The digital tools two top producers trust

As real estate professionals in the ultra-competitive Austin, Texas market, we know a strong online presence is critical today. But no matter how ubiquitous digital solutions become, we can never forget that this is a relationship-based industry. Being able to focus on digital trends while maintaining a personal touch is key to building long-lasting client relationships. Here are some of the common questions that crop up for REALTORS® looking to take their digital solutions to the next level without losing track of what's really important.

How do you streamline your own processes using digital tools?

Kuper Sotheby's International Realty

Shay Millheiser: To be a top REALTOR® today, you need to maximize your time, and it's impossible to do that without utilizing as many tech solutions as possible. In our market, technology

is essential because it’s competitive.

The quickest way to maximize those key initial 24 hours on the market is to blast out to all your outlets immediately. Through our partnership with email marketing platform Rezora, we can have an entire marketing plan ordered in 10 minutes in a cost-effective way.

Also, in a really practical sense, our transactions can have hundreds of pages of documents and revisions and building plans, and these are now only one click away, no matter where I am in person. Here, technology plays a role by simplifying the process while also opening up as many doors as possible.

Kim Burke: We have a proprietary digital presentation tool that is quick, easy, and efficient, and allows us to give consumers what they’re looking for: instant access to information. Then we establish rapport at the face-to-face appointment.

We also use the Contactually CRM. It records every transactional correspondence throughout the life of that relationship. These digital tools boost efficiency and help to create better work-life balance — which is always a challenge in real estate.

What is your go-to social media tool to engage prospective clients?

SM: Social media is probably where my biggest reach comes from; about a third of my clients ultimately come from Instagram. I use it as a tool to educate my followers about real estate. It creates trust, which makes it second nature for them to choose to work with me. I personally don’t believe in asking for business until I’ve provided value to that client and a lot of these social media tools allow me to do that.

KB: Instagram is my 2019 focus because it’s instant, it’s enticing, and it’s quick. People want to see a photo with caption information, and they can go right to a property link from the post.

I’ve found that a mix of personal and professional works best. If you constantly publish about real estate, it doesn’t keep people engaged. And then Facebook allows you to narrow and niche your advertising right down so that you’re sending out effective marketing. I have a personal page and I have a professional page, and I invite every client to both. Facebook is really good at keeping your name in front of people — I’ve had neighbors that I’ve lived around for 10 years and I still have to remind them, “Hey, don’t forget I’m in real estate.”

How do you ensure you’re being effective with your digital content?

Kuper Sotheby’s International Realty

KB: I’ve had enough of the goofy recipes! I get spammed all day and never want clients to feel overwhelmed. Sit down and ask yourself, “What would you want to receive?” You also have to keep messaging short and sweet so people don’t get bored, and target your content to the desired demographic. And be systematic about scheduling time for your social media marketing. Sit down for a set amount of time every week, post something on Instagram or share an interesting article on Facebook. Engage people!

SM: It’s easy to overwhelm your audience, and a lot of this outreach can also feel very impersonal. It’s so important for us to give our clients that human experience and personal touch to make them feel taken care of.

Also, you need to know your clients. I’ve worked with people in their 70s and 80s who are so excited about using technology, while others don’t even want to use DocuSign. You have to be

open-minded and willing to adjust.

When do you bring a digital interaction into the real world?

KB: Real estate is, first and foremost, a relationship-based industry. So yes, you're going to have the enticement of certain digital platforms, but, after any type of virtual introduction, you have to go back to the face-to-face interaction. It's not about the house, it's about the relationship. The pitfall is doing everything via email and social media instead of also engaging personally with clients. A phone call or note to say, "I'm thinking about you; do you want to get coffee?" takes minimal time but really makes a difference to clients.

SM: I try to make meaningful contact with each client as often as possible. Sometimes I'll send a gift card that says, "Closing is next week and you're probably not going to have time to cook dinner, so here's a Whole Foods card to get you through." It's important for them to know I care about the relationship enough to invest the time in it.

Kim Burke

Kim Burke is dedicated to providing the highest level of concierge service with the goal of creating a lifetime customer care relationship. She makes every transaction a positive experience for all parties involved by providing collaborative negotiating techniques, high integrity, and the utmost professionalism. Her areas of expertise include West Austin, Westlake Hills, Downtown/Central Austin, Dripping Springs, Hays County, luxury estates, resort properties, and high-rise/loft living.

Shay Millheiser

With an expert eye for design and an impeccable ability to redesign fixer-uppers into stunning, easily sellable properties, Shay Millheiser is recognized as a real estate leader. She has managed the real estate process from the purchase, construction, rebuild and sale of over 100 residential properties. Her dedication to her craft has won her acclaim by leading real estate professionals and her renovation and remodeling work has been featured on HGTV. Shay is a Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist, as well as a member of the Austin Board of Realtors Housing Issues and Growth & Development Policy Teams.

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