



YES



NOT SURE



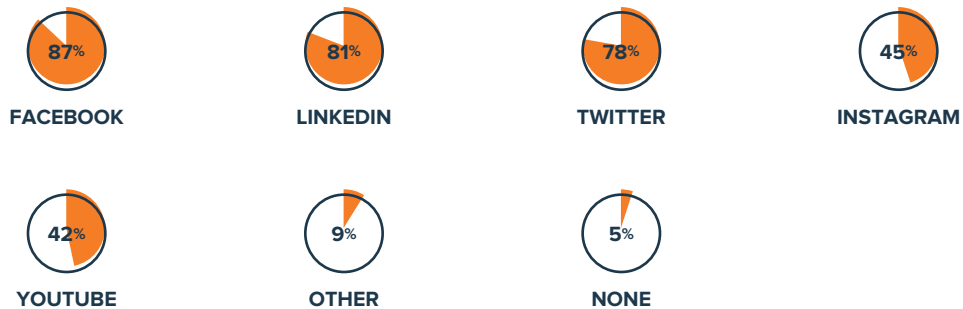
NO, BUT PLAN TO CONTINUE IN 2018



NO, DO NOT PLAN TO CONTINUE IN 2018

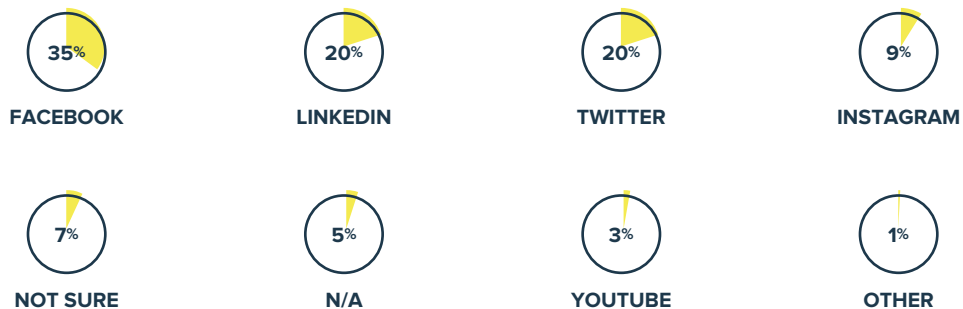
In our **2017 DNA of #CRE Broker Survey**, respondents indicated that they used Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter the most to promote listings, and Facebook received the most engagement. The results of our 2017 Marketer Survey closely matched brokers' responses in regards to which social media channels they use to promote their firms. Just 5 percent of respondents said they didn't use any social media channels to promote their company.

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DID YOU USE FOR YOUR COMPANY'S ONLINE PRESENCE?*



**Respondents had the option to select all.*

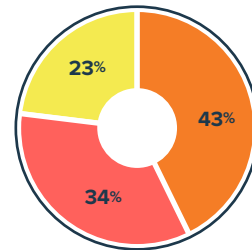
ON WHICH PLATFORM DID YOUR COMPANY RECEIVE THE MOST AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT?



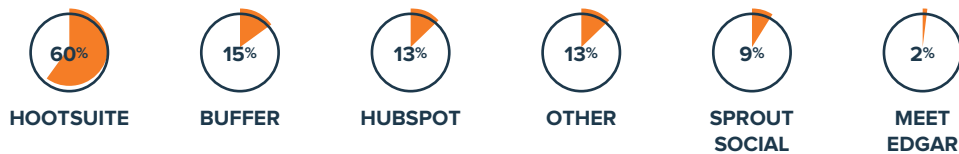
Of the marketers using social media, 43 percent said they used social media automation tools in 2017, and 23 percent said they plan to in 2018. Of the tools they use, the most popular was Hootsuite, followed by Buffer, HubSpot, TweetDeck, Sprout Social and Meet Edgar.

DID YOU USE ANY SOCIAL MEDIA AUTOMATION TOOLS?

- Yes
- No, do not plan to in 2018
- No, but plan to in 2018



IF YES, WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA AUTOMATION TOOLS DID YOU USE?*



**Respondents had the option to select all.*

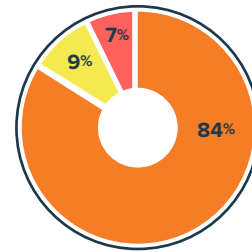
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JUST 5 PERCENT OF
RESPONDENTS SAID THEY
DIDN'T USE ANY SOCIAL
MEDIA CHANNELS TO
PROMOTE THEIR COMPANY

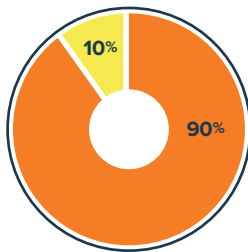
Approximately 84 percent of marketers told us their team sent press releases in 2017, 9 percent said they plan to in 2018 and only 7 percent indicated that they would not. With the vast majority of CRE brokerages sending press releases to make announcements, it's clear press releases remain a standard industry marketing tactic.

Further, 90 percent of marketing teams who send press releases wrote those releases in-house, and 75 percent shared them on their company website. Other targets for press releases were 66 percent CRE media outlets like The News Funnel, Bisnow, GlobeSt.com, Connect Media and REJournals, and 45 percent mainstream media outlets like The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Forbes and Business Insider.

DID YOUR COMPANY SEND OUT PRESS RELEASES?



- Yes
- No, but plan to in 2018
- No, do not plan to in 2018



IF YES, DID YOU WRITE THESE PRESS RELEASES IN-HOUSE OR DID YOU OUTSOURCE?

- In-house
- Outsource

HOW DID YOU SHARE THESE PRESS RELEASES?*

- Company website
- Direct outreach to CRE media outlets
- Direct outreach to mainstream media outlets
- PR platforms
- Other



*Respondents had the option to select all.

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WITH THE VAST MAJORITY OF
CRE BROKERAGES SENDING
PRESS RELEASES TO MAKE
ANNOUNCEMENTS, IT'S CLEAR
PRESS RELEASES REMAIN
A STANDARD INDUSTRY
MARKETING TACTIC.

2018 PREDICTIONS

03

As video and social media become increasingly common CRE marketing trends, almost 62 percent of firms said they plan to adopt video as a listing marketing strategy, and another 62 percent said they plan to adopt social media to market listings. As marketing automation is on the rise, and digital advertising is easier than ever for individuals to manage internally, approximately 41 percent of marketers expect to use these tools in 2018.

CRE marketers are embracing tools that help them both maximize listing exposure and make their jobs easier. Our results showed that every marketer plans to adopt new marketing tools in 2018.

WHAT NEW LISTING MARKETING STRATEGIES DO YOU PLAN TO ADOPT IN 2018?*



*Respondents had the option to select all.

WHAT COMPANY MARKETING STRATEGIES DO YOU PLAN TO ADOPT IN 2018?*



*Respondents had the option to select all.

To promote their own firms, 62 percent of CRE marketers said they plan to try blogging for their company in 2018, and 59 percent said they'll start using social media. Almost half of respondents said they'll begin using video to promote their firms.

And like marketing listings, all marketers plan to implement new tactics to promote their firms in 2018.

Like brokers, marketers expect CRE staffing needs to increase and their firms to actively recruit team members in 2018.

Nearly 62 percent of respondents said in our survey that they expect CRE staffing needs to increase in 2018, approximately 38 percent said staffing needs will stay the same and no one said they expect staffing needs to decrease. About 82 percent said their company plans to actively recruit more brokers, 18 percent were unsure of any broker recruitment plans, and no one said their company would not recruit more brokers.

In our 2017 Broker Edition survey, respondents agreed with marketers about the future of recruitment and staffing in brokerages. This shows expectations of growth are consistent across varying roles in the industry.

**DO YOU BELIEVE THE CRE INDUSTRY STAFFING NEEDS
WILL INCREASE, DECREASE OR STAY THE SAME IN 2018?**



**DOES YOUR COMPANY PLAN TO ACTIVELY RECRUIT
MORE BROKERS AND OTHER TEAM MEMBERS IN 2018?**



**ABOUT YOU AND
YOUR COMPANY**

04

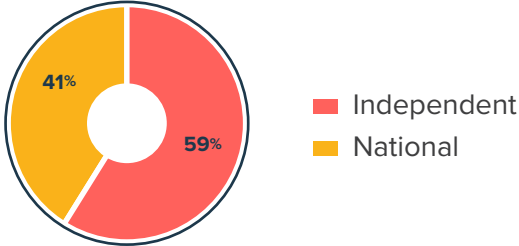
About your company

Close to 60 percent of respondents to our DNA of #CRE Marketer Survey worked in independent firms, while just over 40 percent worked at national firms.

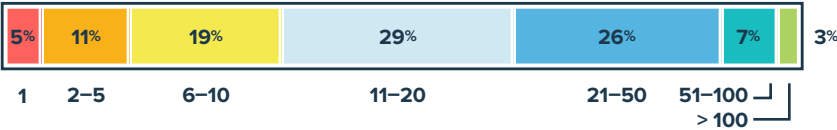
Additionally, about 29 percent of our respondents said there were between 11 and 20 brokers in their local office, with 21 to 50 brokers at a close second.

Almost 40 percent of marketers told us they were the sole marketer in the local office, and just 10 percent said they worked with a team of more than five marketers.

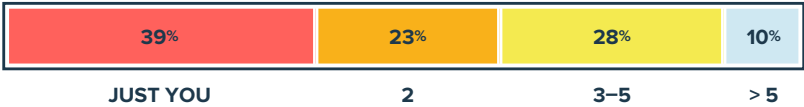
WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY TYPE?



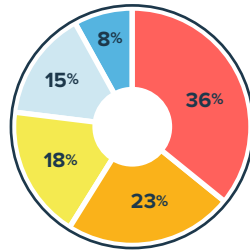
HOW MANY BROKERS IN YOUR LOCAL OFFICE?



HOW MANY MARKETERS IN YOUR LOCAL OFFICE?

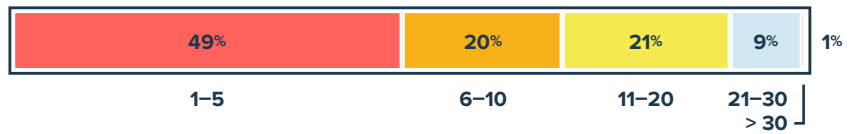


YOUR ROLE



- Marketing director
- Marketing coordinator
- Broker assistant/administrator
- Other
- Marketing designer

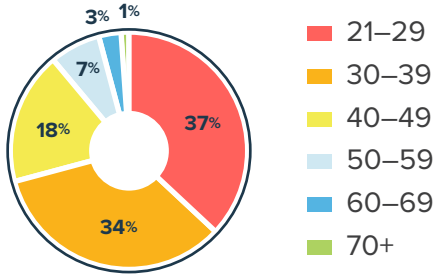
YEARS IN MARKETING



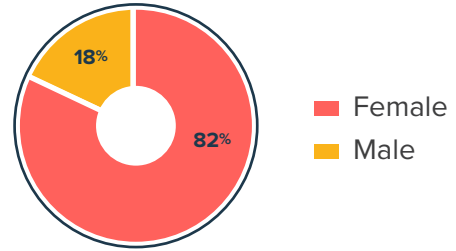
YEARS IN CRE



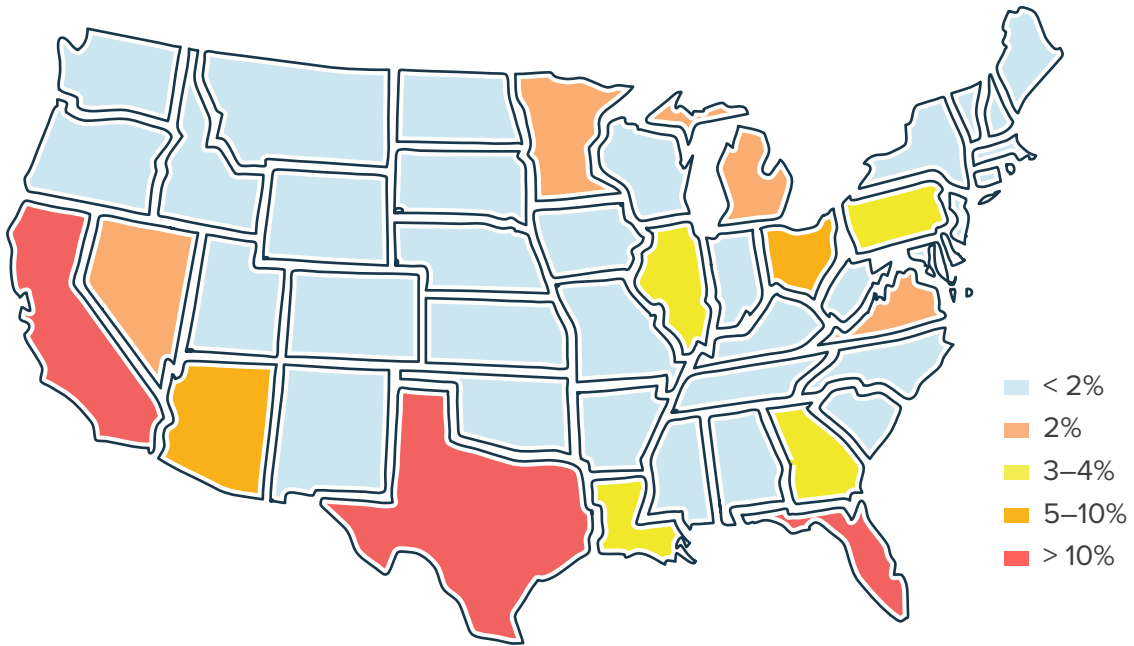
AGE



GENDER



LOCATION



66

AND WHILE CRE BROKERS
ARE PREDOMINANTLY MALE
AND OVER AGE 40, 82
PERCENT OF DNA OF #CRE
MARKETER EDITION SURVEY
RESPONDENTS WERE FEMALE

ABOUT THE SURVEY

05

WHO EXECUTED THE SURVEY

Buildout and theBrokerList partnered to conduct the third annual DNA of #CRE survey, including the Broker Survey and the Marketer Survey. This is the first year the survey included a marketing-specific portion.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

In conducting the DNA of #CRE Marketer Survey, our goal was to gather and share information about the Commercial Real Estate industry, including what CRE marketers do and the tools they use. This information provides a benchmark for other marketing teams to see how they measure up and to learn about marketing best practices across the industry.

WHEN THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

January 2018

THE RESPONDENTS

One hundred thirteen CRE marketers from all across the country participated in the 2017 DNA of #CRE Marketer Edition Survey. These respondents represented a range of demographics, roles, brokerage sizes, geographic regions and property focuses, all highlighted in our aggregate results infographic.

