

# Zillow Boosts Agent Engagement and Satisfaction with Marchex Sonar



**98%**

Agent Engagement



**99.9%**

Uptime



Custom  
Hands-On  
Deployment



**REAL ESTATE  
MARKETPLACE**

**MARCHEX  
SONAR**

**BOOST CUSTOMER  
ENGAGEMENT**

**HEADQUARTERS**  
Seattle, WA

**FOUNDED**  
2004

**WEBSITE**  
[www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)

Zillow is a leading real estate and rental marketplace with an online database of more than 110 million U.S. homes. Zillow provides consumers with data and knowledge around home-finding throughout the full lifecycle of acquiring, financing and improving a home, and connects them with the best local professionals for their residential needs.

## Challenge

The Zillow Premier Agent program is designed for real estate agents – called partners – who are striving to grow their business. These agents advertise on the Zillow marketplace in specific locations according to where they do business. Explains Briar Rose Kepiro, Operations Manager, Premier Agent Program Technical Support at Zillow, "Real estate agents buy advertising in specific areas so they get connected with buyers or sellers looking for homes on Zillow."

The Premier Agent program lies at the core of Zillow's mission. Says Capri Jensen, Premier Agent Program Sales Operations Manager at Zillow, "Zillow is completely redefining what real estate looks like, and our team is building that experience. We need really good agents to do that with us."

Jensen's team is charged with partnering with agents who want to take advantage of Zillow's reputation and reach. "Agents get onto the platform either because they've heard of us, they know us as a household name, or because they know people who have gained clients and have grown their business through Zillow," she says.

As a key revenue driver for Zillow, the Premier Agent program strives to deliver an excellent experience for its real estate agent customers. SMS messaging enables the sales team to connect with agents and is a key component of the communication strategy since agents are often on the go. Uptime was a critical factor in choosing a solution. Jensen was brought in specifically to oversee the team's migration to Marchex Sonar, an intelligent two-way texting platform that seamlessly integrates with most CRMs.

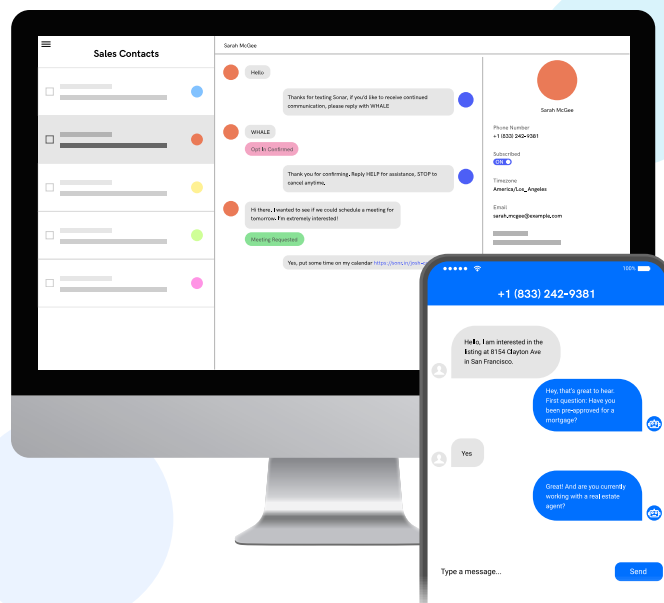
"We basically have two customers," says Jensen. "We have our sales teams who we want to enable, and our partners—the agents that we sell to. SMS is really to foster the connection between our sales teams and our partners."

The challenge Jensen faced with the Sonar migration was gaining SMS adoption from internal team members. The sales team had used a different SMS tool in the past and the experience was poor, so naturally team members were hesitant to embrace a new tool. But because agents rely on it, it was imperative that an SMS solution be deployed.

"We had an SMS tool, but it was constantly crashing. It was not reliable and it was really hard for our sales teams to pick up," explains Jensen.

## Solution

To foster adoption, Jensen wanted to impress upon the sales team that the end goal was an easy-to-use platform that helped foster communication with customers. "Just as an individual would call or email or text anybody in their own personal life, salespeople can meet the agent in their preferred method of communication," she explains.



The Sonar team worked hand in hand with Zillow's operations team to implement the mobile messaging solution in the Zillow environment. One of the distinguishing factors of a Sonar implementation is the hands-on approach to deployment.

First, the two teams collaborated so the Sonar team could gain an understanding of Zillow's workflows. From there, the Sonar team strategized around automations and how Sonar could best support the sales and support teams. Because the Sonar team gained a deep understanding of Zillow's use case, the team could provide strategic suggestions for configuration. Next, the Sonar team installed the Sonar Salesforce iFrame integration, which makes it easy to send texts from within Salesforce. This was coupled with single sign-on (SSO) and roles and permissions management for improved security and access control. The Sonar team supported 26 of Zillow's distributed regions with differing needs to set up intelligent routing so that customers are routed to the appropriate Zillow team based on custom triggers. This application includes sophisticated bots that automatically respond to segments of customers.

The implementation was a success. Says Jensen, "We actually got huge adoption, a lot of excitement around it, and have seen a lot more usage of it. Things have just been running smoothly, and we kind of take that for granted."

**"Getting Sonar up and running was a great experience."**

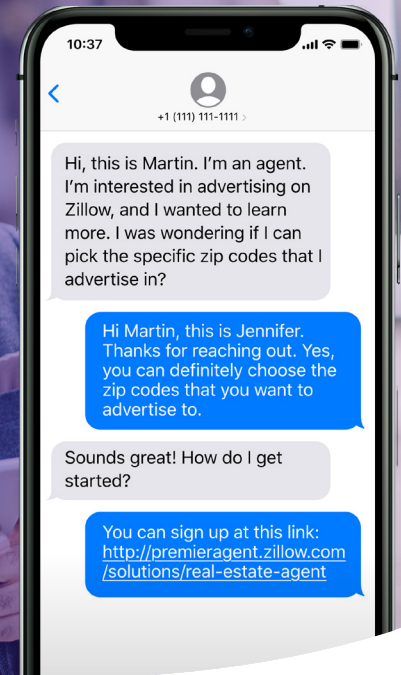
**Briar Rose Kepiro**

Operations Manager, Premier Agent Support  
Zillow

**"We moved over to Sonar because it operates in a much healthier way."**

**Capri Jensen**

Sales Operations Manager  
Zillow



## Success begets more success

Since the sales team increasingly uses text messaging and because the goal is to offer a seamless experience to partners, the customer service team determined that it should offer the option of text messaging to partners as well. As a business that provides a personal communication experience before the sale, Zillow sought to continue the experience after the sale with the customer success team.

Says Briar Rose Kepiro, Operations Manager of Partner Support at Zillow, "When you are purchasing into Zillow, it's not a one and done purchase. On the sales side, someone may coach you through the process of working with inbound leads, making you good at our product. And then, that's where my team comes in. We support from a customer service standpoint. We work very closely with sales, but we're handling the customer service and technical support side of the Premier Agent program."

It's common that the sales team will be communicating with an agent regarding sales-related issues, but the discussion will turn into a technical support conversation as the discussion unfolds.

"One of the best things about how we're using Sonar right now is, sales can actually transfer conversations over to us.

So, if they are communicating regarding sales-related things, but it turns into more of a technical support conversation, they can actually transfer that text message conversation to us to take it from there and handle the customer service," says Kepiro.

Sonar's integration with Zillow's Salesforce instance further streamlines the sales process in multiple ways. Besides being able to message with prospects from within Salesforce, another key benefit is the data capture that provides rich context for the account team. When a sales representative is reviewing an account, they can see information such as previous conversations, the phone number used, and whether they've recently worked with the support team.

"It provides a holistic view of what those conversations looked like, and I think the biggest benefit we gain from Sonar versus previous tools is that if one particular person was working an account and it changes hands for any reason, the account manager can see what past conversations look like over SMS. They can see the history of that conversation, and so they get a really good feel for what the client has gone through or what they've been promised. It makes the experience more seamless for our partners," says Jensen.

Representatives can reply to texts from right within Salesforce, providing an easy way to respond to customers.

## Results

The goal of the Premier Agent program, both on the sales and service side, is to provide an excellent experience for partners. Customer satisfaction surveys continually show the team is meeting this goal. Marchex Sonar enables the Zillow Premier Agent program in multiple ways.

One of the main reasons for the migration to the Sonar platform was the need for reliability. Sonar solved this with 99.9 percent uptime in 2020!

Another reason for adopting Sonar was to boost engagement. On the sales side, Jensen is seeing engagement rates from agents as high as 98% consistently. This means when a Zillow rep reaches out to a prospect or when a prospect or customer goes to connect with Zillow, the conversation happens nearly every time.

With Sonar, it's seamless for a partner to contact and interact with a real person at Zillow via text, whether the issue is related to sales or support. A typical sales conversation moves across phone, email and text channels, so knowing that agents respond well to text helps the sales team make quick transactional deals when the time is right.

"When we have promotions and really good deals coming up, some of our best sales reps will align themselves with agents in phone conversations or email conversations prior to that big sale day, and then they really leverage SMS on those high sales days to get the green light to make a sale, like, 'Hey, do you want me to go ahead and push through this transaction? Do you want me to make this sale?' And then, it's a quick yes or no, and so they're able to be highly transactional in those key moments," explains Jensen. As for support, "Texts are routed to a human and response time is one minute or less," says Kepiro.

**"I think the service level that's provided by the Sonar team is really what sets Sonar apart. They have just been absolutely phenomenal."**

### Capri Jensen

Sales Operations Manager  
Zillow

**Learn more at [Marchex.com/sonar](https://marchex.com/sonar)  
or call (800) 840-1012**

## Operating Environment

### KEY FEATURES



**Salesforce integration for automated data capture**



**Text-enabled phone lines**



**Intelligent routing for appropriate team assignment**



**Automated responses**



**Advanced user roles and permissions**



**Custom workflows**



**SSO integration**



**Intelligent time zone compliance**



**Double Opt-In**



**Detailed analytics and performance reports**