

# TOP AGENT

## MAGAZINE



### Mike Anderson – Whitefish, Montana

Mike Anderson is passionate about many things – family, skiing, mountain biking, and mountain getaways – but most of all, his hometown of Whitefish, Montana and the beautiful surrounding Flathead Valley. In fact, he couldn't wait to return after leaving Whitefish to attend college in Oregon! Deeply connected to the area, he is drawn to the majestic mountains, the friendly people, and the wide range of outdoor activities that the area offers, such as skiing, fly fishing, hiking, and mountain biking. It's no surprise that Mike turned to real estate, building a successful career around sharing his love for the area.

When Mike returned to Whitefish, he was managing the busiest bar in town. One night, an out-of-town customer asked Mike for a referral to a "good real estate agent." Later, Mike joked with the bar owner, "Maybe I should get my real estate license... I could take my clients with me!" And, with the support of the bar's owner, that's exactly what Mike did! He juggled both real estate and bar management for a while but within three months, he was becoming far too busy to manage both careers. Mike left his position at the bar and began focusing on his real estate career full time.

"The first year was CRAZY! In 2005, I was named Rookie of the Year and had eight listings under contract immediately. I was also named Top Listing Agent and Top New Salesperson. From there, I built a strong referral business. My sphere of influence has been locals who knew me, liked me, and would refer me. Everyone called to work with me. I haven't looked back," he says.

He adds, "Lots of people know my personality. They know I'm driven. They know I have a good work ethic, I don't slow down, and I'm detail-oriented. Real estate is not that much different from managing a bar. You've got to listen and respond to your customers." Mike's second year was even more successful than his first. He says word of mouth from locals and out of state buyers who find him via his website have helped grow his business. "They'll tell me, 'We have similar interests and like the outdoors.' They're happy to find someone like them."

Since 90 percent of buyers start their search process online, he gets direct calls from buyers who want to see properties filtered through him. He lists about 70 properties per year. He hasn't added team members. "I am my own entity," he shares. "It's a challenge but I operate under a smooth system. I work a lot but am comfortable carrying up to 75 listings. Unless the properties are very unique, I can move them."

What does Mike see as essential to building a successful real estate business? "Hands down, what sets me apart is communication. I answer every text or voice mail within the same day. The biggest thing I hear from clients is they appreciate that I get back to them promptly," he says. This dedication to detail is proven by Mike's own personal statistics. He has been in the Top 10 producers in NW Montana for the last 8 years. Last year, he was voted as Whitefish's Best Real Estate Agent. In 2014, Mike and National Parks Realty helped more people in the Northwest Montana area than any other brokerage.

"About 80 percent of agents around here wait for buyers or listings. They don't go outside the box. I recruit out of state agents on a referral basis and am always looking for other ways to market properties or get in front of buyers," he shares.



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