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UpfrOnt

CALLING ON CREATIVITY

Trading Spaces

Here's one sales associate's creative solution to getting homes sold.

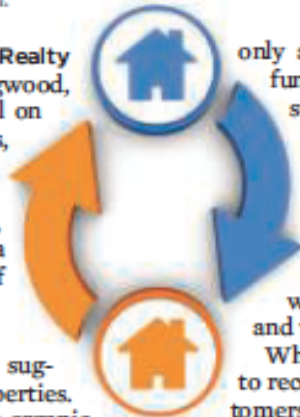


Malte Strauss
Southern Realty Enterprises
Inc., Longwood

Malte Strauss, of Southern Realty Enterprises Inc. in Longwood, knows what it means to call on creativity. He had two listings, on opposite sides of town. Both sellers were having trouble selling their homes, and each wanted to buy a home on the opposite side of town.

Strauss had an idea: He suggested the parties swap properties. For Strauss, the trade was an organic transaction. "My seller was able to unload his larger property and at the same time found something that suited his needs." The other customer, busy with preparations for a growing family, was eager to get into a larger space. "It was a perfect match," says Strauss.

Neither transaction was a 1099 exchange. The way it worked was that Strauss tied the two transactions together contractually so that each part of the transaction was contingent on the other. Closing documents on the two transactions were signed at the same time in one sitting, and



only after both transactions were funded was the swap considered successful.

Both parties signed two sets of documents for two transactions: sale and purchase on property A and sale and purchase on property B. The seller of property A was the buyer of property B and vice versa.

While Strauss had the foresight to recognize the needs of both customers, property trading isn't always a sure thing. "It's a little bit like playing the Lotto," says Strauss. "It can be difficult, but it's not impossible to win."

Here are his tips for success:

1. Be creative. Keep an open mind and be willing to examine atypical approaches to serve customers in complex markets.

2. Communicate. If a seller agrees to a trade, communicate clearly the delicate nature of the transaction and the potential for the trade to collapse.

TECHNOLOGY

Must-have Safety App

Stay safe with this new app, designed by a fellow real estate professional.

Michelle Jones, a sales associate with Realty Austin in Austin, Texas, has had her share of uncomfortable situations, including the time she was showing a vacant home, by herself, and the prospective buyer tried to kiss her. Thankfully, when Jones rebuffed him the buyer left quietly. "No one knew where I was; anything could have happened," according to Jones, who says this is only one of many uncomfortable situations she's experienced.

Soon after, Jones and her husband decided to build a safety app that would allow real estate professionals—and anyone in potentially dangerous situations—to easily call 911, record information and locate local hospitals.

Called Real Alert, the app is available for both iPhone and Android phones.

Real Alert is currently available on iTunes and Android Market at a price of \$1.99. It's listed in the "Lifestyle" category and is compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. **Real Alert is available for download at [itunes.](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/real-alert/id436455476?mt=8)** apple.com/us/app/real-alert/id436455476?mt=8 or market.android.com/details?id=com.realalert.android&feature=search_result.

