

Do You Use Video in Your Business?

There are many ways to use video in your business. This article, reprinted with permission from the REALTOR®Mag, has some pointers on getting started with video.

Let's Get Reel | By Stefanie Hahn

With millions of people watching online videos every month, it's time for real estate professionals to consider how they're adapting this resource in their marketing plans. Here are some tips for getting started.

As a society, we are consuming video like mad. A look at the current YouTube statistics shows that as of September 2012, more than 800 million people come to YouTube each month and watch more than 4 billion hours of video. Last year, traffic from mobile devices tripled. Now wrap your head around this: 500 years worth of YouTube videos are watched on Facebook every day and more than 700 videos are shared on Twitter every minute.

More importantly, people are interacting with video content – YouTube reports that 100 million people take a social action on YouTube (likes, shares, comments, etc.) every week.

Don't think your clients have caught on to the profound impact of video? In April 2011, Mashable released an infographic by Postling stating that, "73 percent of home owners are more likely to list with a REALTOR® offering to do video."

Based on these statistics, there's never been a more compelling time to add video to your marketing plan. Here are a few tips to get you started.

Equipment

You probably have multiple devices that can shoot decent video these days – smartphone, digital camera, and tablets, for example. Try your digital camera with a tripod first, as it helps avoid the “shaking” effect of the picture and give you a smoother plane upon which to move your shots. Tripods are cheap, but they can make a big difference in the quality of your video. Always carry extra batteries and/or a battery charger just in case you run out of juice.

Shooting

Here are a few quick tips for capturing video:

1. **Turn on every available light if you are shooting inside.** Also, avoid shooting for a length of time toward a window or anything that will reflect.
2. **Write a script, even if you think you don't need one.** Scripts will keep you on track and give a bit of confidence. For added security, create a full-blown storyboard with each video shot and the words that should be spoken over top.
3. **Speak louder and slower than normal.** Don't emphasize your words to the point of silliness, but enough so you are easily understood.
4. **Keep it short.** If you don't capture the viewer in the first 10 seconds, you will lose them. Limit your video to less than two minutes whenever possible.
5. **Practice.** When you make a mistake, laugh at yourself. Then, try it again.

Content

Sure, you could parrot your listing description and film the house room-by-room, but I would encourage you to be bolder than that. Try something different. Instead, ask your sellers

two questions:

1. What attracted you to this neighborhood?
2. What will you miss most when you move?

Really, any variations of those two questions will work. If your sellers do not wish to be on video but are willing answer the questions, you might be able to record their answers in a voiceover while filming their favorite part of the house or what they love about the neighborhood. Your goal should always be to make the buyer feel something and (hopefully) get attached to the property.

If you don't have a listing to shoot video in, don't use that as an excuse. Start building a video channel with a variety of content that can help you market your services to potential clients.

Here are more content ideas to consider:

1. **Vendor tips:** Get your favorite loan officer in front of the camera to explain mortgage terms, the application process, and what's happening in the market. Do this with your insurance rep, title people, and home warranty reps. Keep the videos consumer-focused, helpful, and short.
2. **Market statistics:** Answer that famous question, "How is the market?" Get local and you can attack one area within your market each week with statistics and analysis from your MLS reports.
3. **Community information:** Show off the communities where you work (or wish you worked). Ask shop owners to wave hello and maybe even grab a "man on the street" interview with a local.
4. **Testimonials:** A video testimonial is a powerful public endorsement of your work – these videos are your best self-marketing pieces.

5. **Profile:** If you have somehow managed to keep your face out of all the other videos so far, this is the one to showcase you and how you work. Try to keep your video focused on what you will do for the consumer.

Editing

There are many options when it comes to editing your video. Consider trying the editing tools on YouTube.com if you are planning to upload there already. For beginner video editing, I would go with iMovie (Apple) or Windows Movie Maker (Windows).

SEO

You can use the same search-engine optimization (SEO) principles that you employ on your Web site to your videos. Know your keywords beforehand and use them in your video title, description, and tags.

The title of your video should be descriptive yet short. And don't jam it up with keywords – use the video description to tell the world what they are about to watch. Each video should be “tagged” with your name, the word “video,” and relevant keywords. Don't over-tag your videos and always use your name (or team name) as the first tag. This will help with your “related video results” down the line.

Marketing

Once you have a video or two ready, you will need to set up a channel. Think of your video channel as your own little station packed with the content you upload. You can share videos from here and/or get embed code for your Web site or blog. YouTube is the giant in this space, but don't rule out other viable options like Vimeo or Flickr. Do some research and determine which option is best for you. Here are a few more promotional tips:

1. **Set up your video channel** with all of your real estate

and contact information. Remember to link the channel back to your Web site and use your keywords wherever they make sense.

2. **Add a title, description, and tags** to uploaded videos. If your video is listing-specific, upload it with your listing anywhere you are able to add a video.

3. **Share your video** with the listing, use the built-in social shares, and embed the video on your Web site or blog.

Conclusion

Remember: You can do this! Video is easier than ever to record, edit, and upload. The investment on your part is mostly time. Like anything else, you have to be consistent to see real results, but video will give you a marketing piece that lives online and works in your favor long after you've uploaded. It's time to get reel.

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