

EXPLORE WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Where Agents Go Wrong With Video Marketing

5 Real Estate Issues You're Dealing With as an Agent

It's a Generational Thing: Examining Recent Home Buyers and Sellers

Settling vs. Foundation Issues: What to Look For in a Home

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WHERE AGENTS GO WRONG WITH VIDEO MARKETING

Video marketing is one of the most powerful tools in real estate. According to NAR's 2017 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers, 39% of all buyers use online video sites in their home search, with 56% ranking this resource as "very useful" in the home shopping process. Though 61% of buyers found video to be a useful feature for real estate website to offer, only 11% of sellers reported their agent having used video to market their home. However, this essential piece of your marketing toolbox is more complex than it seems. Agents must consider the quality and professionalism of both the content and technical factors of their videos. A simple mistake could become an obstacle for success and result in wasted time and effort. Avoid these common real estate video mistakes and the time and effort you invest in this vital medium will pay off.

1. Failing to Rehearse

The first listing appointment is no longer when you walk into someone's home. It's what they see about you online. Consumers want to find a real estate agent that is professional and trustworthy. Why would they put their financial future in your hands if you can't rehearse for a promotional video?

The Solution: Prepare for your video. Dress well, write a script, and practice, practice, practice. People do not want to hear "um" or "uh" in a video, nor do they want to listen to an agent ramble on for five minutes. Make sure your message is always clear and succinct to ensure you captivate viewers.

2. Not Focusing on a Single Message

Too often, real estate videos contain more than one message and quickly become confusing. Agents often fail to think of their video content as falling into a number of "types," and therefore default to creating one long video that rarely gets watched.

The Solution: There are four main real estate video types that you should know inside and out:

1. **The introduction:** Listing videos are no longer the most popular type of real estate video. Instead, it's your introductory video or video business card that potential clients are more likely to gravitate to. In fact, "find an agent" searches on YouTube are increasing by 46 percent year over year. Think of this video as a warm opener to your online followers or your real estate elevator pitch.
2. **The testimonial or "just sold" video:** These videos should include genuine messages from previous clients that confirm your high ratings on review sites. They can showcase a property that you just sold or the client's experience working with you.
3. **The neighborhood tour:** This is your opportunity to highlight the location where you work. These videos can cover all aspects that may be important to your clients, such as the nearby landmarks, nightlife, or transportation.
4. **The listing or open house video:** Showcase all aspects and details of a home you're selling. Think of it like an open house, offering potential buyers the opportunity to see property specifics.

3. Not Interacting Digitally

Real estate agents need to build community engagement. This means you cannot ignore the reception you're receiving on your videos. People may comment, asking for more information, and they need answers.

The Solution: Don't forget to check back on your videos after you post them. Interact with your viewers through comments, subscription callouts, or direct messages. On social media, direct messages are a great way to start a private conversation to answer questions about yourself or your listings.

4. Poor Quality Audio

The addition of music to your video can make it much more engaging; however, it can be a disaster if it's not mixed right with your voice. Many videos allow the music to overpower the agent's voice, which makes words and messages unclear.

The Solution: Set the music volume at a low level during frames with audio. Your audio and message are more important than the music. When your voice isn't heard in the video, you can raise the music volume to set the mood or invoke emotion. Simple video editing tools allow you to raise and lower music volume at a gradual level without the audio becoming choppy or inconsistent.

5. Bad Lighting

Lighting is often overlooked in nonprofessional videos. But pictures or videos that are too dark or bright or that feature unflattering shadows can completely change a viewer's opinion of the content.

The Solution: Natural light is your best friend. When you can't film outside, film yourself or your subject near a window. This will fill the frame with light. But be careful that you don't place a subject directly in front of a window, as backlighting will create a silhouette and darken the room. If you have the proper equipment and licensure, consider using a drone for aerial shots. If you don't have the ability to do it yourself, know that hiring a drone operator can cost as little as \$200 and is a great way to stand out and attract new listings.

6. SEO-Unfriendly Videos

The first title you come up with isn't always the best. If your title doesn't contain your target keywords, your video won't be found by the right audiences online and won't show up prominently in Google or other search engines.

The Solution: Highly searched, relevant keywords in your title and description will boost your video in search results. Furthermore, uploading your video on YouTube will ensure you are featured higher in Google searches. YouTube allows you to include video tags that help searchers discover your video as well as suggest it to the right audience. Be clear with your titles and use the city, type of property, and other relevant information.

7. No Video Transcript

Lack of transcripts for your videos will hurt you in search results and with viewers on the go. Google cannot read visual data in videos, so without a transcript, it's unable to include such content in search results. In addition, if your viewers are on mobile devices or social media, chances are they are not viewing your video with sound enabled. According to Digiday, 85 percent of Facebook videos are viewed without sound.

The Solution: Invest in automatic speech recognition software that will transcribe your videos for you. Then, Javascript plugins can help you sync the transcription and video together. There are countless automatic speech recognition software programs available, such as Dragon, Sonix, and Speechlogger. These software programs are a cheap way to increase your video's searchability and engagement.



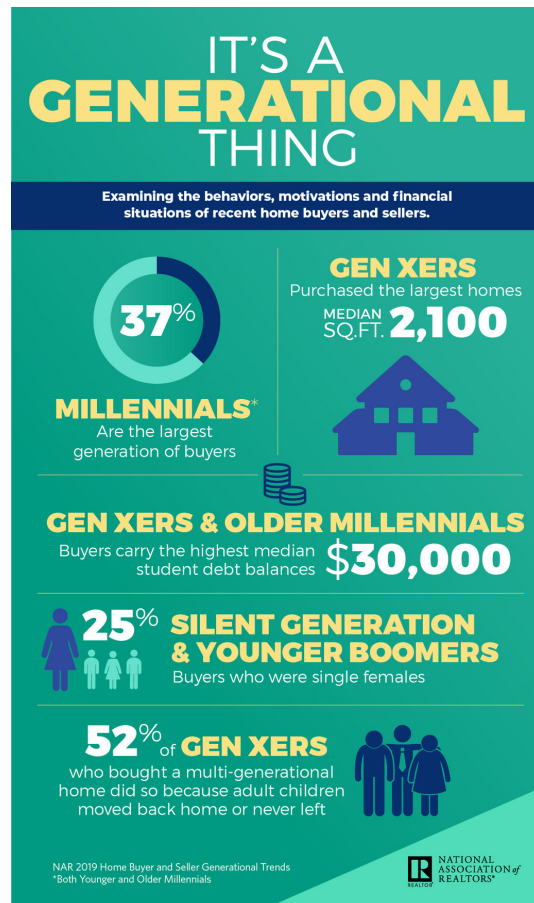
4 REAL ESTATE ISSUES YOU'RE DEALING WITH AS AN AGENT

No matter where you live and work, most real estate professionals share similar business challenges and can brainstorm solutions and best practices. There is no "magic potion" to fix all the issues agents may face. It comes down to doing the activities you need to do in order to be successful and the fundamentals of having the best system, practices, and habits in place.

Here are some ways to maximize your success:

1. **Master one tool at a time.** Agents talked about the importance of learning one lead generation tool at a time and using weekly sales meetings to be accountable for individual success and discuss prospecting tactics that are working. Agents need to understand the difference between prospecting and marketing. Prospecting is for the now, and marketing is for the future. Agents need to do a combination of both—an infinite loop. And as you are going to each lead generation source, such as your sphere of influence, it's about having that loop and what gives you business now and keeps it coming.
2. **Explain your value to consumers.** It is important that agents are able to explain to buyers and sellers what they bring to the table that other agents don't. For example, agents should always tell clients about the REALTOR® Code of Ethics and how it ensures that you will protect their interests. Agents need to understand their value proposition and be able to articulate to a client what services they are providing.
3. **Hold yourself accountable.** It's vital for agents to hold themselves accountable, especially when it comes to time management. One great tactic in doing so is using Sunday nights to plan out your upcoming week in detail. Trust in a friend or coach to hold you accountable and make sure that you're following systems and keeping transactions on track. It's also vital to attend networking events and follow up with contacts and leads.
4. **Stick to a schedule.** For time management, agents should have a calendar that's consistent every morning. That will help you establish regular intervals for lead generation activity. Agents like to do things that make them feel good but neglect some necessary business-generating tasks because they're not particularly enjoyable. But you have to do some of those uncomfortable activities if you want to grow your business, whether that means cold-calling or going to networking events to meet people and drum up new business. You have to do more than just the things that make you feel like you did something that day.

Source: <https://magazine.realtor/sales-and-marketing/feature/article/2019/03/5-real-estate-issues-you-re-dealing-with-right-now>



QUOTE OF THE MONTH: *"Pretend that every single person you meet has a sign around his or her neck that says, 'Make me feel important.' Not only will you succeed in sales, you will succeed in life." - Mary Kay Ash*

Settling vs. Foundation Issues: What to Look for in a Home

A home is your number one most valuable investment—so it makes sense to ensure that the foundation of a home being considered for purchase is strong. When the structural integrity of a house has been compromised, a variety of unpleasant problems can occur. But how can you tell the difference between normal wear and a problem that needs immediate attention?

How to Distinguish Foundation Problems from Settling

Settling is a term used to describe the natural changes that will take place in a foundation due to time and weathering. Over time, a new home will very gradually sink down further into the ground. The biggest contributor to settling is soil expansion and contraction. Even though a bit of soil expansion is to be expected, this naturally occurring settlement of the foundation can lead to problems. In order to diagnose a true foundation problem, you'll need to look for more warning signs than just visible cracks in your foundation. Visible cracks in the foundation can be the first sign of a problem, but they can also be a sign of non-threatening settlement. A real foundation problem will have a combination of other signs.

Look for these signs of foundation damage:

- **Cracks in Walls:** This is one of the primary indicators that your foundation has been compromised. A jagged crack running off at a forty-five-degree angle is a sure sign that your foundation is seriously shifting and has resulted in actually tearing the sheetrock apart.
- **Sticking or Gapping Doors or Windows:** Inspect all of your doors and windows. If you have doors or windows that consistently stick for no apparent reason, or are gapping at the top, these can be a sign of your foundation shifting. This happens because the door or window frame twists out of balance as the foundation moves.
- **Cracks Forming Above the Windows:** You might assume that any foundation issues would be most obvious near the ground – but the opposite is actually true. When a foundation has been compromised, the most obvious signs of damage will be near the top of your house rather than the bottom. Carefully inspect the top story of your home from the outside using a ladder. Look for cracks that appear above window frames – this is the most common place for damage to become visible. If you have a brick home, look for a stair-stepping crack in the veneer of the brick.
- **Cracks in the Foundation:** Of course damage can be visible within the foundation itself as well. Look for horizontal cracks in the actual foundation. A horizontal crack is a sign of hydrostatic pressure, or too much water pressure building up behind the foundation.



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