// THE PLAYBOOK

FOR UK MORTGAGE BROKERS & FINANCIAL ADVISORS

The FCA-Compliant Broker Lead Generation Guide

How a UK mortgage brokerage repositioned to an adverse-credit specialist, hit £42 cost per qualified enquiry, and grew applications 80% in 90 days.

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SECTION

Why generalist broker marketing fails in 2026

The UK mortgage broker market has consolidated and specialised over the last three years. Networks have shrunk. Lender criteria have tightened. The brokers winning are niche-focused; the brokers losing are still positioning as 'we do mortgages'.

The economics are clear. A generalist broker competing on 'mortgage broker [city]' Google Search is competing with 30+ other brokers in the same locality. CPCs are £4-£8. Conversion is moderate. CAC is high. The same broker repositioned around 'adverse credit mortgage [city]' or 'first-time buyer mortgage [city]' is competing with maybe 3-5 specialists, CPCs are £2-£5, conversion is significantly higher because the page matches the specific search intent, and CAC drops accordingly.

Niche positioning compounds in three places at once. Google ranks the firm for niche queries it understands. Ads convert higher because the message matches the audience precisely. Word-of-mouth and introducer referrals route accurately because peers know what you specialise in. The brokers that have leaned into this in the last two years have built significantly more defensible businesses than the generalists.

SECTION

Choosing your niche

Niche selection should be driven by data, not by what you think sounds attractive. Internal margin analysis is the starting point. Look at the 20% of cases that produced 80% of profit in the last 24 months. Look at where the broker network gives you genuine access most generalists lack. Look at where your introducer relationships are strongest.

Common UK broker niches that work in 2026: first-time buyer specialists (volume play, lower margin but high lifetime value), BTL portfolio specialists (high margin, smaller volume), adverse credit (highest margin, requires specialist lender relationships), expat mortgages (defensive niche with limited competition), contractor mortgages (growing demand from gig economy and IR35 contractors), equity release (high margin, regulatory complexity barriers).

Pick one primary niche. Resist the temptation to be a 'specialist in everything'. Generalist marketing doesn't work; multi-specialist marketing doesn't work either. One niche led, two supporting niches branded clearly as secondary, and a clear architecture that reflects the priority.

Niche choice can be revisited annually. We typically run an annual strategy review with broker clients that revisits niche performance and adjusts if the market has shifted. Niche positioning isn't permanent;

it's the operating decision for the next 12-24 months.

SECTION

FCA financial-promotion compliance for marketing

The 2024-2025 FCA financial-promotion rule changes caught most broker firms' marketing underprepared. The high-level shifts: enhanced classification requirements for certain promotion types, stricter expectations around risk warnings, and explicit guidance on social media financial promotions.

For mortgage broker marketing specifically, the key points are: 'clear, fair and not misleading' is the overarching standard. Rate-related claims require substantiation or qualification. Risk warnings ('your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage') must be prominent, not buried. Social media promotions are treated under the same rules as paid advertising — your broker's personal LinkedIn post promoting the firm is a financial promotion if it could influence a consumer's decision.

Senior Managers and Certification Regime (SMCR) implications matter. Marketing approval typically sits with a senior manager who holds responsibility for compliance. All creative should be reviewed through that approval process before going live.

Practically, what we do for broker clients: all ad creative drafted against a current FCA-compliance checklist, then routed to the firm's compliance manager for sign-off before launch. Landing page risk warnings positioned for both regulatory acceptance and conversion (i.e. visible without being intrusive). Documentation of approval trail maintained for any future FCA inquiry.

SECTION

Niche-specific Google Search campaigns

Google Search remains the most reliable acquisition channel for UK mortgage brokers. The structure that works is niche-led ad groups with tight keyword matching, location targeting matching your service area, and audience signals from existing customer data.

For an adverse-credit specialist (using the case study above as reference), the campaign structure runs: 'adverse credit mortgage [city]', 'mortgage after CCJ', 'mortgage with default', 'bad credit mortgage broker', 'mortgage broker after bankruptcy', 'mortgage with DMP'. Each as a tight ad group with 3-5 ad variants matching the specific search context.

For a first-time buyer specialist the structure runs: 'first time buyer mortgage advice', 'first time buyer mortgage broker [city]', '95% mortgage advice', 'help to buy alternative', 'shared ownership mortgage'.

Negative keyword lists matter. 'Calculator', 'free', 'jobs', 'salary', 'rates today' typically all need exclusion unless they're explicitly part of your niche.

Enhanced Conversions should be configured from day one. Niche broker firms typically have higher case values than generalist competitors; the bidding system should optimise toward higher-value enquiries, which Enhanced Conversions allows.

SECTION

Long-cycle nurture for mortgage leads

Mortgage enquiries do not convert on day one. First-time buyer journeys are 6-10 weeks from first enquiry to mortgage application. BTL takes longer. Adverse credit cases are complex and often take 8-12 weeks just to get through the broker's lender placement.

Most brokers respond to an enquiry, do a fact-find call, send a recommendation, and then go silent if the client doesn't proceed within 14 days. The leads that book with someone else were yours to keep.

The nurture sequence we build runs 10 weeks, mix of email and SMS, with occasional retargeting reinforcement. Content varies by niche but the structure is consistent.

Week 1-2: acknowledgement of enquiry, niche-specific guide content (e.g. 'first-time buyer FAQs', 'how adverse credit mortgages work'), reassurance content addressing common buyer anxieties.

Week 3-5: market update emails covering rate changes, application timeline guidance, document checklist drip-feeds.

Week 6-8: case study content showing how the broker handled similar situations, testimonial videos from previous clients in the same niche.

Week 9-10: re-engagement content. 'Where are you on your journey?' check-in. Final personalised follow-up.

Recovery rate on the cold leads is typically 15-20%. On a base of 100 enquiries per month, that's 15-20 additional applications captured monthly that would have otherwise booked with the next broker.

SECTION

Introducer relationships as a compound channel

Estate agents, accountants, solicitors, IFAs, and increasingly conveyancers — these are the introducer relationships that produce the highest-quality mortgage broker leads. Most brokers have informal relationships at best. The brokers who systematise this build defensible distribution.

The introducer system we build for broker clients runs three layers: outreach, tracking, and incentive structure.

Outreach: structured monthly outreach to local estate agents, accountancy firms with mortgage-needing client bases, and solicitor firms doing conveyancing. The pitch is 'we offer specialist [niche] advice your clients can't easily find — here's why it matters for you'.

Tracking: each introducer gets a unique referral code. Every enquiry is tagged at source. Conversion through to mortgage application is tracked. We know exactly which introducers produce volume and which produce quality.

Incentive: typically a fixed introduction fee paid on completion (compliant with FCA rules — this is a fee, not a regulated activity). Variable structures based on case complexity. Quarterly relationship reviews to maintain warmth.

Mature introducer programmes typically produce 30-50% of total leads for niche-positioned broker firms. Higher quality than paid, cheaper than ads, defensible against competitors who don't have the relationships built.

SECTION

What to ship in your first 90 days

If you're an FCA-authorised UK mortgage broker firm doing decent volume but stuck in generalist positioning, here's the 90-day plan we'd run.

Days 1-30: niche selection workshop. Brand architecture rebuilt around primary niche. New landing pages for primary niche (typically 3 pages). FCA compliance audit of existing marketing creative.

Days 31-60: FCA-compliant Google Search campaigns built and launched against niche keywords. AI receptionist deployed and trained on niche-specific qualification criteria. 10-week nurture sequence built and live. CRM (typically GoHighLevel) configured for broker workflow.

Days 61-90: introducer programme launched with structured outreach to 30+ potential introducers. Meta campaigns launched for niches that suit the channel. First 90-day performance review and adjustment.

Month 4-6: niche positioning compounds. SEO rankings improve for niche keywords. Introducer relationships mature into productive channels. Cost per qualified enquiry typically drops by 50-70% over the engagement period.

The case study brokerage above hit £42 cost per qualified enquiry and grew applications by 80% in 90 days using this plan. The same plan works for any FCA-authorised UK broker firm with delivery capacity ready to upgrade from generalist marketing to a real niche-specialist acquisition system.

// Ready to ship?

If you run a mortgage broker business in the UK and want this system built for you, there's one next step.

Book a 30-minute strategy call. We audit your current marketing live, identify the gaps, and map a custom plan. Zero pressure. If we're not the right fit, we'll tell you on the call.

cal.com/elavatewithalex/free-strategy-call

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