

SOCIAL NETWORKING BEST PRACTICES 3.0

THE EVOLVING WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Practices, Recommendations And Common Terms



Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

DEFINITIONS AND COMMON TERMS

SOCIAL MEDIA is a term used to collectively describe a set of tools that foster interaction, discussion and community, allowing people and brands to build relationships and share information.

BLOG is a word that was created from two words: “web log.” Blogs are usually maintained by an individual or a business with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

A **COMMENT** is a response that is often provided as an answer or reaction to a blog post or message on a social network. Comments are a primary form of two-way communication on the social web.

FOLLOW FRIDAY (#FF) is a trend via the hashtag #FF every Friday on Twitter. Users select other usernames and tweet them with #FF in their post, meaning they recommend following those Twitter users. People tweet at their favorite brands, colleagues, celebrities — you name it!

A **HANGOUT** is a video service on Google+ that allows you to video chat with up to 10 Google+ users at a time. You can name these chats, watch YouTube videos during them, open a Google Doc with colleagues, and much more.

A **HASHTAG** is a tag used on the social networks Twitter, Instagram and Facebook as a way to annotate a message. A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a “#.” Example: #yourhashtag. Hashtags are commonly used to show that a message is related to an event or conference, online or offline and is used to help keep track of certain topics. By using hashtags, you can elicit more attention to your post and attract the attention of those with a shared interest.

A **NEWS FEED** is literally a feed full of news. On Facebook, the News Feed is the home page of users' accounts where they can see all the latest updates from their friends. The news feed on Twitter is called Timeline (not to get confused with Facebook's user profiles also called Timeline).

A **PODCAST** is an episodic series of digital media files which a user can set up so that new episodes are automatically downloaded via web syndication to the user's own local computer or mobile device. Podcasts are created in an array of genres and the transcript from the podcast can help boost search engine optimization (SEO) when used in a blog of related content.

A **RETWEET** is when someone on Twitter sees your message and decides to re-share it with his/her followers. A retweet button allows them to quickly resend the message with attribution to the original sharer's name.

A **SHARE** is the ability to “re-post” content from a person, company and/or website to your own social media stream for the purpose of republishing content into your own network of contacts.

TIMELINE is the series of events on a personal or company Facebook profile page.

A **TWEET** is the name for a post made on Twitter.

A **VLOG** meaning video logs or Video blogs (vlogs,) is a blog in which the postings are primarily in video form.

+1 (PLUS ONE) is how you signal your appreciation for anything that grabs your attention on Google+ or on your favorite websites.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

FRIENDS are individuals you consider to be friendly enough with you to see your Facebook profile and engage with you.

CIRCLES are clusters of a user's friends on Google+, meaning you can group certain people you choose to connect with on your Google+ into a certain Circles—such as colleagues, college connections, family, etc. When you want to share content with only these individuals, you include that specific Circle in your post's sharing options.

CONNECTIONS The LinkedIn equivalent of a Facebook 'friend' is a 'connection.' Because LinkedIn is a professional social networking site, the people you are connecting with are not necessarily people you are friends with, but rather you met in brief, heard speak, or know through another connection.

FOLLOWERS are the individuals or businesses that you are connected to you in social media and who receive your updates/posts/ shares. Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Facebook all use the term 'follow.'

COMMUNICATION VS ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNICATION is one-way messaging – Facebook post, Facebook status update, Twitter tweet, Instagram post, Blog post/article, pinning a photo on Pinterest, etc.

ENGAGEMENT constitutes a dialogue, conversation or interaction between two parties.

Reactive Engagement – Responding to or liking someone's comment on your own Facebook post/status update, replying to a tweet you're mentioned in.

Proactive Engagement – Commenting, liking or sharing someone else's Facebook post/status update, Instagram post, or retweeting someone else's tweet or mentioning someone in your tweet.

BRING SOMETHING TO THE CONVERSATION

“ Social Media is like walking into a cocktail party where you discuss a wide range of topics – some business, some personal, but pretty high-level small talk. As you feel your way around the room and interact with people you have something in common with, you share your ideas and experiences with each other. ”

MATTHEW FERRARA
CEO Matthew Ferrara & Company

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

4 KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

1. DEDICATE RESOURCES

Social media is not a singular marketing campaign, but a permanent presence and communications medium that will evolve over time. **A successful social media presence requires thought, strategy and creativity.** Assign/hire someone to manage and administer your company's social media profiles.

2. CREATE AN EDITORIAL CALENDAR

Have a general idea about what content you will post and when. This will not only help to alleviate the "job" of social media, but will also help you to create a clear communications strategy.

- **Identify 3-4 topics of interest that you will regularly post about**

- Local Community -parks, restaurants, shops, schools, etc.
- Real Estate/Market news from trustworthy sources
- Brand, Company and Sotheby's auction news

[View The Brand's Editorial Calendar On Access:](#)

- **Plan for the spontaneous**

- Share news stories and press coverage received
- Download social networking mobile apps to engage on the go
- Segment your social communities into lists by interest and/or type (i.e. new clients, existing clients, recruits)



[Low Cost Tools](#), help schedule content ahead of time.

3. CREATE & SHARE MEANINGFUL CONTENT

Photos, photos, photos – today consumers communicate visually.

- Post interesting, resourceful and timely content to drive organic growth and increase post reach
- Limit the amount of posts about your property listings – your Likers/Followers are not looking for more "advertising"
- Consider weekly posts with all your new listing/sales/open house information
- Stay up-to-date on the latest product releases to explore new ways you can make the social networks work for you

4. BE RESPONSIVE & ENGAGING

One of the most important elements of social networking is "creating a presence." It's a real-time, persistent phenomenon.

- Update frequently – in many cases, daily
- Respond with urgency – consider your social media accounts another means through which potential clients can contact you. Respond with the same urgency as you would an email or phone call.
- Say thank you – Thank people for sharing or liking your posts; Like and comment on others posts



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ADHERING TO BRAND STANDARDS

TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

PERSONAL VS. BUSINESS

Over the years social media has evolved from an online activity to a daily habit that is integrated into every aspect of our lives. The lines between an individual's personal and professional activities online have blurred. Furthermore, social networking sites have become more sophisticated and reward users who post/share quality content to engaged audiences –typically measured by interaction rate received on a piece of content. However, in order to advertise on most social networks, it must be done from a business account.

COMBINED VS. SEPARATE

TIPS FOR A COMBINED PRESENCE

- Create lists to organize and segment your connections so that you can engage with the most relevant people
- Become familiar with the social network's privacy setting so that you know what posts you're sharing with whom
- Enable the Follow feature on Facebook to allow acquaintances to connect with you without becoming your Facebook "Friend"
- Remain professional, but post about other aspects of your life so people can feel they have a personal connection with you



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VS.

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**SOTHEBY'S REFERS TO THE SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE,
NOT SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY**

GENERAL RULES

- Never use the name "Sotheby's" alone
- Use of our brand images, names and trademarks must be carefully managed and protected
- Companies must use full DBA whenever space allows*
- Approved logo, sized appropriately
- Sales associates should use branding in employer/description fields only
- Sales associates should never use company/brand logo as profile picture
- [Download Guidelines for Companies](#)
- [Download Guidelines for Sales Associates](#)

*See Identity Standards Manual for approved DBA abbreviations

FACEBOOK

- Largest Social Network worldwide with over 2.13 Billion monthly active users*
- A social sharing site that connects family and friends
- Communicate with consumers in a non-obtrusive way. Sell lifestyle and community, not property listings
- Be selective about what you're posting; post/share just 1-2 pieces of content per day

*as of April 2018

CONTENT IS KING ONLY IF IT'S QUALITY

Facebook uses an algorithm to rank your content in users' News Feeds. In fact, the average post from a company page only reaches a fraction of its fans. More than ever it is important to post quality content that engages your audience in order to reach your fans. Examples include: posts with beautiful photography, captivating video, and helpful market and area information.

[Stay Up-To-Date With The Latest Algorithm Changes Here](#)

TIPS

MAKE EVERY POST COUNT

Ask yourself...

- Would people share this with friends?
- Does this build credibility with my audience?
- Would they want it in their news feed?
- Is it timely and relevant?



TIMING

- Use Facebook's schedule feature (or a 3rd party management tool like [Hootsuite](#)) to schedule your posts in advance and during times your intended audience is engaging with Facebook.

FACEBOOK ADVERTISING

WHY ADVERTISE?

- Only a fraction of Business Page posts reach fans
- Break through the clutter
- Reach targeted audiences
- Highly efficient

TARGETING

Choosing a relevant audience for your ads is important because your ad will only be shown to people who match the criteria you select. Use the targeting options, such as location, demographics, interest, behaviors and propensity, to define the relevant audience for your ads.

WRITING AD COPY

Find out what works in your ad text and for your audience by experimenting with a variety of ads and reviewing your performance reports on a regular basis.

- Include a clear action you want your audience to take in the body text of your ad (i.e. Explore, Discover, Search, Experience)
- Highlight the benefit(s) to the consumer and/or recruit

SELECTING AN IMAGE

Experiment with different images by running multiple ads and then monitor their performance to see if there are images that your audience tends to respond to more positively. If you're just getting started creating your first few ads, here are some general tips about how to pick a strong image.

- Use an image that is bright and eye-catching, even when viewed at a small size
- Avoid images that have many small details or text and opt for something simple instead
- Choose an image that is directly relevant to your ad text
- Using your company logo is not recommended

TWITTER

- 280 character messages (tweets) containing text, photos and video display
- 330* million active users
- Real-time conversation where users are tagged using @username and where topics are tagged with #hashtag
- Provides direct access to companies, brands, personalities, celebrities and thought-leaders

*as of April 2018

TWEET, TWEET, TWEET

Unlike Facebook, on Twitter you can tweet numerous times a day. It is not uncommon for a business to tweet 10, 15 times per day. Just remember to make your tweets meaningful and to include a link or photo. Tweets with photos and video receive more engagement.

WHAT IS A RETWEET (RT)?

DIRECT RT

A repost or forward of another user's tweet directly to your Twitter Stream.

BUILD AWARENESS

Feature your Twitter @username on your email signature and within your other social media profile descriptions; Use the Twitter icon to link to your profile from your website, online brochures and other marketing materials.

FIND YOUR CUSTOMERS ON TWITTER

Import your email contact list into Twitter to see which clients to follow.

GET FOUND WITH HASHTAGS

Join conversations relevant to the interests of your followers by using hashtags (e.g. #realestate).

TURN OFF RT'S

If your Twitter Stream becomes too overwhelming you can turn off other user's Direct RT's, which will minimize the amount of messages in your Twitter Stream



PINTEREST

- 200* Million active users
- Social discovery of images (as opposed to friends and family connections) where a user curates online pinboards
- Desirable real estate demographic comprised of affluent women interested in home décor, interior design and recipes

*As of April 2018

TIPS

BEAUTY INSPIRES ENGAGEMENT

The very best boards are inspiring, with beautiful images that draw people in. Create boards using your listing inventory around topics pinners are interested in such as curb appeal, luxury kitchens and décor. Ensure the pins link back to your website.

BEYOND LISTINGS

In addition to pinning listings, pin images about topics related to your community such as cuisine, landscape photography and attractions. This is a great opportunity to showcase your personality and unique interests.

THINK VISUALLY

Infographics are a great tool for displaying information visually. Imagery is the language of consumer engagement online. Here are three online tools for creating visual Infographics:

1. Infogr.am
2. Piktochart



WECHAT

WeChat is a Chinese multi-purpose messaging and social media app developed by Tencent. It was first released in 2011, and by 2018 it was one of the world's largest standalone mobile apps by monthly active users, with over one billion monthly active users. It has been called China's "app for everything" and a "super app" because of its wide range of functions and platforms.

WeChat's moments allow you to share content with followers and friends in groups or one-on-one.

Like tagging friends on Facebook, you can also Mention friends on photo updates you release in Moments. To tag a friend use the @ sign in front of their name like you would on Twitter or Instagram.

TIPS

Because WeChat is a hybrid social tool, it serves many functions. Refer to general recommendations page to get the most out of WeChat.



INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a social networking app made for sharing photos and videos from a smartphone. Similar to Facebook or Twitter, everyone who creates an Instagram account has a profile and a news feed. When you post a photo or video on Instagram, it will be displayed on your profile.

- 800 million* monthly active users
- Visual, quick, mobile and simple to use
- Like Twitter, hashtags are used to join real-time conversation and create searchable content

*As of April 2018

TIPS

POST RELEVANT, HIGH-QUALITY PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

Instagram is all about providing value to your followers, especially if you want more engagement. Your goal should be to evoke some kind of emotion to encourage people to take action by liking and commenting on your post and also following you.

USE PROPERTIES AS CONTENT

A beautiful home speaks for itself. You can utilize the Instagram gallery feature to showcase more than one photo video of a home for a visual tour.

USE THE 80/20 RULE

The 80/20 rule states approximately 80% of your content should be focused on educating, enlightening, and engaging your audience, and only 20% should be self-promotional.

INSTAGRAM STORIES

An Instagram story can either be a video or a photo that stays live for 24 hours and then disappears. Instagram stories do not appear on your profile grid or in feed.

It is a great tool to share events as they happen without clogging up the newsfeed of your followers. It can also be used to provide a “behind-the-scenes” look at an upcoming open house or other event. If you don’t want the story to disappear, you can choose to “highlight” the story on your Instagram account and it will appear on your profile page.

INSTAGRAM TV

Instagram TV (IGTV) is Instagram’s long-form vertical video platform. Once you start your own channel, you will be able to add videos up to 10 minutes in length complete with @mentions and tappable URLs. Unlike stories, IGTV videos remain live on your channel unless you remove them.



LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is the largest professional networking site available today

- A tool for helping individuals expand their personal professional networks and find jobs in their field while exchanging knowledge, ideas and employment opportunities with peers
- LinkedIn is a great tool to establish your online presence and usually shows up at the top of search engine results

TIPS

Think of LinkedIn as a dynamic, visual version of your resume. You can add your education, work experience, awards/accolades, community service, and even hobbies. Rather than just listing your tasks, LinkedIn allows you to expand on your roles and showcase examples of your work.

Like most social networks, LinkedIn allows the user to upload a photo. Your photo should be professional and polished.

THINK: How you would present yourself for a job interview or a meeting?

BENEFIT FOR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS:

- Allows you an opportunity to expand on the market you serve, your experience and any specialties you have
- You can publish and share professional articles that would be helpful for a buyer or seller
- Fantastic way to connect and speak with relevant people about the business



GOOGLE+

- Google's Social Network
- If you have a Google+ account, you're automatically set up with a YouTube account
- It differs from most other social networks in that it allows for easy user segmentation and targeted marketing to specific groups or 'circles' of friends
- Google continues to add deeper levels of integration between their social network and their search engine, which makes G+ essential for search engine optimization (SEO) efforts

SEO

Google+ content counts toward your overall SEO ranking because Google indexes Google+ posts in the same way it does for webpages. This means that when you post to Google+, your content is searchable and it appears higher in search results, for a longer period of time than if you posted that same information to another social platform, like Facebook.

COMMUNITIES

A Google+ community is a place to meet and engage with people on topics you care about. There are both public and private communities. Google+ communities are among the most vibrant and active social communities. If you had trouble finding engagement on Google+ in the past, try joining a community.

HANGOUTS

[Google Hangouts](#) is a communication platform developed by Google which includes messaging, video chat, SMS and VOIP features. Hangouts bring conversations to life with photos, emojis, and even group video calls for free.



YOUTUBE

YouTube is the world's destination for online video content. Captivating nearly 1/3* of internet users, YouTube allows its visitors to comment, like, dislike, and share videos with friends and followers across other social media platforms. Videos uploaded to your account can be organized in channels and playlists, making for a curated viewing experience for visitors. Subscribing to a content creator's account gives you up-to-date notifications when new content arrives.

- 1 billion hours of video are watched per day on YouTube
- YouTube is technically the second largest search engine in the world
- 20% of viewers not "hooked" by the first 10 seconds of a video will click away

POST FULL-MOTION, HIGH-RESOLUTION VIDEO

Production value matters – from the camera, to the lighting, to the soundtrack, professionally crafted videos with high production value gain more traction. Hiring professionals with experience shooting properties will yield a better video for your subscribers and will better represent your home. Photo slideshows and videos mixed with still imagery are not recommended on this platform.

*As of July 2018



BLOGGING & VLOGGING

- Journal-style articles that are updated frequently
- Provides a person or company's experience, opinion and news
- Good for SEO

TIPS

HAVE A POINT

Your blog posts should strive to provide informative, entertaining or newsworthy reads that entice readers to want to come back for more. Be sure to combine both promotional and educational blog entries.

MULTIMEDIA

Include photos, videos and links within your blog posts in order to create a rich consumer experience.

BLOG PLATFORMS

- **WORDPRESS** - WordPress is a blog publishing platform that makes it easy for anyone to publish online. WordPress.com is a fully-hosted platform that requires no coding experience while WordPress.org is the self-hosted version which requires your own website and web development.
- **BLOGGER** is Google's blog platform. It's fully hosted platform that requires no coding experience.
- **TUMBLR** is a microblogging platform that allows users to post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog.

LET THEM SHARE

Adding social share buttons to your blog-or website- is a simple and effective way to boost visits and pageviews. The popular blog platforms already have this function incorporated - though you may need to update your post settings to enable it. Here are a few other share services available.

- [Add to Any](#) features the most streamlined sharing button we've seen. This service's stats can be rolled into Google Analytics.
- [Add This](#) is a popular sharing platform with a huge list of services readers and users can share through. The interface isn't unpleasant (as many catchall interfaces are), and it can be customized to feature small or large buttons for popular services. Buttons with share counts are also available, although this beta feature isn't as visually appealing.
- [Share This](#) is a similar service with a UI that features a small, single button, large icons, or even larger icons with horizontal or vertical share counts.

VIDEO BLOGGING (VLOGGING)

Vlogging is one of the quickest ways to share content in the web. Unlike written content, videos offer consumers the opportunity to connect with you on a deeper level and allows non-writers to portray your personality in a highly consumable format.



SETH O'BYRNE

Real Estate Sales Professional | Pacific Sotheby's International Realty



BLOGGING & VLOGGING CONTINUED

VLOGGING TIPS

While vlogs are meant to be personal, this does not mean you should sacrifice quality. Here are some tips for maximizing your vlogging efforts.

KEEP IT SHORT AND SWEET

Keep your videos short, sweet and to the point. 1-3 minutes is a good rule of thumb.

CONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

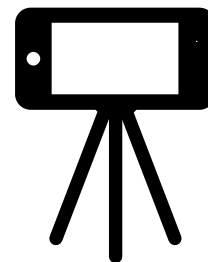
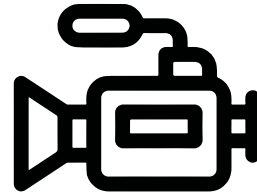
Smile, be natural and personable. Provide interesting, entertaining or useful information your audience will find value in watching. Although it's fine to highlight your listings on occasion, vlogging is not meant to be a direct sales tool.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- **AUDIO** - Most vlogs have the unfortunate tendency to use a computer or cell phone's built in microphone. While this is a convenient solution, it often picks up a number of external noises as well as recording echoes of the subject's voice. The use of a standalone microphone helps to negate these issues, focusing the recording on a clear version of the subject's dialog. (See "podcast" section for microphone recommendation)
- **LIGHTING & FRAMING** - Taking everything with the frame into consideration is essential. Be sure that the subject is in focus, and is the most naturally lit item within the video frame. The typical vlog has the blogger centered in the FRAME.
- **PICTURE QUALITY & EQUIPMENT** - The simplest of video equipment can be utilized for a vlog - even a 3-year-old iPhone has HD video capabilities. The key is to keep the shot steady, with the camera set at a straight angle, mounted on a still surface or (ideally) a tripod.

DISTRIBUTION: GET VIEWS

- **POST YOUR VIDEO TO MULTIPLE OUTLETS** — YouTube, social media, your website and blog



PODCASTS

PODCASTS

A podcast is an episodic series of digital media files which a user can set up so that new episodes are automatically downloaded via web syndication to the user's own local computer or portable media player. Podcasts are created in an array of genres and the transcript from the podcast can help boost search engine optimization (SEO) when transcribed on a blog of related content.

- Podcasts are known to have loyal, affluent, and educated listeners
- 80% of people listen to all or most of each podcast episode
- The year-over-year growth rates for podcast listening have been consistent, with 10 to 20% increases each year

TIPS FOR STARTING A PODCAST

- Choose a topic you're passionate about. Do you want to be the local market expert on real estate? How about covering the latest trends in home design and décor?
- Choose a format, length, and frequency. Is your podcast just going to be you, or will you have guests? Are you committing to once per week or once per month?
- Plan your content. Just like other social networks, having a content calendar is the best way to stay on track. Once your content is set, think about scripting your show so you stay on track.
- Use your social networks to share links to your podcast to grow your audience.



PODCASTS CONTINUED



BASIC TOOLS TO GET YOUR PODCAST STARTED

Now on to some of the technical aspects for creating a video podcast. The right tools will make for a successful podcast.



A HIGH-QUALITY MICROPHONE

ex. [Blue Yeti](#) USB Condenser Microphone



A MESSAGING PLATFORM

[Skype](#) includes the ability to have video conference calls, it's a perfect choice for having a three-way conversation. Plus, the sheer popularity of Skype makes it easy for guests who are already comfortable using the platform for online conversation.



PRO TIP: IF YOU'RE JUST GETTING STARTED, KEEP YOUR PODCASTS TO AROUND 15 MIN.

AS YOUR DEMAND GROWS, THE LENGTH OF YOUR PODCAST CAN TOO.



AN EDITING TOOL

ScreenFlow is great app for recording and editing screencasts. It's easy to use and packs in powerful editing features. (Note: All Apple computers include a program called Garage Band which features a built-in podcast editor.)



SUBMIT TO ITUNES

With the finished recording edited and exported, it's time to put it up on the web and submit it to the iTunes podcast directory. [Blubrry.com](#) simplifies this task and as an advertised Apple partner, offers hosting and submission options along with access to reporting tools.