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THIRD ANNUAL

Building CRE Report | 2025

BUILDING CRE REPORT 2025

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Introduction

CRE tipping point

While a tech CEO by trade, the majority of my education was in behavioral science. One of my favorite books is Malcom Gladwell's *The Tipping Point*, which explores the moments in markets, in societies, in movements where things just "click" and accelerate.

2025 felt like we tipped. With AI and new capabilities in automation finally at the ready, we could leap from software that makes something easier to do, to software that simply does it for us. Without question, CRE brokers and brokerages are tech-enabled like never before.

And, we're seeing the tip in our metrics. Buildout's Monthly Active Users jumped 27%. Total Unique Users rose 15%. And Rethink+, our new data-backed CRE CRM, crushed its attach-rate goal by 3x. That's not AI hype. That's real traction moving at full steam.

The CRE software market is racing toward nearly $50B by 2032. I see a market replacing cautious optimism with bold action, where 75% of global CRE leaders are gearing up to increase investment levels over the next 12-18 months.

The hard truth is, there's no status quo safety after the tipping point: If AI and automation aren't core to your strategy in 2026, your financial picture will fall well behind your competitors - in revenue generation and in profits. Moreover, you have to think about both discrete places technology can help, but also how those intertwine across your needs as an organization. AI only works if your systems talk to each other. Automation breaks the moment your tools are siloed. A disconnected stack doesn't deliver intelligence—it creates more busywork.

That's why Buildout is focused on platform unification. We're streamlining the entire deal cycle, from first pitch to final payout. We're eliminating duplicative systems. Heavily leveraging AI to automate repeatable tasks. Centralizing insights. And giving brokers, ops, and finance teams a single place to see—and steer—the business.

In 2025, we made every move through one lens: Can we not only help you accomplish administrative tasks, but start doing them for you? It's why active accounts grew 18%. It's why the most competitive firms are consolidating tech around a unified platform. 2026 is the year integrated AI becomes strategy. The firms that align operations, data, and automation will win.

We're here to make sure you're one of them.

HELEN CALVIN
CEO

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BUILDING CRE REPORT 2025

Selection to foundation

State of Buildout & today's landscape

Platform performance | The numbers that matter

2025 | A year of purposeful growth

Let's cut through the noise and get straight to what matters—2025 has been a momentum building year for the Buildout platform, and we've got the receipts to prove it. While parts of the broader CRE market may have been playing defense against uncertainty, our users found their offensive strategy in our integrated solutions.

In 2025, Buildout didn't just grow; we gained real traction as the essential platform for modern CRE brokerages. Monthly Active Users jumped 27%, proving brokers aren't just logging in but they're building daily habits around our tools. A 15% increase in Total Unique Users and an 18% rise in new active accounts signal more than growth; they show momentum that's organic, sustained, and sticky. But the breakout story is Rethink+. We aimed for a specific adoption rate goal among new customers; the market came back with 3x. That's not just validation but it's a transformation. By integrating property data directly into CRM workflows, Rethink+ is removing friction, killing silos, and becoming the heartbeat of broker productivity.

CRE tech isn't just evolving, it's accelerating, and Buildout is driving the pace. Kudos, if you're already on board!

The following metrics aren't just numbers we're throwing around; they're proof positive that having a central platform strategy works. Having completed our foundation which not only drives retention but also sets the stage for even bolder innovation in 2026.

The message couldn't be clearer: give brokers the right tools, integrated the right way, and adoption follows. And with it comes the kind of success that doesn't just meet expectations—it shatters them.

↑27%

MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS UP 27%

Our surge in monthly active users means brokers aren't just signing up—they're relying on Buildout as a core part of how they win.

↑15%

TOTAL USERS UP 15%

This increase in Total Unique Users shows Buildout is expanding its reach—and earning trust—in a market where reputation is everything.

↑18%

NEW ACTIVE ACCOUNTS UP 18%

Here's where rubber meets the road. Steady, month-over-month growth that was building with momentum and staying power.

↑3x

RETHINK+ LAUNCH 3X ATTACH RATE

We had a goal, and brokers rose to the occasion by adopting the data backed CRE CRM offering at 3x the rate of what was expected.

Today's landscape | **Navigating the new normal**

The state of CRE in 2025-2026

If you're looking for simple, clean answers about the future of commercial real estate, get in line. But here's the thing about complexity: it creates massive opportunities for those equipped to cut through it. Here's our overview of what we see in the market.

CLICK HERE FOR OUR BLOG POST THAT DIVES EVEN DEEPER

ECONOMIC HEADWINDS

Remember that recovery everyone was banking on for 2025? It got a rain check. Macroeconomic volatility and policy uncertainty hit pause, leaving the industry in a state of cautious optimism as if we're all at a party waiting for the good music to start. Interest rates are still elevated, not at their peak, but high enough to make every deal feel like a high-wire act. Inflation remains above historical norms, complicating underwriting and valuations.

Yet here's the kicker: over 75% of global CRE leaders plan to increase investment in the next 12–18 months. That's not wishful thinking—it's strategic positioning. The smart money knows uncertainty isn't just risk; it's an opportunity for those with the right tools and timing.

CAPITAL MARKETS: THE GREAT RECALIBRATION

Transaction volumes are finally showing a pulse after a rough 2024. Global investment declines have shrunk for six straight quarters which is not champagne-worthy, but movement in the right direction. That long-awaited pricing reset? It's largely behind us. With activity picking up, the early-mover advantage is fading, and the focus is shifting from opportunistic plays to execution excellence. Here's where it gets interesting: alternative capital sources—private credit and debt funds—have stepped up as traditional lenders stay cautious. Institutional investors are more selective than ever, targeting quality assets with strong fundamentals. Today's market rewards precision.

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

Not long ago, "proptech" was just conference lingo. Now, it's the backbone of competitive CRE strategy. Technology integration has gone from optional to non-negotiable, with most brokers planning to increase their tech investment in the coming years. AI has quickly evolved from novelty to necessity, offering firms a serious edge in everything from prospecting to valuation. But here's the rub: it's not just about having advanced tools—it's about using them in ways that actually move deals forward.

The real winners are brokers who turn data into action, with integrated platforms that connect CRM, property intelligence, and financial modeling. Because in today's market, disconnected systems don't just slow you down, they kill deals.

SECTOR PERFORMANCE: A TALE OF DIVERGENCE

Not all property types are created equal in this market; some are thriving while others are just surviving. Across asset classes, commercial real estate is evolving at wildly different speeds. Industrial continues to lead the pack, driven by e-commerce and nearshoring trends, with last-mile logistics and cold storage topping investor wish lists. Office, on the other hand, is undergoing "extreme natural selection," where only amenity-rich, Class A buildings are thriving—while aging Class B and C assets struggle to keep up, prompting a wave of adaptive reuse and an estimated $933B+ in capital needs just to stay relevant. Retail has defied expectations, buoyed by experiential tenants, grocery-anchored centers, and high-end retail that's outshining the long-declining mall sector. Multifamily remains strong overall, though some overbuilt markets are feeling the strain, and build-to-rent single-family homes are gaining serious traction. Meanwhile, alternative asset classes such as healthcare, data centers, and telecom infrastructure, are growing rapidly as investors chase yield and specialized expertise becomes more valuable than ever.

LOOKING FOR MORE?

We prepped a blog post for you that dives into the real-world headaches and what might be hurting brokers.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE

BUILDING CRE REPORT 2025

Structure & plan

Building the advantage with tech and insights

The right structure
for now, and always

The commercial real estate landscape isn't just shifting—it's compounding in complexity. Brokers today are expected to do more with less: tighter margins, higher expectations, faster timelines, and fragmented tools that were never built to work together. In this environment, technology that doesn't reduce friction becomes a liability. That's why we've taken a hard stance at Buildout—not just to build software, but to create the structural environment brokers need to succeed. We believe tech companies serving this industry can't just react to market conditions; they have to anticipate them. That means building platforms that simplify workflows, collapse silos, and surface critical information at the exact moment it's needed.

This isn't about shiny features or checking boxes; it's about structural performance. When deals move fast and windows close quickly, there's no time to fumble through disconnected systems or dig for missing data. We've engineered our platform with one purpose: to make brokers more effective in high-stakes moments. As we move into 2026, we're doubling down on that commitment. Not because it's trendy, but because it's essential. The brokers who will win in this next cycle are the ones with the clearest visibility, the strongest relationships, and the tightest operations. Our job is to make sure they have the infrastructure to get there—and stay there.

The following section, Buildout Insights, is put together with care. Millions of properties have run through Buildout Showcase for marketing while being enabled by Rethink CRM, as millions of dollars have been processed using Buildout Manage & Close. The following insights are to help turn challenges into opportunities.

DISCOVER MORE

Click here to read a blog post that goes more in depth of Buildout's 2025 evolution.

READ BLOG POST

HOW OUR PRODUCTS DIRECTLY
ADDRESS CRE PAIN POINTS:

RETHINK+
Integrates deep market data directly into your CRM workflow, eliminating research fragmentation and boosting prospecting productivity.

SHOWCASE+
Provides real-time syncing across all marketing materials and channels, eliminating the confusion over "which version is current."

MANAGE & CLOSE
Acts as the command center for your pipeline and finances, automating commission calculations and delivering complete visibility into your firm's deal velocity and projected earnings.

Buildout insights | Regional overview

Our regional transaction data reveals a fascinating story, a mix of opportunities, obstacles, and quirks that brokers navigate daily. By digging into the numbers, we uncover how the ripple effects of administrative complexity, collaborative struggles, and profitability paradoxes play out from coast to coast. So, let's unpack what the data reveals and how brokers can transform these challenges into wins.

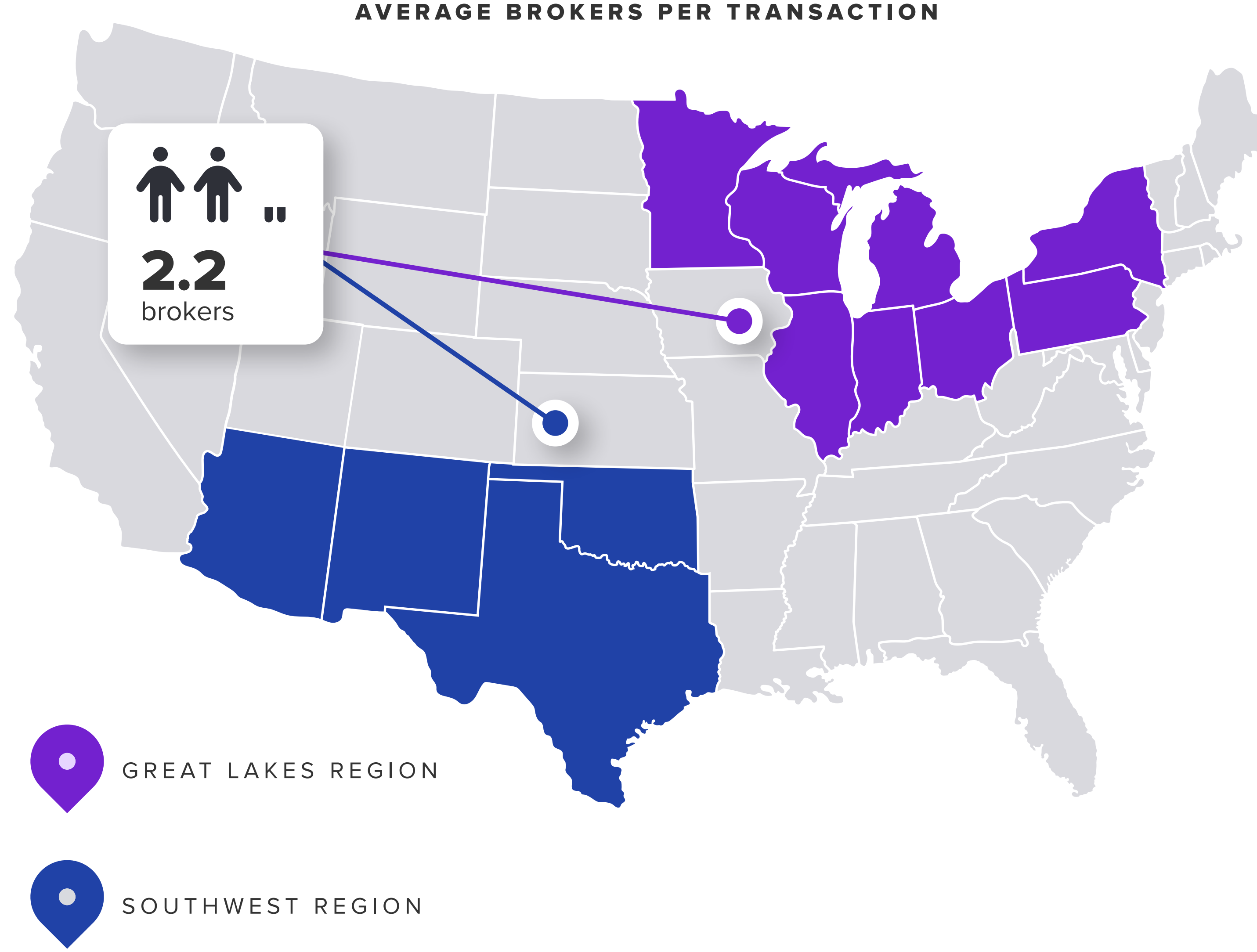
Leases are piling up. Here's how brokers streamline the process
Office and retail leasing transactions may seem routine, but they can quickly overwhelm brokers faced with stacks of leasing paperwork. These tasks often dominate their workload, making it challenging to focus on more lucrative deals.

- **PAPERWORK OVERLOAD**
  Office and retail deals often account for a significant amount of brokers' daily tasks, leaving little time for higher-value opportunities.
- **RACE AGAINST TIME**
  Brokers frequently have only hours to prepare documents and finalize lease negotiations.
- **THE OFFICE LEASING GRIND**
  Office leasing transactions are the single most active segment by volume, yet Office Tenant Representation work delivers a low average commission of just $15,104, underscoring the critical need for automation.

Broker traffic jams: When too many hands are in the pot
In competitive markets like the Southwest and Great Lakes, teamwork is essential. But when two or more brokers are handling the same clients or transactions, decision-making and commission distribution can get complicated.

- **CROWDED FIELD**
  The Southwest and Great Lakes regions average 2.2 brokers per transaction, leading to potential disputes and inefficiencies.
- **MISSED EARNINGS**
  Studies show that 88% of spreadsheets contain errors, often leading to costly commission miscalculations and disputes that erode profits.

AVERAGE BROKERS PER TRANSACTION



Chasing big deals in big cities comes with big dilemmas

Brokers in major markets like New York and Los Angeles close huge deals, but at a cost: the commission rates are often low. It is a significant challenge to maintain profitability when margins are so slim and the pressure is so high.

- **SLIM MARGINS**
  Commission rates in stable premium markets can be as low as 1% on high-value properties, reflecting the inverse relationship between deal size and percentage fee.
- **HIGH-VOLUME, LOW-LEVERAGE**
  California is the king of volume, processing 2,546 transactions, but its effective commission rate (ECR) is only 2.53%. This confirms that in high-volume markets, transactional speed and automation are mandatory for margin capture.

High rewards, hidden hassles: The big deal balancing act

Brokers love scoring top-dollar, complex transactions, like special-purpose property management deals, which typically carry average commission rates of 32.3 percent. But these deals bring major hurdles, from navigating intricate compliance rules to managing multi-layered transaction structures.

- **COMPLEX ISSUES**
  Errors in these high-stakes deals can cost brokerages tens of thousands of dollars.
- **INDUSTRIAL IS THE RELIABLE SALES ENGINE**
  For teams targeting high-payout sales, industrial property sales deliver consistently high commissions of over $80,000 and a strong average deal value of $2.68 million.
- **THE BUYER REP BONUS**
  For industrial deals, a buyer representation transaction yields an average commission 2.7 times greater than a tenant representation transaction—$71,478 vs. $25,791—revealing a clear target for business development.

SUCCESS IN ACTION

We can't fit all the juicy details here, but our case study, "Solving the Data Dilemma: How NAI Mertz Found Confidence and Clarity with Rethink," perfectly illustrates what happens when the right platform meets the right team. **Read the Full Case Study** to learn how Rethink empowered NAI Mertz.

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Close & win

Become a market leader in 2026

Closing note to ramp for 2026

Buildout is built, battle-tested, and built for brokers. It's not just a place to stash data, it's a system to help you move faster, stay sharp, and close more. Everything you need, right when you need it. Heading into 2026, we're doubling down on the workflows that matter most—tight integration, less admin, and smarter automation—so you're not just keeping pace with the market, you're out in front of it.

All this to say...

2026 is the inflection point. The choices you make now about your tech, your workflows, your partners will shape whether you lead the market or chase it. The gap between early adopters and everyone else is widening, fast. At Buildout, we're not just watching this shift, we're building the platform that makes it possible. Integrated. Intelligent. Broker-first. Because the next era of CRE will belong to those who connect their systems, automate with intent, and execute with precision.

Let's make 2026 the year you take the lead—and keep it.

2026 PRODUCT ROADMAP | SNEAK PEEK

If this year was about bringing our ecosystem together, 2026 is about making it sing like a well-rehearsed choir. Our product roadmap isn't just a laundry list of features; it's a strategic vision for how technology can fundamentally transform the way brokers work. Here's a sneak peek on what's on our horizon:

AI capabilities | From assistant to advisor

We're moving beyond basic AI integration toward what we call "Agentic AI," systems that can autonomously reason and act on behalf of brokers. Imagine AI that doesn't just crunch numbers but anticipates your needs, spots opportunities before your competition, and even drafts initial outreach based on what's worked best for you historically.

Expanded integrations | Building the ultimate proptech ecosystem

Integration isn't just about connecting tools; it's about creating seamless workflows that feel like one unified experience. The future belongs to brokers who can see around corners. Therefore, our 2026 roadmap prioritizes deep integrations with partners in advanced analytics and specialized asset classes.

Operational leverage | Scale with less

Here's our north star for 2026: maximizing broker efficiency. In plain English, we want you to grow your brokerage without watching your operational costs spiral out of control. We do this through technology that doesn't just support your team; it multiplies their effectiveness like a force multiplier.