



Smart Marketing

To a stalker, your photo on a sign or in print is a personal ad.
The stalker determines if you have the 'look' he is seeking.

There are many documented cases of criminals actually circling photographs of their would-be victims in homes magazine advertisements.

These victims were targeted because of their appearance in the photograph.

Consider these tips in preparing or updating the information you use to get business:

- All of your marketing materials should be polished and professional as opposed to overly "attractive." Don't use alluring or provocative photography in advertising, on the Web or on your business cards.
- Keep your personal phone number unlisted. Use a Google Voice number as opposed to your personal cell phone.
- Limit the amount of personal information you share. Consider advertising without using your photograph. Use your office address and never your home office. Giving out too much of the wrong information can make you a target.
- Install caller I.D. on your business telephone, which should automatically reject calls from numbers that have been blocked. This will provide you with immediate information about the source of the call.
- Concentrate on your professional proficiency rather than personal information in newspapers, resumes and business cards.
- Be careful how much personal information you give verbally as well. Getting to know your client does not need to include personal information about you or your children. Refrain from telling your prospects, "I live down the block, my son goes to this school, my daughter goes to that library, we go to this house of worship."

(Sources: Taken in part from Washington Real Estate Safety Council; Louisiana REALTORS® Association; City of Mesa, AZ)