

The Power of Social Networking

Why Social Media is Important
to People & Businesses

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For Real Estate
Professionals



Why Social Networking is Important to People & Businesses

Social Networking for Real Estate Professionals

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Why Social Networking is Important to People & Businesses

By now, you've at least heard about Social Media and Social Networking. You may have even experimented with Twitter or checked out your kids' Facebook profiles, and you can see the value for college students who want to make sure they're all hooking up at the same bar on Saturday night. But you've probably wondered, *"How can any of this help me with my real estate business?"*

Why Social Media Is Important To People & Businesses

Social media and social networking are increasingly important assets for real estate professionals to get found by and engage with potential buyers, sellers and referral partners on the web. Think about the way you find information about products and services – are you watching TV ads? Going through your junk mail? Or are you consulting a search engine or a friend? Gone are the days where people had to rely mostly on an advertiser's biased claims about their own products or services.

Today's Consumer Wants Unbiased Information On Everything. People have gotten better and better at ignoring purely marketing messages with DVRs, caller ID, and spam filters. Instead, they visit Google and Social Networks for honest, unbiased answers to their questions.

Will you be there to answer your prospects when they ask?

Social Networking is one of those "heaven sent" tools for real estate professionals because it allows you to further build your network of prospects and referrals partners without spending much (if any) money doing so. With social networking, your investment is mostly time and energy. For most real estate professionals whose marketing budget is very limited and who rely heavily on referrals, Social Networking is a perfect tool for their business. In this course we're going to explore the 5 most popular Social Networking sites:

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- Twitter
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- ActiveRain

We'll introduce and explain how each site works, show you how to setup an account with each of these sites, help you understand the basics of how to meet prospects and develop relationships with them on each site, and explain how each site can earn commissions with your real estate business.

Twitter

Twitter's Popularity



Facebook is by far the most recognizable name in the online Social Networking world and it has by far the most users. However, another social networking site almost as well known as Facebook also has a colossal number of users, yet is much less recognized by real estate professionals, let alone utilized. That site is Twitter. In fact, we believe Twitter can be much more useful for your real estate business than Facebook.

Twitter is the #2 most popular social network in the world behind Facebook. Twitter currently has over 500 million registered users who send 300 million messages or 'tweets' on the Twitter system per day. Perhaps even more significant is Twitter handles over 1.6 billion search queries per day for people searching for tweets made by Twitter users. As an example everyone has heard of the Marilyn Monroe Condo in Mississauga—what a real estate person could search on twitter would be what are people tweeting about with the Marilyn Monroe buildings. Though Google is the #1 most visited site in the world, it only gets about 2/3 as many searches per day as Twitter, even though Twitter is only the 10th most visited site in the world.

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Why People Use Twitter

There's a simple reason that Twitter's daily search volume is greater than even Google's: people trust other people far more than they trust machines. Google relies almost entirely on artificial computer intelligence for everything to do with searches on their site. Twitter, like other social networking sites, relies almost entirely on human intelligence and human opinion for how it classifies and ranks information sent through its system via tweets. It doesn't even matter that people using Twitter usually don't know one another very well (if at all). With the amount of advertising we see today people can readily sense the difference between someone giving an honest, unbiased opinion and someone whose opinion is slanted and who is merely spreading self-serving propaganda for whatever they're trying to sell. There is no shortage of the latter on Twitter.

Again, the secret behind the immense power of Social Networking sites like Twitter is your ability to readily get honest, unbiased information from lots of different people on virtually any topic.

So we want to make it very clear the type of information that has real currency and value on Twitter: the honest, unbiased kind, just like the kind of info posted on sites like Amazon.com product reviews. It's the same thing that makes you as a real estate professional valuable to your home buyers and sellers: your honest, unbiased expertise on your local real estate market as that is invaluable to sellers for knowing how to price their listing right the first time and how much to offer on a property when working with buyers. So, make no mistake: Twitter is a great venue for networking with literally tens of thousands of qualified prospects and demonstrating your local real estate expertise.

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How Not To Use Twitter For Your Real Estate Business

Twitter is not an online classifieds site in the same way as Kijiji or Craig's List is. Sure, you can advertise any of your own listings you want on Twitter (a program called Tweet Lister www.tweetlister.com helps with this), and advertising listings can be effective. You should certainly announce your new listings, and open houses on Twitter. But the bottom line is people are on Twitter for the sort of honest, unbiased information they have traditionally gotten from people they know and trust. People are not on Twitter to be sold to. If they wanted to be sold to they'd be visiting sites with real estate listings on them. When people have made up their mind about what they're looking for by using sites like Twitter they then will focus on sites with listings. While they're still making up their minds they stay and search on sites like Twitter.

Why Twitter Is More Suitable Than Facebook Or LinkedIn For "Quantity" Business Networking

Twitter is by design a more suitable climate for building business relationships than Facebook or LinkedIn. The reason is the thing that really has currency on Facebook is your established relationships, mostly your personal relationships. With LinkedIn, it's your past and professional relationships that have currency. Most people don't go on to Facebook to meet new people, they go on the site to socialize with people they already know, whether they be friends they've kept in touch with or friends from the past they've dug up through Facebook searches or looking through the profiles of friends and family. Facebook partially restricts who you can contact and what information you can know about other people based upon established relationships. If you started making friend requests on Facebook randomly to people you didn't know but thought would be good business contacts, many (if not most) of these people will deny your friend requests. The same holds true for LinkedIn. In fact, LinkedIn penalizes you for doing too much random business networking with people you don't know.

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With Twitter, your ability to network is much, much freer. Twitter does not take into consideration any of your past or present business or personal relationships, so Twitter does not restrict your ability to freely network as Facebook and LinkedIn do. You can follow anyone you choose, even celebrities and world leaders! In fact, unlike Facebook, you can look into any Twitter account's list of followers and people that person is following and follow any of those people you want! This ability alone is a huge advantage in your ability to network freely and effectively using Twitter that Facebook restricts because of the existing friendship prerequisite in most cases.

How Twitter Works

Twitter has rightly been called the "SMS of the internet" since the way messages are sent is similar to cell phone text messaging. People who register an account on Twitter are readily able to network with any of the 300 million other Twitter users worldwide. The way this networking is primarily done is by users 'Following' other Twitter users. Following another Twitter user is like walking up to a person at a business networking event, introducing yourself, and stating "I'd like to exchange business cards with you and keep in touch. Are you interested?" Following someone is the equivalent of signing up for their email mailing list, albeit in following someone you only receive Twitter based messages or 'tweets' from that person. Your contact information in your Twitter account is kept private from anyone whose Twitter profile you follow. If someone you follow decides to also follow you back then this is considered a consummated business relationship on Twitter because both people are interested in possibly doing business with one another.

Twitter users can communicate with other users on the Twitter network by sending them what is known as a 'tweet'. A tweet is a short message whose maximum length is 140 characters, the same maximum length a SMS based text message on a cell phone can be. When you send out a tweet, all the people who have followed your Twitter profile will see this tweet. When someone you have followed sends a tweet you and everyone else that's

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followed that person will see that message. Tweets are organized on your screen in the order they were received from all the people you're following. Sending tweets is known as micro-blogging because you are posting informative messages as you would on your blog, except they are (hopefully!) much shorter messages than your normal blog posts.

So your goal with Twitter should be steadily building up your list of new Followers while developing relationships with your existing followers. The quality and quantity of your Twitter follower list should both always be growing. If you neglect the quantity of your list your overall relationship quality will suffer, and vice versa. As they say, your "network" is directly proportional to your "net worth".

Network = Net worth

Registering Your Twitter Account

Here's a step-by-step guide on registering your Twitter account:

1. Go to the Twitter signup page by clicking this link: <https://twitter.com/signup>
2. Type in your name, username, password and email address. Need help with a username? It can't have spaces, so many people just use their real name without the spaces. For example, my Twitter account is gabriellejeans_. You could also use the first part of your email address before the @ symbol.
3. Type in the CAPTCHA words from the image. If you have a hard time reading them, you can listen to the words by clicking the link just to the right of the image.
4. Click on the Create My Account button

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The next step is to see if your friends are on Twitter. This will look through the address in your email if you use Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail or another popular Internet email service. You can skip this by clicking on the Skip This Step link just below the Continue button.

5. Twitter may want to brag about the celebrities on Twitter and ask you to follow them. Feel free to skip this step just like you did above!
6. Congratulations! You are done. The next page that asks how you are doing is your main Twitter page. Type in something in the text box and click update to send your first 'tweet' - which is a Twitter message.

Determine Your Target Followers

After you register your new Twitter account and complete your Twitter profile, the first thing you should do before tweeting or sending out "follow me" requests to anyone is figuring out who you want your followers to be. Real estate professionals should be looking for three types of followers:

- **Property Buyers**
- **Property Sellers**
- **Referral Sources**

With property buyers and sellers, by far the most prominent of these people on Twitter are the real estate investors. Most of them will proudly announce that they're real estate investors in their Twitter bio even if they're only doing it part time and are still working at a full time job. Real estate investors are very easy to find on Twitter. Regular home buyers and sellers are out there on Twitter and typically don't announce their intention to move either in their profile or in their tweets, so they're much tougher to identify. But some buyers and sellers do announce their intention to move in various ways. I'll explain the various ways of finding non-investor home buyers and sellers on Twitter later in this e-book.

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Your third type of follower should be Referral Sources. They can be either of two types of people: past buyers and sellers you've worked with and other real estate professionals. The latter should definitely include real estate sales representatives from your brokerage and sales people from your immediate farm area but also any other reps from your city or even province/state or country. You never know when another sales person following you who lives thousands of miles away from you will get a client re-locating to your farm area. They'll need to refer their client to a competent professional such as you.

We all know that referrals from past clients are the lifeblood of many a real estate business, so be sure to look up all your past clients on Twitter and get them added to your Twitter follower list ASAP.

You should also cultivate relationships with any other types of real estate related professionals working with the types of clients you work with such as mortgage brokers, real estate lawyers, home inspectors, home appraisers, contractors, property managers, relocation professionals, junk removers, cleanup & maintenance companies, and so forth.

We'll soon explore where to look on Twitter for all the different types of target followers you should be seeking. But before I get into that, it's time for you to start micro-blogging on Twitter!

Time To Start Tweeting!

Before you start following anyone in Twitter, you should compose and send out a few tweets. Sure, they won't be sent to anyone since you have no followers (assuming you just registered your Twitter account), but these tweets will be displayed in your Twitter account, and that's the point of doing this. At this point it's more important to develop your profile with some information about who you are and what you offer professionally rather than plunging in and looking for followers. Many people will judge whether they want to follow you or not based on the number of tweets you've sent to date plus the information you're tweeting about.

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Your Twitter Account Is Like A Party



Think of your Twitter account as a party. If you invite people to your party you need to give them a reason to show up and then stick around or they won't stay for long (or won't show up at all). For the first few people that show up, if the food and drink offerings are lackluster, the same dated hit music CD keeps playing over and over, and not many other people are showing up yet then you may have

a difficult time getting people to stay. If that happens then your party may never get much momentum through the evening and may ultimately turn out to be a dull affair.

However, if you lavishly cater your party, hire a DJ, bartender and maybe even some local socialites or models, it'll free you up to focus your time on chatting and mingling with each of your guests while overseeing each aspect of your party and the party's overall progress. This will quickly create an overall vibe most people will find appealing, making them more likely to stay at your party and come to your future ones.

As more people come to the "party", more and more of them will stay because of the great everything. Your party will quickly get momentum. Some of your guests may be having such a good time that they'll ask you if it's ok they invite a couple more people they'd like you to meet. Pretty soon, your party will be in full swing with most everyone having a great time and most people not wanting to leave until they absolutely have to (or you kick them out).

When you send follow requests to other Twitter users, or when people find your profile through their own searching, many of them will look at your

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tweet history and only take into account that and your profile's bio for deciding whether they want to follow you or not. If your profile has no tweets and no bio then the only people who will want to follow you are spammers because you fit a spammer's profile exactly: that profile is anyone, anywhere.

People often want to see your tweets because they'll want to see how valuable the information you've been tweeting is to them or to their followers. When Twitter users start following a large number of people they will start getting more and more tweets coming their way sent from the people they're following. If you follow lots of other people involved in real estate you can expect to get lots of tweets from them about articles, websites and other resources you'll often find very interesting and that your own followers may also find very interesting.

In fact, my Twitter feed has replaced the real estate sites I used to visit occasionally. I find so much useful real information coming down the Twitter pipe on a daily basis that there is little need for me to visit these sites because the people I'm following have usually already sent me the best articles from these sites already plus info from many other sites I've never even heard of.

What Information Should You Tweet?

So the big question is: what information should you tweet? Think of your collective tweets as another way of real estate blogging; in this case, real estate micro-blogging. Your normal real estate blog is all about your professional opinion about all things to do with real estate with a focus on your farm area's real estate. So your tweets should be a highly compressed, ultra concise version of your blog. If you already write a normal real estate blog regularly then you'll know what I'm talking about. If you don't have a blog, then your blog should contain any information whatsoever than can help property buyers and sellers with accomplishing their buying and selling goals for properties in your local farm area. Obviously their biggest goal is buying their next home and selling the one they're living

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in (assuming they own that home). So lots of your tweets should contain interesting information about your farm area, especially information on the local real estate market.

You can get started by sending a few tweets that allude to content on your website, especially your blog. Your first tweets can be as simple as the headline of your blog article followed by a link to the full article.

We suggest a weekly schedule of 15 tweets: 10 tweets about your farm area and 5 tweets pertaining to content on your website or blog.

Twitter Isn't Your Own Truman Show!

Recall the hit movie The Truman Show starring Jim Carrey. The film chronicles the life of a man who is initially unaware that he is living in a constructed reality television show, broadcast 24-hours-a-day to billions of people across the globe. Don't make your Twitter account a narcissistic diary of your every thought, whim and action!

As with Facebook, many real estate professionals make the mistake of discussing personal and business matters simultaneously in the same account when you really should have separate accounts for business and personal matters. As with your profile's bio, none of your prospective clients or referral partners really cares about your comments about the weather, tv shows, celebrities, your cute little nephew, that gorgeous new designer bag you just maxed your credit card out on or that scrumptious piece of cheese cake you just ate at a trendy cafe.

Follow You, Follow Me

After you've written your Twitter profile's bio and sent a few tweets (initially, the more tweets, the better) you then need to start networking on Twitter. As with a brand new real estate website, right now you have zero visibility on Twitter with your prospects and potential referral partners, so you need to go

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out and start pounding some information highway pavement, so to speak.

Initially, by far the best way you get people interested in following you is by following them first and replying to one of their recent tweets, especially if that tweet is a question about real estate. Once you've built your Twitter account with a sizable following and lots of tweets relevant to your farm area, you'll start attracting followers automatically. The

more you build up your Twitter account, the more your account will start attracting followers on its own. But for now your daily Twitter mantra must be "follow, follow, follow".

You need to balance your efforts at following other Twitter users with the tweets you send out. Ideally, you should spend some time both tweeting and following others daily. If it's a slow time of the year for you (eg. winter months) you should put extra time into following and especially for creating tweets. Free software such as Tweet Deck www.tweetdeck.com allows you to take all the tweets you've written and have them automatically tweeted on your Twitter account on whatever dates and times you specify for each tweet. Software such as Tweet Adder www.tweetadder.com allows you to automatically follow whichever Twitter users you specify. Follow automation software can be very helpful as Twitter currently allows you to follow upto 500 people per day!

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Following/Unfollowing On Twitter

Now you need to start looking for and finding prospective clients. First, you must understand in detail more on how Following/Unfollowing works on Twitter.

Initially, Twitter allows you to follow up to 2000 people total and up to 500 people per day. If you reach the maximum for either total or number of follows per day Twitter will block you from following any more people. If you reach the 2000 following limit and haven't got the same or more number of people following you then you'll have to unfollow some people. Again, there are limits with unfollowing people: you can only unfollow 500 people per day.

If someone you follow hasn't followed you back then it's a good indication that they aren't interested in what you offer professionally. How long you should wait before unfollowing people who haven't followed you is debatable. Some people use Twitter daily while others less often. Some people go through their list of followers at least once per day and follow back the people that interest them. Some people may only do this every few days or once per week.

Should I Hold Out For A Follow?

After waiting a few days for someone to follow you back who hasn't yet reciprocated your follow, it's best to look at their overall Twitter profile and their history using Twitter to see if they're worth waiting for a "follow back". Look at their Twitter profile overall and assess the following factors:

- **Do they have a large number of Twitter followers?**
- **How often do they send out Tweets?**
- **How many Tweets have they sent total?**
- **Do they follow lots of other Twitter users?**

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Inevitably, you will follow people that are simply not (under any circumstances) interested in you or your knowledge about your local real estate market. If someone doesn't follow you within a few days of you having followed them then they probably fit into one of two categories:

1. They don't see any reason to have a personal or business relationship with you

OR

2. They don't use use Twitter much, so they are not looking at the emails they've received from Twitter about new followers like you, or they've have disabled the option of getting notified by Twitter via email of new followers.

I recommend unfollowing these people 7 days or less after you've followed them.

There are exceptions to these rules. Some people not readily following you may be on vacation or on some other type of extended leave of absence from work (eg. maternity, disability, academic sabbatical) and therefore not getting (or caring about) emails they've received while they're away. But when these people get back from their absence some may be more than happy to follow you on Twitter.

Where To Look For Local Buyers And Sellers On Twitter

As we've mentioned earlier, there are three types of people you want to seek out on Twitter:

- **Home Buyers and Sellers**
- **Real Estate Investors**
- **Referral Partners**

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For now I'll focus on where to find local home buyers and sellers. The very best spot for finding these people is your competitors' follower lists! Do some research and find other real estate sales professionals in your immediate geographic area who have the most followers and look through their follower lists.

Once you've gone through these people look for real estate sales reps in areas adjacent to your farm area and then beyond, focusing first on the ones with lots of followers.

Again, avoid following the people who seem to be following your competitors just for the sake of selling them something. Focus on following the people whose Twitter bios indicate they aren't focused on selling something. They're the people more likely interested in your competitors' real estate knowledge and are therefore following them for that purpose, regardless of whether they're planning to move soon or not. Few buyers and sellers will explicitly state in their Twitter bio that they're looking to buy or sell properties unless they're real estate investors.

Another hot spot for buyer and seller prospects are people following local mortgage brokers or mortgage people from banks. As you probably know some people go to mortgage broker's right at the beginning of their new home search, especially if they think they may have problems getting conventional bank financing for their next home for whatever reason(s). So use the same tactics for following local mortgage brokers' followers and primary lenders as with real estate professionals.

Other real estate professionals involved in the mid-later stages of real estate transactions are also worth following. So look for local real estate lawyers, home inspectors, home stagers, and home appraisers, especially those with lots of followers.

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Property Developers



Another prime spot for finding both buyers and sellers along with real estate investors are local property developers. Some prospective buyers and investors follow property developers on Twitter, awaiting word from the developer of VIP buyer events, public launches or price reductions on remainder units in a development. Developers are particularly good places for finding real estate investors as well.

Getting Loads Of Twitter Followers On Autopilot

As we've stressed before, one of the most important parts of your Social Media presence is the number of people in your direct, 1st degree network IE your direct contacts you can interact with directly with a referral or introduction. When you have a large number of people following you on Twitter, the size of your extended network (IE 2nd and 3rd degree contacts) is exponentially higher than people with small numbers of followers. So your Twitter follower size is just as important as having a large number of people in your email database.

Yet I recognize that most real estate professionals don't have the time nor inclination to take much time for building up their Twitter following, especially not on a daily basis. With that in mind, I have successfully tested a method for getting you loads of new Twitter followers on daily basis with minimal effort – as many as 100 new followers per day! It really works! Here's how to do it.

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First, purchase the program Tweet Adder www.tweetadder.com Currently it can be purchased online for \$55 and you can start using it immediately. This is the only money you'll have to spend to make this strategy work. Tweet Adder will automatically follow whichever groups of people you specify. Then, you can export this list to your PC and keep it in a directory with all your other "to follow" lists. Once you've built up lists of at least a few thousand people, load them all into your "To Follow" list.

Obviously Twitter frowns upon spammers

To twitter, one tell-tale sign of a spammer is using automation tools for Twitter with very predictable patterns (eg. always 500 follows, then 500 unfollows at the same time every single day). Twitter also identifies spammers when they see accounts where there is a high degree of churn. By "churn" we mean when an account follows lots of people regularly but gets very few people following back. Spammers typically get their accounts suspended after Twitter sees these two factors in an account on a regular basis.

You want to be sure to avoid getting labeled as a spammer you need to ensure the people you're following are likely to reciprocate and follow you back. As mentioned, the easiest prospects to identify and most likely to follow you back are real estate investors and other real estate professionals (mortgage brokers, inspectors, etc.).

Having Multiple Twitter Accounts

If you work a large geographic farm area and still want to appeal to that large area rather than one or two neighborhoods it's best to have multiple Twitter accounts each focused on a small section of your farm region. With each account only send out tweets relevant to that particular area. For the website URL in your Twitter profile direct them to a landing page on your site specifically on the particular geographic area that Twitter account covers.

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How To Make Money With Twitter

The most frequently asked question real estate professionals have about Twitter and social media in general is: how do I make money with my real estate business using these sites?

With Twitter, you make money by doing two things: demonstrating your expertise on your local real estate market and then exposing your business via Twitter to large numbers of qualified buyers and sellers on a daily basis. You demonstrate your market expertise by only tweeting useful information about your farm area's real estate market and doing it on a regular basis (daily is best). You get loads of exposure for your business by doing large amounts qualified prospects (particularly real estate investors). Inevitably people who are looking for your services or listings in your area will see your "I'm Following You" email and then contact you directly.

If you use the tactics we've discussed earlier for building up your Twitter following on a daily basis you can probably reach 3,000 followers within 6 months. When home seller prospects you follow see you have such a large number of people in your Twitter network they will be more inclined to give you a chance to list their home because they see you have so much marketing power relative to your competitors.

YouTube



With all the press and buzz about Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks, one site not commonly viewed as a social networking site has emerged as a leader in this area. That site is YouTube. With it's many standard social features like the

"Like Button" and new social features getting added regularly, YouTube is quickly becoming a highly useful site for real estate professionals.

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Another key thing to understand about YouTube is that it is a wholly owned subsidiary of Google. Considering that YouTube is also currently the second most popular search engine site in the world, it's all the more important to have your own videos on YouTube as this will help your Google SEO in a big way.

Read on and discover several reasons why it should be a part of real estate social marketing strategy.

You Don't Need Your Own Videos For Using YouTube

The thought of having an account at YouTube (let alone a channel) is scary for many, even intimidating. Fortunately, you don't have to produce your own videos to have an active social experience on YouTube. Indeed, you should eventually overcome your fears and publish videos so you can connect with your market, but you don't have to start there.

A few things that you can do without producing video content of your own:

- **Commenting (on others videos, or channels)**
- **Sharing videos (more on that later)**
- **Creating playlists of your favorite YouTube videos**
- **Rate videos (1-5 stars)**
- **Favorite Videos (another playlist)**
- **Have your actions on YouTube recorded on Facebook, Twitter, etc**

Share Valuable Content

For those who are familiar with the various sharing options found on many blogs and social networking sites, you'll be glad to know that YouTube has this function as well. YouTube users can now share a video using one of the popular social networking sites (including Twitter). It also can be sent to one of your YouTube friends, or emailed. YouTube also allows you to embed video content for a single video, a playlist, or a channel.

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Updates On Your Social Activities

While not comprehensive as Facebook or other feed activity updates, with the release of YouTube's realtime updates, the site is headed in that direction. The fact that this feature has been introduced along with other recent enhancements, there may be other activities will be streamed out as well. For instance, the popular movie site Netflix has a plugin with Facebook whereby you can allow people visiting your Facebook page to see all the recent videos you've watched on Netflix. YouTube is likely to have something like this plugin soon, although many, many people are already sharing YouTube clips on other social media sites.

Registering Your Own YouTube Account

When you create your new YouTube account, you also want to create your own YouTube channel. With your own YouTube channel you can market your listings and services to your local market and have all of your videos located in one easy to find place that carries your brand.

1. **Create a YouTube Channel account using your business email address. Choose a username for this channel based on your brand or the theme of your website. It is important to keep your personal and business YouTube accounts separate. Your YouTube account name is permanent, so be sure to choose a professional username. If you already have a Google account for your business, you can use this as your YouTube login.**
2. **For example if you sell in Glenn Abbey Oakville area then try to choose your YouTube Cannel account Glenn Abbey Real Estate. This is the name that users will see when they visit your channel. If that name is already taken, pick a name that describes your expertise (eg. Oakville Real Estate) or choose a variation of this.**

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3. Brand your channel. YouTube allows you to change the background image and layout of your new company channel page. Include your company logo and make sure you follow the guidelines for advertising according to the Registrar, REBBA 2002 on all your social networking accounts and any graphics pertinent to your page and your company. You can find a copy of the advertising checklist by visiting the www.reco.on.ca and clicking on Industry professional and search advertising guidelines. The finished effect should look professional and polished. (See chapter on advertising checklist)
4. Include social features on your channel page. YouTube has several modules that you can include on your channel page such as subscriptions, friends and upcoming events. Add pertinent modules to your channel that enable you to interact with your viewing audience.
5. Create a video page banner for your videos to make it easy for people who discover your videos on YouTube to find your YouTube Channel. You can create a small 25 by 170 pixel banner that will display on the top of your videos and will link to your brand channel.

Videos Real Estate Professionals Can Use On YouTube

The type of videos you can use for your real estate business is only limited by your imagination. The most common videos are (of course) virtual tours and video tours, but your videos don't necessarily have to be a person behind a camera filming something.

There is now software widely available that captures everything you do on your computer, whether it be browsing the web or giving a PowerPoint slide show presentation. This software also allows you to speak into a microphone connected to your PC and have your speech recorded in tandem with

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whatever you are doing on your computer. Camstudio (PC) or Camtasia (MAC) are two software titles you can use for doing this.

The first thing you should record using this software is your Market Watch report. Many people would prefer watching a video you narrate on this topic rather than read a written PDF report (although you should continue to offer that to).

This PC recording software is perfect for doing video blogging. For example, if you find an article you think would be of interest to your prospects on the web, in your video you can go to the article, read through it, and then provide your live verbal commentary.

If you ever host webinars or teleconferences for home buyers or sellers or investors, this software is perfect for recording these presentations and then posting on YouTube.

Understanding The Effectiveness Of Your YouTube Clips

One of the challenges with social media sites is the difficulty in measuring the effectiveness of your social activity. In other words, how much money is being made from my time being spent on these sites? Understanding how your market responds to your video content can help you fine tune and improve what you offer. Besides getting feedback from video ratings and user comments, there's Insight Statistics and Data.

YouTube Insights and Statistics

YouTube's Insights reporting function helps you understand views, viewer demographics, popularity, and community.

Community

The community tab of Insight reports on how other YouTube users are interacting with your video contents in the form of rating, comments, and favoriting. Used properly, this information can drive future content you publish, making it more relevant and targeted.

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Hot Spots

The Hot Spots feature is available on a per video basis, and helps you understand the attention your video has at any point, compared to videos of similar length. Learn where you are losing interest, and make appropriate adjustments in future videos.

No other social networking site provides this kind of data for free. Let's hope they continue to build on these useful reporting features.

Driving Traffic To Your Website Via YouTube



Active YouTube users generate interest in their profile (Channel) page, and this generates traffic to their website (supposing you are naturally peppering links to your website in your channel and video descriptions).

While you'll probably find Google will remain the number one traffic generator for your site, one real estate professional

reported traffic coming from YouTube users and opting in at his site for a special report at 357% the rate of those coming straight from Google search, his second highest conversion source (he reports Twitter is #1).

What this indicates is that having YouTube as a part of a social marketing strategy is not only valuable, but serves as a very important source of website traffic that converts by getting new additions to your opt-in mailing list.

If you've ever seriously considered having an active YouTube account, but were concerned with all the time it takes to make videos, the newer YouTube social features of commenting, rating, favoriting, and sharing means you can get started right away without creating your own videos.

When you do start producing videos not only can you build rapport with

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your market by offering valuable information, but you can drive more qualified traffic to your site, while tracking the effectiveness of the videos with YouTube Insights.

Utilized in this way, YouTube should be an integral part of any small business social marketing strategy. Haven't setup an account on YouTube? If you haven't done so, do it today, it is by far one of the most important social media programs real estate professionals need.

How To Make Money With YouTube

It's actually possible to make money with YouTube just by having people watch your YouTube videos. However, since your videos will have mostly local appeal only it's very unlikely your videos will get nearly enough views to qualify you to earn money from a large number of views or via ads displayed on your video's pages.

The way to make real money with YouTube is by posting your own videos on YouTube of properties you want to promote. If you work the condominium market you could do a video tour through the model suites, interview the developer, and so on. You could also do a video where you talk about why investing in this project is good decision and then promote your videos through your Twitter account where it's easy to find investors.

LinkedIn



What Facebook is to socializing online, LinkedIn is to business networking online. LinkedIn is by far the most popular business oriented social media site in the world, boasting 120 million users as of August 2011, and it's membership is growing in leaps and bounds, at a faster rate than even Facebook. LinkedIn facilitates interaction between business professionals of all kinds, allowing them to share information amongst

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one another, ask questions publicly, get answers, and promote themselves and their businesses. Real estate professionals can use LinkedIn for meeting and developing relationships with home buyers and sellers as well as referral partners such as mortgage brokers.

Registering A New LinkedIn Account

Here's how to register a LinkedIn account for your business in 5 steps:

1. Go to <http://www.linkedin.com>
2. On this page it will recognize that you don't have an account yet and ask you for your First Name, Last Name, Email Address, and the password you want to use for your LinkedIn account. Once you've filled in this information click Join Now
3. On the next page you'll be asked to fill in a few fields with basic information about your profession. Even if you are only working as a real estate professional part time indicate this as your profession. Then click Continue.
4. LinkedIn will send you an email to the email address you provided, asking you to confirm that someone from this email address requested a new LinkedIn account. Go into this email and click the confirmation link to bring you back to the LinkedIn site.
5. LinkedIn will then give you the option of going through your contacts in various services such as Yahoo and MSN Messenger and your contacts in your email accounts for any of the major web based free email account providers. You should add all the people from these contacts lists as it will help you greatly in getting a running start with using LinkedIn.

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Creating Your LinkedIn Profile



The first step after joining LinkedIn is creating your profile. It's crucial you are very thorough and precise in creating your profile as the keywords you use in your profile will be one of the major ways people find you. So you want to use in your profile all the keywords that describe your areas of real estate expertise. Make sure you use any words directly associated with your farm area.

When you complete your basic profile, LinkedIn will go through your Hotmail and MSN Messenger list of contacts and ask which people you want to send an invite to for joining your LinkedIn network. You should add as many of these people as possible because LinkedIn restricts your ability to add contacts to your LinkedIn network. This "gated-access" policy requires you either have a preexisting relationship with a contact. You can approach anyone (whether they're a member of LinkedIn or not) and request they join your LinkedIn network.

However, if someone who gets your invitation selects "I don't know (this person)", this constitutes a strike against you. If you get five strikes of invitees saying they don't know you, LinkedIn will restrict your ability to network. They will make it so you can't invite anyone else to your network without first supplying LinkedIn with their email address as proof that you have a pre-existing relationship with that person.

So you need to carefully consider the initial contacts LinkedIn suggests join your network. Microsoft has a very long memory of who you know! So you don't want to send invites to just anyone that you have stored as most of them will have no idea who you are and are liable to give you a bunch of "I don't know (this person)" (IE IDKs) right off the bat.

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The list of LinkedIn users who are part of your LinkedIn network are called Connections. Users can invite anyone (whether a site user or not) to become a connection. Your list of connections can then be utilized in any of several ways.

Your contact network consists of three types of connections. First, there direct connections, or people who you know directly. There are also connections of your connections or second-degree connections and these are people your direct connections know directly. Lastly, there are connections of your second degree connections or third degree connections. You can use your direct contacts IE first degree connections for getting an introduction to someone in their direct first degree network or someone in their second degree network. This is similar to asking someone for a referral.

Downloading Your LinkedIn Database



A key advantage of your LinkedIn network is (unlike Twitter) you can export your contact's email addresses. Consequently, since you have to do more on other social media sites to get your contact's emails, it's wise to suggest to all your Facebook and Twitter contacts that you also connect on LinkedIn.

Remember that the greatest power to connect with your contacts is by having their email address. People don't necessarily visit all the social media sites they're a part of every day, but you can be sure that if they're doing anything online at all on a given day that they're looking at email. Even more importantly, with the rise of mobile 'everything', more and more people are using Smart Phones which are notifying them of emails as soon as they get them, wherever they are.

As with your real estate website, one your primary goal of using Social Media is still building you're the ALL important good old fashioned email database.

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Linked In Questions/Answers Section

One of the best ways of establishing yourself as an expert in your local real estate market is by regularly participating in the LinkedIn Answers section. This area is similar to Yahoo! Answers or about.com where anyone can pose a question and others may answer it. The LinkedIn Answers section differs from these sites in that the questions asked are more business-oriented, and you can know the identity of anyone involved in asking or answering questions here. Focus on answering questions from people who seem to be asking questions typically posed by home buyers or sellers. And always try to be the first to answer these questions. In such cases the early bird often gets the worm!

LinkedIn also has discussion groups on a wide variety of topics. These groups are moderated by some expert in the group's subject matter. Currently there are nearly 900,000 of these groups on LinkedIn, some with as many as 300,000 members. The majority of the largest groups are employment related, although a very wide range of topics are covered mainly around professional and career issues, and there are currently 128,000 groups for both academic and corporate alumni.

The employment groups can be fertile grounds for real estate broker/owners looking for some fresh talent.

Take a look around at the real estate related discussion groups for your region. It's better to join an existing group with lively discussion rather trying to start your own group from scratch. For instance, you might want to look for a group that discusses mortgages. Anyone that's visiting this group and asking questions is likely a soon to be home buyer or seller, or someone that's looking to refinance their existing mortgage.

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Giving and Getting LinkedIn Recommendations

One of the ways you can bolster your business profile on LinkedIn is by getting recommendations from satisfied past clients. It's the same thing as the traditional testimonial: when someone 'recommends' you on LinkedIn your profile will note who it is and provide some writing by that person on why working with you was a positive experience. Obviously, the more recommendations you get, the better. If you have any clients who have made Testimonials that you've previously used in your marketing materials, be sure to ask them to provide this testimonial as a recommendation in LinkedIn. For clients you don't have a testimonial for, you can improve your chances of getting one from them by giving one for them via LinkedIn. Write an unsolicited recommendation for them, telling them about what you liked about working with them.

If you have worked with any other real estate sales professionals or any mortgage brokers, accountants, real estate lawyers, home inspectors, etc., also send them a recommendation along with the positive and negative (if any) aspects of your experience in working with them.

How to Find Potential Clients With LinkedIn

The best way of finding a potential client on LinkedIn, is getting involved in Question/Answer groups and answering questions. The groups should have lots of members and the discussions must be closely related to real estate. You can also stimulate conversation in these groups by not only answering questions but asking questions. For instance, you could ask the group "does anyone here own an investment condo in the Toronto area? Has it been a positive experience for you? Have you made money, lost money or broke even?"

You can also have Pay Per Click ads with LinkedIn. These can be very targeted as much information is provided by LinkedIn users about their professional life. One way of using these ads for attracting buyers is by looking for

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real estate investors. Direct them to a landing page with information on investment properties in your area along with some reasons on why investing in your area is a wise decision.

Facebook



Facebook is not an evil time-waster, a community just for younger generations, nor is it irrelevant for real estate professionals. Rather, Facebook is a tool for connecting people with those around them that's to be used in particular ways. And, as with any social media tool, real estate professionals have an opportunity to use Facebook to expand their online footprint and directly engage with customers, prospects and potential referral partners. It's not immediately obvious what you should and shouldn't do on Facebook for your business. But, armed with the right knowledge and metrics, you can make Facebook a powerful marketing tool.

What Is Facebook?

Facebook is a social network for connecting people with those around them they know or have known in the past but have lost touch with friends, family, coworkers, or simply others with similar interests. Facebook started in 2004 as a closed community for college students requiring users to sign up with a valid university email address. The site was made even more famous by the movie *The Social Network*. Since then Facebook has since expanded beyond colleges and universities to schools, corporations, social groups, and beyond. Facebook allows users to connect and share information in a variety of ways.

How to Register A New Facebook Account

Registering a new account on Facebook is fast and easy, and almost anyone can do it in just a few minutes of time. First, navigate to the home page at Facebook.com. You'll see a place where you are prompted to sign up and you'll need an email account to verify your account and open a Facebook account.

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Simply fill in your first and last name as you would like it to appear on your Facebook page and then fill in the email address you are going to use to verify your account. Enter a password that cannot be easily hacked, select your sex from the pull-down menu and enter your birthday and then press the button that says Sign Up.

After you hit this button a confirmation email will be sent to the email address you listed and you will need to sign in to your email to confirm your account. You'll receive an email that has a link that you will either need to click on or copy and paste into your browser's address line and your account will be verified.

Once your account is verified, you can log in to your account using the email address you listed as a user name, and the password you specified.

Facebook Terminology

Here are a few words commonly used in the Facebook world you should understand:

Application

A program that allows users to share content and interact with other users

Edge Rank

An algorithm used by Facebook to determine what content gets shown in users News Feeds (more on this later)

Fan

Facebook users who choose to "Like" and become a "fan" of an Organization's page

Friend

1. (n) personal connection on Facebook
2. (v) to add a Facebook user as a friend

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Friend List

organized groupings of friends

Group

A collection of Facebook users with a common interest; any Facebook user can create and join a Facebook group

Like(s)

1. (v) to like a Business Page means you've become a fan of that page
2. (v) within Facebook, to like others comments on their wall or news feed
3. (n) the number of users who have liked your page
4. (n) "outside of Facebook, to like something add the Facebook like button"

Network

An association of Facebook users based on a school or workplace

News Feed

An aggregation of one's friends' wall posts published on a users page

Facebook Homepage

Page

Official presence for public figures, artists, bands, businesses, places, entertainment, causes, brands, or products to share information and interact with fans on Facebook

Profile

Presence for individuals to share information and interact with friends and organizations on Facebook

Wall

The core of a profile or page that aggregates new content, including posted items (e.g. status updates) and recent actions (e.g. becoming a fan of a page)

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Why Facebook Is Important For Business



As of early 2012 Facebook currently has over 800 million active users, and that number continues to grow steadily. According to www.compete.com it is currently the second most popular website in the world (behind Google) in terms of unique visitors, and by far the most popular social network overall.

Don't think your clients and prospects aren't on Facebook. There are tens of thousands of work related, collegiate, and high school networks on the site. According to www.insidefacebook.com approximately two thirds of U.S. Facebook users are outside of the college demographic, and users age 26 to 64 make up more than half of Facebook's US user base. While Facebook started off as a community for college students, it has expanded far beyond that. In fact, you'd be hard-pressed to find a demographic not yet represented among Facebook's 800 million users.

How To Use Facebook For Your Real Estate Business

There are a number of good reasons for real estate professionals to participate in and maintain a presence on Facebook. Here are a few:

- **Get found by people who are searching for your services**
- **Connect and engage with current and potential customers and referral partners**
- **Create a community around your business**
- **Promote other content you create outside Facebook, including webinars, blog articles, or other resources**
- **Generate leads for your business**

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Personal vs. Business Accounts With Facebook

On Facebook, Profiles are meant for people, and Pages are meant for businesses. To fully engage and leverage Facebook's features, you should create a personal profile. If you're worried about privacy or balancing business and personal contacts, don't. Facebook allows you to provide as little or as much information to the public as you're comfortable with.

Do not create a personal Profile for your business. Profiles are for the people you know on a person level people; Pages are for businesses. Facebook has built significant functionality specifically for businesses, and all of this functionality is only available for Pages. We'll talk about Pages more in a later section.

There are a few key differences between Business Pages and Personal Profiles:

- **Pages allow you to designate multiple administrators so you can have more than one person help manage the account. In addition, if one of your administrators leaves the company, you can still have control over the Page.**
- **Pages are, by default, public, and are starting to rank in Facebook and public search results.**
- **Pages are split into different categories (local businesses, brands, musicians) that help you get listed in more relevant search results.**

Do NOT create a personal profile for your business. Profiles are for people, Pages are for businesses.

How to Set Up a Business Page

A Page is similar to a Profile except that it is, by default, public, and users can Like and become a "fan" of your Page without first requiring approval from the Page's administrators. Creating a Page is completely free but will require your time to build and maintain.

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To get started, visit www.facebook.com/pages/create.php (Note: you must be logged in to create a Page). Facebook will then walk you through a simple wizard to create your Page.

How to Promote Your Business Page

Now that you've built your Page, you need to focus on attracting some fans. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- **Create an engaging Page.** Use applications like the discussion board and YouTube video box to add more interesting and engaging content to your Page. Give users a reason to become a fan of your Page and engage with you. More advanced Facebook users can add custom pages to their Page using iFrames.
- **Leverage the viral nature of Facebook – the News Feed.** The added benefit of creating an engaging page is that every time a fan engages with your page – from becoming a fan to posting a comment to attending an event – that activity is published to their “News Feed” which can be seen by their friends on Facebook. When a user first logs into Facebook, they see a feed of their friends recent activity, so the activity of your fans on your Page gets shared with a greater network, giving your business more visibility.
- **Draw on your existing network.** You most likely already have email subscribers and blog readers – so make sure they know they can now become a fan of your business on Facebook. Consider emailing your optin mailing list, including a link to your page in your email signature, blogging about your Facebook page, and posting a link or badge to your Page on your website or blog.
- **Make your Page publicly searchable.** By default, your Page will be public so it can get indexed by search engines and give you

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the opportunity to drive organic search traffic to your Page. If you don't notice your Page showing up in searches, make sure you have set it to be publicly indexed and searchable. Go to "Edit Page," click "Manage Permissions" and make sure "Page Visibility" box is un-checked. This will make it publicly visible.

- Use Facebook Ads for an extra push. Facebook ads allow you to advertise a website or other properties on Facebook, including Pages, Groups, and Events. If you're familiar with Google AdWords, the system for building and running ads on Facebook is very similar.

Facebook Fan Page Timeline

The Facebook timeline is a new layout for the pages that Facebook launched in 2011. This new timeline enables page owners and visitors go back in time to see activities on the page from previous months or years. It is also structured differently from the typical Facebook wall. Here are some features of the fan pages:

- The layout has a space for a large cover photo at the top of the page where creative, engaging pictures can be displayed. The size allowed for the cover photo is 851x351 pixels. However, images cannot include price or purchase information, contact information, calls to actions or references to Facebook features such as Like or Share.
- Page owners have the option to pin an important post to the top of the page by using the pencil tool. Pinned posts can last up to seven days.
- Page owners have an option to highlight posts on their pages and make it bigger and they do this by using the star button.
- Pages can now accept direct messages from users but the page owners cannot initiate the messages with the fans. For

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example; if your page fans want to find out about a listing, they can send you a direct message instead of writing their enquiry on your wall.

- Page owners can now request a name change for their pages. For example, if you switch brokerages or switch farm areas, you can now request a name change for your fan pages.
- Page owners also have the option to approve posts from individuals before they go live.

Facebook will not allow default landing tabs like before. Page tabs still continue to function but instead of listing the apps down the left side of the page, apps are available on the right beneath the cover photo.

Facebook Groups vs. Facebook Pages

In most cases, businesses should create a Page to represent their company and professional branding on Facebook. In a few cases, however, it may make sense to create a Facebook Group instead (or in addition to). The key distinction between Groups and Pages is that a Group is for a community of people with a common interest, while a Page represents a brand or entity of which there are “fans.” Here are some of the differences in functionality:

SEE CHART BELOW

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	Facebook Groups	Facebook Pages
Overview	Community of people with a common interest	Represents a brand or entity of which there are "fans"
Messaging Members/Fans	Message – emails members and sends to Facebook Inbox	Update – shows up under Requests on user's homepage and sends to Facebook Inbox
Visibility on Profiles	Shows up on members' profiles as a small text link	Shows up on fans' profiles with an image and text link
Visibility in Public Search	Groups are publicly indexed and searchable (single page only)	Pages are publicly indexed and searchable (each Page's tab) Pages may show up in fans' public search listings
Distribution in News Feed	When members join or engage with the group, action is distributed in News Feeds	When users become a fan or engage with the Page, action is distributed in News Feeds Updates / content shared by the page
Administrator Visibility	Group admins listed on Group When Group admins engage with the Group (send a message, respond to a discussion thread), it comes from the admin's personal Profile	Admins are the behind-the-scenes managers of the Page When Page admins engage with the group (send an update, post content), it comes from the Page (business) – unless changed in settings
Applications Available	Basic applications including Events, Discussions, Wall, Links, Photos, Videos	Almost all applications (tens of thousands)

How To Make Money (Build Clients) With Facebook

The best way to make money with Facebook is by having your own fan page, directing lots of prospects to it, and demonstrating your erudite knowledge on your local real estate market. As mentioned, one great way of building up your Facebook fan page following is by having people you have mutually followed through Twitter visit your fan page and offer to do the same for them.

You can also make money by having Facebook Pay Per Click ads. Since Facebook has so much demographic information on its users your ads can be highly targeted and displayed to only your best prospects. One way of using these ads for attracting buyers is by designing ads targeted toward real estate investors. Direct them to a landing page with information on investment

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properties in your area along with some reasons on why investing in your area is a wise decision. To get investors, have your ads displayed to anyone who has any of the following interests indicated in their Facebook profile:

- real estate investing
- real estate investor
- investments
- investing
- investors
- assignments
- renovations

ActiveRain



ActiveRain is a strong real estate social network with real estate professionals and other professionals that are relevant to real estate. With well over 200,000 real estate agents this network has distinguished itself as a group of real estate professionals that are technology minded and interested in improving their businesses.

One of the unique features of ActiveRain is that it is based on individuals posting blogs and sharing those blog posts within specific groups or potential clients. Each and every post you make allows you to earn points and join the conversation! To share your posts with a potential client (i.e. have it ranking on Google), you need to be a rainmaker and pay monthly fees to ActiveRain.

As real estate professionals are the primary user base, this network lends itself as a great way to build a nationwide network of referral agents.

ActiveRain can seem overwhelming to a new real estate professional that joins the network. One of the best ways to initially network with the other agents is to leave comments on their posts. Take time to make valuable comments that demonstrate your expertise and add value to even the blogger. Too often agents new to ActiveRain are in search of points and leave

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such short comments as “Nice post, thanks for sharing”. This is looked down upon by the community and will slow down your efforts of making great connections. At the end of the day, the connections you make will be your greatest sources of referrals.

When commenting, start with people in your city, then province and then move on to people in other cities. Comment on the featured posts, comment on newer posts and Suggest new posts to other readers. (There is a suggest button on blogs that are not featured yet) Join groups that are relevant to you and your area and also that you feel you can gain from. Post your blogs to those groups.

When writing blog posts, make sure to have valuable information, write seo-friendly titles, include a labelled photo (SEO friendly), tags, and post the blogs to groups. Always post your blogs to the localism group section as well as that has a wider reach.

Optimizing Your ActiveRain Profile

ActiveRain is the number one social media network for real estate professionals. To get profile to come up in search results on ActiveRain, you will need to do the following things to optimize your ActiveRain profile

Getting SEO For Your ActiveRain Profile

For getting a webpage to get ranked highly in Google search results, you will want to optimize as many SEO elements of the page for search as possible. The same goes for social profiles such as your ActiveRain profile: you need to fine tune the various aspects of your profile to get optimal ranking on the site.

With ActiveRain the order of importance is generally SEO Title, Meta Description, header tags (H1, H2, H3), image ALT tags, image filenames, and bolded text. When it comes to search results, the typical result will show the SEO Title linked to your profile, the URL, and the Meta Description beneath as additional details.

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Here are the SEO elements that you can customize to optimize your profile:

Your Name

Your name is in both the SEO title and Meta Description for your profile. Be sure it appears as people would search for it so your profile will appear in search results.

I am a...

If you're signing up for ActiveRain, be sure to select your correct title (Real Estate Agent, Loan Officer, Notary, etc.) as this will appear in the SEO Title and Meta Description for your profile.

Your City & Province/State

The city and state you list for your address and primary market will also appear in the SEO Title and Meta Description for your profile.

Profile Details

The About Me title (which can be renamed) for the first section of your profile counts as an H1 tag. Be sure to change this to include your name or your top keyword, such as Your Name, Real Estate Advisor.

Your Image Filename

Whenever you upload your profile image, be sure the filename includes your name and your main keyword phrase as this will be included in the HTML code and might help your photo rank in image results.

Also, while the links do not count for SEO value towards your website because they are marked as nofollow, which essentially tells search engines to ignore them, you should still add links to your website to both the Website field and within your About Me text using the link button. Even if search engines ignore those links, visitors are still likely to click on them. Optimizing your profile can make a huge difference with ActiveRain

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ActiveRain's Points System

When you view your ActiveRain profile, you will notice beneath your photo that you have a certain number of points allotted to you. If you edit your profile you will see a box at the top showing the number of points you have and a link to see your points breakdown. Alternatively, you can click on the Points Summary in the links list on the left-hand side to see your current points. You can earn points by doing the following:

- **Adding information under each section of your profile including the short description, About Me, specialties, and testimonials (270+ points).**
- **Uploading a HD profile photo at 600 x 600 pixels (1,000+ points).**
- **Logging in daily (100 points per day).**
- **Inviting others to ActiveRain (you receive 250 points when they accept your invitation plus 10% of the points the invited members earns).**
- **Commenting on blog posts (25 points with a minimum of 50 characters per comment, up to 10 comments per day).**
- **Submitting blog posts (200 points with a minimum of 50 words per post, up to 10 posts a week).**
- **Re-Blogging another member's post (25 points, up to 10 reBlogs per week).**

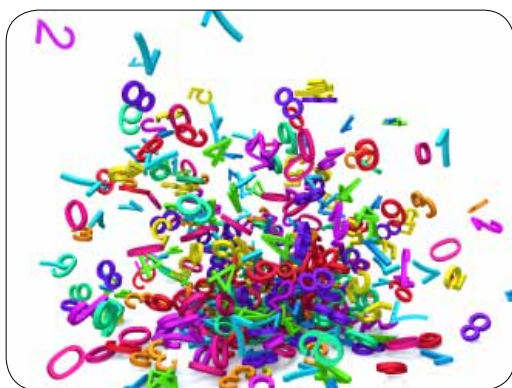
You can also receive more points if your blog post is featured on ActiveRain's homepage (400 points), if members comment on your blog posts (up to 475 points per post), if you win ActiveRain contests (point amount varies), or if a staff member awards you points for good deeds around the network (point amount varies).

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Why do points matter?

The more points you have, the more popular you are on the network. ActiveRain has a leaderboard which displays members in order of the most points. The top member currently has 1.5 million points which means you have a long way to go to be among the top ranking members. So start engaging on the network on a daily basis to be the leading Real Estate professional in your region!

How To Make Money With ActiveRain



Since ActiveRain is intended for real estate professionals only, this is a prime site for building relationships with other local real estate professionals not directly competing with you and ultimately giving referrals to each other.

As with your website, the best way to get recognized on ActiveRain as an authority on your local real estate market is by regularly blogging on your local farm area market and writing mostly about its real estate market. You want to be the go-to person these people first think of right away when their clients are looking for a real estate expert in your particular geographic area. ActiveRain is probably the best of all the social media sites for building relationships with these referral partners.