

WIN SOCIAL

Win Clients



 VideoPunch

Do not read this book!

At least, not from 'digital' cover to cover...

Instead, if you want to get the most out of *How to Win at Social Media in Real Estate*, then start with the chapter that is the most relevant to you.

We're going to cover how you can increase your existing presence on social, ramp up the frequency and actions you take on social every day. We'll cover the ins and outs of LinkedIn, online tools that can help you create social media content.

And finally we're going to talk about creating content that converts, because – let's be honest – we're posting on social to get new people through the door, sometimes quite literally!



Yes! I'm ready to win clients



*To figure out what to read first,
have a look at the 'plus sized' table of contents*

1

5 tips for ramping up your social media game.

Are you using social media but not getting the results you want? Then start right here for some actionable advice that'll boost your social media presence.

2

LinkedIn: Your secret weapon for landing listings

Read this chapter first if you're wanting to find out about how LinkedIn, a supposed "b2b" website, can actually be used to get more eyes on your listings.

3

5 free online tools that will fire up your marketing.

If you want to get more results from your online marketing, but don't want to spend even a cent on paid advertising, then this is the chapter to start on.

4

How to build an online presence that converts.

Okay, if you know plenty of the 'tactical' side of social media, but want more help with your overall strategy, then this is the chapter to read.

5

How to take professional photos with your smartphone.

Jump to this chapter if you're wanting straightforward advice on how to get better photos for your listings without spending a ton of time or cash to get the job done.

**Start with the chapter that's most relevant to you and
come back for the rest later!**

*Happy reading,
VideoPunch team.*

5 tips for ramping up your social media game.

1



Chapter 1

5 tips for ramping up your social media game

It doesn't matter what industry you are in, if you aren't investing in your social media game you are missing key opportunities to build your brand and get yourself directly in front of potential clients.

Especially in real estate, the likes of Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn provide a free platform to show your expertise, authentically connect with your target market and grow an active and engaged audience.

Let's take a look at our top 5 tips for taking your social media presence to the next level so that it benefits and authentically grows your real estate business.

Drop the sales pitch. Now.

It's no secret that real estate is a highly competitive and saturated industry that is still plagued by the ol' stereotypes of 'smooth talking' agents that do nothing but breathe and sell property. If you want to create a social media presence that stands out and gains an authentic following, it's time to drop the constant sales jargon and curated image - It's doing more harm than good.

Use your social media presence as a way to connect on a personal level with potential clients; to share experiences, common interests and your understanding of the challenges associated with buying or selling their home.

A beaming photo of you with a whole host of generic 'sales pitch' posts on Facebook isn't going to make a compelling case of why you are the best real estate agent for their specific needs and goals.

However, by having an authentic, consistent online presence you have a platform to engage with future clients that are looking to jump on the property ladder in the next few years, for example. They will appreciate genuine insights into the housing market and honesty about the challenges associated with buying a home.

Making a positive impression early means when they are ready to use an agent down the line, they are likely to consider you - from getting to know you as an agent - and not feel like you are just another walking real estate billboard.

This leads us to our next tip...

Create quality content that adds value to the reader.

One of the biggest cliché quotes in marketing is "content is king". And, despite the cringe factor, it's true. The most successful social media accounts, with an engaged following, will undoubtedly have quality content.

But what exactly is "quality content" in the real estate space? It can be incredibly easy to overthink what to post on social media, but a great starting point is asking yourself;

“If I was looking to buy/sell a home at some point what would I want to know?”

Quality content is the key to ramping up your followers, and the best content you will create is in the heat of the moment – while you are going through the motions of each part of the buying/ selling journey.

Think about what is causing your current clients anxiety, and what advice you naturally share to support them through the process. Potential homebuyers in particular will have a lot of questions, and succinct answers that educate them and help them feel less intimidated are going to leave a lasting impact – and result in you establishing yourself as a leader in the industry.

Stuck for ideas of what to post? Document – don’t create.

Overthinking what content to post on social media is an incredibly common trap to fall into. A great rule of thumb is to get in the habit of documenting as you go. Share with your followers what you are doing at work and why you are doing it.

Have a happy client in front of you? Take a quick video of their success. A new property listing that blows your mind? Give your followers a sneak preview.

Here’s a list of social media content ideas that are performing well across social media platforms in the real estate industry:

1. Luxury and boutique property photos – especially on Instagram
2. Sharing articles (or writing them – great for LinkedIn especially) about changes to the NZ property market, home loans and demand.
3. Photos that are an inspiration for styling, decorating or renovating a home
4. Success stories and client testimonials.
5. Showcase what a real estate agent actually does (tear down the misconceptions).
6. Use FB & IG stories to post a question box – where you can post answers but also private message those that ask, for much more personal interaction.

It's not just about posting content...

Spending 20 minutes a day interacting and engaging with your current audience and actively looking for new followers, is one of the effective ways to build your social media audience and maximise engagement when you do post. With some research and a regular daily routine you can actively extend your online reach and network.

Make people feel important, with a personal touch

Interacting with your existing audience is relatively self-explanatory; responding to comments, liking and authentically commenting on their posts, as well as asking questions about your stories.

This is a great way to establish and maintain an engaged following, but here are some tips for organically growing your audience.

Find your lookalike audience through hashtags and friends of friends on Instagram

One of the great things about Instagram is that the nature of the app means it isn't considered "creepy" to engage with people and accounts you don't know personally. It's part of the app's mission to connect people with common interests through photos.

If you are just starting your Instagram profile, it's likely your first followers will be a small number of existing and past clients. So how do you grow organically? One way is to look at the profiles of your existing followers, see who they interact with – and drop a quick like on some of their pages.

Still sound creepy? Here's an example.

Let's say one of your clients has recently posted about their new home purchase on Instagram. The people that interacted (liked and/or commented) with this post are more likely to have a shared interest in the property market than a generic lifestyle post. Think of using industry-relevant posts as a gateway to reaching and interacting with new people that have characteristics of your target demographic and who you want to reach. From here you can look at these profiles and find a way to interact with them authentically*

**A very important note about authentic comments and engagement*

The key here is authenticity – anything that seems remotely like a sales pitch or disingenuous will work against you. Comment on photos that highlight shared interests, and successes, or compel you to share your thoughts – as they will be much more likely to reply and check out your profile.

Bots are hiding in every corner of Instagram and they are easy to spot in comments as they spout generic comments unrelated to the post – usually dripping with unsolicited praise – and finish with: “DM me”.

Make all your comments stand out by engaging with the subject matter of a specific post rather than the ol’ automated “Love this” or “So great”. A personal touch will make the person posting feel important and more inclined to respond and – if they haven’t already – check out your profile and be introduced to your business and unique offerings.

Another way to use this tactic to build a following is by exploring the profiles of people in your geographic area, that is likely to fit within your target market. Even dropping a like on a few photos will generally trigger a notification – and quite often lead them to check out your page – which equals more exposure. Explore hashtags relevant to real estate in your region

This is a great opportunity to get creative on Instagram and interact with people who are posting and using property-related hashtags.

When searching property-related hashtags – thousands and quite often millions of posts will show up – so it’s important to narrow down your search geographically.

For example, a real estate agent in New Zealand could look at hashtags like #newhomeNZ #renovationNZ, #NZhomebuyers #firsttimehomebuyerNZ, #propertyNZ, #diyNZ, #homemakeoverNZ – just be creative with your searches. This is a great way to find people that are already interested in the industry and more likely to enjoy your content.

You can also change the parameters and look for popular hashtags within your region or town/city – which aren’t just industry-specific – eg; #byronbaylife #byronbaylocal #byronbayhome #byronbaybusiness #byronbayproperty. A solid base of followers who are based within your service area is incredibly valuable to have as your content is being shown directly to potential leads.

A hashtag doesn’t need to be popular with thousands of posts to make it worth searching for either. Fewer posts on a hashtag that are directly relevant to your target market and region will make it easier to sort through the posts and find profiles worth engaging with, faster.

While you are exploring hashtags make sure to filter Instagram posts by “Most recent” instead of “Most popular”. This is so you are interacting closer to when the person posted which means you are more likely to be noticed.

The opportunities for organically growing your audience are endless, so allocating a few minutes a day to exploring relevant hashtags and interacting with new people is going to get your profile out there – and with quality content, will likely convert profile visitors to engaged followers.

Get amongst Facebook Groups

Facebook’s algorithm is constantly changing and overwhelming amounts of targeted ads all competing for attention – many with a horrifyingly huge spend behind them – makes it much harder to get reach and engagement when you post organically.

This is where the beauty of Facebook Groups comes in – as posts within a group tend to take priority in a member’s news feed.

Search and join groups in your local area that allow free business promotion, as well as property-related groups in your region. This gives you a platform and audience to share your expertise, by answering questions or sharing updates and insights into the real estate market.

You could also create your own group based on a common property interest in your area. This puts you right in front of your target demographic and organically gives you access to leads.

Consistency. Consistency. Consistency.

This point is so damn important that it warrants repeating it over and OVER. Building a strong social media presence and an engaged following doesn’t happen overnight, and won’t happen at all if your accounts are dormant, or have inconsistent bursts of posts.

Consistency is just as important as quality content, and in all honesty, it doesn’t need to be something you are working on every single day – we know how demanding and people-focused your job is! Starting with one Instagram or Facebook a week and ramping it up over time is an investment in your business – and it doesn’t have to be a time drainer.

There are a bunch of great, user-friendly scheduling tools that are free and you can use to prepare a few weeks of content – which you can then add to with relevant stories or anything additional you want to share.

Your real estate CRM will most likely have scheduling tools inbuilt. Facebook Business Manager is great for scheduling and allows you to connect your Facebook & Instagram accounts and will do the cross-posting for you. There are also a variety of third-party apps you can find that will allow you to schedule with ease from your phone.

If you set yourself up to implement these tips, there's absolutely no doubt that your social media following will grow, and work as a successful marketing tool for attracting high-quality leads.

Note: If you're really struggling to post, there's no harm in delegating! Get someone in your office to help you with a couple of posts a week

**LinkedIn: Your secret
weapon for landing
listings.**



2



Chapter 2

LinkedIn: Your secret weapon for landing listings

It seems like every business owner and their dog has an opinion about which social media platform gets the best results for business marketing. The truth is quite simple – there are pros and cons to each, but LinkedIn stands out from the pack. It is one of the most underrated platforms for real estate agents to build their brand, and generate high-quality leads that convert.

Let's explore what makes LinkedIn the mythical dark horse of social media and your new secret weapon.

It's literally designed for business.

Ironically enough, one of the more common arguments against LinkedIn being an effective tool for real estate agents is that; 'It's a way for businesses to connect – so you most likely won't find quality leads there.'

Well to say we disagree would be an understatement.

While Facebook and Instagram yield more active users; a majority of people use these platforms to distract themselves from life's stressors and look for a cheap hit of dopamine. Meaning that they probably aren't going to be actively thinking about major life decisions like buying a house.

You could argue that in the same way you wouldn't start and end your search for a real estate professional solely on Facebook, the very nature of LinkedIn makes it a more credible source for finding professionals.

It also serves as a great touchpoint for potential clients or referrals to learn about your skills, expertise and business – and seal the deal.

Connecting with strangers isn't creepy – it's business

If you're an active LinkedIn user, you will know exactly what we mean by this but for those on the cusp of setting up their profile – hear us out. On Instagram and Facebook, there is nothing more creepy than the shameless ol' DM slide or friend request from a stranger trying to pitch you an opportunity/scam you.

However, on LinkedIn, it's common practice and encouraged that you add a diverse range of professionals to your network that you don't know personally.

It's like an online business card exchange with endless opportunities – as there's no unspoken hierarchy about only connecting with those in your industry or shying away from high profile leaders and CEOs – you'll find that a lot of leaders will be open to accepting requests. This is a great way for you to upskill and learn as a lot of high-quality content and advice is freely shared by business leaders.

Another opportunity lies in connecting with professionals that work alongside your profession within your local area – side note: you don't need LinkedIn Premium to find professionals that are nearby.

Connecting with the likes of local property lawyers, mortgage brokers, financial advisors and architects, creates a network of people that can refer you to potential clients if you demonstrate your strengths and make the effort to engage with them through LinkedIn

A direct line of communication with high-income earners

Luxury real estate is one of the hardest and most competitive niches to crack into, no matter how talented of an agent you are.

It's a space where referrals are the golden gateway to success – but landing your first luxury listing or high net worth client without a foot in the door, is quite often just a pipe dream.

This is where the power of LinkedIn is demonstrated in spades. Once you have set up a solid profile – which LinkedIn guides you on creating – you can start connecting with people in these exact circles, and the individuals you eventually want to pitch to.

Many real estate agents end up trapped in the mindset of only targeting first home buyers – but in reality, there are always opportunities to get your expertise in front of an experienced buyer or investor – which LinkedIn's features make easy.

Cold outreach just got a whole lot warmer

For cold outreach to have any chance at success, you need to have a way to get an individual's attention – which our great mate LinkedIn provides.

Once an individual is in your network you can DM them for free. However, if you have your sights set on someone higher up the corporate ladder; signing up for a LinkedIn Premium or Business account is one of the most effective actions you can take.

You'll get the opportunity to send 5 -10 InMails each month (LinkedIn's paid messaging feature). Even if it doesn't sound like a lot, it's important to remember that the paid messaging caps means that your message will be one of only a very small handful that your chosen recipient receives, instead of getting lost in an overcrowded inbox.

Think of it as 5 -10 opportunities to make targeted power moves, that are highly likely to be read and responded to – especially if they are personalised and crafted well.

Many real estate agents have touted their success from using InMail and crafted a compelling and personalized pitch in their message, which has resulted in landing luxury listings or clients.

Other features of LinkedIn's paid options include unlimited people searches, competitor data, industry news, analytics, and data. AND – you can also see exactly who has viewed your profile, and create a strategy around interacting and turning visitors into solid leads.

Put the boxing gloves away – you no longer need to fight to be seen. LinkedIn now is essentially what Facebook was 7–8 years ago when it comes to selling and, effective organic reach. Nowadays, lead generation on FB and Instagram sits on a spectrum between 'bloody hard' and 'damn near impossible'.

This is because it's an oversaturated mess of too many active users, a heavily biased algorithm and an utter battle to get eyeballs on your content. To add insult to injury; creating a quality social media presence on these platforms involves a huge time (and quite often money) investment.

Creating blogs, stories, infographics, designs, videos and captions are laborious and it's become commonplace to receive zero organic engagement – which can be super disheartening.

Anything short of an aggressive bombardment of content isn't going to get engagement. However, that in itself will end up alienating and tiring your audience and Facebook's lovely algorithm will learn that people dislike your content and you are back to the bottom of the pile.

Side note – Facebook isn't all doom and gloom – there's still potential for results over time – but it's a very competitive space with maximum work for minimal reward a lot of the time.

Back to LinkedIn – With far fewer humans trying to impress the same audience – and not having to go up against viral reels, meme wars and puppies, LinkedIn will get you a much higher rate of engagement than all other platforms – especially if you are posting high-quality content.

An opportunity to position yourself as a leader.

In the majority of business practices you'll find that 20% of your outreach efforts will result in producing 80% of your revenue. The application of the Pareto principle is, quite unsurprisingly, true for LinkedIn, in that the vast majority of users are consuming content, but NEVER posting it for themselves. They also never reach out to anyone, except to connect.

This means that there's a powerful opportunity to position yourself as a leader in a real estate niche within your local area. As if you do regularly post content, use hashtags and publish a mix of content post types, you will be much more likely to have your content seen by people on LinkedIn.

There are three core elements that need to be in play for this strategy to work.

1) Pick a niche area of real estate you feel passionate and confident writing content about on a regular basis. This could be weekly market changes roundup; content that is specific to first home buyers in your local area; practical tips for increasing the value of your home before selling it - and so on. LinkedIn rewards action like this - and is good at building a community around a certain post.

One of the many LinkedIn real estate success stories we came across was US-based real estate agent Kathleen Callen. She wrote a regular content piece called "Real Estate Thoughts for Friday" and gained a highly engaged audience - as well as a direct client conversion from a reader that reached out - resulting in closing a multi-million dollar deal. Kath also shares mortgage updates & advice as well as market trends to stick more to the business side as her niche.

2) Build networks of influential people in your local area whilst positioning yourself as a local real estate authority and considered as a "go-to" for your expertise.

3) Communicating how you operate within your business consistently is an opportunity for people to fall in love with how you do business. Remember showing is much more powerful than telling.

Parting thoughts: A single chess move

Let's say you were allowed to do only one marketing activity, that would yield the most powerful reach and results for your business.

If marketing were a game of chess, a post on Facebook, a flyer drop in rural Auckland, and an Instagram story are all the equivalent of taking out your chess opponent's pawn.

Investing time into your LinkedIn profile on the other hand and creating quality engagements – that, my friends is a straight-up checkmate.

Note: LinkedIn is really for unfiltered business people. It's the perfect place to build connections with other agents, and build your professional network.

**5 free online tools
that will fire up your
marketing.**



Chapter 3

5 free online tools that will fire up your marketing

Is it possible to take your real estate marketing to a whole new level without spending a single cent? Damn straight it is.

In a world where 'everyone is an expert', and there's a plethora of doppelgänger apps and endless marketing tools – we've picked the undisputed heroes. These tools offer major opportunities to attract high-quality leads, ramp up your brand presence and drive sales.

Oh, and they're free.

Let's dive into these tools and their specific benefits for real estate agents looking to grow. Some of these you may have heard of – so take this as a push to start utilising them.

Canva

If you haven't heard of Canva's brilliance, we're unsure what kind of digital rock you have been sleeping under, but you need to sign up for your Canva account NOW. Even if you are a technophobe that couldn't design a poster to save yourself, we promise if you can use your computer mouse, you can use Canva.

The free version has thousands of high-quality templates for every single type of marketing collateral and industry. Yes - there are a range of competitors such as Crello, Snappa and Easil, and even real estate-specific design tools but none of them come close to offering what Canva offers for free. There are no limits on designs per month either.

Even a quick search in Canva for "real estate" showcases hundreds of social media posts, story templates, business cards, and open home adverts and we could go on all day. Upload your photos, add your logo, have a play with colours and you are away laughing with a whole lot of material you can use both online and to print.

If learning to use Canva is a "hard no" for you - at the very least make sure a team member knows how to use it. Even for real estate franchises, who will have the majority of their marketing collateral provided, Canva gives you as an agent the opportunity to create more material, with a personal touch that still stays within brand guidelines.

This post is in no way sponsored by Canva. It's just that damn good.

Unsplash

Who hates generic, creepy, awkward and just downright weird stock images? You know the EXACT ones we mean. Case and point - the photos below....

Interestingly enough, websites like Shutterstock - which are responsible for a large amount of awkward professional handshake photos - are still hella expensive on a monthly subscription basis.

High-quality, professional, royalty-free image libraries were damn near impossible before Unsplash came along.

The best part about Unsplash - other than the fact it's free - is that you don't even need to make an account to search for photos and download them.

They are high enough resolution for full bleed website banners and any marketing material.

Canva automatically has an Unsplash integration too – which means you have access to their full image library automatically when creating designs too.

Issuu

There's something nostalgic and beautiful about presenting property listings in magazine form. As we know, print advertising is both a dying art and can be incredibly pricey – which brings us to Issuu (not a typo – although the future of print advertising is probably an 'issue').

Issuu is used to create digital editions of magazines, journals, books and brochures. It uses PDF flipbook technology, which changes standard PDF files into a responsive magazine that boosts the reading experience so that when you turn the pages it feels like you have the real deal in front of you. And we know the same thing was said about the Kindle, which touted the same experience as reading a hardcopy book (which it wasn't and ruined nostalgia) but for digital documents and magazines – it's perfect.

From a real estate marketing perspective, it's an easy, aesthetic way to share marketing material and proposals with clients that look super professional. Most importantly – you never have to attach a PDF to an email ever again. Below can see the aesthetic of one we created 8 seconds, earlier.

[Click here to check out our flipbook mockup in full](#)

Before we go further though, a full disclaimer – there are limitations to the free version of Issuu BUT you can still create and publish unlimited publications and share them across your social media platforms and as links in emails or messages for free.

All you need to do is upload PDF files of your brochure, magazine or sales collateral and it will be converted into an interactive digital flipbook in less than 10 seconds! There's also a brand new free feature to create visual stories for your social media accounts, without any work at all.

If you find yourself loving the free version and are wanting to pay for more features, you can embed sound, video and pop-out content (like a lead generation form) into your flipbook.

This means that a user can click on a photo of a property in the publication and it will lead them straight through to a video that's hosted on a third-party platform. Comprehensive analytics about the reach of your digital publication is available or you can opt to keep it completely private for a select few clients and leads. It's up to you.

The bottom line is: Issuu is the very best technology for creating PDF flipbooks that are sharable and elegant. It's an amazing tool for real estate marketing as it allows potential home buyers to visualize themselves living there by seeing all the details, views and imaging all in one place. It also allows you to share information with ease and a whole new level of professionalism. Say goodbye to PDF attachments for good.

Unbounce – AI Copy Generator

Unbounce's Smart Copy tool is every real estate agent's dream as a one-stop shop for content creation. With their intuitive new AI copy tool, you'll never experience the crippling frustration of writer's block when belting out your property listings, ads or social media captions again.

One reason we've included this as one of our top five free marketing tools is that when it comes to writing property listings – you can't put a price on originality.

We're all familiar with the magazines that contain pages upon pages of listings, that sound like a thesaurus has been robbed and ravaged. "Peace and tranquillity, "Spacious modern living", "slice of paradise", "sweeping views"... you know the adjective overuse all too well.

So, it's time to stand out.

The free version of the tool allows you to personalise the content to your brand and target audience by asking some intuitive questions before AI steps in and does the grunt work. Whether it's the fresh copy from scratch, expanding on existing content or rejigging a polished piece with a fresh twist – this tool will definitely fire up your marketing game for anything written.

Loom

Looming at the bottom (we couldn't help ourselves) as our final free tool for a FIRE marketing game is Loom, a free video messaging tool, that allows you to quickly create and narrate professional-looking, personalised videos that get your message across and can be shared instantly.

The reason this is so great for real estate professionals?

With Loom you can record your camera, microphone and desktop simultaneously; which allows you to add your voice and face to go alongside anything on your desktop; from property walkthroughs, to market updates.

Installed as a Chrome Extension, Loom is so outrageously easy to use that you can create these videos on the go - a far cry from explaining disjointed screenshots through voice notes or advice that you can't show visually. Loom is also epic for creating powerful social media content for sharing tips or instructional videos that add value to your clients and help soothe their anxieties about entering the property market.

Here are a few key use cases for real estate agents:

1. Record home tours and/or open houses and publish them privately or publicly
2. Demonstrate property search tools best practices and support
3. Narrate property market updates with insights that help your client.
4. Show your clients how to navigate documents and e-signature software.

**How to build an
online presence that
converts.**



Chapter 4

How to build an online presence that converts

There's a major difference between establishing an online presence AND creating one that actually converts.

The real frustration comes from the fact that there isn't a straight answer to how to create one either. We're sorry, but it's the truth.

An online presence that converts depends on so many moving parts and requires time, tweaking and a hell of a lot of analysis.

The positive thing is that there are a few critical steps you can take to build a presence that sweeps the real estate floor – and brings you the spiciest leads. A lot of them may sound obvious and simple, but they are non-negotiables, and could be the missing link holding you back from achieving growth.

Run a fine-tooth comb through your existing online presence

It isn't sexy in the slightest but the very first step in building an online presence that converts is to take inventory of everywhere you exist online. And examine it as if your business depends on it – it does.

Most savvy real estate agents will have a combination of a website presence and social media profiles with some trimmings such as Google My Business, third-party mentions and maybe some PR. Before starting any new online activities: this is what you want to look for:

What comes up when you search your name & business? Is there any outdated contact information? Old websites or landing pages that don't represent you as a professional? Are you easy to find and is it clear what services you offer?

Your website and/or a website you're listed on. Check to see that all pages contain up-to-date information and can be used on desktop and mobile devices. Are there any spelling errors? Does your website presence represent the image you want to portray as a professional agent? Are there any loading issues or broken links? How easy is your website to navigate?

Does your entire online presence link seamlessly together? Any social media profiles you have should be displayed on your website and vice versa. If any potential client wants to know more information about any platform they are on, it should be seamless and obvious.

Crystal clear CTA's = Conversion

This, in our view, is THE most important step. You may have tens of thousands of social media followers and a constant stream of website visitors. But if there isn't a user-friendly way to collect contact information – you are missing out on the opportunity to convert your traffic and followers.

Wrote an awesome blog on LinkedIn or your website? Have a clear link to subscribe to your database. Posted on Facebook about a happy client? Invite them to check out the other testimonials on your website.

The key here is to utilise every opportunity to strengthen your brand and encourage people to subscribe, contact you or visit your website. However, this **MUST** be done organically and authentically, not as a disguised sales pitch.

It can be as simple as:

“If you liked this article – check out our property blog [here](#)” or “Want to be the first to know about changes in Australia’s property market? Subscribe to our newsletter.”

The focus should always be on being helpful, honest and true to your brand – whilst maximising the opportunities that come up when you post on different platforms.

Stop focusing on vanity metrics

Facebook & Instagram are particularly guilty of promoting the importance of the number of likes, comments and followers; but the reality is that these ‘vanity metrics’ don’t equate to conversion.

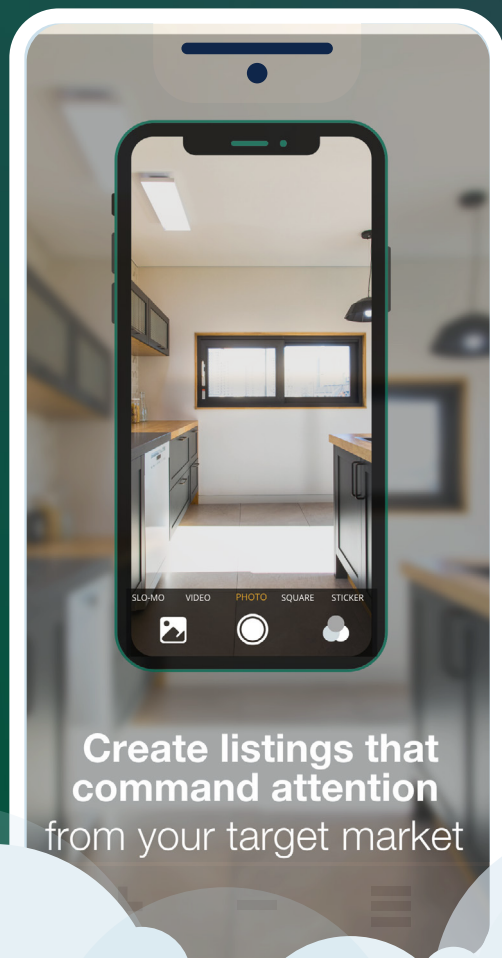
It’s possible to grow your audience quickly by creating clickbait content with mass appeal, and the likes of giveaways, competitions and collabs but they are unlikely to be in your target demographic nor actively engage with your content going forward.

You are MUCH better off having slow, steady growth that results from these kinds of social media strategies and a smaller but highly engaged audience.

Any deviation from your brand for the sole purpose of engagement ‘numbers’ creates a hell of a lot of issues in the long run – and it effectively works against the grunt work and valuable content you’ve already shared.

Although a lot of these steps may seem straightforward, having brand clarity, consistency across all online platforms and clear CTA’s and linking build a rock-solid foundation for creating a commanding online footprint that will set you apart from your competitors.

How to take professional photos with your smartphone.



Chapter 5

How to take professional photos with your smartphone

If you want to make a splash on social media, then good photos are a must.

There's no getting around it – people pay more attention to images than they do to words. If you don't have the right pictures, then an ideal prospect might just 'scroll' past your listing instead of stopping and reading more about it.

But to get great photos, you don't have to hire a professional or buy an expensive camera.

Taking photos like a pro has never been so accessible, with some of the best cameras available, quite literally, in the palm of our hand.

If you are looking to up your real estate photography game – without hiring a professional – check out our practical tips for how you can take the highest quality smartphone photos, which we nabbed from a professional photographer.

Always use natural light

Look it might sound obvious but lighting is one of the core reasons why smartphone photos look less than professional.

Even though smartphone cameras are boss-level powerful these days, the actual sensors (the part that records an image) are very small. This means that they will often struggle to capture a high-quality image in low light.

To make sure you get the best results, the key is to use natural light wherever possible. When taking a photo always aim to position yourself so that your subject or focal point of the image is lit as well as possible, be that natural daylight or an artificial light source.

When things get dark your smartphone will really struggle, creating hazy, noisy images that are less than ideal.

Let HDR mode be your new best friend

Be honest – how often do you take listing photos in HDR mode?

HDR stands for High Dynamic Range. Dynamic range is the difference in light between the brightest and darkest parts of your image.

Enabling HDR on your smartphone means that the phone will take multiple images of the same scene and then intelligently stitch them together for you. Ahhhh the joys of technology.

HDR works particularly well for landscapes, where often you will get the sky looking normal but an underexposed foreground, or a normal-looking foreground and an overexposed sky.

Use flash during the daytime.

Trust us on this one.

In a perfect world, every time you wanted to take photos of a property, the sun would be basking the room at the perfect angle, creating a palace of natural light. But, alas sometimes your only opportunity to take snaps for your listing is the dreariest bloody day of the year and you have a 15-minute time window.

So, welcome using flash during daylight to the chat.

Similar to HDR mode, fill flash is a great way to balance the light through your image and is particularly useful for outdoor portraits where the sun is behind your subject. All you need to do is turn on your flash and hey presto – no more silhouette portraits.

The rule of thirds.

There is no duo more iconic than good lighting and photo composition when it comes to smartphone photography. The 'rule of thirds' is the most basic rule for composition in professional photography as it can take the flow and direction of your images to a whole new level.

Putting the 'smart' in smartphones, the vast majority of cameras have gridlines that can help you put the rule of thirds in action and aid the composition of your shots. When taking interior or exterior photos of a property, you should only be taking landscape photos as this allows you to capture more detail; and it will also be how prospective buyers will visualise the property.

The rule of thirds splits your image into nine equal blocks, forming a 3x3 grid over your image. Once you have got your grid up (it is in your camera settings) and are preparing to take a shot; your first step is to decide where the horizontal lines go in relation to your subject.

The best practice is to make sure the lines stay away from the centre in either the top or bottom third of the image.

If there is a particular feature or piece of furniture you want to highlight within a room, line this up vertically on the left or right side and have the intersection point of the grid lines meet here. If this sounds confusing, standby – check out some examples above.

Remember – you can never take too many snaps. Try lining your gridlines up at different heights, with different features sitting at intersections to see what makes the room or exterior look the most appealing and spacious.

How low you should go

In real estate photography, height matters. Big time.

It's natural to assume eye level is the best height to hold your smartphone camera, but according to photographers, when it comes to shooting interiors in particular– a lower height will create a much better shot. But the question

remains, how low should you go when taking your photos? When we did our research – one super cliché phrase stood out for shooting properties:

“Shoot from the heart”.

Despite the cringe factor; it seems to be pretty accurate and unanimous amongst professionals – which agree that four to five feet from the ground (or chest height) will give you the best results for the majority of properties. This is because it will showcase furniture and floors; as well as mimic how prospective buyers will view your property.

Remember – this rule of thumb is a starting point; make sure you adjust your camera height based on the room you are in, what you want to showcase – as well as how the photos are turning out. In a room with super high ceilings or a sweeping staircase – heart level may not cut it. Experimenting and practice will always produce the best results.

Extra for experts:

When it comes to ramping up your smartphone photography skills, there are endless opportunities to continue to learn and upskill. Mastering these fundamentals will result in better-quality property photos almost instantly.

A couple of final tips for taking your photos to the next level.

Invest in a tripod for your smartphone:

Having your camera steady and completely level will result in a more crisp and polished shot. This can often be hard when you are holding your smartphone at chest level or below. There are a variety of options around the \$20 mark that will do the job perfectly.

Purchase some wide-angle lenses for your smartphone:

Yup – we’re with you on this one and also didn’t realise these existed. These detachable lenses will enable you to capture more features in your shot – which is perfect for showing the full layout of a property’s interior layout or a sweeping landscape.

When in doubt, edit it out:

There is an array of inexpensive – and in many cases free – apps that allow you to adjust lighting, brightness and shadows as well as enhance photo features. VSCO and Lightroom are two of the most popular ones, and there is a tonne of content online which shows you how to create a professional quality photo, and a consistent theme you can use for all your photos.

In a nutshell – the better quality photos you take – the more polished and enticing your property listings will look.

Taking them yourself is a fun and highly valuable skill to master, which will also help you build and maintain an epic social media presence as well as create high-quality videos to showcase your properties. It will also save you a hell of a lot of money on photographers and videographers.

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