

**EPISODE 797**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:00.0] ANNOUNCER** Welcome to the Real Estate Syndication Show. Whether you are a seasoned investor or building a new real estate business, this is the show for you. Whitney Sewell talks to top experts in the business. Our goal is to help you master real estate syndication.

And now your host, Whitney Sewell.

[INTERVIEW]

**[0:00:24.4] WS:** This is your daily real estate syndication show. I'm your host, Whitney Sewell. Today, our guest is Robert Syfert, thanks for being on the show Robert.

**[0:00:32.1] RS:** Absolutely, a pleasure. Thanks for having me on.

**[0:00:35.3] WS:** Robert is an innovator in real estate investment industry who creates software tools and services that enable real estate investors to do things better and faster and is the founder of Investor PO, property list manager, and USA Portfolio Real estate visionary for realestateinvestor.com. With well over a decade of experience in the industry, he has sold and managed hundreds of investment properties and has built three successful startups from the ground up. He's passionate about being part of the solution and finding answers to the problems that hold real estate investors back from growing and scaling their businesses.

He gives back to the industry through his mentorship program and business coaching services. You know, Robert and I were talking before the show and he has a background in sales and he has some skills that man, anybody in the real estate business needs to know how to do. Some of that is even, you know, just like our follow-up process and if you're in the syndication

business, if you don't have a follow-up process, you're not planning to raise much capital from investors.

I'm looking forward to getting into this and him helping us to think through how he's built relationships for the long term and even develop automations to help with that, it's so important. We cannot keep up with all of this just by ourself, most likely if you're scaling, you know, if you're really growing your business. Robert, welcome to the show, grateful to have met you, get us started, who you are, what you do and then let's dive in to how we can help the listeners create that automation so they can scale and follow up so they can build those relationships that are so crucial.

**[0:02:07.7] RS:** Yeah, thanks again Whitney, it's a pleasure coming on the show. Like you said, Robert Syfert. Originally from the Midwest, born and raised, lived there my whole life, started my whole real estate empire. Back then, quite a few years ago now. Living in Tampa Florida, basically living my vacation life that I enjoy. And all of it is piggybacked off of just the things that I took from sales coming into real estate and turning my business into focusing on the relationship more than tripled our business and then it opened the door to all the startups that occurred over the last few years just to help others gain that level of ability to scale.

Because the reality is, this is all relationship business. For me, anything in sales is relationship-driven. And the more you focus on the relationship, the better, right? Relationships, there's only so many as you kind of eluded to, it's always so many you can personally manage and truly stay in touch with. That's where automation and some other things you can do come into play.

To really just help foster that relationship where you may be limited in time and ability to just do that on a daily and weekly basis.

**[0:03:11.4] WS:** No, that's awesome. I love how you just said, focusing on relationships more than tripled your business and I would just like the listener to think about that for a minute. I'm focusing on relationships and I agree completely. I mean, it doesn't matter if you're talking

about brokers, you're talking about investors or whoever in the business property management teams. Man, those relationships have been crucial in so many aspects of our business.

Let's get started, how have you done that Robert, you know, let's talk about – let's get into the automation and just how you've created the follow-up system to help you do that better in the scale.

**[0:03:45.0] RS:** Yeah, absolutely. Number one, maybe I had an advantage coming in, right? I come from a sales background so I spent many years where, follow up, follow up, follow up. Follow up is king, right? And it's just that's it. I actually didn't fully apply it to real estate in the beginning because I was so focused on transactions, "I got to buy another house, I got to go find another person to buy the house from me right after I'm done with it," and so I focused on that.

Once we took a step back and said wait a minute, this is so no different than any other sale, I came from the finance industry, we should be following up and cultivating these relationships with the deals we're not doing, we shifted everything. And, we knew we had to put some automation into it because we just – there's too much when you have thousands of leads to be able to do that. Especially even hundreds.

When we made that shift, we started to say okay, take a step back, what is it that I want to do with this person, not their property, not buying or selling, right? How would I want to continue to communicate with them until the transaction's done? You have to take that step back first because like you said, right? It could be agency you're dealing with or brokers.

It could be lenders that you're keeping a relationship with. In the case of the next syndication that's coming up, right? Or, property management-related and whether that's tenants or contractors or et cetera. You take a step back and say, how would I personally want to continue to foster a relationship with that person, right? What would I say, what would I do if I was just trying to touch base, right?

Think about it from that perspective because that's the minimum. How you build a relationship is touch base, let a person know you're still thinking about them, and whatever the transactional side of that relationship might be, what is that, right? From there, what you need to do on a minimum level, no automation, right? I would show you how to automate this with no tool but a Google calendar or whatever calendar you choose probably has similar attributes, right?

I assume you have their email and their phone number most likely, that's the first step in the relationship. If you have their home address or business address, even better because I'm going to give you a little trick there that I really took away from the book, *Giftology*, and the thought process is just –

**[0:05:54.0] WS:** What's the name of the book?

**[0:05:55.1] RS:** It's *Giftology*, I think it's John Ruhlin, wrote a good book and it just – he doesn't talk about this specifically but having the address allows you to send gifts, right? I don't take it to that level with automation yet, now that I say that out loud, that's a good idea. But we do take it to the level of taking the same concept and just physically having something from you adds to the relationship and you have already separated yourself, right? It's another level.

Number one, set yourself in a calendar, a reminder. I would recommend, depending on the relationship, right? Maybe you don't need to contact the person, if it's an aggressive thing like a seller, you're probably going to contact them aggressively when they first reach out to you because you're trying to get a transaction going with them and then it's going to pitter-patter out over time, right? Maybe a week apart, two weeks apart, 30 days apart.

First month is generally more aggressive, after that, it's less aggressive. Other relationships like buyer relationships or lenders, I would highly recommend figuring out how often you would normally want to reach out to this person, is it every other week? Is it once every few weeks, right? Is it the – if that's the case, then you can either one, set a reminder in your calendar and

you can put in a list of names, right? I would recommend a time block first thing in the morning, just to remind you for the day.

“Hey, follow-ups” list out the names you want to follow up with, two weeks from now, here’s the list – or you could have a weekly schedule, depending on how many you have, right? Maybe every Thursday or a Friday, Friday follow up day and list out all the people you’re going to follow up with that day, right? If you have a ton of people, maybe it’s like 20 people every week over the course of the month, you’ve hit a hundred people or so, right?

Depending on that number, and you can see where automation can come into this when you start to get a lot of people. If you do this on that basis though, on those days, it is simply sending a quick email. “Hey, was just thinking about you, wanted to touch base and see how you’re doing, how’s family life going, how things are going, how are you? Are you still looking out for more syndications, have you heard anything that’s coming up that I might be interested in? I’m working on some stuff that might be interesting to you right now.” Email you, can be a little bit longer but I would still, at the point, it’s just building a relationship.

Then, to take it to the next level because everyone does email and most people don’t open emails today. Still have, you know, 20, 30% and if its it’s relationship driven, this is where we tripled our open rates and click rates, was just being very thoughtful of what our emails were going to say. To add to that though, especially today and over the years, we have found the next two to be the biggest ones and that’s text messaging.

Send them a quick text message. Now there, you can be a lot shorter but still fostering a relationship, right? What would you want to say to that person on a regular basis, you’re just touching base, right? Engaging, trying to – it could be an engagement question to get them to answer so there’s a response and some kind of like, “Cool, we both text back and forth.” Text gets open highly today and most people respond and usually you’re getting that person versus an assistant or someone else that might be involved in the email.

If you want to take it to the next level but don't have to actually call somebody, you can get a system. I mean, you don't even need ours for this, you can go get a system called Slybroadcast. Slybroadcast is a ringless voicemail delivery system. What that means is, it has technology that you can have an app right on your phone, you can record a voicemail message as if you got a hold of someone's voicemail when you call them, say what it is you want to say and then hit send and actually goes directly into their inbox.

They actually look like they got a voicemail, your number shows up as a missed call, they never got a phone call go, the technology is kind of cool in how it works. The cool thing about that and taking it to the next level is they heard your personal voice, right? What's better in a relationship, right? Email's great, text message is great, it's words.

Your physical voice, when you hear someone's voice, it's more meaningful to you, right? You could again, just using it to touch base. Now, if there's a transactional side to that, you can add in a piece of that, right to that thing. But now, they feel, "man, this guy called me, he texts me, he sent me an email, he really cares about me." Right? If you do that on a regular basis, you are fostering a relationship.

You don't have to talk about a deal, you could just talk about "hey, how are you doing, how's life. Done anything interesting in the last couple of weeks, done anything interesting since the last time we talked to each other?" That's going to foster a relationship. If you're really good with this, you have a place where you're keeping and storing notes related to that relationship.

So, when they do communicate with you, you have more information to talk about when you're really talking to them. Now, a piece where I said about the *Giftology*. If you have their physical address, you could also send them a simple thank you card. I recommend, whenever you do a transaction, drop them a piece of mail. Now, gifts are great in that area, of course, that is a little harder to automate because it's date-specific, something just happened.

But you could automate something as simple as a thank you card. Or something your sequence that sends him a picture about what's going on in your life with a little message.

“Hey, just wanted to send you this, thought it might be cool for you to see what I do in my personal life.” Right? Anything that helps foster that relationship and physical mail is cool because just like the voice, it’s real personal touch, people could touch and feel it, it’s a little bit different than just some text that’s gone in a week or two which is why I recommend, every couple of weeks or at least at a minimum, once a month, no matter what that relationship is, following up.

Now, using your Google calendar would allow you to create a reminder for you to do that. Now, at realestateinvestor.com and the previous other startups that are all rolled into this where that exactly what I just said, we built to do to all of our sellers, all of our agents, all of our contractors, all of our buyers, every relationship that we had that touched our business, we did, then we tripled the real estate business with massive growth.

That’s what allowed me to move to Tampa Florida and run my business virtually and we were going to expand and then we started up software because we realized, “Huh, everyone in real estate is not doing this and there’s no tool to do it.” Some people got an email system, some people figured out this thing about text when it came out. But no one did all of it.

We created our touch platform which automates all of that, right? It literally automates email, text message, ringless voice mail drops and postcard sequences, all built out different for every relationship, different for a couple of different stages that you could be at in that relationship and then a place to organize all the notes, thoughts and communication with that person. It helps keep you organized.

Now, that’s important. Like I said, you don’t need something like that if you’ve got say, a hundred or less people and if a hundred or less people and you are fine with taking the manual process, you could do 20 of those a week, 25 of those a week and it won’t take you long to shoot through all those, you could send a similar message, if it’s a similar type of person. Just to stay engaged and build a relationship.

Now, when you get way beyond that, in the level of people, that's a little harder organized that it would make sense to have something besides a Google sheet or a doc that can keep track of all of that.

**[0:13:07.6] WS:** Robert, it is exciting. Like I'm just grateful that you just grateful that you just went through all that because I feel like the follow up is so important, when I first started networking, when I first committed to the syndication business, I was going to every conference, I mean, flying all over the country for a couple of years just as hard as I could go, meeting as many people as possible and I can tell the listener right now.

I mean, the most important thing is to follow up. Because most people, majority are not going to. Those business cards are lost, you know, by that night for a lot of people. Much less by over the next few days or week. You have to have a process and I quickly developed a process and mine was very manual like this. However I was not doing tax and you know they ring those voice mails and those things just through email or even a phone call encouraging people for a phone call and trying to follow up that way and then initially that was kind of it. I didn't have a way to keep doing it. You know we have the systems we have now and so I just like how it can be that simple for the listener right now if you are growing your investor base, I mean there you go.

I mean Robert just laid it out for you. I mean if you just did what he said very quickly you are going to grow faster than the majority of your competitors that are at the same level or at the same stage in this business. So Robert let's move past that just a little bit let's say, okay it is very possible now. You know we'll have 150 investors in a deal, thousands of investors on our investor base. Obviously, it is impossible for me to send that many text messages.

Follow up with you know personally with that many investors, how do we automate that a little bit after we've had some scale? Can you give us some, I guess some tips on you know, I wanted to be genuine, right? I do take notes and I do remember a lot of them believe it or not but still, you know in following up with that many, it's like wait a minute. I afford to be personalized anyway, what suggestions do you have?

**[0:14:54.3] RS:** Yeah, this is where automation really comes into key, right? Because you know, once it gets to a certain level it is kind of unmanageable and I have one of those memories too or I just happen to remember a lot of details. Sometimes I wish I didn't remember all the details I do but it is good in relationships, right? Because it's not I remember this guy. This happened in this conversation we had was about this thing, right?

But at some point, that gets beyond that where you still may trigger your memory when you meet a person or their name pops and you'd be like, "Okay, I remember" or a note that you wrote down. So, I love being able to have it organized and it is actually this exact reason and regardless to real estate is we realized — because my background in sales — that this is anywhere that you sound anything. The relationship is the focus, and if you focus on that, money always comes.

So that's one thing and in that, the automation we created so we have our platform as a complete CRM that has this as a component of it for real estate investors buying and selling houses. From that, we realized, "Wow, there's a massive need" that even if you are just getting started in real estate at the lowest level you can never even done a deal and you just need to get into it. Well, the number one thing we know they're going to need is they need to track everything they're doing.

But more importantly, they've got to keep an organized place and automate the follow-up. Follow-up is the most lacking thing and there is Harvard studies, Google studies, tons of sales studies that would say most relationships are transactions but don't even happen until past the 10<sup>th</sup> time that you've touched that person where there is text, email, call, piece of mail, right? So that makes it that much more important.

Most things you will ever do in your business sales related wise aren't going to happen the first time you meet somebody, write you off the business card. Forget about the conversation but if you could foster that or put them into a system that fostered and catered the relationship until

they were ready to go further in your relationship and then you got a relationship that you need to keep ongoing that is where automation comes in.

And so, I don't know how to – there is no other system I am aware of that does it as much as we do. So, we created a light version of our software that does all of that, right? That's it's whole focus. It is not related to what kind of properties you're doing because we take that out of that system. That system is nothing more than a contact and lead management system with automated follow-up for both types of relationships.

So, a contact meaning, "Yeah, I have never done anything with this person but we've made contact." I got the business card at the network meeting, they called me once, I don't really know them but we are in contact and I think they could turn into what we call a lead, right? Which is someone that I could do business with. So at the contact level that relationship is a little different the way you communicate would be different.

So, what you would say to that person would be different than someone you've done a syndication deal with already in your guy's example, right? So, in the contact level, you could write out, "Here is my text messages, here is my emails, here is my voicemails I would leave" they could be similar in nature, right? Because again if they are only hearing it like once a month, they don't even remember what you said a month ago but over time, they consistently admit it.

"I am always in contact with Whitney. Whitney is always checking on me" all right? And so, automation is going to allow that to happen and keep it personalize because now you have written out what you would write to all of them and then when they respond, if you get an instant notification on your phone to say, "Hey, they just responded" and hear what they said, then you can take your notes and personalize it even further, right?

Because now they are responding, you can have a real conversation but getting the conversation started if they are ready because here's the thing with automation you may send them a message every month. It may be three months before they reply to one of those and

that is okay because you reached out. Once they reach back out that is when your notes come important and you want to foster the relationship further.

And then in a perfect world, which we do with our touch platform, the light version, is once they're someone you're doing business with, you are going to talk to them different. You have a little deeper relationship, you are going to say things a little bit differently, huge or you have – the only exercise you have in doing it automation is writing out what you would say and how often you would want to say it if you are engaging that relationship anyway.

So, if you think about your follow up, you then could put it into a system that can just send that for you and so then it becomes automated that allows you hit – you can have a thousand messages go out today. I could be on the beach, right? And if they reply, which will be way less than a thousand people reply, right? But the ones that do, you can see, “Oh that sounds something that needs my reply back. They were just thanking me.”

Now if they said something, I would take that the next step like, “Oh yeah, I am doing X and oh that's amazing. It's so great.” I remember the last time and I will be checking in, “I remember the last time you told me you did XYZ, how did that happen?” right? But the automation is just getting the relationship and the conversation started. There are other platforms like I recommended. One little piece I would get Slybroadcast. The texting can be done from your phone, email can be done from your phone and if you download the Slybroadcast app, I think it is free other than once you send messages like a couple of pennies to send the message. Those are things that you can do that are automated but they at least help you get started and then as you build up your database, definitely I would recommend automating it.

**[0:20:00.0] WS:** Incredible value right there Robert, thank you so much. Unfortunately we're going to pivot just a little bit to a few final questions but I hope the listeners paid attention and taking notes because Robert has just told you how to triple your business ultimately by following up and automating it so that way it's for sure getting done and you are not just getting bogged down by sending the follow-up messages but helping to foster those relationships. So Robert, you know what is a way that you prepare for a downturn?

**[0:20:25.1] RS:** So we are putting a lot of cash to the side. We have been preparing for a downturn because we heavily expect, we really think this has just been pushed off with all of the forbearances and things going on and that there is waiting for it to come. So two things: One, setting aside and preparing for the ability to buy more things when they come cheaper but at the same time, maybe different than a lot of people. We have actually doubled down on marketing and the reason is that when all of this negative stuff happened, a lot of people got scared and started pulling them out on your marketing. Well, what I know in business or what I understand in business is the day you stop marketing is that your business goes under because that's relationships you do believe in knowing what you do. So we assumed and rightfully so, we could see it on our lead volume that if we double down on marketing, we are taking up –

I love a guy we interviewed who said, “I want to take up the mental space that they have. So I want to be even more in front of these people so when they do have a problem or they do have something that is to be solved, they are going to think of me because now they see all of my marketing because most of my competition went away.” So those are our two things, then you're cash ready and doubling down on marketing to get those people with you.

And kind of take up mental space, mental space across the people you want to do business with so they know you instead of someone else that's looking through the same things.

**[0:21:44.0] WS:** You know Robert, I believe that anyone that's successful in business and in real estate must have a high level of self-discipline. How have you gained such a high level of self-discipline?

**[0:21:51.7] RS:** Yeah, I've continued to play with this one, right? This is – I'll ebb and flow I think into what works. The biggest thing that helped me take this to a whole another level, I did a challenge called 75 hard and I actually did it twice this year and that is it's whole purpose is to develop grit, perseverance, it is a very disciplined – you have to do five things every day for 75 days or you fail enough to start over.

A guy named Andy Forssell runs multiple nine figured companies started it and I've heard it the first time, I'm like, "Oh, I can see where I thought I had great self-discipline and I was lacking and not doing a whole bunch of stuff."

**[0:22:28.4] WS:** Tell me the name of that again?

**[0:22:30.9] RS:** 75 Hard. You can do 75, you can go do that and millions will come up.

**[0:22:36.6] WS:** What's a daily habit or maybe one of those or a couple of them that you're very disciplined about that's helped you achieve success?

**[0:22:42.1] RS:** Yeah, my biggest one is the way I started my day. When I wake up I don't look at my phone. So that is number one. A lot of people and I used to jump up, look at social media, look at my email — I don't. My ringer is completely off and so I wake up and I go into a routine. Generally speaking, that's going to be some combination of I love reading in the morning. It is one of my favorite things to do. It gets my mind going in the right way and I love some form of exercise.

Like generally speaking in the morning, I like to just go for a walk. So usually I start my morning I'll jump out of bed, go for a walk in the morning and then I will come home and read. That's usually the way I start most of my days and that, I probably spent a couple of hours doing that then I look at my phone and see if there is anything that needs my attention but I have already set the mind frame to allow me to accomplish what I want.

And then even once I've checked that it is usually a quick thing and then I go into, I love and learn what's the one thing that's going to help push my business forward that I can do today and I want to knock it out as early as possible.

**[0:23:39.1] WS:** Awesome. That is some great value right there. Robert, what's a way that you have recently improved your business that we could apply to ours?

**[0:23:45.8] RS:** The biggest is the automation. It really is just apply, finding – we are actually working right now that’s already like eliminating some overhead and proving some things by finding other areas where, “Man, can we automate that? Is there a way to like make our software plug in that hole right there and it could take three less people to do that job? Continuing to look for ways and things that are repetitive that could just be automated.

**[0:24:12.0] WS:** What’s your best source for meeting new investors right now?

**[0:24:17.2] RS:** When you said right now, threw a little monkey wrench, it was offense, which is a little bit more troublesome today. I still think meeting the right people for me is some sort of events even if it’s attending them virtually today. Some have put on live events and if you’re okay with traveling and going to live events, I still – I don’t think there is – for me, especially because it’s the relationship. I don’t think there is anything better than the live event, being able to meet someone in person.

**[0:24:42.4] WS:** What’s the number one thing that’s contributed to your success?

**[0:24:45.3] RS:** Relationships. 100%. Putting people first.

**[0:24:50.0] WS:** How do you like to give back?

**[0:24:53.1] RS:** Many ways. I love to donate to things that – I’m very focused on kids. I donate to several charities that are related to helping kids that don’t have as much. That’s my favorite way. Anything to do with kids, I’m probably hooked and we’ll donate money to it.

**[0:25:09.9] WS:** Robert, amazing show. I mean, it’s just incredible. I hope the listeners have listened closely and have taken notes, it doesn’t matter if you are just getting started in the syndication business and developing relationship with your first few investors or if you have hundreds of investors or thousands on your list.

Man, you have learned a lot today from Robert. Thank you so much Robert, tell the listeners how they can get in touch with you and learn more about you.

**[0:25:32.3] RS:** Yeah, thanks so much Whitney, it is a pleasure, I'm glad that I could add some value, that's what I'm always looking to do. The easiest way to reach me, and you can connect with me on call, text, email or any social media that you like to connect on, is iamrob360.com.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[0:25:48.5] WS:** Don't go yet, thank you for listening to today's episode. I would love it if you would go to iTunes right now and leave a rating and written review. I want to hear your feedback. It makes a big difference in getting the podcast out there. You can also go to the Real Estate Syndication Show on Facebook so you can connect with me and we can also receive feedback and your questions there that you want me to answer on the show.

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[OUTRO]

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