



5 COMMON FACEBOOK MISTAKES

(and how to avoid them)

FOR REALTORS



Cornerstone®
HOME LENDING, INC.



if you want to use social media to generate leads, these are the missteps to steer clear of:



1. getting caught up in the likes.

This is a mistake because the number of likes you get on your posts, and the number of likes you have on your page, are actually artificial metrics of engagement. Racking up page likes is meaningless if they're not coming from high-quality followers.

You might get hundreds or thousands of page likes by asking friends, family, in-laws, and other acquaintances to like your page, but if they're not engaging, can you really consider it a success?

Making matters worse, if you opt to advertise on Facebook and target those page likes, Facebook will ding you for having a low engagement rating among your followers. Unfortunately, people who liked your page just because you begged them to are people who won't ever buy or sell with you. These followers are most likely not going to engage with your ads and posts.

On the other side of the coin, let's say you post a link on your page, and it gets 10 clicks with zero likes. Is this a failure? Not necessarily. One of those clicks may be a person who visits your website, turns into a lead, and becomes a client.

And, sometimes just having certain posts on your page can be helpful, even if you're not seeing direct engagement. Let's also say a potential client checks your Facebook presence (and they will research you online if they're interested). It's essential that this prospective client sees the good quality content you're posting.

A client conducting a silent search isn't likely to like or comment, but you'll still make an impression on them based on your online reputation: what you're sharing.

here's what you can do to avoid getting caught up in the likes:

- **Build your audience based on qualified likes — no need to seek out likes from friends of friends or random Internet strangers.** Then run a page like ad campaign that targets the homeowners in your area. Acquiring page likes can be pretty affordable, and Facebook advertising also lets you filter the type of follower you want to like your page. The estimated CPC (Cost per Click) on Facebook in real estate is \$1.81, slightly higher than the all-industry average of \$1.72.

No need to seek out family, friends, or coworkers for a like, unless you specifically know they'd be interested in using you as their agent sometime in the future.

- **Don't ever buy a page like for any reason** — unless it's through Facebook advertising. Those offers for a large amount of page likes (coming from Fiverr or other sites) should be ignored at all costs. These paid likes won't benefit your business or your page, and you definitely don't need them.
- **Only share content that's relevant and helpful and that your audience will be interested in.** When you share a link to an article, check to see how many clicks it gets. When you share a link for a free home evaluation that requests contact information, check on how many leads come from it. Don't fret about how many post likes you get, if any, and also don't get hung up on getting comments.
- **Always rank quality over quantity.** You can gauge your progress by checking to see if your deeper engagement metrics have movement or are gaining momentum. This sets you up in a prime spot to generate results and gain leads.



TARGET THE **HOMEOWNERS** **IN YOUR AREA**

2. not posting that often.

This is a mistake because the top-secret Facebook algorithm is always changing, affecting who sees what when it comes to friends' and business pages' status updates.

These days, it can be harder to reach your audience, unless you pay for ads. *Recent digital reports* suggest that as few as 5.2 percent of your followers will see your organic content.

So, posting once a week means that only a small fraction of your audience may see it. If your audience hardly ever sees you active on Facebook, they're probably going to forget about you altogether. On the off-chance they do see your posts, their odds of engagement will also be low because they're not used to seeing you alongside their friends and the other business pages they like on their newsfeed.

FUN FACTS

77%

of agents regularly use social media for their business in some form.

90%

of baby boomers start their search for a home online.

47%

of real estate businesses say social media yields the most quality leads over other outlets.

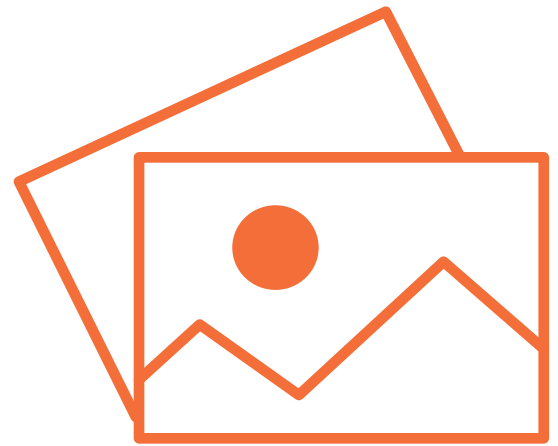
99%

of millennials start their search for a home online.



Source: "Real Estate in a Digital Age," NAR

here's what you can do to avoid not posting that often:



- **Like the Facebook algorithm, the recommended number of times you post to your page changes.** It's a good idea to do a quick Google search every few months to make sure your posting practices match Facebook's most recent updates.
- **The latest recommendations range from two to five times a week.** While there isn't technically an "ideal" posting day for Facebook, Sunday, by a slim margin, is the engagement winner. Still, many industry experts pooh-pooh a magic posting number and advocate instead for posting consistency.
- **A lot of times, agents worry about posting this often because they don't want to annoy their followers.** But remember, most of your audience won't ever see what you post. This makes quantity and consistency extra-important if you truly want to extend your reach.
- **You might hear some social media influencers recommending that you post anywhere from 20 to 30 times a week.** This is a great time to use your common sense, while staying up to speed on the ever-changing optimum practices for posting. Again, you can use a basic Google search to stay current.
- **No matter what, don't sacrifice your quality for your quantity.** Since each of your followers sees so few of your posts, you want to know that everything you post is top-notch when they do see it. Posting irrelevant, unrelated content is a sure way to tank your engagement rate and limit your posts to even less of your audience.
- **Looking into low-cost paid Facebook advertising could help you reach more of your audience if your organic reach isn't cutting it.** It's entirely possible to leverage Facebook for a large amount of leads on a tight marketing budget.

QUANTITY + CONSISTENCY

ARE EXTRA-IMPORTANT IF YOU TRULY WANT TO EXTEND YOUR REACH



3. posting only your listings.

This is a mistake because just like in the real world, a strong relationship requires some give and take. The key here is to strike the balance.

Only posting about your own listings is a take, take, take relationship. You're not giving your audience any information that's helpful and meaningful to them. As a result, you'll probably see an unengaged audience who's sick of being sold to.

Then there's the fact that whenever a potential client checks up on you on Facebook to see what you're all about, they'll only see you selling your listings. This could be helpful because it'll show you have active listings, but it won't outweigh the negative effects of appearing to be an agent who constantly self-promotes and sells to clients.

**FOR
SALE**

You know that as a realtor, you never want to be perceived as a seller. You want your clients to see you as an expert, trustworthy advisor. Pushing listings round the clock on your Facebook page paints the picture of a salesperson.

Even better, when you switch up your Facebook posts and add variety, you're more likely to keep your audience engaged. Constantly posting the same thing each day doesn't give your audience anything to look forward to. You'll cultivate a solid following — and a strong Facebook presence — when your content is fresh, fascinating, and relevant.

Posting the same types of post again and again is always a mistake, whether it's open houses, listings, blogs, or any formulaic posts that become redundant. Always keep them guessing.

here's what you can do to avoid posting only your listings:

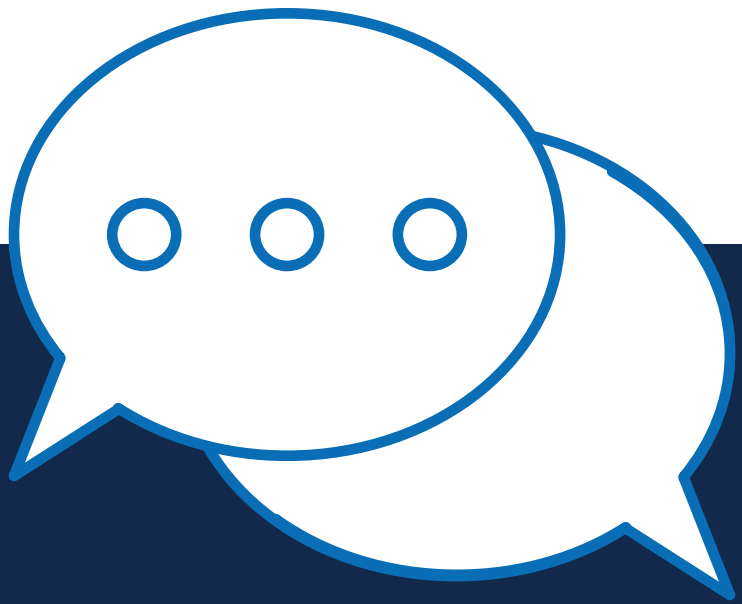
- **Think about your audience's needs instead of your own.** This involves giving information and content that your followers will value and want to spend time reading.
- **Put effort into seeking out the types of content that match your audience.** Maybe it's an article about when to buy or sell, an infographic on mortgage rates, or a recent news story about developing neighborhoods in your community.
- **Now's the time to get creative.** Really, the possibilities are endless. You can post a wide variety of content on your business page, beyond your own listings — varying tone, topic, and humor.
- **You can't go wrong with posts that relate to real estate.** This includes market changes, home values, repairs and maintenance, homeownership, or changes in your community. These topics are relevant and helpful, and you'll have plenty to choose from to keep your audience interested.
- **Posting about different topics along with your listings could amp up engagement whenever you do share a new house or price reduction.** You're likely to get a better response when you aren't talking about yourself as often but are instead giving out free, helpful information your audience cares about.
- **Brainstorm, brainstorm, brainstorm and test out your different post ideas to see how your followers engage.** If you run out of ideas, check out your competition on social media or start digging around on Google.



SHARE VALUABLE CONTENT

THAT YOUR AUDIENCE WILL WANT TO SPEND TIME READING

4. shamelessly self-promoting.



This is a mistake because it's easy to forget the whole point of Facebook in the first place: to socialize, keep up with the happenings, stalk old high school friends, and share important thoughts and life details.

In the past few years, Facebook's advertising platform has experienced exponential growth, and businesses of all sizes are benefiting. But Facebook users still don't want to be sold to. (Does anyone, really?)

Facebook keeps changing its algorithm for this reason — to minimize brand posts perceived as overly promotional. So, you might notice that your promotional Facebook posts are the ones less likely to appear in your followers' feeds. Facebook is trying to stay on top of promotion to ensure users still like using the site. User surveys indicate that over-selling on Facebook is a definite no-no.

No matter what you post, you want it to be natural and conversational without an emphasis on sales or promotion. If you keep posting and asking people to check your listing or contact you, your audience is going to tune out because you're only using the site for business. Changing your tone and purpose to show your followers that you're here to help can make a world of difference.

2 thumb-stopping post ideas:

1. PERSONAL

Stick with the 80/20 Rule: Post 80% personal and 20% other topics.

Examples include pics of you, your house, friends, family, travel, and more.



2. MARKET INSIGHTS

Think tips for sellers and buyers, timely housing news, or short monthly recaps.

Sharing market-facing posts can send strong messages to potential clients, helping to establish your reputation as an in-the-know agent.



Right now, the average home is staying on the market for just 18 days.



here's what you can do to avoid shamelessly self-promoting:

- **As mentioned, post more content than just your own listings.** Useful content is way more attractive to your audience than self-promotion.
- **Don't post sales-y status updates, like "Call me at XXX-XXXX anytime!"** This type of post is never acceptable on social media, even in the comments. Of course, commenting on other people's posts gives you the chance to interact, socialize, and potentially bring traffic back to your own page, as long as you're posting helpful comments that relate to the topic and do not self-promote in any capacity.
- **When you do post statuses and comments, offer to answer questions and follow up on it.** This is one of the easiest ways to connect with your followers and encourage them to reach out to you without the hard sell.
- **Reword your posts and comments to come from the perspective of someone who is really trying to help.** Useful information, insights, and feedback that relate to a photo, meme, or link will get you much farther. Don't ever push people to contact you or scream using caps or exclamation points about all the features of your latest listing.
- **Stick to the rule of thumb of only offering free, direct support on Facebook.** You can invite someone to contact you via email or phone when it feels natural, after you've spent some time chatting with them in the comments. Or, you could just shoot them a Facebook message after a back-and-forth conversation without telling them to contact you directly.

You'll see more success when you use Facebook like a real-life scenario, connecting with a user the same way you would in person.



POST USEFUL YET

RELATABLE

INFORMATION
AND INSIGHTS

5. forgetting to make a game plan.



This is a mistake because failing to plan means you're planning to fail, as the saying goes. Winging it doesn't often pay off if you're a realtor hoping to grow your business.

But it's surprising how many agents don't set aside time to come up with an action plan and a social media strategy. There's no telling why this happens. It could be because many agents don't think that planning is worth the time involved, or maybe they don't know where to begin. No matter what the reason may be, it's essential to stick to a game plan whenever you log in.

Not having a plan means you're more likely to waste time and energy brainstorming on what to post about — time that could be better spent connecting with your existing and new clients. And, if you're pressed for time, you might end up posting something off-the-cuff, something that can hurt the results of your future posts and your engagement because it doesn't speak to your followers.

When you know in advance what and when you're going to post to Facebook, it'll lighten your workload considerably. It'll also give you more free time to focus on the important things, like other avenues of growing your business. It's easy to schedule planned Facebook posts weeks out, so you can "set it and forget it." You won't need to post daily to Facebook, unless there's a timely topic like a new open house or new listing that needs to go up on your page quickly.

Once this is done, you'll have peace of mind that your Facebook page is being populated with relevant, helpful content each day without you having to do it manually or worry about it slipping your mind because of a busy schedule.

here's what you can do to avoid forgetting to make a game plan:

- **Ease the burden on yourself and put together a Facebook calendar.** This can take some time and planning from the outset, but it'll save you hours in the long run.
- **Stop worrying about what to post on Facebook every day.** Instead, devote several hours a month, or less, to planning out all the posts you can think of. Schedule inspirational quotes that you and your followers might like once a week over the next month. Search for upcoming community events near you and schedule several of those over the next few weeks to keep your followers' interest.

Stay aware of fun, frivolous, or major holidays and schedule a couple of posts in celebration. Make sure to choose some of your existing listings, strategically sprinkled throughout, and schedule a push on those posts. Also, schedule a handful of posts inviting potential sellers to check their home value through a tool on your website, if available. Leave room on your

calendar to add spontaneous posts and breaking news or to replace sold listings, and you're golden.

- **When you're ready to start scheduling your calendar, you can schedule Facebook posts right from your page.** Or, you may prefer a third-party scheduling service, like Buffer or Hootsuite that cross-posts to other social media sites like LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, and more.
- **Even after creating a calendar and scheduling, you'll still have some wiggle room when you need it.** Your game plan doesn't have to be rigid, but structure helps. Now, you'll always have some type of content ready to go on a day when you're feeling rushed, and you can check in and tweak your scheduled posts whenever you need to.



NOTE SOME FUN HOILDAYS

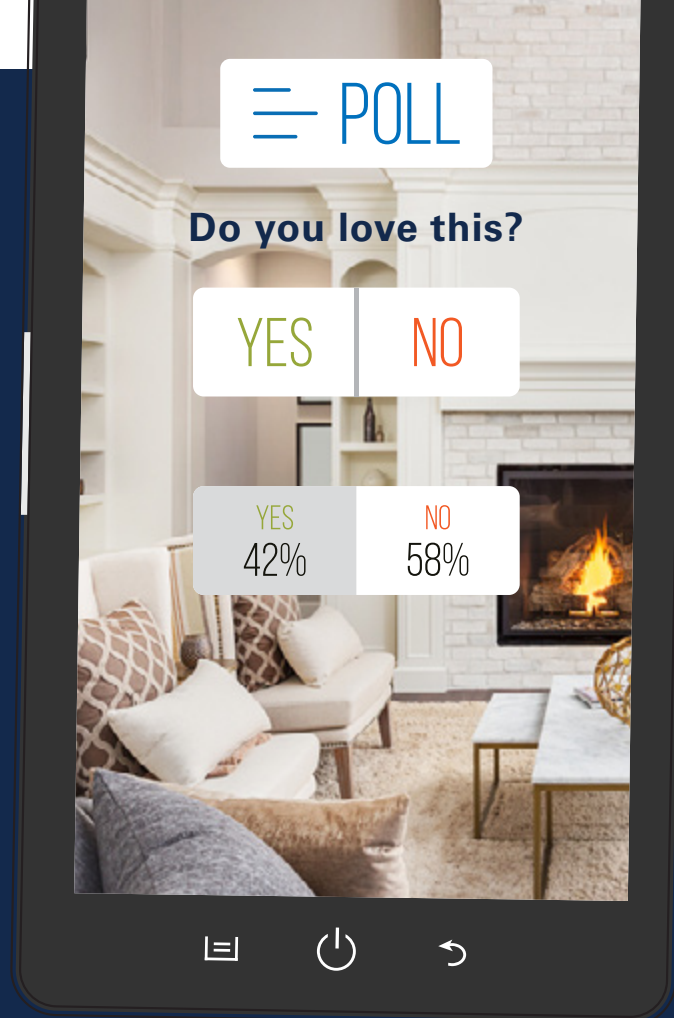
AND SCHEDULE A COUPLE CELEBRATORY POSTS FOR EACH

2 engaging story ideas:

1. POLLS

A poll is one of the easiest and most effective ways to build engagement by interacting with your audience.

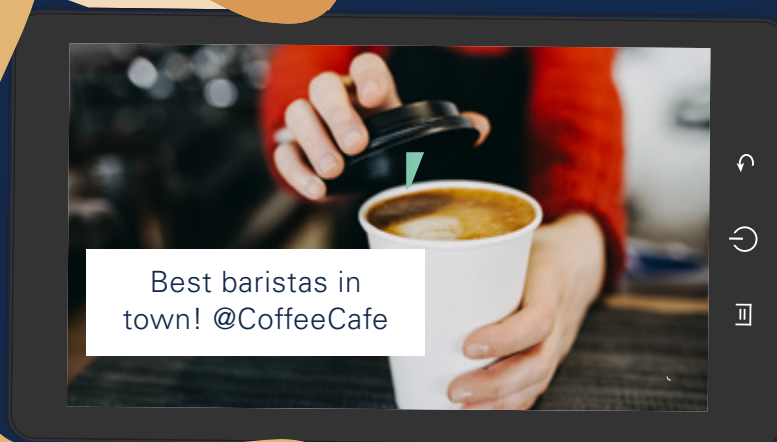
TIP: Use this as a smart way to showcase listings without coming across as overly salesy.



2. LOCAL MARKET GUIDE

Clients looking for an agent want someone who's able to not only help them through the process of buying and selling but also navigate the local community.

Stories offer a simple way for you to show off how well you know your area, while helping to promote and grow relationships with local businesses. (Make sure to tag them.)





tell your new leads they can get home weeks faster

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