

HOW TO MASTER THE 2021 FACEBOOK ALGORITHM AND GET MORE BUYERS

The average organic reach for a Facebook post has dropped to just 5.2 percent. But there's something you can do about it. Getting to know the Facebook algorithm can be especially helpful for connecting with clients in mortgage and real estate.

GO WHERE THE EYEBALLS ARE

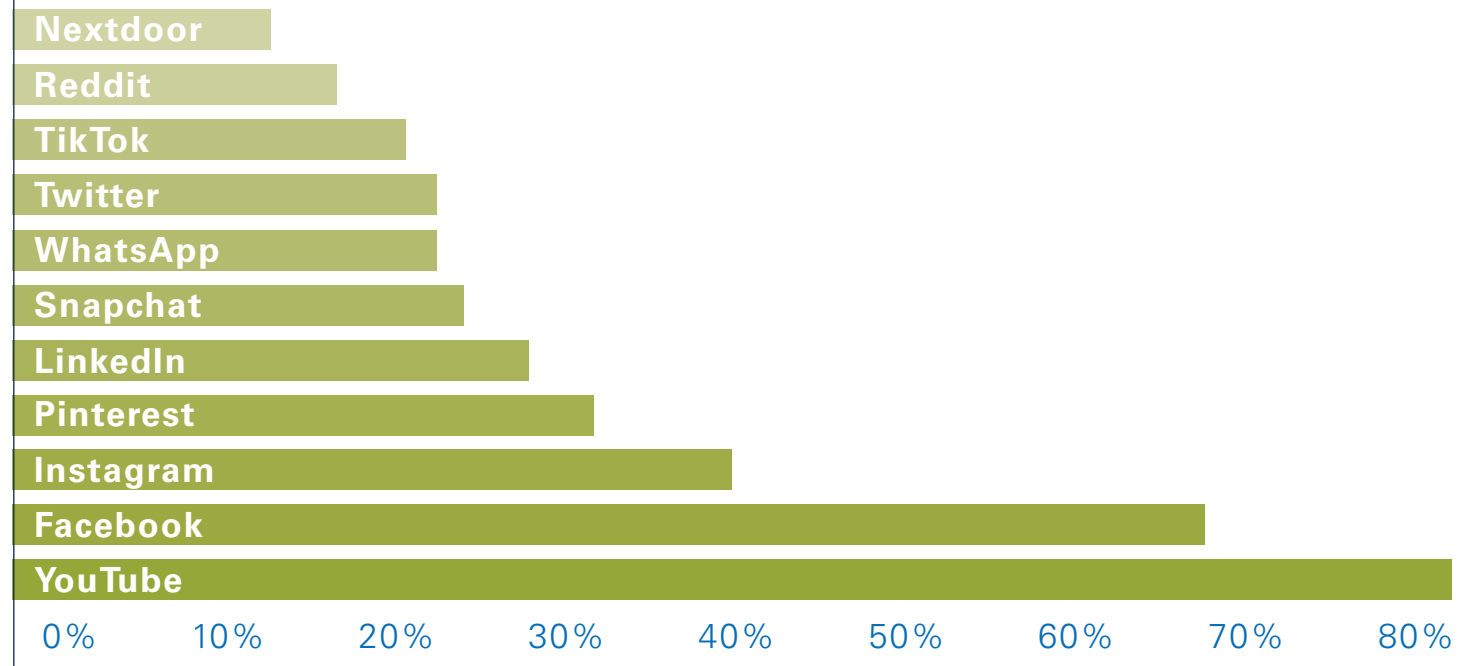
Having a social media strategy has become an absolute necessity in marketing and advertising. According to Pew Research, 72 percent of adults are actively using some type of social media.

This surge is continuing to grow throughout generations and cultures. Younger adults, expectedly, have higher activity levels, but social media use among older adults is also increasing. This shift has not only created a new platform to connect with and attract clients, it's created an abundance of opportunity.



WHICH SOCIAL PLATFORM IS THE MOST POPULAR?

percentage of adults in 2021 who say they ever use...



Source: Pew Research, 2021.

DATA SHOWS THAT SOCIAL DRIVES GROWTH

Staying active on social media and staying aligned with influencers (people who have a large base of loyal followers and are considered thought leaders) could hold enough weight to grow your business. Adapting to new social media trends and changes, no matter how small, is one way to increase short-term sales with the potential for long-term revenue by remaining visible to your audience.

The facts are clear: Social is where buyers get ideas for purchasing. **Nearly 90 percent of consumers will buy from a brand they're following via social media.**

While there's no wrong platform to focus your marketing spend on, Facebook -- coming only second to YouTube in terms of popularity and reach -- is a strong starting point for any real estate agent.



11 FACEBOOK ALGORITHM BEST-PRACTICES YOU SHOULD ADOPT TODAY

Like the mortgage industry and the housing market, the social media landscape is always changing. Social media can be an effective tool to grow your business — as long as you stay on top of the latest shifts.

Speaking of shifts, one notorious shape-shifter is the Facebook algorithm. What is it, and how does it impact your visibility to your audience?

A quick recap:

- The Facebook algorithm is the method that determines which posts your audience will see whenever they scroll through their feed -- and in what order.
- Facebook states that, rather than using a single algorithm, it integrates multiple processes to score posts and supply the most valuable content to its users.
- While the exact mechanism of the Facebook algorithm remains unknown, it's designed, like other social platforms, to encourage scrolling so that users encounter more ads.

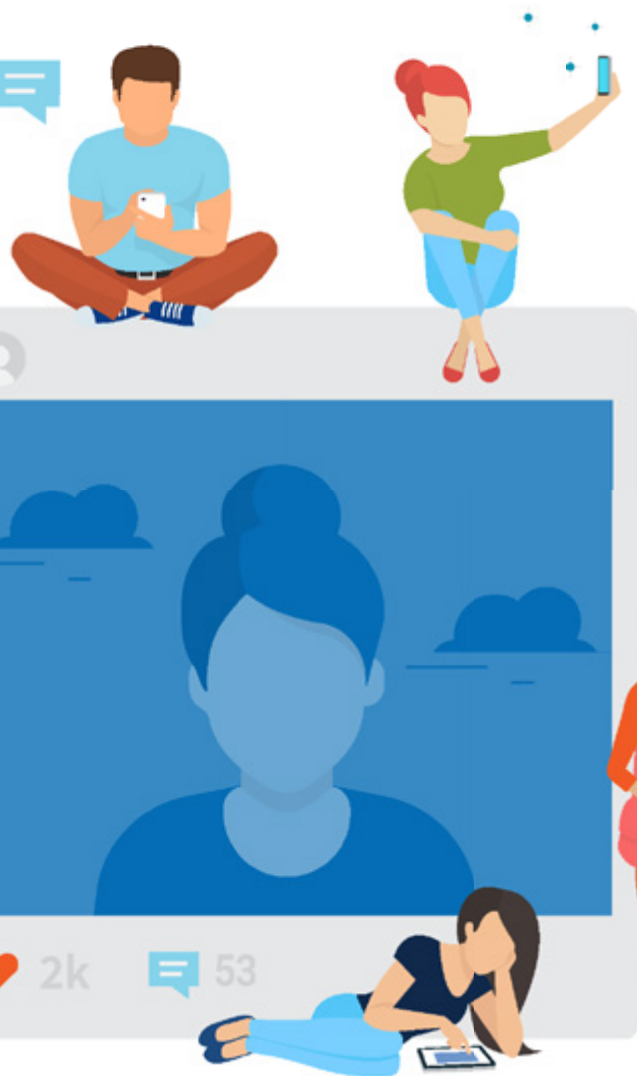
**WHILE THE
FACEBOOK
NEWSFEED WAS
INVENTED IN
2006, IT WASN'T
UNTIL 2016
THAT FACEBOOK
BEGAN TO RANK
CONTENT BASED
ON HOW MUCH
TIME A PERSON
SPENT ON IT.**

If you want to optimize your organic reach -- so that your followers are more likely to see your posts -- use these strategies to work with the Facebook algorithm instead of against it:

1. ALWAYS REPLY

Or, at least, reply to your followers' comments as frequently as you can. Remember, the Facebook algorithm gives priority to posts the user has previously interacted with. So, whether it's in the form of a comment or via Messenger, replying and continuing the conversation is critical.

Consider this: If a potential client has taken the time to reach out to you and comment, don't let the opportunity pass you by. A quick response will let them know they've been heard -- and encourage them to comment again the next time they scroll past your content.



WHICH 4 FACEBOOK ALGORITHM RANKING SIGNALS INFLUENCE YOUR ORGANIC REACH?

Relationship. Does a post come from a person, news outlet, or brand that a user usually interacts with?

Popularity. How many people have reacted to, commented on, and shared a post? Particularly among friends.

Type of content. What content type has been posted, and is it a user's preferred form of media (i.e., photo, article, video, etc.)?

Recency. How long ago was the content posted? Newer is better.

2. ENCOURAGE YOUR FOLLOWERS TO REPLY TOO

Facebook confirms that if a post has a lot of action among friends – read: conversation -- it will be bumped by the algorithm and shown to a user again. So, sharing conversation-starting posts could gain you more reach, as well as a second go-round with your audience.

Consider this: Buzzworthy posts that invite shares and discussions are seen as high value in the eyes of the algorithm. Steer clear of inflammatory content and instead focus on stimulating topics of conversation.

3. POST WATCHABLE LONGFORM VIDEO

Any video you post may be scored by both its watch time and rate of completion; these variables reflect the quality of the video's content -- and whether it could entice a viewer to watch it the whole way through. If you can keep a viewer watching for longer, your video will be ranked higher by the algorithm and may appear higher in the newsfeed.

Consider this: Based on its 2019 updates, Facebook now prioritizes video content by intent/loyalty, shown when a user searches for and comes back to a video; video/view length, when a video is three minutes or longer and is watched for more than one minute; and originality, meaning that a video's content doesn't come from other sources and provides enough value.



Image credit: Facebook for Business

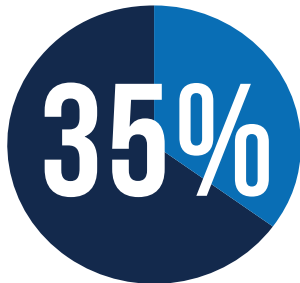
As of 2021, vertical video still outperforms square video on Facebook. Just using this video format could generate an average rate of engagement ranging from 0.20 to 1.77 percent for smaller accounts. While this may not sound like much, it's actually significantly higher than Facebook's typical and relatively low engagement.

Biteable research shows that:

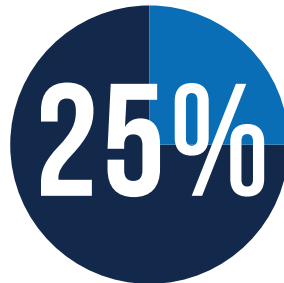
"Facebook is the most popular (75 percent) social channel for marketers to post videos, followed by YouTube (70 percent), and Instagram (58 percent)."

PEOPLE WATCH ALMOST AS MUCH VIDEO ON FACEBOOK AS THEY DO ON YOUTUBE

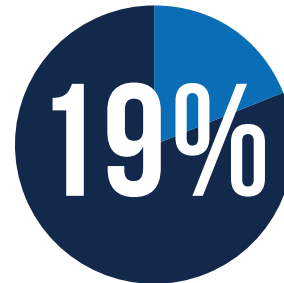
percentage of those who watch video content most often on each platform



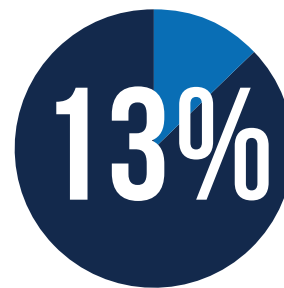
YouTube



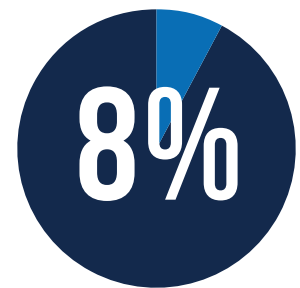
Facebook



TikTok



Other



Instagram



15%

OF ALL CONTENT ON FACEBOOK IS VIDEO, INCLUDING LIVE AND NATIVE VIDEOS.

Source: Lucid/HubSpot, 2021.

4. USE FACEBOOK LIVE

Beyond blogs, images, memes, and text posts, video is becoming the preferred form of content. What makes video so captivating is this: If you share helpful information with your clients on social media, they're only likely to remember 10 percent of what you posted three days later. But when you pair a relevant image with the same information, you bump up your followers' retention to 65 percent.

Video allows you to share ideas and images in conjunction faster and more seamlessly than any other format. You can use video on social media for a short-and-quick shoutout to your followers, in a one-to-one personalized chat, or as a more polished final product that can be shared by your audience.

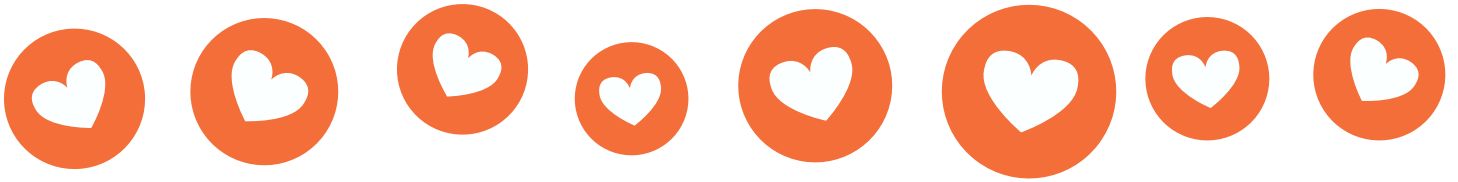
Consider this: While everyone spent more time at home during lockdowns last year, use of Facebook Live video skyrocketed by 50 percent. Facebook continues to prioritize this channel – likely because Live video gives six times the interactions, making it well worth the effort for upping lead conversion and engagement.

5. BYPASS THE ALGORITHM WITH STORIES

Facebook Stories are distinct since they don't run through the newsfeed. They're located above it, in a place where the algorithm doesn't rule. And yet, Stories can be used to successfully draw traffic. Nearly 60 percent of people report checking out a brand's website after viewing their Story.

Consider this: A Facebook study finds that 52 percent of users want to watch easily-understandable Stories, 50 percent want Stories to include new products, and 46 percent want Stories featuring tips or helpful advice.

FREE AND PAID
VIDEO EDITING APPS
LIKE BOOMERANG
AND PROMO OFFER
BUILT-IN SONGS,
VIDEO CLIPS,
TEMPLATES, AND
GIF CAPABILITIES
THAT YOU CAN
USE TO UP YOUR
VIDEO MARKETING
GAME WITHOUT
PAYING FOR A
PROFESSIONAL EDIT.



6. GO FOR LOVE OVER LIKES

As of 2017, Facebook officially began counting reaction buttons more than the old-school “like.” So, being able to elicit a strong emotional response to your post holds weight -- whether it’s love, care, laughter, shock, sadness, or anger.

Although difficult to learn, humor and inspiration are the most effective emotions to try and implement. Emotional content related to happiness is shared more often and more widely than sadness or anger. Used properly, sadness or anger towards an injustice can be powerful, but be careful posting with these emotions as it can inadvertently create a connection with these feelings and your brand. Plus, most of the time, this content is less likely to get shared with others.

Keep in mind that headline and copy are important, but emotions can easily be triggered with facial expressions. So, make sure to slightly exaggerate the expression you want to depict on selfies and photos with friends. A neutral or serene facial expression may get less engagement.

Consider this: Posting regular market reports is a must if you want to demonstrate your skill and knowledge as a local agent. But taking it a step further, sharing more personalized and heartfelt content -- like a photo of clients closing on their dream home accompanied with their story -- may encourage your audience to react with a “love” instead of a “like.”

7. POST WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

Recency: Facebook continues to underscore its importance. This simply means that newer content moves to the top of the feed. Granted, if a user happens to miss a fresh post, they may still see it when they open Facebook the next time. The Facebook algorithm also places unread posts within its eligible inventory for upcoming viewing.

Consider this: The easiest way to stay fresh and at the forefront is to schedule your posts at the optimal time for your audience. Ideal posting times for Facebook can vary but are said to be from 9 AM to 1 PM on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. Use Facebook Page Insights to double-check the performance of your posts and also view “When Your Fans Are Online.”

8. GET FAVORITED

You may not know that every Facebook user has 30 spots to designate for their favorite Pages/people. Once you enter this elusive cohort, you will no longer have to worry about the algorithm -- for that one fan, at least.

Consider this: Facebook created this favoriting feature as another way to give users more say-so over the content they see. So, feel free to share this with your followers. Ask clients to add you to their favorites so they can ensure that they'll regularly find you in their feed.

9. START A FACEBOOK GROUP

It's not always necessary to grow your Facebook audience based solely on your industry, whether it's mortgage or real estate, though that can be helpful. You can also expand your sphere of influence by attracting community members through related interests: home décor, home improvement, family and lifestyle, budgeting and finance, DIY, recipes, and more.

Facebook's algorithm prioritizes interactions between family, friends, and groups over brands, so creating a connected community will ensure your content is more likely to be seen and shared.

Consider this: While running your own branded Facebook group does take time and energy to cultivate, it provides yet another avenue for you to connect to your audience. Not only that, but if a post in your group gets enough reactions, it'll be given preference by the Facebook algorithm with potential to have even greater reach.



10. NEVER, EVER POST CLICKBAIT

Doing this is a quick way to get on the algorithm's bad side. So, refrain from posting questionable content that could be flagged, fake news/misleading information, deepfake/doctored videos, and anything else that may not reflect well on you and your brand as an agent.

Consider this: Facebook continues to crack down on "gray area" content that may misinform its users. In 2019, Facebook introduced the "Why am I seeing this post?" feature, and in 2020, the site honed in on news credibility, while also rolling out more tools that allow users to monitor how their data is used.

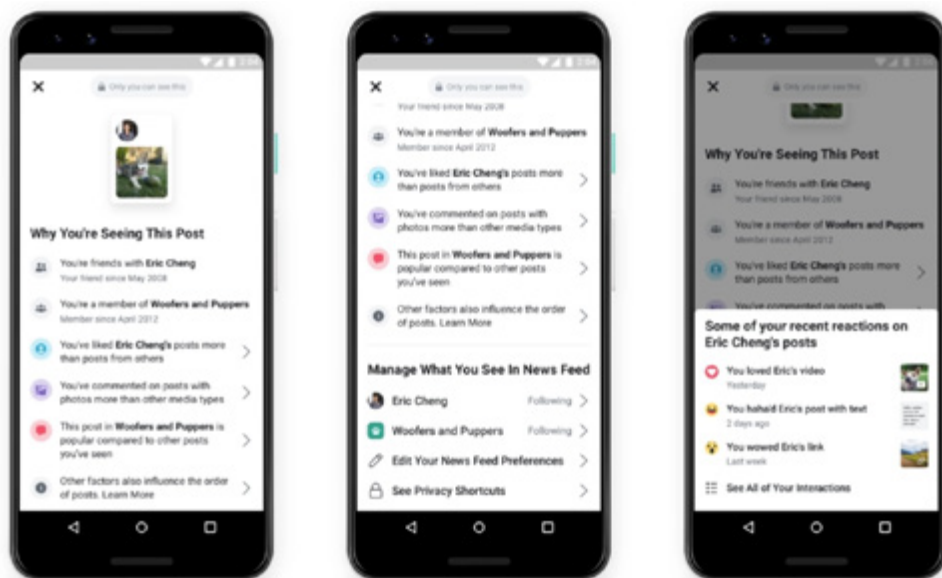


Image credit: Facebook

11. LEAN ON YOUR INNER CIRCLE

Some of your biggest advocates may be your employees if you run a brokerage, your team members, or your fellow agents. These allies in your inner circle have the credibility that the Facebook algorithm is looking for, when it comes to influencing their own friends and followers. They also know all about your business, so their endorsement -- or shares -- will be that much more authentic.

Consider this: Let's say you have 10 other agents working on your team, and you also have a Facebook page with 12,000 likes (and growing). Encouraging your team members to share your content with their own audience, and vice versa, may extend your reach to nearly 7,000 new people.

SUMMARY

The main goal of mastering the Facebook algorithm is simple: You want to naturally increase your visibility so that your name pops up in someone's mind whenever they hear "real estate" or "mortgage." Leveraging these trends will help you to stay connected and increase your volume. Social media drives purchases. With studies showing that almost all people (90 percent) may buy from a brand they're following, it's hard to argue with the numbers.

According to the National Association of REALTORS®, social media appears to be working for real estate. Real estate agents remain most active on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram, with 57 percent logging into social media apps daily.

Younger/millennial buyers (from ages 22 to 40) still make up the biggest share of the market -- a group you're likely to find on social media. So, don't miss out: Keeping your social media skills sharp will keep you in your followers' minds and drive more referral volume.

LOAN OFFICER

Loan Officer / NMLS 123456

O 123.456.7890 / C 123.456.7890

LoanOfficer@houseloan.com / **LoanOfficer.com**



1234 STREET ADDRESS, SUITE 123 / CITY, STATE 12345 / BRANCH NMLS 12345

For educational purposes only. Please contact your qualified professional for specific guidance. Equal Housing Opportunity.

SOURCES: •

1. "Social Media Fact Sheet." Pew Research Center, 2021.
2. "Sprout Social Index: Above and Beyond." Sprout Social, 2020.
3. "How the Facebook Algorithm Works in 2021 and How to Make it Work for You." Hootsuite, 2021.
4. "How does News Feed predict what you want to see?" Tech@Facebook, 2021.
5. "[Facebook Video Study] What 3,977,410 Video Posts Tell Us About Facebook Video Strategy In 2021." Social Insider, 2021.
6. "Video marketing statistics: The state of video marketing in 2021." Biteable, 2021.
7. "The 4 Go-To Social Media Video Platforms & How to Engage Their Audiences [New Data]." HubSpot, 2021.
8. "20 Facebook stats to guide your 2021 Facebook strategy." Sprout Social, 2021.
9. Medina, John. *Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*. Nota, 2014.
10. "2020 Year in Review and Top Pop Culture Moments." Facebook, 2020.
11. "Tell your story with immersive ads that meet people where they are." Facebook, 2021.
12. "The best times to post on social media in 2021." Sprout Social, 2021.
13. "2021 Member Profile." National Association of REALTORS®.
14. "2021 Home Buyers and Sellers Generational Trends Report." National Association of REALTORS®.

Sources deemed reliable but not guaranteed.