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Complete Guide to Social Media

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About Market Leader

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How to Stop Wasting Time on Social Media

Spending time on social media in a professional capacity without having a clear strategy or understanding of the business benefits you should be striving for is a lot like going to the grocery store on an empty stomach. Without a grocery list, you'll likely wander aimlessly down the aisles grabbing whatever looks good, calories and nutrition be darned.

It's the same with your social media marketing plan. If you don't have a solid strategy for making connections and creating leads for your real estate business, you're most likely going to spend your time throwing ideas against the wall, hoping something will stick. This lack of direction will inevitably lead to significant drains on your time.

Continue reading to learn why real estate professionals should use social media – and how they can keep distractions at a minimum while doing so.

Benefits of Using Social Media

Keeping in touch with clients.

Interacting with past or prospective clients on social media, from sharing real estate news to congratulating them on life events (e.g., birthdays or anniversaries), is a great way to stay top-of-mind. When it's time for these clients to buy or sell a house, you will likely be the agent who comes to mind first.

Generating new clients.

As part of a well-rounded content strategy, social media can help improve your website's ranking in search engine results pages. The more your website's content gets shared on social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ – and the more likes, retweets, and +1s that content gets – the higher your website's pages are likely to rank in search engines. The more traffic your website gets from search engines, the more new clients your website is likely to generate for you.

Learning from other agents.

Many agents use social media as a learning platform. Social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, and ActiveRain allow agents to seek out peers and industry experts to get tips and advice. For example, you can follow industry experts on Twitter to read the tips and best practices that they share.

Take Control of Social Media

Be strategic with your social media time.

Focus your social media activities where they will have the largest impact. This means your first stop of the day should be wherever your clients hang out online; popular social networks like Facebook and Twitter are good starting points. Respond and reach out to past and prospective clients first and save the reading of articles and watching of videos for your off hours.

Schedule your social media time.

Time blocking will help you to keep on track and avoid the temptation to follow every shiny object you see while using social media. Once the scheduled time is up, navigate away from social media and move on to the next task in your schedule. Some agents find it more advantageous to schedule two blocks of time, with one block in the morning and another at the end of the work day.

Limit involvement with groups and communities.

Avoid spending too much time on ActiveRain and in Facebook groups unless you're using social media purely to get business advice, or if you schedule these visits for times outside of your normal work hours. It's far too easy to get lured into things of dubious value for your business, from lengthy discussions about industry topics or catch-ups with fellow agents that you haven't seen in awhile. Save these online communities for your downtime, such as in the evening or on a weekend when you don't have any open houses scheduled.

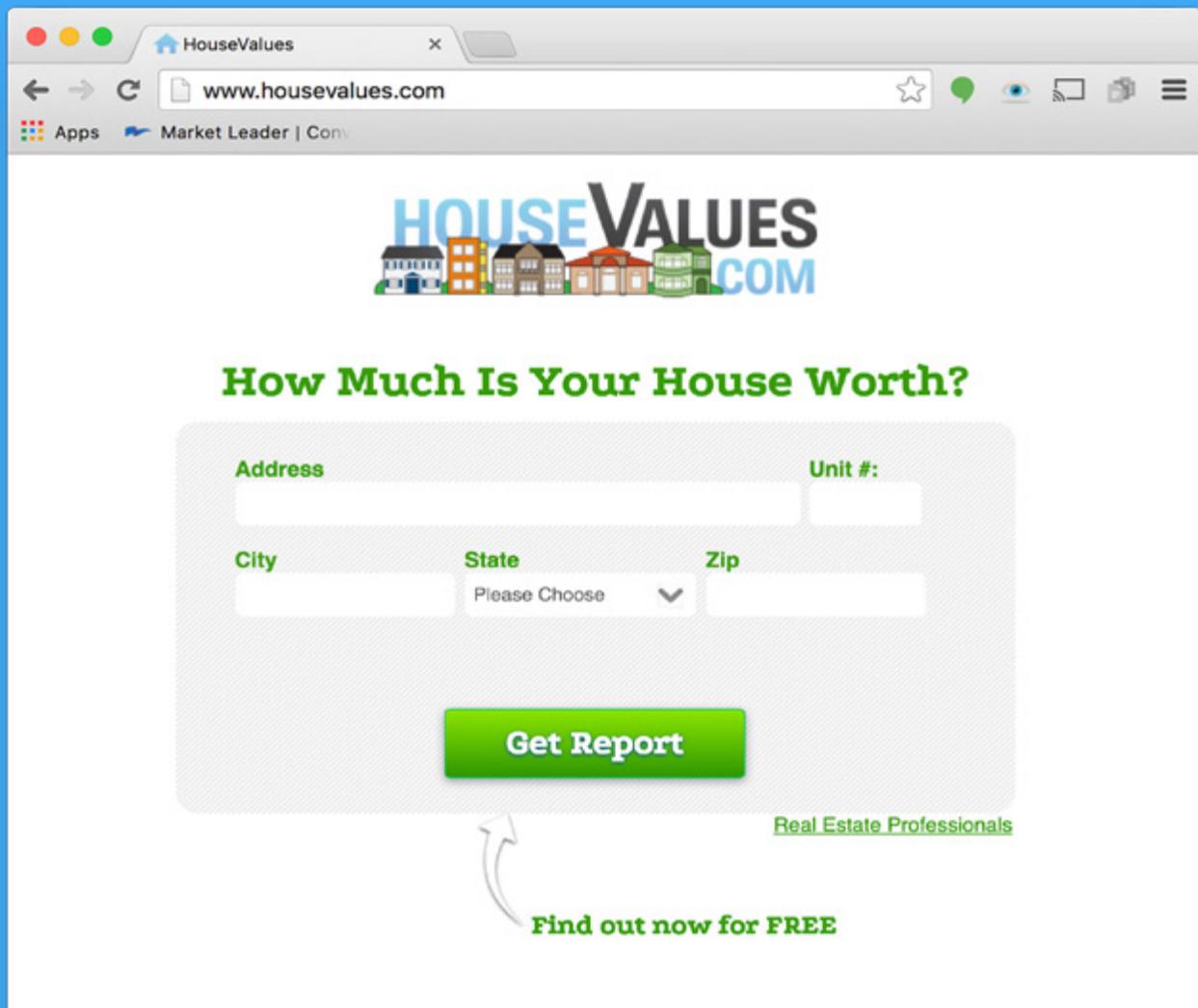
Disable distractions.

Stop social networks from emailing you with updates and showing push notifications on your smartphone. These distractions make it far too easy to let curiosity get the best of you, making it more likely that you'll find yourself on social media outside of the times you've scheduled.

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The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.housevalues.com. The page features the HouseValues.com logo at the top, which includes illustrations of various houses. Below the logo is the heading "How Much Is Your House Worth?". A form is displayed with the following fields: "Address" (text input), "Unit #:" (text input), "City" (text input), "State" (dropdown menu with "Please Choose" selected), and "Zip" (text input). A green "Get Report" button is positioned below the form. To the right of the form, the text "Real Estate Professionals" is visible. At the bottom of the page, a curved arrow points from the "Get Report" button to the text "Find out now for FREE".

HouseValues
www.housevalues.com

Apps Market Leader | Con

HOUSEVALUES
COM

How Much Is Your House Worth?

Address Unit #:

City State Zip

Get Report

Real Estate Professionals

Find out now for **FREE**

Must-Know Facebook Page Lead Generation Tips

As of April 2016, Facebook has more than 1.65 billion monthly active users, of which one billion log in to Facebook on any given day. The average Facebook user is connected to 80 community pages, groups and events, and creates an average of 90 pieces of content each month. It's clear that Facebook is one of the most influential and viral communication engines of our time, providing a social network that every real estate agent can leverage to build their business.

In the real estate industry, targeted and consistent communication makes the difference between market leaders and those who work hard yet achieve less-than-desirable results. Ensure Facebook is a tool in your online marketing toolkit so that you can easily and continually communicate with clients past, present and future.

Creating a Great Facebook Page

Just like your real estate website, your Facebook page should be visually appealing, easy to navigate and clean and uncluttered. This will help visitors find the information or links they are looking for and give a good impression of your business.

Here are some must-follow Facebook page creation tips:

1. Put Effort Into Your Page's Cover Photo

The cover photo is the most eye-catching component of your Facebook page, so it behooves you to make it as visually-appealing and professional as possible. The ideal size for your cover photo is 850 pixels by 315 pixels. It should avoid promotions and overusing text, while staying consistent with how you present yourself and your brand elsewhere on the Internet.

2. Use Your Entire Profile Picture Space

The ideal dimensions for your profile picture are 180 pixels by 180 pixels. Most businesses use this space for their business's logo.

3. Create Customized Tabs

Facebook pages allow their owners to create custom tabs in addition to the standard tabs like "Home," "About" and "Photos." Identify the most relevant tabs for your page; great tab topics include reviews, featured listings and information about neighborhoods served.

Facebook pages allow their owners to create many tabs, but only two will be shown without clicking to see more. There are a number of companies that have developed apps that help real estate professionals create robust review, listing, and neighborhoods served tabs for their Facebook pages, many of which are free.

4. Address Your Milestones

Another helpful aspect of your Facebook page is the milestone feature, which allows you to go back in time on your profile and add events or significant moments. Great examples are your business's founding date, goals that were hit (e.g., selling your 100th home), the hiring of new employees, etc.

5. Pinning Important Posts

Pinning isn't just for Pinterest anymore. Another great feature of your Facebook page is the ability to keep a post containing an important story or announcement at the top of your timeline for up to a week.

6. Be Interactive

Those who visit your Facebook page will keep coming back if you create a dialogue and provide useful information. Create a conversation with your past, current, and prospective clients. Answer any and all questions, comments, or complaints efficiently and professionally.

7. Ask for “Likes”

It's crucial that those who visit your Facebook page click the “like” button so that your content shows up in their news feed in the future. Don't be shy about pointing them in the right direction.

Optimize Your Facebook Page

Creating a great Facebook page is just the beginning. Next, you'll want to optimize your page to increase the amount of web traffic it receives. Then start watching the leads roll in!

Most agents understandably focus on driving organic web traffic to their website. But what about driving organic traffic to your Facebook page? Is it even possible for Google to index your Facebook page and send organic traffic to it? Absolutely! Over a billion Facebook pages have reportedly been indexed by Google, and you can do the same for your own page simply by removing all privacy controls and not doing anything to restrict people from viewing it (e.g., having age or geographic restrictions or requiring users to be logged in to view your page).

Having Google index your Facebook page is the easy part. Getting your Facebook page to rank high in Google? That's trickier. Let's look at some important SEO considerations for Facebook pages:

1. The Name of Your Facebook Page

Be sure to pick a hyper-local focus for your Facebook page. You might work throughout an entire city, but choosing one area you know really well is a better bet for getting organic search traffic. Competition for hyper-local keywords is much lower than the competition for city, metro, or state-related real estate keywords (e.g., “Seattle homes” or “Oregon homes”).

2. The URL of Your Facebook Page

Be sure that your Facebook page's URL is succinct and contains the hyper-local area you are targeting. Covering a bunch of different cities, suburbs, or neighborhoods will dilute the focus of your Facebook page and decrease the likelihood that it will show up in search engine results.

For example, the URL facebook.com/QueenAnneSeattleHomes would be a good URL for a hyper-local real estate Facebook page for an agent who is an expert about Seattle's Queen Anne neighborhood.

3. Number of Overall Facebook “Shares”

One of the most important social media-related SEO metrics is the number of times a Facebook post is shared. Help ensure that your Facebook page’s followers will share your content by making posts interesting, timely, and relevant.

4. Share Photos on Your Facebook Page

Not only are your past and prospective clients more likely to engage with great photos, but Facebook’s news feed algorithm gives preferential treatment to photo-based posts over posts that exclusively contain text. This means the more photos you share in your page’s posts, the more visible your posts are to the Facebook users who have liked your page.

Make sure you include descriptive captions that contain hyper-local keyword phrases. Posting your own unique, interesting, and inspiring photos – or even sharing the photos of others – is a great way to increase engagement on your Facebook page.

5. Don’t Forget the “About” Section

Be sure to completely fill out each section of your Facebook page, including the “About” section. Once again, use hyper-local keyword phrases relevant to your business. This section also allows you to describe the full area you cover in addition to the hyper-local area you chose for your Facebook page. Tell visitors what they can do on your Facebook page and why they should “like” your page and engage with it.

Using Twitter to Sell Homes in Just 15 Minutes a Day

It seems like everyone has a Twitter account these days. Politicians, celebrities, sports figures and companies have recognized the numerous opportunities that this social network provides. Its value isn't lost on the real estate industry, either; many thousands of real estate professionals use Twitter to connect with potential leads, promote their brands and sell homes.

Because Twitter doesn't require its users to spend hours writing pages of content to get anything out of it, you can benefit from devoting just 15 minutes a day to promoting your real estate business and services on Twitter. But before you start tweeting, it's best to come up with a plan.

How to Tweet – and Not Tweet

Just as you can engage your target market with interesting tweets, you can also annoy and alienate your audience. According to Pete Deininger, Realtor® at Breckenridge Real Estate, "The golden rule for businesses on social media is to never be salesy."

Focus on offering value – interesting, helpful and engaging content – to your followers. According to Tierra Wilson, founder and CEO of New Media 4 Agents, "We don't just put the tweets out there and hope for the best. We use multiple strategies to tweet home listings. One of the most effective is just to have fun. People love to see the inside of homes, so we use their natural voyeuristic tendencies to get them to take a peak. We tweet specific home features with links to images. For example, 'Cold outside! Wish you had this fireplace? For \$250k you could. #interiors #realestate' and we include a link to a single property website or IDX listing with pictures of the home."

Come up with a strategy before sending out tweets. Are you selling specific types of properties, such as condos or townhomes? Are you just focused on building up a following (and referral base)? What target market are you courting? Your answers to these questions will dictate what you tweet. It's also important to keep in mind that not every tweet has to be about real estate.

The Best Tweet Subject Matter for Agents

Your followers will inevitably want to see more than just listings in your tweets. Change it up so they become more engaged. “Tweet creative, valuable content that provides entertainment or expertise about the area. This will bring people to your site. If they decide to purchase a home in the future, you will be top-of-mind for them to contact,” says Deininger.

Deininger’s list of excellent tweet subjects includes:

Ask fun and engaging questions. “What’s your all-time favorite holiday movie? Why?”

Share local photos. For example, a picture of new snowfall with a caption: “Who loves to play in powder!?”

Share information about upcoming and noteworthy local events.

Tweet local insights, such as where to find inexpensive/quality rental ski equipment, the best happy hour in town, ski parking tips, local hero stories, etc.

If done correctly, tweeting questions will better engage your audience by creating a two-way communication channel, which helps to build relationships. You can ask people about what they are doing for the weekend, if they’ve seen a new movie that just came out that you enjoyed, how they are dealing with the weather, or if they have any holiday plans.

The Compose-Edit-Reply Schedule

Create a tweeting schedule that you follow every day. The best time to tweet is anytime between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday, according to data collected by the link management platform Bitly. You can create a daily reminder in your calendar that alerts you when you should compose and send a tweet or use a free social media management platform like HootSuite to schedule tweets out weeks in advance.

It’s also important to remember that with Twitter, there’s no downside to tweeting frequently – as long as you do so within reason. The typical Twitter feed is a fast-flowing river of tweets,

so tweeting several times a day will help ensure that your followers actually see at least one of your tweets.

After you've published or scheduled your tweets, spend five minutes replying back to comments from your past tweets and interacting with other Twitter users who are tweeting about things related to your business. Take advantage of the dialogue your tweets are creating by sending meaningful replies that designate you as a thought leader in your field.

Tracking Success

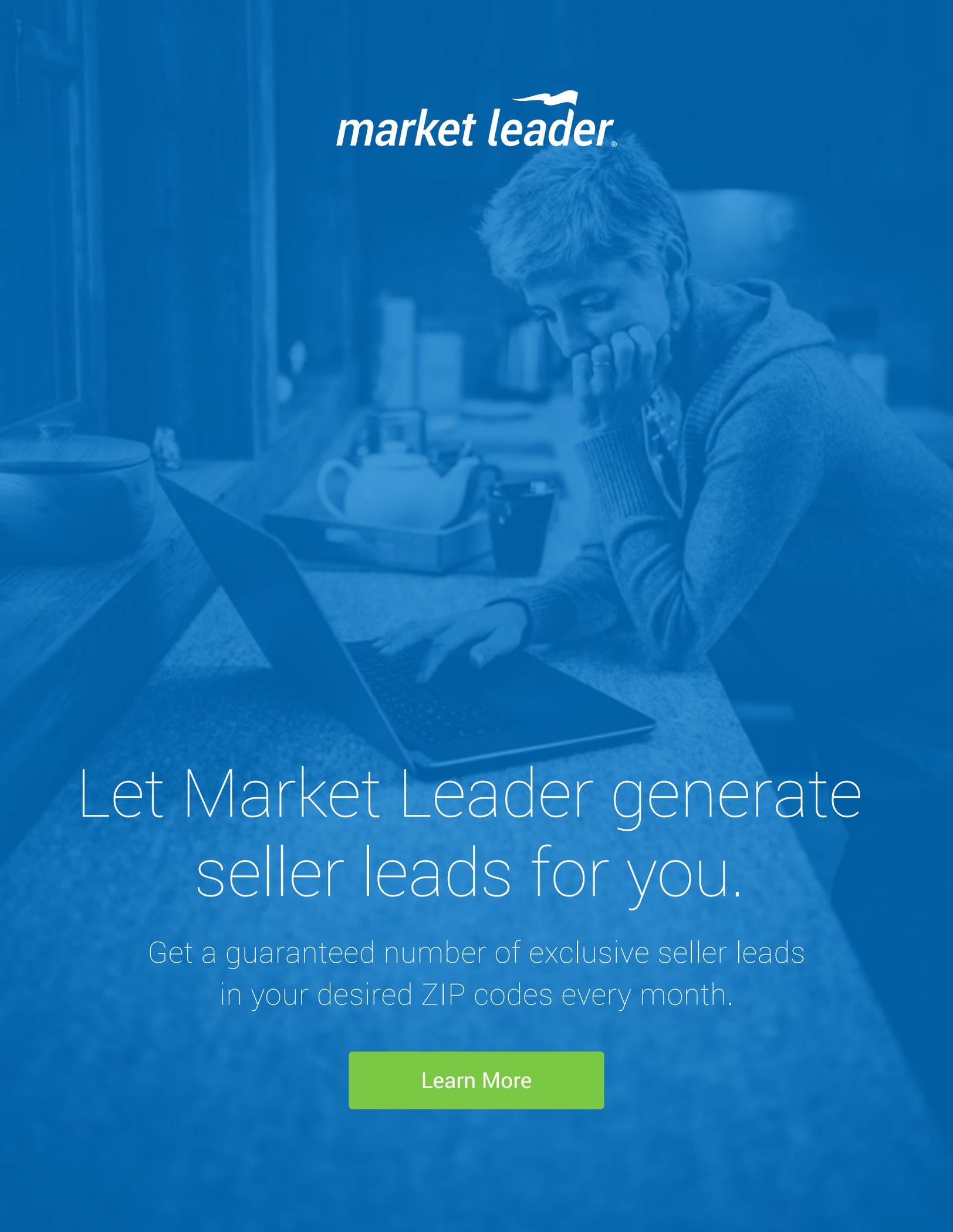
It's important to be able to measure the success or failure of your social media campaigns in order to know what's working for you and what needs tweaking. You can track your success by using website analytics software like Google Analytics, which has a free base version that provides more than enough features for virtually every agent.

"If you have Google Analytics installed on your website, you will be able to measure how many visits you are acquiring from Twitter," says Deininger. "You will also get a glimpse at what they are doing after they get to your site. You have the ability to set up 'goals' in Google Analytics, and your goal could be to track the number of visits coming from Twitter that eventually land on a listing page or submit contact information."

Prevent Twitter Burnout

Prevent Twitter burnout or writer's block by making a list of all the possible subjects that you can tweet about and revisiting that list when you find yourself running out of ideas. Taking a look at other real estate agents' tweets will give you some ideas for this list.

You can also get creative. Some real estate businesses have experienced success by setting up Twitter profiles for properties. Experiment and see what works for you and your real estate business. Above all, commit to spending 15 minutes a day to building your business on Twitter. Consistency is the name of the game when it comes to social media marketing.



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Instagram vs. Pinterest – Which Is Better for Agents?

Quick! What social network comes to mind when we say, “social media”? Facebook and Twitter, right? Those are the go-to social networks for most agents looking to promote their real estate businesses via social media.

But promoting a real estate business and marketing listings are two entirely different things, which is why many agents use online photo-sharing websites as well. The two most popular of these platforms are Pinterest and Instagram, with the latter currently being the hotter social network. Let’s take a look at where Instagram is today and whether it’s worth your consideration as a means to promote both yourself and your listings.

Diversify Your Social Media Presence – Carefully

Although using just one social media platform will limit the effectiveness of your online marketing, more than two may be too distracting, according to some social media experts. Agents have a limited amount of time that they can devote to activities not directly related to meeting with clients and closing deals. For those who lack assistance, the job of consistently posting interesting and engaging content to their business’s social media accounts can become overwhelming.

However, using just one social network isn’t an option for agents who want to get the most out of social media marketing. Agents want – and their clients expect them – to promote their listings online. While Facebook is great for getting the word out about open houses, market updates, and interesting listing tidbits, an over-reliance on pushing your listings there will do nothing but reduce the number of people who like your page.

It only makes sense, then, that agents seeking to branch out from the standard social media platforms in their quest to compete for market share typically consider adding a photo-sharing social network to the mix. The most popular of these social networks are Instagram and Pinterest.

The Allure of Instagram

Within two months of its birth in 2010, Instagram had grown to 1 million users, and in less than one year that number grew to 10 million. In April of 2012 [Facebook acquired Instagram](#) for \$1 billion in cash and stock.

With a global reach today of 500 million monthly active users, at first blush, Instagram looks mighty attractive. Add in the fact that Instagram [has surpassed Twitter in mobile users](#) and you'll find it being touted by real estate coaches and thought leaders all over the Internet.

What's not to like? Agents can upload photos and videos and connect their Instagram accounts to Facebook and other social networking platforms. One feature, in particular, has many agents scrambling to get an Instagram page: Instagram Direct. This feature allows an agent to send photos to a predetermined group of users, such as their buyer leads, rather than making them available to all. In many ways, Instagram appears custom-made for real estate agents.

Why Instagram User Demographics Aren't Ideal

Before adding anything to a marketing plan, agents need to dig deeper than learning the quantity of visitors, subscribers or users that an online marketing opportunity offers. After all, visitor, subscriber, and user quality is also an important consideration. When viewed through this lens, it becomes clear that Instagram's user demographics aren't ideal for real estate agents.

According to a [2015 Pew Research Center study](#), the majority of Instagram users are between the ages of 18 and 29, and most users live in urban areas. Income levels vary, with the majority of Instagram users earning between \$30,000 and \$74,999 annually.

In comparison, your typical home buyer, according to [NAR's 2015 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers](#), is 44 years old and makes about \$86,000 a year. The average Instagram user is therefore not your ideal target audience.

The Instagram Alternative for Agents

If you're a real estate professional looking for a photo-sharing platform, Pinterest offers a more desirable audience than Instagram. Here's why:

The average age of Pinterest users is [higher](#) than that of Instagram users ([most](#) are older Millennials and Generation Xers), making Pinterest users more likely to be home buyers and sellers.

Pinterest users have higher incomes than Instagram users. About one-third of Pinterest users make more than \$75,000, while only about one-fourth of Instagram users do.

Compared to Instagram users, Pinterest users are more likely to live in the suburbs or a rural area than the inner city. Because homeownership rates are higher in suburban and rural areas than in urban areas, Pinterest users are therefore more likely to own a home – and, in turn, become seller leads for your business.

Based on its user demographics alone, Pinterest is the logical choice for any agent seeking a photo-sharing platform to add to their social media mix. If you've never used Pinterest, [NAR has a list of helpful articles](#) on how to get started with it and use it effectively.

Don't write off Instagram altogether, however! The demographics of social networks change over time. Remember that Facebook, currently the most cross-generational social network you can find, used to be a mecca for teenagers. Keep an eye on Instagram because its user demographics might also change enough to make it worthy of including in your marketing plan.

LinkedIn for Real Estate Professionals

Trolling for referrals is one of the more important aspects of running a real estate business. Social media has become the go-to place to nurture the valuable relationships that will provide future referrals, and LinkedIn seems to be one of the best social networks for this purpose.

This is because LinkedIn, unlike Facebook, for instance, was created for business professionals as a place to meet and network. Your typical consumer is much less likely to find a real estate professional discussing their business on LinkedIn odd or off-putting than they would on Facebook. The professionals who comprise LinkedIn's user base are also [more likely to be high earners](#) than the users of other popular social networks, meaning that they (and, presumably, those they're connected with) are more likely to be interested in buying or selling a home.

Here's how you can use LinkedIn to generate referral leads by staying in touch with past and prospective clients:

Getting Started – Creating Your Profile

The cornerstone of your LinkedIn experience starts with your profile. Most social media experts agree that having an appropriate photograph and saying the right things about yourself on your profile will make or break your LinkedIn experience.

Your profile can be more accurately described as your LinkedIn resume – spend more time describing your career history and education (real estate-specific or otherwise) and less time talking about things like your hobbies and favorite music.

When you've filled in the blanks, you'll have an opportunity to complete the Summary section. This is the place to "tell your brand story," says career coach Carol Ross. She's referring to a personal brand, but agents can use the Summary section to convey their professional brand "in a human voice, revealing what makes you unique," Ross says.

If you're tempted to skimp on the Summary portion of your profile, keep in mind that LinkedIn says that a completed profile is seven times more likely to be viewed than one that is incomplete.

The final step in the LinkedIn profile creation process is sending out connection invitations to all of your past, current, and prospective clients. LinkedIn makes this easy by scouring your email client's address book and providing a list of everyone it can find there who also has a LinkedIn profile. Don't be shy when sending out these connection invitations; every additional connection you make on LinkedIn creates more opportunities for new referral clients down the road!

Creating a Company Page

The personal profile must be completed before you can set up a company page – and real estate professionals like yourself must set up a company page to get all you can out of LinkedIn.

You'll find the option to set up a company page by clicking on the "Companies" tab. Use this page to provide updates about your business and developments and trends in the local real estate market. Regardless of whether you link to your own website content or content created by others, you will be providing value and making an impression on connections who may refer you to new clients later.

LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn Groups are the water coolers of that social network, enabling you to find and connect with other users with similar interests. If you choose your Groups wisely, they can be the most valuable LinkedIn feature available to you. If you're after referrals, join the LinkedIn Groups your past clients and those in your sphere belong to, or create a group related to your local housing market.

How to Use YouTube to Sell Homes

Many real estate agents use YouTube as a powerful marketing tool, both for generating new business and building their brands. If you haven't already jumped on the YouTube bandwagon, you're missing out on an effective, flexible, and free method for showcasing properties and generating new leads for your real estate business.

This video-sharing website offers agents a chance to feature engaging, in-depth property tours that highlight amenities and address key selling points. Because there are thousands of home tour and real estate videos on YouTube, it's important to make yours stand out from the rest by:

- Incorporating your own personality in the video
- Including a neighborhood tour, even if it's just a brief one
- Adding informative tips

Selling Yourself on YouTube

Videos of homes may not be memorable enough for buyers and sellers to contact you. Creating a personal connection to the viewer by incorporating your own personality and demonstrating your expertise in a specific field will make your video stand out.

Bob Sokoler, Realtor® at RE/MAX Properties East in Louisville, Ky., draws upon his background as a television news reporter and anchor when making videos. "It's tough to hide in front of a camera. I've been doing these videos for more than six years, and they give both buyers and sellers a unique look at my personality," says Sokoler. In many of Sokoler's YouTube videos, he goes beyond showing a property. He adds humor to his scripted tours and gives people advice about what to look for in a home, which demonstrates his expertise in the market.

To help you reduce performance anxiety, write scripts for your videos before filming them. Paint a picture of what it would be like to live in the home. Infuse some of your own personality by adding what you think makes the property special. By appearing natural and confident, you will be able to produce videos that sell properties to buyers and you as an agent to potential new clients.

Neighborhood Tours – Are You an Expert on Your Area?

Many people make their decision about a home based on a neighborhood's cultural amenities, proximity to employment opportunities, local schools and distance from outdoor recreation. Real estate agents benefit from creating neighborhood tour videos. Neil Mathweg, real estate agent at Century 21 in Sun Prairie, Wis., gives viewers an engaging tour of the city by showing them all the places where residents shop, eat, work and enjoy wildlife.

You can distinguish yourself as an authority on a neighborhood or city by listing community events and other cultural activities. Interviewing locals within a community also gives viewers an idea of whether a neighborhood suits their needs. Don't let the fear of having to operate or pay for expensive equipment keep you from creating a neighborhood tour video. Mathweg shot his neighborhood tour video using his iPhone.

Attract Viewers With Quick, Informative Tips

Informative tips are also a great way to give people real estate advice and demonstrate your expertise.

Some topics that can be covered when providing tips include:

- Eco-friendly building
- How to purchase a home
- Lease-to-own tips
- How short sales work
- Renovation tips

Videos that cover tips or feature interviews with experts are generally pretty short. Most people don't have the time or interest to sit down and watch a 10-minute video. Make your video around three to four minutes at most so that it will appeal to a wider audience.

The more videos you have posted on YouTube the better chance you'll have with your website showing up first in search engine rankings. "It helps to increase the search engine optimization of my website because YouTube has so many hits; my name comes up first many times when

searching for properties in a particular area,” says Karyn Glubis, broker associate at The Real Estate Expert LLC. To optimize your videos, make sure that you use keywords in each video’s title text, description and tags. Posting your YouTube video on social networks like Facebook will also help increase the number of viewers, which can lead even more traffic to your website.

Marketing Your YouTube Videos

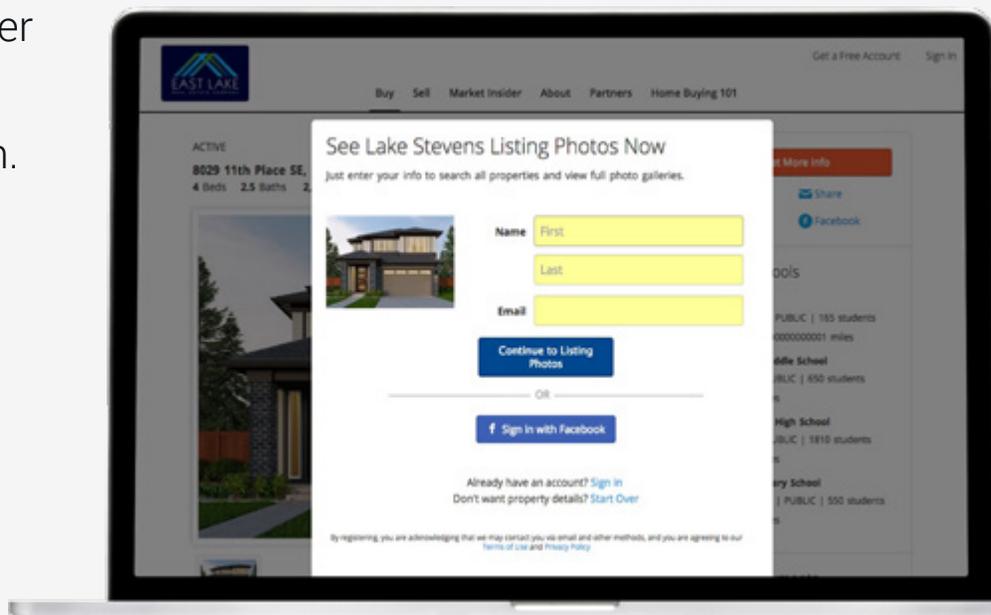
There are numerous ways to market your YouTube videos. The best methods include the following:

- Linking to them from your social media accounts
- Embedding them in blog posts or web pages on your company website
- Reaching out to local blogs and news publications to share them on their websites and social media accounts
- Featuring them in YouTube ad campaigns

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It's important to do more than simply share your YouTube videos on your own website and social media accounts. Ask people to "like" a video in order to increase its ranking in YouTube for keywords related to your real estate business. The higher your videos show up in YouTube search rankings, the more views your videos will get.

Guide to the Best Real Estate Videos

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video has to be worth at least a million.

If we are living in the age of the Internet, we are entering the era of online video. The size and social prominence of video hosting sites like YouTube and Vimeo is growing by leaps and bounds. Even the all-powerful Facebook [has recently lost ground](#) to social networks that are completely or partially based on sharing videos (Vine, Snapchat, Instagram, Kik, etc.).

Online video is particularly useful for the real estate industry. Because [90 percent of homebuyers](#) use the Internet during their home search, online video gives real estate agents the chance to introduce themselves, share market updates and show potential clients the features of their listings without ever meeting them. In this way, a series of short YouTube videos can do more to brand and advertise agents' services than more conventional marketing methods like riders, newspaper ads or radio spots ever could!

Here are some of the best videos the real estate industry has to offer. Learn from the masters and adapt their techniques into your business's YouTube video marketing strategy.

The Humorous Branding Video

PURPOSE: Make potential clients laugh and take up some mental real estate in an upbeat, unique way.

Real estate agents are consumers' greatest friends during the home-buying process. It thus makes sense for homebuyers and sellers to work with agents they like as people. There's perhaps no better way to share your personality with potential clients than to display your sense of humor and fun.

Of course, humor can be a double-edged sword; your sense of humor could turn some potential clients off! Make sure your humorous branding videos don't alienate or annoy anyone.

[Watch this](#) funny and clever humorous branding video from Kentucky Realtor® Brad Simmons.

The Introductory Video

PURPOSE: Gives consumers an idea of what agents are like to work with, and what they are like as people.

Agents use these videos to introduce themselves and their teams, give client testimonials, and explain their values, interests and why they work in real estate. They are more feel-good than educational, showing that the agent is someone you should want to work with on the basis of their personality and work ethic.

[Watch this](#) video to get a great introduction to Southern California Realtor® Chuck Costigan.

The Listing Video

PURPOSE: Provide consumers the opportunity to peek inside agents' listings without physically being there.

Listing videos give consumers a much better idea of what a house looks and feels like than listing photos can. They also give agents the opportunity to quickly describe their listings' important features as consumers are taken on video tours of them.

[Watch this](#) listing video from the charismatic Travis brothers, Benji and Julian, two Realtors® from the Seattle area.

The Informational Video

PURPOSE: Share the real estate agent's abilities, credentials and processes, and differentiate the agent from his competitors.

Unlike the introductory video, which shares what the agent is like to work with and as a person, informational videos are more of a sales pitch. They address an agent's:

- Abilities and talents.
- Industry experience and other credentials.
- Honed, tried-and-true method for buying/selling homes.
- Unique and notable attributes, especially compared to other agents in the market.

[Watch this](#) informational video from Los Angeles-area Realtor® Greg Geilman or [watch this](#) video from Vancouver, British Columbia Realtor® Phil LeGree.

The Market Update Video

PURPOSE: To give information about housing market trends in the agent's market.

Consumers will want to know if it is the right time to buy or sell their home before they start doing so. Real estate agents can answer their questions by releasing monthly or quarterly market update videos with information about trends in home sales, home prices, mortgage rates and other facts and figures.

Of course, agents can also use market update videos to impress potential customers with their knowledge of their market and the real estate industry. "Knowledge is power" – show potential clients that you have it!

[Watch this](#) market update video for the Atlanta metropolitan region produced by Realtor® Kyle Eaves.

The Community Video

PURPOSE: To introduce buyers to the neighborhood or city in which the agent operates.

Every real estate agent has the ability to be a tour guide for their local market. You know why people should want to live in your community, so put your reasons on video and post them online for potential clients to see! Community videos are particularly valuable in markets with many out-of-state or out-of-country buyers.

Community videos should address the local economy, the quality of schools and parks, shopping and dining options, culture (fairs, festivals, museums and the like), weather and anything that makes residents enjoy living there. Skip local tourist attractions unless they affect day-to-day life. For example, no one ever moved to Seattle for the Space Needle.

[Watch this](#) community video from Realtor® Richard Silver, where he gives a virtual tour of Toronto's beautiful Rosedale community.

Closing Thoughts on Social Media for Real Estate Pros

It shouldn't come as a surprise to you that social media is currently wildly popular and, from what anyone can tell, is here to stay for many years to come. This far into the 21st century, it also shouldn't surprise you that people of all ages – including tens of millions who fit the demographic profiles of the average home buyer and seller – are active social media users. Facebook, Twitter and other popular social networks aren't just for teens anymore.

Having an active social media presence is therefore as important for today's real estate professionals as being present on the most popular media of yesteryear was for contemporary agents. If your business plan relies on dated marketing channels like newspaper and radio advertisements, plan on watching your business's revenues dwindle in the same way the revenues of newspaper publishers and radio stations have declined over the last decade.

This might sound ominous, but don't let social media intimidate you. Social networks have spent countless hours making themselves as user friendly as possible for both their regular users and for businesses like yours. Real estate professionals don't need special expertise or puzzle-solving abilities to glean benefits (read: more clients) from their Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube accounts. With some effort, consistency and by following the best practices outlined above, you can build your social media presence into something that engages with your past, present and prospective clients – and builds your business in the process.

However, it's vital to always treat social media as what it is and was meant to be: a fun and simple way for individuals to digitally connect. Phrased another way, don't forget to have fun with social media!

Thanks for reading,

The Market Leader Team