

The New Real Estate
Agent's Essential

Toolbox

A REAL ESTATE EBOOK FROM



A Smartphone

It might sound obvious, but every real estate agent needs to be in constant contact with their clients and it's likely that clients will want to communicate with you via their smartphones. That means you'll have to be able to call, text, send photos, send videos, send email, post on social media, or shoot over links to properties via a smartphone.

Smartphones are also useful in terms of apps. If you have a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) platform, you'll likely be able to integrate that into your smartphone, as well as, of course, take The CE Shop courses on it.



Must-Have Apps:



Zillow Premier Agent

Zillow is one of the most powerful real estate search engines at your fingertips. What's more, it's easy to use and is great for monitoring activity in a certain area or neighborhood.



Facebook

If you haven't already, download the Facebook app. The Facebook app is your on-the-go hub for managing your Facebook page. Don't forget to join one of our market-specific Facebook groups to network with other students, and stay current with local real estate trends.



Instagram

Curb appeal hooks, and there's no better way to express that than with Instagram. Post, share, comment, and edit photos all with the touch of a thumb. Better yet, connect your Instagram and Facebook accounts to be able to post to both.

A Laptop

Like a smartphone, a laptop is useful in many of the same ways. To become a successful agent, you'll need a laptop to efficiently search for properties, manage your clients' information, write email, and manage the flow of documents between entities, etc. With many laptops rivaling desktops in terms of price and performance, there's no reason not to make your favorite coffee shop your second office.



Must-Have Programs or Web-based Accounts:



DocuSign - One of the most prominent electronic signature services out there, DocuSign makes signing and saving important documents easy, so long as there's an internet connection.



Trello - Trello is a free project management platform that helps you keep track of what you need to do. Great for teams or individuals, think of it as a sophisticated to-do list.



IXACT Contact - Every real estate agent needs a customer relationship management tool, and IXACT Contact is a great place to start. Starting at \$33 per month, IXACT is a great tool for managing your book of clients, following up on leads, and sending marketing emails.



“Ask any top-performing real estate agent what their **go-to-must-have-can't-live-without** tool is, and chances are they'll say a great real estate CRM.”

— *Chris Linsell,*
contributor at The Close



A Clean, Reliable Vehicle

With the exception of places like New York City, having a clean reliable vehicle is a must for real estate agents. Don't worry if you don't have a luxury vehicle, it's not worth taking on the financial burden. Rather, just keep your current vehicle in tip-top shape. Or if you need a vehicle, a few-year-old crossover or sedan will be plenty of car.



Vehicles to consider:

Mazda CX-5

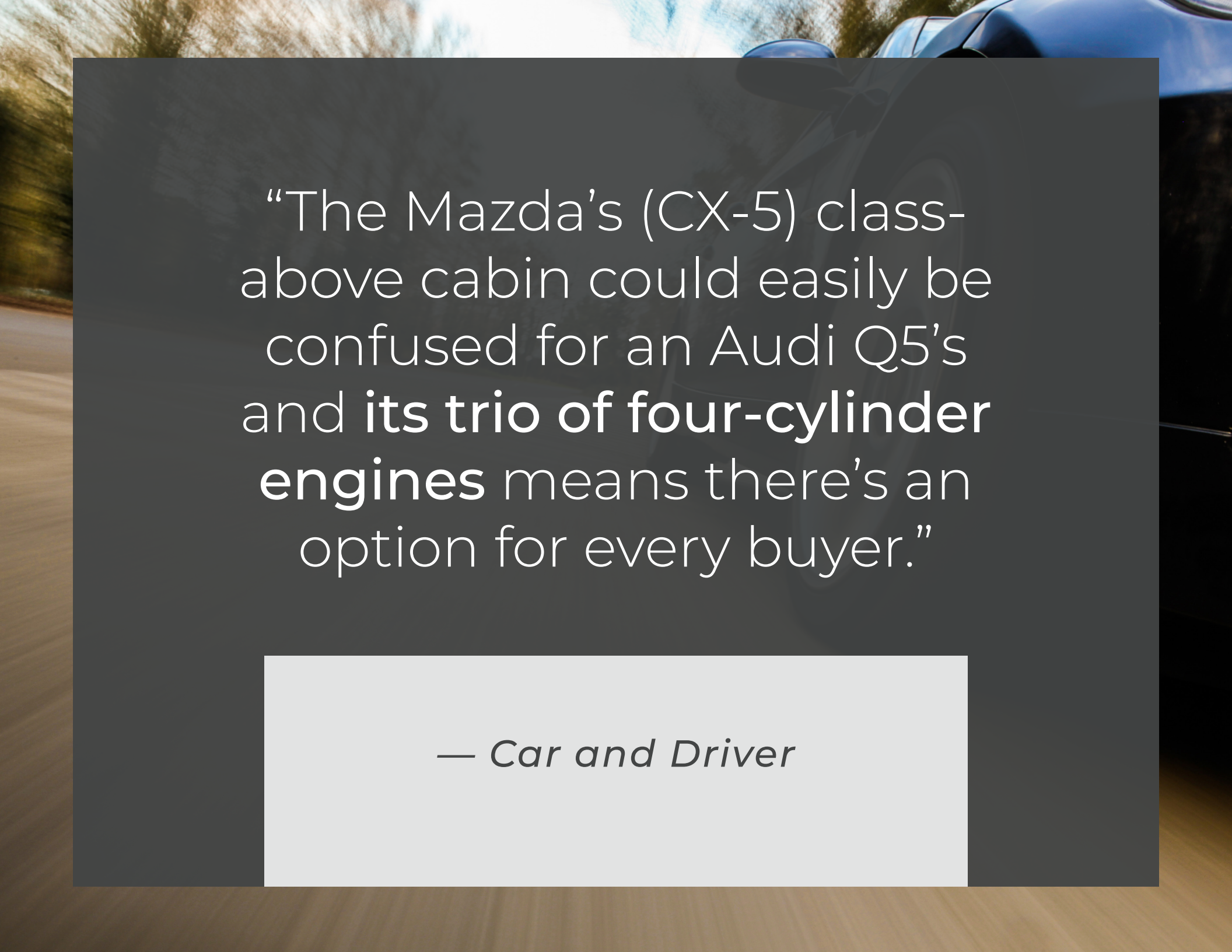
Reliable, spacious, efficient, fun to drive, and stylish, the CX-5 is a great affordable crossover SUV that's the perfect business partner.

Honda Accord

One of the most awarded cars of all time, the Accord is a practical, stylish, efficient, and reliable way to get from a to b. Models come with lots of standard features, as well as luxury appointments on par with vehicles in higher price brackets.

Toyota Sienna

Minivans are excellent all-around vehicles, and the Sienna is among the best. Perfect for family life at home or taking clients around town, the Sienna has plenty of room for hauling signs, supplies for events, and is a pleasure to drive. Plus, it's a Toyota which means you can put a lot of miles on the clock.



“The Mazda’s (CX-5) class-above cabin could easily be confused for an Audi Q5’s and **its trio of four-cylinder engines** means there’s an option for every buyer.”

— *Car and Driver*



A Supportive Brokerage Firm

If you missed our ebook on choosing the right brokerage firm, then we recommend giving that a [quick read](#). There's a lot to consider when choosing a brokerage firm, and pros and cons to each type. Finding the right fit is key to getting traction in your career, and many come with a host of tools for their agents to use. Some even come with their own online assets that make marketing your properties easier. When you interview a brokerage firm, get the necessary information on commission splits, then ask them what assets they provide to support your business.

Things to consider:

Some brokerage firms like RE/MAX let agents keep the majority of their commission but they do little in the way of marketing support. You'll also have to rent desk space at a local office for a monthly fee. You'll need to consider what you're going to do for things like health insurance, saving for retirement, etc.

Social Media Presence

The nice thing about social media accounts is that they're free to sign up for and a great way to reach potential clients. As you progress in your career, you'll be able to run your own social media ad campaigns that let you reach new audiences for a fraction of the cost of traditional methods such as park benches, billboards, etc. If you really become busy, there are tools available, like Hootsuite, that let you manage all of your social media platforms from one place.

Must-Have Platforms:



Facebook - Facebook seems obvious, but it's worth a mention because once you start gaining momentum Facebook can be a powerful tool. Start by posting once per day and getting the word out to your inner social circle.



Instagram - Instagram is a great way to show a property's visual appeal. You also have the opportunity to post videos, which is great if you have drone footage of a property or want to do a walkthrough.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white button-down shirt and a grey skirt, is standing and looking down at a tablet computer she is holding with both hands. She is positioned on the left side of the page, in front of a window with white blinds. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Security

Real estate agents work with all walks of life, and while most people are good natured, there are simple tools you can use to protect yourself against those who aren't. Beyond having your cell phone on you at all times, companies like [invisaWear](#) produce jewelry that can connect to your phone and alert the police when pressed.

You can also make use of tech tools like [PeopleSmart](#) which lets agents perform a background check through the convenience of an app. That way you can be sure your client is who they say they are. For a more in depth view of safety, check out our Ebook ['Agent Safety: How to Keep Safe Working in the Real Estate Space'](#).

As always, simple things such as telling someone where you expect to be, keeping an eye on guests during an open house, and following your gut instinct go a long way.

Final Thoughts

Regardless of where you are in your career, one thing is certain: being genuine, friendly, and organized should always be at the core of your business. The ability to purchase and subscribe to tools will come in time, so don't hesitate to do things the old-fashioned way if need be, e.g. meeting people in person, calling leads, and writing things on paper. People sell people, and tools are just a way to get your brand in front of more of them.



About us

Founded in 2005, The CE Shop has become the leading provider of online real estate education. With industry-leading pass rates and support from Pre-Licensing through CE, our students are better prepared to set themselves up for success.

Our ever-expanding course catalog of Pre-Licensing, Exam Prep, and Continuing Education products are trusted throughout the industry and offer agents across the country the education they rely on.

With products available in all 50 states and D.C., we're driven by a desire to constantly improve, both for ourselves and our students.

