

A Deluxe Guide to Online Marketing and Promotion for the Real Estate Industry

Learn how to:

Recognize the power of online marketing

Establish an online identity

Atttract clients through search engines and
online listings

Leverage your client base to win referrals using
social media and email marketing



REAL

Recognize the power
of **online marketing**

Distinguishing yourself in a crowded real estate market

Great location. Priced to sell. Perfect starter home. You know how to sell real estate or attract tenants. But how well do you market your business to potential clients?

According to the National Association of Realtors, there were more than 5 million new and existing homes sold in 2015. At the same time, there were 2 million licensed agents. If you average it out, that's just over two homes for sale for each licensed agent.

Property management is similarly competitive. Managers of office, retail, and multifamily properties have to develop and nurture a unique brand to attract and maintain clients.

To increase your chances of sustaining a profitable business, you must **constantly distinguish yourself from the crowd of professionals in your industry**. You have to attract new clients in the market for a new home or property and maintain top-of-mind presence to generate referrals and repeat business.

Fortunately, today's marketing tools provide a more economical, targeted approach than the mass media strategies of the past. You can efficiently reach people who are in the market to buy, sell, or lease. Once you've won them over, you can consistently engage clients at a fraction of the cost of traditional advertising outlets.

A 3-step approach to online marketing

This guide offers a three-step approach to marketing your real estate business online. Use it to build and maintain your:

- **Online Identity** - through the creation of a logo and website.
- **Online Presence** - through search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising and online directory listings.
- **Online Personality** - through consistent customer engagement via social media and email.

If you've already completed one or more steps, review those efforts. Have you received an adequate return on investment?

If you have not employed these tactics or if previous efforts have lacked the curb appeal needed to attract new business, use this guide to get your marketing efforts on track.

5 questions to begin your online marketing

1. Do you have a **website**?
2. Does it have a look and feel that **resonates** with clients?
3. Do you engage on **social media**?
4. Do you **show up on Google** when people search for a real estate professional? On the first page?
5. Do you **email** clients to stay in contact?





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online identity



Build brand equity with a professionally designed logo

How often have you tried to sell a property that looks fantastic on the inside but needs exterior work? It's tough to get buyers past that poor first impression.

The same principle applies to your firm's brand. Potential clients may judge your business before they ever meet you based on your external branding; sometimes in as little as **five seconds**. It's important, therefore, to make a visually appealing first impression.

The branding or rebranding process often begins with a custom logo.

A logo is a foundational way to pique a prospective client's interest. It can help them identify and trust you and set you apart from competitors. It can communicate that you're reliable, reputable and able to help them with what they need.

A memorable logo will reinforce your brand image every time customers see it online or around town. It will connect your marketing efforts.

5 requirements for a powerful real estate logo

1. **Work with experts** who specialize in logos. A dull logo will hurt your brand. A complex one will limit its use.
2. Understand the **importance of colors**. The right color scheme can position your business in a positive light and reinforce its core values.
3. **Envision it** on your signage, property listings, website, and other marketing materials. How will it look on different backgrounds?
4. Consider how to make your logo **distinguishable** from the dozens of other real estate firms. Study your competitors and try different typefaces and graphics than what they use for their logos.
5. Make sure your designer creates and delivers it in **multiple file formats** (.JPG, .PNG, .EPS, .tiff, etc). This enables you to use it on different mediums.





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Establish an
online identity

70% of buyers and **75%** of sellers found their real estate agent on the Internet.

Maximize your online identity with a professional website

It's no secret the Internet is where most buyers and renters begin their search for the right home or commercial property. It's where sellers conduct market research to determine how to get the best price for their properties. It's where both look for the right agent to represent them.

Without a website, potential clients will struggle to find you. If you have a poorly constructed website, they may look elsewhere.

In addition to including your firm's current property listings, keep in mind the following as you build your site:

Your **homepage** is the most important real estate on your website. Make sure it contains all pertinent business information, including an introduction of yourself, contact information, and anything you may specialize in.

Include a **bio page** that communicates your credentials, your commitment to your clients and your personality.

Incorporate **video**. According to Google, nearly half of Internet users look for videos related to a product or service. Web pages with video are more likely to rank on the first page of Google search. They encourage visitors to remain on your website longer, which improves your SEO. In addition to producing videos of your properties, you could also do video blogs to share your expertise of the local market and home buying and selling process.

69% of homebuyers begin their research with a local keyword phrase. Include your local market frequently on your website with phrases like "homes in [CITY, STATE]" and "[CITY, STATE] real estate agent."

89% of new homebuyers use a mobile device during the buying process. Furthermore, mobile traffic now accounts for 30% of the total traffic to real estate websites. Therefore, your website must be readable and navigable on tablets and smartphones.

Consider writing a **regular blog** - posted on your website - that covers current events and trends in real estate, which will help you gain credibility. Also include resources that help potential clients, such as information on financing, neighborhood maps, and school district information.

64.5%

Of Internet users click on the first three results in a search engine listing.

How clients find you online

You've established your real estate firm's online identity. But people still have to find you online. This can be accomplished through:

- **Search engine optimization (SEO)**
- **Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising**
- **Online directory listings**

How SEO can help potential clients discover your real estate business online

Search engines like Google and Bing exist to provide useful, relevant information based on keywords. They organize internet content so the most suitable information appears at the top of searches.

Search engines determine a site's suitability using several ranking criteria, which include:

- The **content** on your website
- **Links** to and from your site
- **Social media** activity
- **Reviews** on third-party sites and directories

The higher your SEO score, the higher your internet properties will appear in search engine results for certain keyword phrases. And the higher you appear in rankings, the greater the potential a customer will find you online.

How to improve your SEO rankings

Improving your SEO score means upgrading your internet properties based on the ranking factors above. It is an organic process that may take six months or longer to see results.

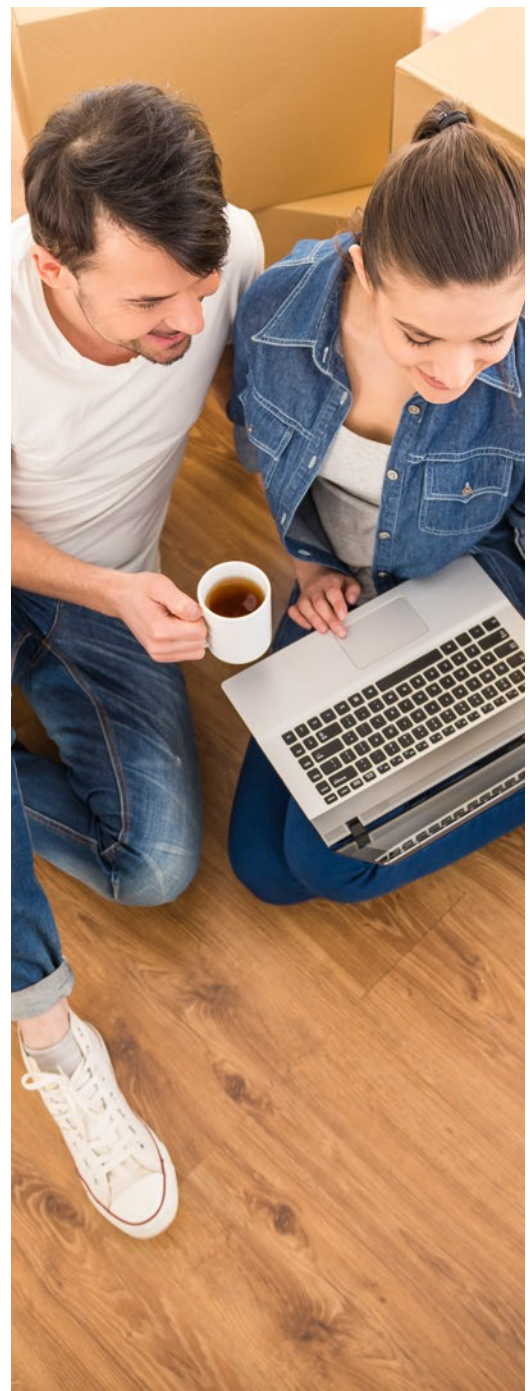
You must continually improve your ranking factors and be consistent. Plus, search engines often change or add ranking factors to stay current with search trends.

The time and knowledge needed to improve SEO ranking typically requires professional assistance. This is a worthwhile investment, as it leaves you more time to serve your clients while increasing your online visibility.



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The difference between SEO and PPC

The goal of search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click (PPC) advertising is to rank at or near the top of search engine rankings. What differentiates them is how your company achieves and maintains a high ranking.

SEO and PPC target separate sections on search engines. SEO applies to organic listings while PPC focuses on sponsored links.

Both have advantages and disadvantages.

PPC can provide more immediate results in terms of rankings and traffic. But it requires you to pay for each visitor.

SEO enables you to receive free and unlimited traffic after obtaining a high search engine ranking. But because it's an organic process, it will likely take several months before you notice increased web traffic.

One popular strategy is to invest in PPC ads while concurrently working to improve your SEO rankings. That way, your real estate company generates immediate traffic until your organic search rankings are high enough to attract the attention of would-be clients.

The Basics of PPC

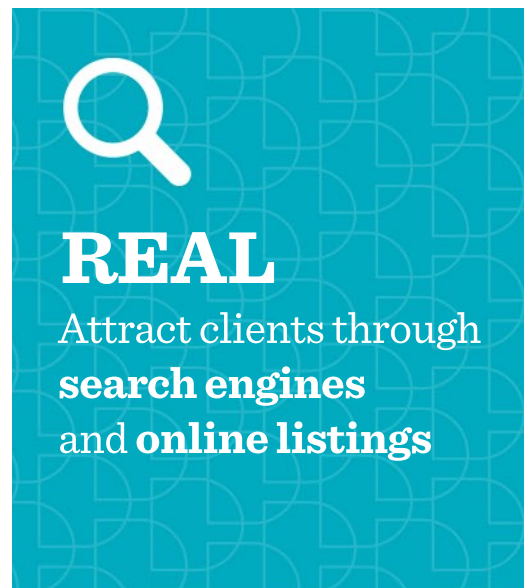
For immediate and measurable search engine results, you can invest in PPC advertising. PPC enables you to pay search engines for top placements.

This strategy:

- Typically provides more **immediate, measurable** results than SEO.
- Allows you to **target your messages** to specific audiences (i.e. people who are in the market for buying or selling a home).
- Requires payment only **when a user clicks** your ad link.
- Enables you to **measure campaign effectiveness** better than other forms of advertising.

5 benefits of investing in PPC advertising

- Businesses average **\$2 in revenue** for every \$1 spent on AdWords
- You can **target ads** based on geography and other search factors
- Analytics help you determine the **effectiveness of ads** and where to make any necessary adjustments
- You only pay when a user **clicks** on the ad link
- Traffic can occur **within days** of launching a PPC campaign



Make your real estate business more visible online with directory listings

While you may already promote your property listings on third-party websites like realtor.com, Zillow and Trulia, you also need to promote your business in as many places on the Internet as possible.

The more ways potential clients can find you online, the better. You can increase your online presence by being listed in online directories and third-party websites.

Directory sites commonly used by real estate professionals include:

- **Yelp**
- **Google My Business**
- **Bing Places for Business**
- **Yellow Pages**
- **Yahoo Local**
- **Foursquare**
- **Facebook for Business**

To maximize your online directory listings:

Claim them: Many directory listings have been created by somebody other than the business being listed. This often results in wrong information, including wrong addresses, phone numbers, and even business names.

Directories typically provide instructions on how to claim a listing. Once claimed:

- You **control** what info and images the listing displays.
- No **unauthorized people** can update your listing.
- You can ensure **accuracy and content** that reflects your brand.

2. Verify them. Make sure all online listings have identical name, address and phone number. Consistency improves your search engine optimization (SEO) and makes it easier for potential clients to find you online.

All of your directory listings should include the following information:

- **Business Name**
- **Address** (City, State, Zip)
- **Main Phone Number**
- **Website**
- **Business Hours**
- **Description** – A description of your business, minimum 250 characters.
- **Business Category**
- **Logo and pictures**

3. Personalize them. Include events like open houses. Also include photos, as directory listings with photos achieve, on average, 248% more clicks than those without photos.



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Leverage your client base to win referrals using **social media** and **email marketing**

Engage clients through social media and email marketing

According to the National Association of Realtors, **42%** of sellers chose their representative agent based on a referral from a friend or relative. Another **24%** used an agent they previously employed to buy or sell a home.

*That means **2/3** of your potential business is coming directly or indirectly from your previous clients.*

To get those referrals and repeat clients you have to stay consistently engaged and do so a long period. After all, it may be several years before the client you helped today is ready for your services again. When that time comes, you want to be remembered.

With a minimal investment, you can stay engaged with clients using the power of social media and the efficiency of email marketing. What's more, you can use these channels to turn those fans into ambassadors who spread the word to their friends, co-workers, and social media acquaintances.

Connect with customers through managed email marketing campaigns

Email campaigns can serve a variety of marketing purposes. Real estate agents can use them to send regular newsletters with information on local events and trends, real estate market information, tips on how to increase a property's value and other valuable information. You can also use email to:

- Send **congratulatory messages** to new homeowners and on the anniversary of their closing
- **Promote** listings
- Encourage clients to **submit reviews** on third-party sites like Yelp or to like your Facebook page

Maximize your email marketing by:

- Designing emails that are **mobile friendly**. More than half of all email is opened on mobile devices. **70%** of people delete emails they can't easily read on their phones and tablets.
- Using an email template that **matches your website** and other online properties. Always include your logo on messages.
- Posting **email content** to your social media accounts.
- Encouraging recipients to **forward emails** and engage on social media.



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Leverage your client base to win referrals using **social media** and **email marketing**

74%

Of home sellers use social media to find a real estate agent.

Reach the masses with a robust social media strategy

Social media gives your clients a platform to tell hundreds, even thousands, of their friends about you – instantly.

At the same time, these outlets enable you to take part in the conversation. Use social media to engage with customers. Showcase your personality. Build and reinforce your brand. You can post regular content that showcases your:

Expertise. Write and post about the latest trends, tips for buyers and sellers, and how to navigate the process of obtaining financing.

Market. Entice buyers to check out your local neighborhoods by posting about events, amenities, school district information, and the business climate.

Care and commitment to clients. Many agents use social media to congratulate new homeowners on the day they close. You can use the buyers' initials instead of full names to protect their privacy, and it shows other prospective clients that you genuinely care and follow up.

Maximize your social media marketing by:

- Updating your content **regularly**. A social media page lacking fresh content suggests you're no longer in business.
- **Integrating** your content with your website, email marketing, print collateral, etc.
- Enlisting professional **social media consultants**. Specialists can design pages that grab your clients' and prospects' attention. They can also provide regular, relevant content.
- Keeping track of **activity**. Analyze the number of likes, visits, reach and overall engagement with your page. Look for trends and react accordingly.

Boost your Facebook presence with advertising

Facebook contains a massive volume of content. Real estate professionals can break through the clutter by boosting their posts with advertising.

Facebook ads provide another outlet to promote your property listings. They provide 10 to 100 times more exposure than page posting alone. They are cost efficient as well: **You can purchase Facebook ads for as little as \$1 a day.**



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Additional Resources

Resources

In addition to this guide, the Deluxe marketing team has a number of guides and articles available on its Small Business Resource Center:

[The Deluxe Guide to Logo Design](#)

[How to Get Your Business on Facebook](#)

[A Guide to Advertising on Facebook](#)

[40 Brilliant-but-Easy Ways to Build Your Email List](#)

[How to Get Started with Google Adwords](#)

Call Deluxe today

Deluxe digital marketing experts are ready to help you establish your online identity, attract clients and turn those clients into fans and ambassadors. We offer multiple packages to meet a variety of needs and to fit within nearly any budget.

Discover how [Deluxe's professional logo designers](#) can create a new brand for your real estate firm.

Deluxe has [built thousands of websites](#) and can create one to meet the specific needs of your company.

Let Deluxe build [a search engine marketing plan](#) to reach homebuyers and sellers in your area.

Enlist the professionals at Deluxe to help you establish or maximize your [social media presence.](#)

The [Deluxe Pro+ Email Marketing Package](#) includes professionally designed emails, two monthly email campaigns, and 8 Facebook posts per month.