

SentriLock Spotlight: Changing Your Default Lockbox Hours

The RMLS™ board voted to adjust the RMLS™ default SentriLock hours earlier this year based on feedback received from subscribers after the last change. Default lockbox hours are now 8am-10pm Pacific.



Subscribers will need to take action for these default lockbox hours to be in effect. First, update your SentriCard® using the SentriCard® reader (this is not required if you've been keeping your card in your RAD). Then simply insert the card into each lockbox and wait until the series of beeps is finished.

We know that some of you prefer to set your own lockbox hours based on your clients' needs or your own preferences. We've produced a short video about how to set your own lockbox hours:

(Our trainers say that the later steps in this video, neglecting to use the SentriCard to log in to the SentriLock website *after* inserting a card into the lockbox, is the most frequent mistake users make in this process.)

If you prefer written instructions, see the instructions on changing your lockbox hours in our previous post.

Using Video to Stand Out in Real Estate

✘ *This is a guest blog post by Joanne McCall, a publicist and strategist who frequently works with REALTORS®.*

It is no big trick for anyone in real estate to stand up anymore. Never in the history of humankind has it been so easy to build a platform and put yourself out there.

The trick is, how are you going to stand out?!

It is a busy, noisy, crowded world with far too many people just copying one another because they don't know what to do. They know they need to do something, so they copy others. It's pretty hard to be unique under those conditions, and being different is exactly what's needed. But how?

What if you had a plan? What if you had a direction? What if you knew how you want to come across and what your important key messages are? What if you tapped into current trends, your knowledge, and in addition to that you had the confidence that you can use these new technologies to market yourself and your business in a way that gets results? Wow! You would be hot!

There is one trend happening now that is not going to go away. Are you ready for this?

It's video.

Video is king (and queen) now.

And because this is the wave of the present and future, I am going to give you some media polishing secrets that will help you get noticed through your videos.

1. Get to the Point. Don't take time to lay the groundwork. ☒ Don't try to warm things up and eventually get to what it is you want to say. And whatever you do, don't start your videos with "Hi, my name is..." Start with the hook. Start with the climax of your message, and then fill in the gaps.

2. Get to the Point Quickly.

You may think I made the point above, but the truth is, this is so fundamental that it is worth saying again. Get to the point and make it quick. No one is going to take the time to figure out your message.

3. Create and Use Soundbites.

Soundbites are quick little phrases that easily explain a concept. I heard an interview not long ago—the guest was a relationship expert and she was making a point about finding the "perfect" person to marry or get involved with. She said, "perfection=pure fiction." That is a soundbite, and a memorable one at that. Here I am sharing it months after actually hearing it. So when it comes to your real estate business, come up with some quips and then practice them so they roll off your tongue. You can pepper these into your videos for much added interest!

4. Know Your Market And Who You're Talking To.

I find far too often that many people have a problem zeroing in on a target market because they're afraid of leaving someone out. The best advice is to pick a market and speak directly to them. You can expand out later, but initially, start with your key clients or customers. Otherwise, you may find yourself waiting, and waiting, and waiting to get those videos done.

Want to know more about using video in your marketing and looking great doing it? Join me and host Becki Saltzman, author of the upcoming book Arousing the Buy Curious: Real Estate Pillow Talk for Patrons and Professionals, for "Media Polishing for Real Estate Agents," a free webinar on Tuesday,

June 25th at 4:00pm Pacific. Learn how to develop content and make it compelling and fascinating to your potential clients and customers. Learn to create fantastic videos for more sales, more media, and more mojo! Click the link above for a complimentary ticket to this webinar.

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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