

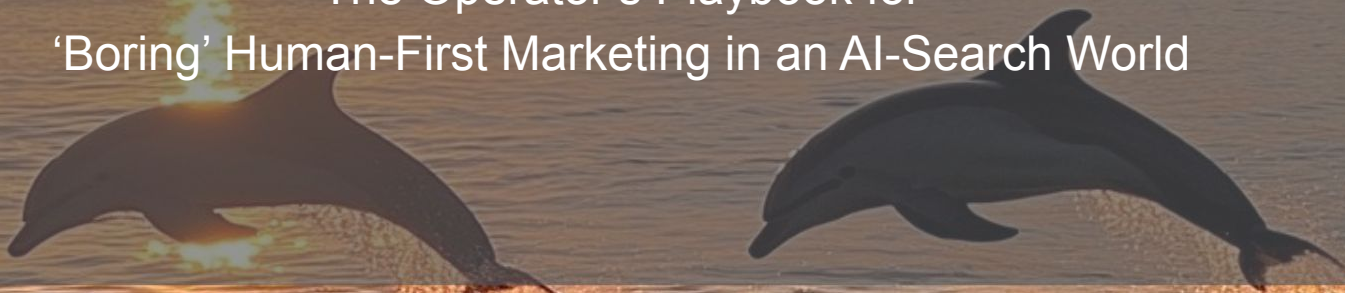


PRESENTED BY



AI Is Not Your Strategy:

The Operator's Playbook for
'Boring' Human-First Marketing in an AI-Search World



Meet Your Speakers



Derek Miller
Director of Marketing
Sterling Group



Mike Whaling
President
30 Lines

"What are we doing
about AI?"

— *Your CEO, your owner, your board ... last month, and again next Tuesday*

Magic is the
new standard.



The opportunity

You have this genie
waiting to serve you

*But the genie can't tell you what to do ...
and you have to take care of the lamp.*



The problem?

We're often wishing for the wrong things.

Bad fundamentals?

AI makes the cracks
show faster.

Good fundamentals?

AI makes them
even better.

Keep the lamp clean.

You get three wishes.

Choose wisely.

1



Speed to
Lead

The right response,
not just a fast one

2



Find More
Qualified Renters

Hyperlocal SEO for
an AI-search world

3



Prove Our
Marketing Works

Reporting that
diagnoses, not just counts

1

WISH ONE

"I wish every prospect heard from us right away."

✗ The wrong wish

"I wish AI would handle all our leads so we can cut staff."

✓ The right wish

"Every prospect gets a fast, useful response — and a real human when it matters."

WISH 1

The First 7 Days

Where does ownership transition from informational tool to emotional connection?

AI Answers & Books

Instant response.
Reliable. Always on.

Human Follow-Up

Call or text. Real person.
Emotional connection.

Automation Sustains

Email/SMS nurture after
human energy fades.

Moment 0

Day 1

Day 3

Day 7

Key Insight

AI and humans aren't competing. Design the handoff intentionally. Stop measuring "did we respond?" — start measuring "did we respond **and successfully qualify** within 48 hours?"

Connection Drives Conversion



APPOINTMENT

LISTENING TO THE PROSPECTS NEEDS

A personalized tour starts by actively listening to the prospect's needs and priorities, allowing the leasing experience to feel relevant, human, and tailored to their lifestyle.



SHOW



APPLICATION

MOVE IN

PERSONAL CONNECTION

Once AI helps schedule the tour, personalized human follow-up helps build trust, tailor the experience to the prospect, and increase show-to-lease conversion.



JOB'S NOT FINISHED

Personalized post-tour follow-up and thoughtful nurturing keep the connection strong, address remaining questions, and guide the prospect confidently toward completing the application.



Redesign your first 7 days of follow-up.

Contact Rate

Are you reaching
prospects at all?

Tour Set Rate

Are contacts converting
to scheduled tours?

Tour Show Rate

Are scheduled tours
actually happening?

Measure pre/post. Map the handoff:

AI answers and books → human follows up → automation sustains.



2

WISH TWO

"I wish more qualified renters could find us."



The wrong wish

*"I wish we ranked #1
for 'Charlotte apartments.'"*



The right wish

*"We show up when someone asks an AI
tool for exactly what we offer."*

Become the Local Authority

E-E-A-T: Experience · Expertise · Authoritativeness · Trustworthiness

Structure content around real human questions — "What's it like living in Midtown Carmel?"
AI search engines reward content that answers the way people actually ask.

Old FAQ Pattern

"What's your application process?"

"Do you allow pets?"

"What are your office hours?"

Add These

"What's it like living in Midtown Carmel?"

"Best trails near our apartments?"

"School districts in our neighborhood?"

WISH 2

The ILS Reality Check

~25%

Impression decline
YoY on steady plans
Sterling Group properties

The shift is happening *whether you invest in your own content or not.*
Create the content you want shoppers to find.

Build one "corporate ILS" regional landing page in the next 90 days.

Tag

School districts, trails, employers, commute routes, EV chargers

Generate

Dynamic landing pages:
"All 2BRs in X school district near Y trail"

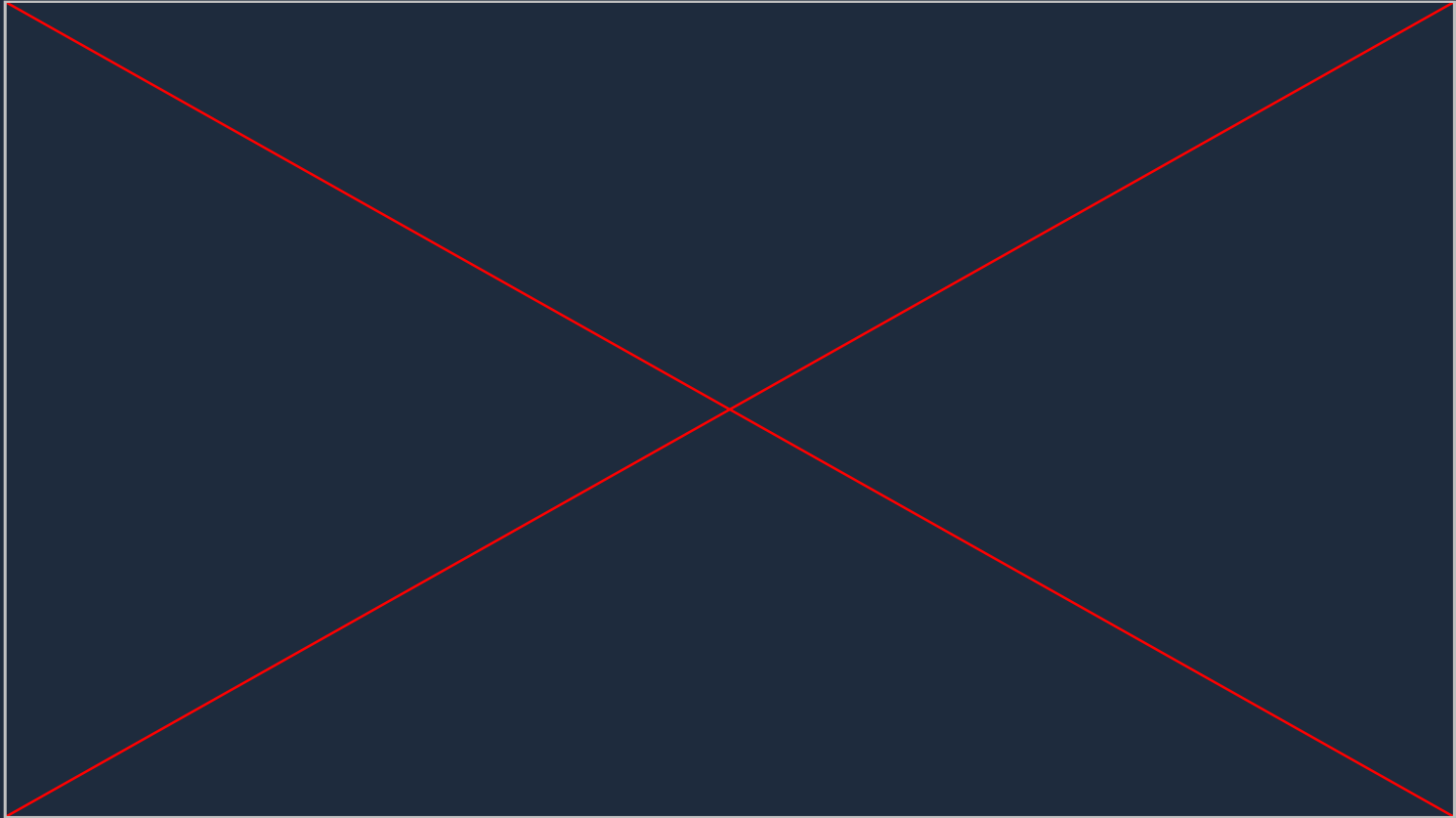
Validate

Test in Google AND AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity)

Measure: organic entrances, assist rate to leases, AI-search visibility.

WISH 2

Content That Makes You the Source



3

WISH THREE

"I wish my owners understood what marketing does."



The wrong wish

"I wish I had a fancier dashboard to share with my team."



The right wish

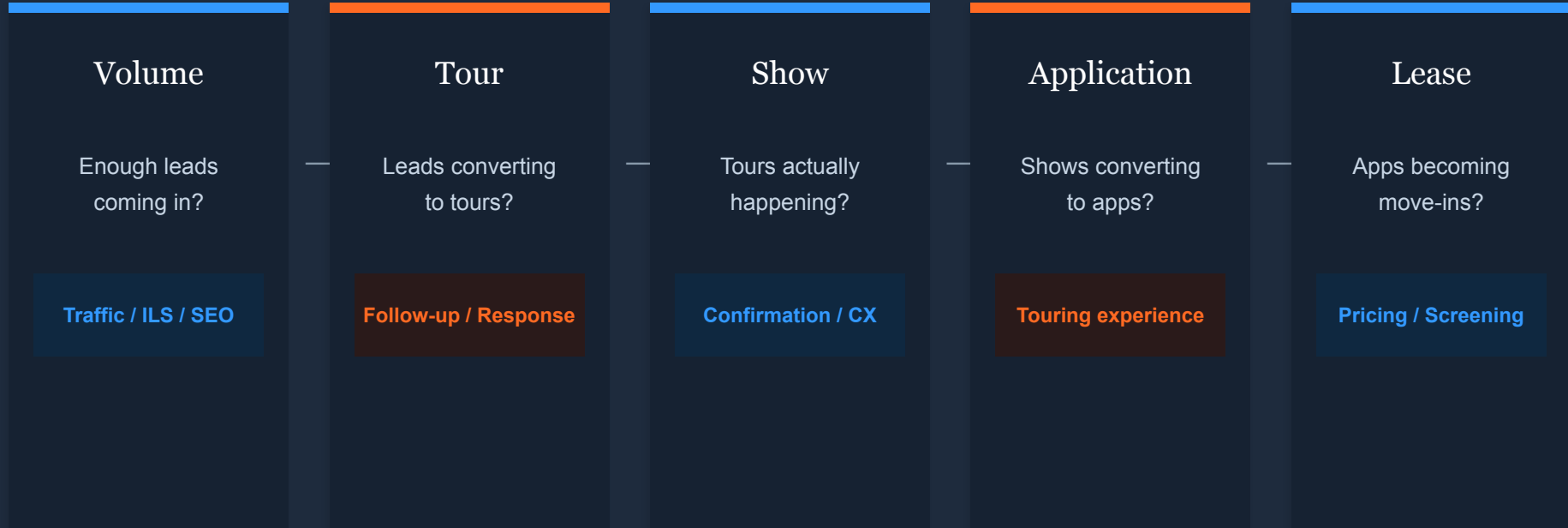
"My reporting shows where the real problem is — not just lead count."

WISH 3

Diagnose by Stage, Not by Channel

LEADS	SHOWS	APPS	LEAD>SHOW	SHOW>APP	LEAD>APP	NET ABSORB	BOTTLENECK	Q1 MOMENTUM
72	18	7	25.00%	38.89%	9.72%	+6	OK	Accelerating Up
52	18	9	34.62%	50.00%	17.31%	+0	OK	Accelerating Up
45	12	5	26.67%	41.67%	11.11%	+0	Full Funnel	Accelerating Up
50	15	4	30.00%	26.67%	8.00%	+0	Show>App	Accelerating Up
80	19	9	23.75%	47.37%	11.25%	+2	OK	Accelerating Up
71	15	7	21.13%	46.67%	9.86%	+1	Full Funnel	Accelerating Up
55	14	6	25.45%	42.86%	10.91%	+0	Full Funnel	Accelerating Up
62	16	6	25.81%	37.50%	9.68%	+0	OK	Accelerating Up
68	20	10	29.41%	50.00%	14.71%	+0	OK	Accelerating Up
36	6	4	16.67%	66.67%	11.11%	+0	Lead>Show	Reversing Down
45	8	3	17.78%	37.50%	6.67%	+0	N/A	Flat
41	11	7	26.83%	63.64%	17.07%	+0	OK	Sustained Up
28	14	3	50.00%	21.43%	10.71%	-1	Show>App	Reversing Up
70	10	4	14.29%	40.00%	5.71%	+0	Lead>Show	Sustained Up

The Funnel Diagnostic



Channel → KPI → Owner's Question → Action

Build one portfolio dashboard that diagnoses by stage, not by channel.

Connect Your Data

- Ad channels
- Search Console + GA4
- Google Business performance
- CRM + box scores
- Occupancy & industry benchmarks

Run the Experiment

- Hold ILS spend flat for 6 months
- Fix photos, filters, and copy
- Measure cost per move-in, not impressions
- Downgrade if Diamond CPMI > Gold
- Report on CPMI + qualified lead volume

*New AI tools (Claude, Gemini Canvas) make custom dashboards accessible
— built for your framework, not a vendor's default.*

Plot twist:

3 wishes? You actually get more.

AI tools are getting faster and more capable every quarter.

The constraint isn't the technology.

AI is not your strategy.

Execute your plan. AI just makes you more of what you already are.

Your genie is waiting. What will you wish for?

1

Map your first 7 days
of follow-up

Where does AI live?
Where do humans live?

2

Build one corporate ILS
landing page

Using data you
already have.

3

Run one 6-month ILS
spend experiment

Based on total customer
lifetime value, not impressions.

4

Create a 20-point listing
& SEO hygiene checklist

Score every property
quarterly.

No silver bullets. No magic.

*Just the boring stuff, done so well that AI and search engines
have no choice but to send you better renters.*

Not a genie.
A wizard focused on
the fundamentals.



Thank You!



Derek Miller

Sterling Group

dmiller@thesterlinggrp.com



Mike Whaling

30 Lines

mike@30lines.com