

National Auction Association Headquarters Sale Through Online Auction

A Case Study in Strategic Marketing, Auction Design, and Digital Commercial Real Estate Disposition

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Date: December 22, 2025

Property: National Auction Association Corporate Headquarters

Location: Overland Park, Kansas City (Kansas City Metropolitan Area)

Sale Date: December 17, 2025

Final Sale Price: \$797,500.00

Executive Summary

On Wednesday, December 17, 2025, the National Auction Association (NAA) successfully completed an online auction for its corporate headquarters building located in Overland Park, Kansas (Johnson County), within the Kansas City metropolitan area and adjacent to the Missouri state line. The auction concluded with a final high bid (hammer price) of \$725,000 and a total contract price of \$797,500, inclusive of the buyer's premium.

The headquarters building represented the only real estate asset owned by the Association at the time of sale. The property is currently under contract and is anticipated to close within approximately 35 days of the auction date. This document is presented as a hybrid white paper and case study, offering a transparent, data-driven examination of the auction method of marketing and sale, and demonstrating how professionally executed auctions support effective price discovery and real market value.

The auction was conducted through an online platform utilizing a soft-close format, a structure designed to allow bidding to continue in response to competitive activity near the scheduled close. The auction opened with an initial bid of \$100,000 and employed \$5,000 bid increments, selected in advance by the NAA Real Estate Task Force for this auction based on the asset type, anticipated buyer pool, and target price range for the offering. The property was offered with an undisclosed reserve. Once the reserve threshold was met during active bidding, a "Reserve Met" notification was issued to

registered bidders, signaling that the property would sell and encouraging continued competitive participation.

The sale was supported by an integrated, digital-first marketing strategy that generated over 7,600 website sessions during the marketing period and resulted in 26 registered bidders. Bidder registration opened on November 17, 2025, with the first bidder registering on November 20, 2025. Although bidder registration remained open throughout the auction, the final bidder registration occurred at 12:45 PM CST on the day of the auction. No bidders registered during the final hour prior to the scheduled soft close, indicating that competitive bidding was driven by a pre-qualified and engaged bidder pool rather than last-minute registrations.

Registered bidders represented 11 U.S. states, reflecting strong regional participation within the Kansas City metropolitan area as well as broader national interest. This geographic distribution underscores the reach of the auction marketing strategy and the ability of the auction method to attract qualified buyers beyond a purely local market.

Competitive bidding intensified immediately prior to the 2:00 PM CST soft close, with a bid of \$365,000 placed at 1:59 PM, followed by a bid of \$385,000 at 2:00 PM, which triggered extended bidding. The auction remained active for an additional 34 minutes, concluding at 2:34 PM CST with a final high bid of \$725,000. From the start of the soft close to the final bid, the high bid increased by approximately 88%, illustrating the effectiveness of the soft-close auction format in fostering competitive tension and enabling true price discovery. Notably, the final bid was placed four seconds after the preceding bid, further reflecting the level of active competition present during the closing moments of the auction.

Although the property was offered For Sale by Owner, the auction was designed, governed, and executed by experienced real estate auction professionals, led by the NAA Real Estate Task Force. This distinction is critical: the success of the sale reflects the application of professional auction expertise, disciplined governance, and intentional auction design, not a passive or unstructured sales approach. The case study demonstrates how the auction method, when executed by knowledgeable professionals, can be an effective and transparent mechanism for marketing and selling institutional and commercial real estate assets.

This white paper documents the marketing strategy, auction structure, bidder engagement, and sale outcomes associated with the transaction. By analyzing traffic data, registration behavior, bidding activity, and conversion dynamics, the case study illustrates the value of auctions as a method of sale, not only for associations or commercial property owners seeking to liquidate assets, but also as a demonstration of how professional auctioneers contribute to maximizing real market value through competitive, well-executed auction processes.

I. BACKGROUND AND ASSET OVERVIEW

The National Auction Association's headquarters building, located in Overland Park, Kansas (Johnson County), served as the Association's primary operational and

administrative facility for more than four decades. Constructed in 1983, the property supported staff offices, meeting space, and day-to-day association functions throughout a period of significant organizational growth and industry evolution.

At the time of sale, the headquarters building represented the only real estate asset owned by the Association. As the Association's operational needs evolved, driven by changes in staffing structure, technology, and work patterns, the Board determined that continued ownership of the building no longer aligned with the organization's long-term operational strategy. The decision to market and sell the asset was made with the objective of transitioning to a facility footprint better suited to current and future needs, while responsibly stewarding member resources.

The property was offered for sale For Sale by Owner, with governance and oversight provided by the NAA Board of Directors and strategic execution led by the NAA Real Estate Task Force. The Task Force was charged with establishing auction parameters and overseeing the design and execution of the sale process, under the governance and direction of the NAA Board of Directors. While the Association did not engage a third-party auction firm, the sale was conducted with the involvement of experienced auction professionals specializing in real estate auctions, ensuring that industry best practices informed all aspects of the transaction.

This section establishes context for the asset and the governance structure of the sale. The sections that follow detail auction design, marketing execution, bidder engagement, and bidding activity, with emphasis on measurable outcomes and transferable insights.

II. CAMPAIGN TIMELINE AND CRITICAL MILESTONES

A. Pre-Launch Phase (October–November 2025)

October 1–31, 2025

- Initial market research and comparable analysis
- Property evaluation and documentation preparation
- Development of digital marketing assets, including professional photography, videography, and aerial imagery
- Marketing strategy development and channel selection

November 1–16, 2025

- Creation of immersive digital assets, including a 3D virtual tour and interactive property mapping
- Preparation of professional listings for commercial real estate platforms
- Design and production of promotional materials
- Email campaign list development and segmentation

B. Launch Phase (November 17–December 15, 2025)

November 17, 2025 – Marketing Launch

- Official campaign activation across all marketing channels
- Publication of the property on LoopNet under a Silver Listing, generating 14,657 views
- Distribution of a press release and coverage in the *Kansas City Business Journal*
- Launch of paid digital advertising campaigns across social media and search platforms
- Initiation of targeted email campaigns to commercial real estate professionals and brokers
- Deployment of a direct mail campaign to 2,068 targeted recipients
- Activation of regional sponsorships and industry-specific newsletter distribution through professional networks

November 17–December 15, 2025

- Sustained paid digital advertising over a 32-day period
- Ongoing organic content promotion and referral engagement
- Regular email communication to maintain bidder awareness and engagement

C. Final Phase (December 16–17, 2025)

December 16, 2025

- Final marketing push and reminder communications to registered bidders

December 17, 2025

- Final bidder registration recorded at 12:45 PM CST, although registration remained open throughout the auction
- Auction event execution utilizing a soft-close format
- Competitive bidding among 13 active bidders, drawn from a total pool of 26 registered bidders
- Final high bid (hammer price): \$725,000, placed at 2:34 PM CST

III. MARKETING STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

A. Multi-Channel Marketing Framework

The marketing strategy for the NAA headquarters auction was designed as a deliberately integrated, multi-channel framework intended to balance broad market exposure, qualified buyer engagement, and institutional credibility. Rather than relying on a single marketing vehicle, the campaign combined paid digital advertising, industry-specific platforms, and traditional outreach methods to reach prospective buyers at multiple stages of consideration.

Across the full campaign, traffic to the auction website was generated primarily through paid digital advertising (65.4% of total sessions) and industry-specific platforms and

referrals (29.8% of total sessions), with traditional outreach serving a supporting role. This distribution reflects both the scalability of digital channels and the continued importance of specialized platforms and professional networks in commercial real estate transactions.

B. Traffic Composition and Channel Contribution

Paid digital advertising functioned as the primary discovery mechanism, efficiently introducing the property to a wide audience of potential buyers. Industry-specific platforms and referrals played a complementary role by attracting users already aligned with commercial real estate acquisition, while traditional channels reinforced awareness and credibility among professional audiences.

Importantly, traffic volume alone did not directly correlate with bidder registration or auction participation. Instead, engagement quality and repeated exposure across multiple channels proved critical to moving prospects from awareness to registration and bidding.

C. Paid Digital Advertising Performance and Audience Behavior

The paid digital campaign ran for approximately 30 days and included advertising across Facebook/Instagram, LinkedIn, and Google platforms. While each platform contributed meaningfully to overall exposure, performance characteristics varied significantly.

- Facebook and Instagram advertising generated the largest share of paid traffic, accounting for 2,461 sessions (31.3% of total traffic). With a cost of \$0.41 per landing page view, these platforms proved highly efficient at scale, delivering broad exposure and serving as the primary driver of initial awareness.
- LinkedIn Sponsored Content generated 1,648 sessions (21.4% of total traffic) and achieved deep penetration within its targeted professional audience. Although engagement rates were lower relative to other paid channels, LinkedIn proved effective in reaching institutional decision-makers and commercial real estate professionals, reinforcing campaign credibility among a highly specific audience segment.
- Google Ads produced 915 sessions (11.9% of total traffic) but demonstrated the highest engagement rate at 43.1%, indicating that search-driven users exhibited significantly higher intent. Performance Max campaigns delivered broad visibility efficiently, while search campaigns captured users actively seeking commercial real estate opportunities, underscoring the importance of intent-based traffic in auction conversions.

This divergence in performance highlights a key insight: volume-based channels and intent-driven channels serve distinct but complementary roles in auction marketing. Broad exposure creates awareness, while high-intent traffic supports bidder qualification and conversion.

D. Industry-Specific Platforms and Qualified Exposure

Industry-specific platforms, particularly LoopNet, served as a central anchor for qualified exposure. The LoopNet Silver Listing generated 14,657 property views from 6,180 unique prospects, representing the single largest source of property visibility during the campaign.

Despite this scale, the estimated conversion rate from LoopNet views to registered bidders was approximately 0.42%. This outcome reinforces a critical characteristic of commercial real estate auctions: exposure alone is insufficient. Qualified bidders often require multiple touchpoints, supporting information, and confirmation of legitimacy before committing to registration and participation.

These findings underscore the necessity of integrating industry platforms within a broader marketing ecosystem rather than relying on any single channel to drive conversion independently.

E. Traditional Outreach and Authority Signaling

Traditional outreach methods, including direct mail, targeted email campaigns, and earned media, played an important supporting role by reinforcing legitimacy and trust.

A direct mail campaign distributed 2,068 postcards to targeted commercial real estate and business segments within the regional market. Email outreach reached 4,400 commercial real estate professionals, incentivizing professional referral activity and extending the campaign's reach into established broker and investor networks.

Earned and sponsored media coverage, particularly through the Kansas City Business Journal, functioned as a critical authority signal. While these placements generated relatively low click-through rates, they delivered substantial impression volume and contributed disproportionately to engagement quality. Referral traffic from BizJournals.com exhibited a 70% engagement rate, indicating that third-party validation and institutional credibility played a meaningful role in bidder qualification.

This contrast highlights a key marketing insight: some channels attract attention, while others build trust. In the context of an institutional real estate auction, both functions are necessary.

F. Key Marketing Insights

The marketing performance data from this auction illustrates several transferable insights relevant to auction professionals and institutional sellers:

- Broad exposure and qualified engagement serve different purposes and must be balanced intentionally
- Paid digital advertising excels at awareness generation, while search and industry platforms support higher-intent engagement
- Commercial real estate auctions require multiple, reinforcing touchpoints to convert interest into participation
- Third-party validation and earned media play a meaningful role in establishing credibility and trust

- The auction method benefits from a coordinated marketing strategy that supports transparency, competition, and informed participation

Collectively, these findings reinforce the value of the auction method of marketing when executed with professional discipline, integrated strategy, and data-informed decision-making.

IV. SUPPORTING MARKETING PRACTICES AND OBSERVED INSIGHTS

While Section III evaluates marketing performance at a strategic level, several supporting practices contributed meaningfully to bidder qualification, engagement quality, and campaign effectiveness. These observations highlight how specific marketing elements functioned within the broader auction framework.

A. Digital Asset Strategy and Remote Evaluation

The marketing campaign emphasized comprehensive digital documentation of the property, including a professional 3D virtual tour, aerial imagery, and high-quality photography. These assets were embedded consistently across primary marketing platforms, allowing prospective buyers to evaluate the property's layout, condition, and context without requiring an in-person visit.

Session duration data, ranging from approximately 14 to 42 minutes, suggests that users engaged with multiple content elements during site visits. This depth of engagement indicates that digital assets played a role in reducing informational barriers, particularly for non-local and regional buyers evaluating the opportunity remotely.

B. Message Consistency and Attribution Behavior

Property information was presented consistently across all marketing channels, with a single property webpage serving as the central reference point. Paid advertising, industry listings, email campaigns, and direct mail materials all directed users to the same destination, reinforcing message clarity and credibility.

Engagement metrics for organic search and direct navigation traffic (888 sessions with a 49.8% engagement rate) suggest repeat visitation behavior. These users likely encountered the property through multiple channels before returning directly, reflecting the cumulative effect of consistent messaging and repeated exposure over time.

C. Industry Network and Professional Referral Effects

Industry-specific networks contributed meaningfully to both engagement quality and perceived legitimacy. Referral traffic from professional auction and industry platforms demonstrated higher-than-average engagement rates, including 196 sessions from auctioneers.org with a 63.8% engagement rate.

Promotion within professional association networks and industry publications functioned less as volume drivers and more as credibility signals. These channels reached audiences already familiar with auction transactions, increasing the likelihood that referred users were qualified to evaluate and participate in the auction process.

D. Geographic Targeting and Physical Mail Reinforcement

A targeted direct mail campaign distributed 2,068 postcards within a defined geographic radius surrounding the property, focusing on commercial real estate professionals, investors, and property managers. While direct mail volume was modest relative to digital channels, its role was primarily reinforcing rather than initiating awareness.

Physical mail served as a tangible verification mechanism, particularly for recipients who had already encountered the property through digital advertising or industry platforms. This multi-touch exposure contributed to confidence and recall during the decision-making process.

E. Professional Email Outreach and Referral Amplification

Targeted email outreach to **4,400 commercial real estate professionals** in the Kansas City metropolitan area extended the campaign's reach into established broker and investor networks. While direct attribution to registrations cannot be isolated precisely, professional referral channels likely contributed to bidder awareness and participation through secondary dissemination within these networks.

This pattern underscores the value of engaging intermediary professionals who possess existing client relationships and transaction experience, particularly in commercial real estate auction environments.

F. Earned Media and Authority Validation

Editorial coverage and sponsored placements in the *Kansas City Business Journal* provided third-party validation that complemented paid advertising efforts. While click-through rates from these placements were low, referral traffic from BizJournals.com exhibited a 70% engagement rate, indicating high content relevance and audience alignment.

These findings reinforce the role of earned media as an authority signal rather than a direct conversion driver. Institutional credibility and third-party validation can materially influence bidder confidence, particularly when combined with transparent auction mechanics and professional execution.

V. BIDDER ENGAGEMENT AND BIDDING ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

Bidder engagement and auction-day activity provide the clearest evidence of how the auction method facilitated competitive participation and real market value

discovery. This section examines registration behavior, geographic participation, and bidding dynamics, with emphasis on bidder behavior rather than chronology.

A. Bidder Qualification and Registration Patterns

A total of 26 bidders registered for the auction, representing 11 U.S. states. Registration opened on November 17, 2025, with the first bidder registering on November 20, 2025. Although bidder registration remained open throughout the auction, the final bidder registration occurred at 12:45 PM CST on the day of the sale.

Notably, no bidders registered during the final hour prior to the scheduled soft close. This pattern indicates that auction-day competition was driven by a pre-qualified and engaged bidder pool, rather than by speculative or last-minute registrants. From an auction design perspective, this reinforces the importance of early engagement and sustained marketing in producing qualified participation.

B. Geographic Reach and Market Breadth

Registered bidders originated from 11 U.S. states, reflecting a combination of strong regional participation within the Kansas City metropolitan area and broader national interest. This geographic dispersion expanded the competitive field beyond localized demand and contributed to a more open and representative pricing environment.

Importantly, geographic diversity extended beyond registration. Of the 13 active bidders who participated during the live auction, three were located outside the state, demonstrating that out-of-state interest translated into active competition rather than passive observation. This level of non-local participation underscores the effectiveness of the auction method, supported by comprehensive digital documentation and online access, in enabling qualified bidders to compete regardless of physical proximity to the asset.

C. Active Bidding and Extension-Period Participation

Of the 26 registered bidders, 13 bidders actively participated during the live auction. Competitive activity intensified immediately prior to the scheduled 2:00 PM CST soft close, triggering extended bidding under the auction's soft-close format.

During the 34-minute extension period, six unique bidders placed bids. This level of sustained participation indicates that late-stage price escalation was driven by multiple competing buyers, rather than by a single bidder or isolated bidding behavior. The presence of several active bidders during the extension period is a critical indicator of competitive tension and authentic market engagement.

D. Price Escalation and Competitive Dynamics

From the start of the soft close to the final bid, the high bid increased by approximately 88%, culminating in a final hammer price of \$725,000. The final bid was placed four seconds after the preceding bid, illustrating the intensity and immediacy of competition during the closing moments of the auction.

These dynamics reflect the effectiveness of the soft-close format in discouraging last-second bidding strategies and allowing all interested participants an equal opportunity to respond to competing bids. Rather than compressing competition into a fixed endpoint, the auction structure facilitated transparent, real-time interaction among qualified bidders.

E. Implications for Price Discovery

The bidding behavior observed in this auction demonstrates several hallmarks of effective auction-based price discovery:

- Competition was sustained by multiple qualified bidders through the final phase of the auction.
- Price escalation occurred in response to active bidding rather than artificial time constraints.
- The final hammer price reflected open-market interaction rather than negotiated or opaque valuation methods.

Together, these factors reinforce the auction method's capacity to establish real market value through transparent, competitive engagement, particularly when supported by disciplined governance and professional execution.

F. Summary Observations

The bidder engagement and bidding activity in this case study illustrate how early qualification, geographic reach, and auction structure combine to produce credible market outcomes. The presence of multiple active bidders, including out-of-state participants, during the extension period, coupled with sustained price escalation, demonstrates that the final sale price was the product of genuine competition rather than isolated participation.

These findings provide transferable insight for property owners and auction professionals evaluating auction-based dispositions of commercial real estate assets.

VI. KEY FINDINGS AND TRANSFERABLE TAKEAWAYS

The sale of the National Auction Association's headquarters building provides a data-supported case study on the application of the auction method to a commercial real estate asset. The findings below synthesize observed outcomes across marketing performance, bidder behavior, and auction dynamics, with emphasis on insights that are broadly transferable.

1. Auction Structure Enables Authentic Price Discovery

The auction's soft-close format, undisclosed reserve, and transparent real-time bidding environment facilitated sustained competition among qualified participants. Late-stage bidding activity, driven by six unique bidders during the extension period,

demonstrates that the final hammer price was the product of open market interaction rather than isolated or speculative behavior.

This case reinforces the auction method's ability to establish real market value through competitive engagement when supported by intentional design and professional execution.

2. Early Qualification Matters More Than Last-Minute Participation

Bidder registration patterns indicate that meaningful auction participation was driven by early engagement and sustained exposure, not last-minute registrations. The absence of new bidder registrations in the final hour prior to the scheduled close suggests that auction-day competition was fueled by a pre-qualified bidder pool that had sufficient time to evaluate the opportunity.

This finding highlights the importance of disciplined marketing timelines and bidder education in producing qualified competition.

3. Geographic Reach Must Translate Into Active Participation

While bidder registration spanned 11 states, the more meaningful insight lies in active participation. Of the 13 bidders who engaged in live bidding, three were located outside the state, demonstrating that geographic interest translated into active competition rather than passive observation.

This outcome underscores the role of comprehensive digital documentation, online access, and transparent auction mechanics in enabling qualified bidders to participate confidently regardless of physical proximity to the asset.

4. Marketing Effectiveness Is Defined by Quality, Not Volume

Marketing performance data confirms that exposure and engagement serve different functions within an auction campaign. High-volume channels supported awareness, while intent-driven traffic, industry platforms, and professional networks contributed disproportionately to bidder qualification and engagement depth.

The results demonstrate that successful auction marketing is not defined solely by traffic volume, but by coordinated multi-channel execution that supports credibility, repeated exposure, and informed participation.

5. Professional Execution Remains Central to Auction Outcomes

Although the property was offered For Sale by Owner, the auction's success reflects the application of professional auction expertise rather than the absence of it. Governance oversight, intentional auction design, disciplined marketing execution, and structured bidding mechanics collectively contributed to competitive outcomes.

This distinction is critical: the effectiveness observed in this case study stems from professional auction execution, not from the mere use of an online platform.

6. Auctions Provide a Transparent and Efficient Mechanism for Real Estate Assets

The compressed campaign timeline, open competition, and definitive sale outcome observed in this case study illustrate how auctions can serve as an effective mechanism for real estate assets. Transparency, efficiency, and price discovery were achieved without reliance on speculative valuation or extended negotiation processes, demonstrating the auction method's capacity to produce clear, market-tested outcomes.

Concluding Observation

This case study demonstrates that when auctions are designed intentionally, marketed strategically, and executed by knowledgeable professionals, they provide a disciplined and transparent method for converting real estate assets into market-tested outcomes. The findings presented herein offer transferable insight for property owners and auction professionals evaluating auction-based approaches to real estate disposition.