

# HOW TO MARKET REAL ESTATE ONLINE

PDF HANDBOOK

## Personas

The most important thing that defines your brand are the users. As highlighted above, you need to have a good picture of who you are to answer the right questions.

A persona is a fictional person we create based on characteristics shared by users. You can now design your brand and market your services for a specific somebody not a generic everybody. Don't assume you know your users.



You can spend a fortune with research companies to generate these. They'll

Your website isn't always the start of someone's search, but it's more often the destination. Boards, business cards, Facebook posts, Google Ads etc will, in most cases, direct users to your website. Once there, are they getting what they need?



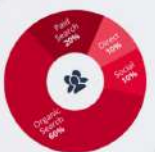
## Attracting users

Whether or not it is to generate leads, you should have now defined the purpose of your website. As with everything you do, refer back to your Brand Strategy. Specifically the question: "What is the journey that we want our users to take with us?". The answer to this question will guide the content which attracts users to your website. We cover content strategies and running killer campaigns across channels in future material. This course will give you a solid foundation for generating not only content that is relevant to your strategy, but that users are looking for and will find valuable.

**PRO MOVE** - Generating content that converts users to leads needs to be planned out and executed across multiple channels (sometimes including traditional) to reach the greatest audience. Make sure you plan your campaign well in advance with a studio experienced at tying all the pieces together.

## Measuring Performance

As soon as your website is up, you'll want to start tracking its performance of any strategies you're employing to send visitors. Important metrics to measure shortly after launching your website



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## A Strong Foundation

In the age of the internet, there are 100s of agencies competing for your market. When a potential user (tenant, buyer, seller, etc.) comes across your company online, or in the “real” world, they automatically compare it to, not only other real estate businesses, but also brands from other industries. It’s the nature of humanity’s consumer evolution and, because of our increased exposure to advertising, we’re becoming better at recognising good branding from bad. There is a lot of noise out there ... and you have to compete with it.

Two of the biggest differentiators any business have are: their brand and their service (both client facing and internal). And both can be designed.

This sounds like a daunting task, but it doesn’t need to be. If you follow some simple rules and get the basics right early on, your brand can be a shining light in the dark. And remember, some companies have beautiful brands that are being executed well, but the vast majority are falling short. So, if you’re reading this you’re already one step ahead.

**6 major tech companies have doubled their design hiring goals in the last half decade**

[Read article](#)

### Essential Definitions

#### Logo

The symbol and/or wordmark used to visually identify your company.

#### Corporate Identity

A collection of the visual (and even audio) elements that your users come into contact with. It’s made up of your logo, boards, business cards, stationery, office signage, advertising, etc. It’s critical that your corporate identity supports your brand.

#### Brand

Your brand is not your logo or even your corporate identity. It’s much more. It’s the relationship you have with your clients/the connection/the promise. Sound like a lot of hippie nonsense? It’s helped brands like Apple sell expensive products to millions of devoted fans.



## Brand strategy - your foundation

So where do you start? Well, if you're a startup agency, or even an existing brand that needs a rethink, that's easy. With a question.

What is the journey that we want our users to take with us?

The start of an answer to this question might be: "We want sellers to feel like we're family, that they can trust us and that we'll hold their hand through the process". Answer this question honestly, build on and then refine it and you'll have the foundation of your brand.

**PRO MOVE** - Dig deeper. Answer the questions below to build on the journey and give more context to help the design team you're partnering with. We say "partnering" because this is a collaborative process. Branding your business can't be left to designers. Business owners need to be involved.

- Who are our users? Speak to them, find out what they want. (See personas)
- What are the problems they face?
- How can our company help them?
- What value (not feature) do we promise to deliver?
- What kind of personality does our company have?
- Who are our competitors?
- How are we different from our competitors?

The most important thing here is the process. By sitting down, contemplating, discussing and writing down the answers to these questions, you'll unravel the brand essence of your company.

## Personas

The most important thing that defines your brand are the users. As highlighted above, you need to have a good picture of who they are to answer the right questions.

A persona is a fictional person we create based on characteristics shared by users. You can now design your brand and market your services for a specific somebody - not a generic everybody. Don't assume you know your users.



You can spend a fortune with research companies to generate these. They'll interview your users and use a number of techniques to analyse the data and build personas. You can, however, do these in-house and still get a lot of value out of them. There are some great tools to help you through the process. Try [www.hubspot.com/make-my-persona](http://www.hubspot.com/make-my-persona)

You can create a number of personas (limit to 5 or less) to cover different groups of users, but remember to niche them to your geographic areas. For example, the following personas could be created for a sales agency in Cape Town's Atlantic Seaboard:

- Young professional buyers between 25-35yrs;
- Serious investors looking to build a portfolio of rental apartments;
- Overseas buyers looking for a holiday home;
- and so on.

If you have access to demographics, use them. If you can send out a questionnaire to your users, do it. Or, at a minimum, just pool the knowledge of the people in your company.

Personas can also be used in your sales and marketing funnel which we'll cover later in this course. Bonus!

The image shows a digital persona card for 'Tenant Tony'. It is a vertical layout with various sections containing data points. The sections include:

- Name:** Tenant Tony
- Age:** 25 to 34 years
- Education:** Some college, no degree
- Social networks:** Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube
- Industry:** Sales
- Organisation size:** 11 to 50 employees
- Preferred method of communication:** Email, Face-to-face, Phone
- Job responsibilities:** Travel to meet existing/potential clients, Understand the company and products, Meet strict sales targets, Understand technology, Prepare reports, Entertain clients
- Reports to:** Sales director
- Goals and objectives:** Finding and working leads
- Gain information by:** Online courses and conferences
- Relationship:** Serious relationship with girlfriend
- Property goals:** Find a home that is close to work and central enough to make travel to clients easy, Low maintenance lock up and go, Saving up for a deposit to purchase a home, Need security
- Fears:** Only finishing paying off my student loan, The sluggish economy, Finding a home to buy that I'll be happy with for at least 5 years, Will my girlfriend like it, Will it be big enough if we get married and start a family

## Takeaway

Answer the right questions. Especially: "What is the journey that we want our users to take with us?". Build personas of your users to ensure you're saying the right things to your actual users.

You now have a basic brand that you can use to brief your design team with and start building your corporate identity and an online marketing strategy.

## Your Logo

If you're a startup agency, getting your logo designed is an exciting time. It's the first time that you start to see the visual representation of your brand. It's also the most important element of your corporate identity as it will be used in all visual marketing.

If you already have an established brand, changing your logo can be a much more difficult task, but if dealt with delicately, even the biggest brands can and do change their logos. This kind of change would normally be preceded by a change in brand strategy, although sometimes a logo just needs refreshing.

**Although your logo is important, it doesn't define you. Your brand does. Your service does. Don't force your designer to make your logo too big on your website or any other marketing. Your logo should be noticed without shouting. Your content is much more important to users!**

### Essential Definitions



#### Symbol

Some companies can be recognised simply by a symbol. If your brand leans towards needing a symbol, then we recommend using it in conjunction with a wordmark at least until you become the next NIKE.



#### Wordmark

A wordmark is your company name spelt out in a custom or chosen font. Most companies will use this on it's own or in conjunction with a symbol.



#### Lettermark

Similar to a wordmark except using the initials of a company name. Sometimes this is necessary for long names. "Bavarian Motor Works" works better as BMW.

## Your Name

If you've gone through the process of developing a brand strategy, you should already know what your company is called. If not, you'll need to decide before design can begin. Although a studio can come up with this, it's a time-consuming process that can cost a lot of extra money. It's also very personal and needs to be embraced by business owners. We recommend choosing your name in-house. Try to avoid cliches or names that sound like other companies.

## Design Brief

Before hiring a design studio, look at their portfolio. Most have a "style". Be careful about asking them to produce something that falls way out of the look they're known for.

A lot of useful context for the designer will have already come from your brand strategy (be sure to pass this on), but there are still some important decisions to make specifically around the logo. Answer the following questions to help your designer give you the best designs.

- What logos do companies that align with our brand have? Look for similarities in style. For example, purely online agencies pushing the boundaries of technology probably wouldn't have more traditional ornate logos.
- Do we have a preference in terms of construction? For example, you may want a symbol if your company name lends itself towards having one or just a wordmark if it's your family name.
- What colours represent our brand? Although your designer should give you options during the process, you may not want the same colours as competing agencies in your areas.
- Do we want a stamp version of the logo? You may want to use a flat, single-colour version of your logo in certain applications.

You may be wary of giving your designer too much and squashing their creativity. Trust us, the more detailed the brief, the better for all parties. Answer the questions above and give as much additional context as possible without telling the designer what to do.

**PRO MOVE** - Trust your design team and try to take personal feelings out of the equation. You must be happy with the result and it must represent your company, but remember your brand is being designed for your users, not you.

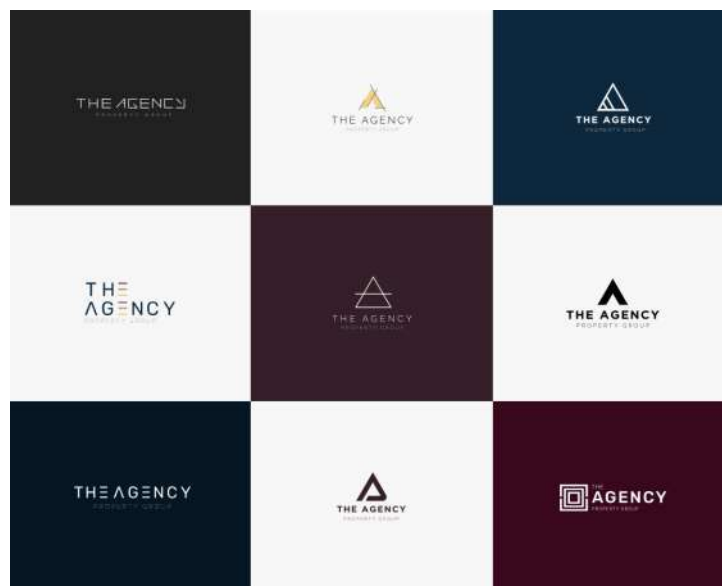
## The Process

All studios work in different ways. The following is the process that Prop Data will go through and what you can probably expect from most designers:

- 1 Receive a design brief.
- 2 Supply a mood board to the client for comment. This is a selection of graphics, photographs, fonts, materials, etc. and form a visual representation of the brief and brand. Your designers will use it for inspiration when designing the actual logo.



- 3 Supply logo variations. At this stage it's important to narrow down a construction from the options presented.



4

Refine and settle on a colour scheme. If possible, ensure you select Pantone colours from a physical book as this will help with consistency across all your printed material.



5

Design variations for use vertically, horizontally, in social media, etc.



You're now ready to start looking at the other visual elements of your corporate identity.

Personas can also be used in your sales and marketing funnel which we'll cover later in this course. Bonus!

### Slogan

"What about a slogan?" I hear you say. A slogan is not your logo, although they are often seen in close vicinity. If you have a slogan, we suggest using it in your marketing where applicable, but not tied to your logo.

### Takeaway

Choose a design studio that, as much as possible, fits the style your brand represents. Give a detailed brief. Enjoy the process! Trust the instincts of your designer. Remember, you're designing for your users, not yourself.

## Branding Identity

As defined in “A Strong Foundation”, your brand identity is a collection of the visual (and even audio) elements that your users come into contact with. It’s made up of your logo, boards, business cards, stationery, office signage, advertising, etc.

Once you’ve defined your brand and had a logo designed, you can start working on your brand identity. Sometimes this is done at the same time as a logo as the two work together in application.

**“Your brand is the single most important investment you can make in your business”.**

Steve Forbes, Editor in Chief of Forbes Magazine

As a residential agency, you’ll need the following essential elements designed:

- Digital
- Property boards
- Business cards
- Stationery
- Office signage

### Digital

Most users will experience your brand through your website and other online marketing channels at some point and a real estate business can be run almost entirely through the digital space. We cover your website and social media in detail in future chapters.

### Property Boards





We strongly believe that your property boards should be used as a branding exercise. Nothing is more powerful than potential users seeing eye-catching boards all over the neighbourhoods that they live in. Don't try to cram too much onto a board, you'll lose impact and users don't have a lot of time while driving past. One contact number is enough.

## Business Cards



Opinion is split on the usefulness of business cards in the digital age. It's so easy for a user to get your contact details through LinkedIn or your website. Nevertheless, we still like the idea of handing out a physical reminder of meeting someone. It's also, in many cases, the first opportunity to show off your brand identity. Unlike your boards, users will have time to consider your business cards. We still recommend keeping this clean and simple though. A logo on one side and basic contact details on the other is perfect. Don't start listing services!

## Stationery



Letterheads, envelopes, compliment slips, etc. are also used less and less these days. At a minimum, you should have a letterhead designed though. If you have the budget, get these professionally printed as most office printers will insert a margin around your document, which will limit what your designer is able to accomplish. The colours are also inconsistent through office printers. Always ensure you receive a digital version that works in Microsoft Word or an equivalent word processor to use when generating digital documents.

## Office Signage

Your shopfront offers users a glimpse into the type of service users can expect before they've even met an agent. There are 100s of shops you've never entered just because of the feeling you had passing it. Make sure you have "curb appeal" by keeping windows clean and paint fresh. A couple of well-maintained planters, an a-frame board with a benefit statement or any number of ways to make your entrance stand out won't go unnoticed. When it comes to signage, you want your brand to be easily noticed, without being garish. A few well-placed logos within the style of your brand identity will do the trick. If you're showcasing properties in your windows, ensure they are well designed with large photos and easy to read details.

**PRO MOVE** - Executing your brand across so many areas can be a time-consuming and costly exercise, but you don't have to do everything at once. Work with an experienced design studio, set a budget and schedule the rollout so that you have the end goal in sight. Eventually you'll have a uniform brand identity that excites your team and attracts users.

## Don't forget...

Your brand identity is all the ways users come into contact with your brand, so it's also worth considering having the following designed to ensure consistency:

### 1

#### Office Decor

You'll want to ensure the decor of your offices reflects your brand. You can pay excellent office fit out professionals to do this for you, but if you don't have the budget, simply follow the same advice you'd give a client when showing a house.

- Keep it neutral - White and subtle variations will keep things modern and clean. Use colours from your corporate identity and use them sparingly. An accent wall is a great way to bring in a colour.
- Artwork - Art is very subjective. Just because you like Game of Thrones fan art, doesn't mean your users do. Rather commission some posters of brand messaging or photographs of the areas you operate in and have them professionally framed and mounted.
- Keep it clean - Your space is a direct reflection of the type of business you run. If your environment is cluttered and/or dirty, users will think that you'll provide a disorganised experience.

2

**Dress Code or Uniforms**

This really depends on the type of agency you are. Designed apparel that includes your branding will work for some brands while a defined dress code (even if relaxed) will work for others. Either way, it's important to set expectations for staff as they are representing your brand. Just like your office design, the way you dress will give a user an immediate impression of the type of service to expect.

3

**Car Branding**

Not an essential element of your identity, but an opportunity to create brand awareness as you drive around the areas in which you operate. We suggest implementing this subtly. No one likes to be shouted at, especially on the road.

4

**Other Opportunities**

There are countless other opportunities to implement your identity. As before, you should consider all the ways clients come into contact with your brand. This includes how users are greeted at your offices or how the phones are answered. Sales packs, presentations, reports, coffee mugs, corporate gifts and the list goes on. Of course not everything should be branded, but anything a client can take away should be.

**Consistency is Key**

Consistency across your brand identity is the most important and challenging aspect to get right. A user might pass a property board, go to your website, get emailed an appointment confirmation and arrive at your office in a single day. If the experience of your brand is not consistent at every point, you will look unprofessional and lazy .

There are more ways than ever before for users to be exposed to your brand. Let's look at a few ideas to help keep things in check.

**Brand Guide**

This is just a digital or physical document that describes your brand identity and can include:

- Logo usage
- Colour scheme references
- Typeface (font) references
- Examples of implementation

The more you have designed the bigger this document will be and it should evolve over time. Even if you're a new agency, this can be a good investment as mistakes can be costly to fix down the line.

## Templates

Templates are a great way to ensure consistency. Get templates made for any repeatable brand identity or marketing material. Examples could be:

- Business cards
- Window displays
- Digital property brochures
- Email signatures
- Mandate presentations

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## Takeaway

Start with the essential identity elements listed above and ensure there is consistency in their implementation. Remember the personas from your brand strategy? You're designing an experience for your users, so keep your personal preferences in the background.

Next, we'll look at an element of your brand identity that demands it's own chapter: your website.

## Your Website as a Marketing Tool

Why do you have a website? It sounds like a silly question, but you're not going to get the most out of your website if your answer is "Because everybody else has one". It's important to define the purpose as the reasons vary depending on your business.

As an example, Airbnb's vision is "creating a world where everyone can belong". Their website delivers a lot of content around experiencing or "living" in a place, not just visiting it. Of course, this strategy and the content based on it are just a means to attract users to a website that is centred around selling short-term rentals and managing the booking from a host and guest perspective.

The purpose of your business, and the vast majority of real estate agencies, is very different. Your website doesn't conclude sales online. You want leads! Whether it's sellers, buyers, tenants or landlords, in the end you want them to enquire about a property or a service you offer.

**Your website isn't always the start of someone's search, but it's most often the destination. Boards, business cards, Facebook posts, Google Ads, etc. will, in most cases, direct users to your website. Once there, are they getting what they need?**



## Attracting Users

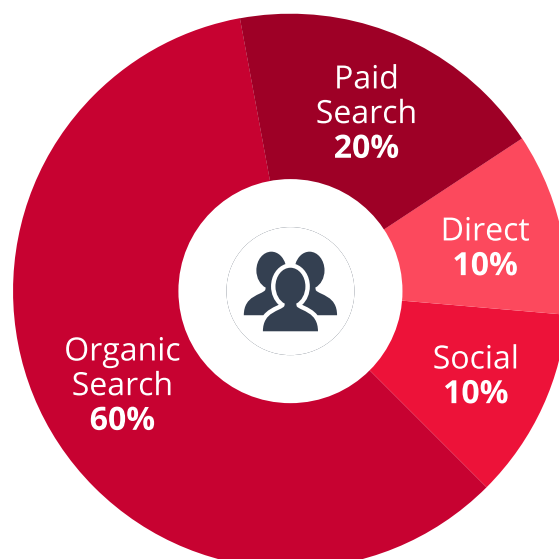
Whether or not it is to generate leads, you should have now defined the purpose of your website. As with everything you do, refer back to your brand strategy, specifically the question: “What is the journey that we want our users to take with us?”. The answers to this question will guide the content which attracts users to your website. We cover content strategies and running killer campaigns across channels in upcoming sections. This part will give you a solid foundation for generating, not only content that is relevant to your strategy, but what users are looking for and will find valuable.

**PRO MOVE** - Generating content that converts users to leads needs to be planned out and executed across multiple channels (sometimes including traditional) to reach the greatest audience. Make sure you plan your campaigns well in advance with a studio experienced at tying all the pieces together.

It's now up to your website (as the destination) to convert that user into a lead. We cover this in detail in the next section.

## Measuring Performance

As soon as your website is up, you'll want to start tracking its performance and the performance of any strategies you're employing to send visitors to it. Some of the more important metrics to measure shortly after launching your website are:



### Unique (or first time) visitors

The number of unique visitors provides a good insight as to how many people you are actually reaching. This gives you an idea as to your current audience and when comparing this metric to previous periods, you'll be able to measure audience growth.







### Source of your traffic

Tracking the source of your traffic will let you know where your visitors are coming from - including any of your marketing campaigns. This is the best way to measure your return on investment over time and where to further invest additional spend.



**Interaction from your visitors  
(pages viewed and actions taken)**

Measuring the interaction of your visitors will provide you with insight as to the effectiveness of your design and usability (what is working and what is not).

Property Leads	148	
Generic Forms	82	
Galleries	34	
Videos	29	
Virtual Tours	12	
Banners	9	

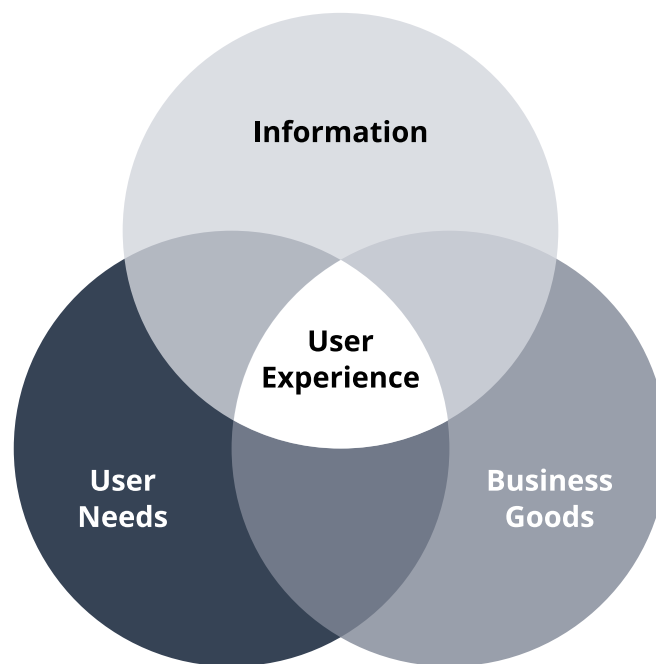
By grouping these metrics together you'll be able to see where your visitors are coming from, what they're doing on your website and make informed decisions about marketing efforts.

**Takeaway**

Your website is the destination of most of your marketing. It's important that all stakeholders and marketing partners understand its purpose and work together to ensure it is effective at (in most cases) generating leads. Ensure you have Google Analytics setup to evaluate performance.

## User Experience

We'd be surprised if you said: "I've never heard the the term user experience". It's also likely you've come across the abbreviated version: "UX". It's become a very popular term in most industries since the 90s. Although user experience has been talked about in terms of any interaction (e.g. designing a playground), it's gained momentum with the growth of digital products and services and become the centre of most design discussions.



**"I invented the term because I thought human interface and usability were too narrow. I wanted to cover all aspects of the person's experience with the system including industrial design graphics, the interface, the physical interaction and the manual. Since then the term has spread widely, so much so that it is starting to lose its meaning."**

Donald Norman

"Human interface", "industrial design graphics", "physical interaction" - huh?

Don't worry, essentially you just need to understand that a user's experience of your website is determined by multiple factors (see next page). Basically how it makes a user feel. The more human, intuitive and effortless, the better the user experience.

Factors that influence user experience:

**Useful:** your content should be original and fulfil a need

**Usable:** site must be easy to use (See “Usability” on the next page)

**Desirable:** images, brand identity and other design elements are used to evoke emotion and appreciation

**Findable:** content needs to be easily navigable

**Accessible:** content needs to be accessible to people with disabilities

**Credible:** users must trust and believe what you tell them

## Designing a user experience

Ticking all the boxes to create an effective and pleasurable experience doesn't just happen. Ensure you work with a company that builds products based on the user-centred design framework. This like the name suggests, puts the user (not business or technology) at the centre of the process. There are many tools available, within user-centred design, that a design studio or software development company can call on, but if executed correctly will all go through the following stages:

### Discovery (Research)

Both you and your designers should be speaking to your users. What are their needs and frustrations? What does their day involve and where does your service fit in? If you've created personas as part of your brand strategy, you're on the way to understanding your users better. This is the foundation of building effective systems and services.

### Design

The design phase is when your designers will map out how your design will work and fit everything together in a user-friendly and intuitive way. They'll actually start sketching, designing and prototyping (building something to test).

### Validation

The validation, or testing phase is when they either prove or invalidate their designs. This phase is typically followed by additional rounds of design and testing to solve the problems they will inevitably find when testing with real users.

This process is extremely broad and as an agency you certainly don't need to know every detail, but having a broad overview can help you work with a studio to create better solutions for your users.

## Usability

This topic from the factors that influence user experience above deserves expanding on.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to usability. Sometimes things that look like they shouldn't work do. There are however guidelines which should be followed like:

- Use a text size and typeface that is legible.
- People scan, they don't read. Keep information in bite sized chunks.
- Make what's clickable obvious.
- Eliminate distractions. Less really is more.
- Follow internet conventions. E.g. a magnifying glass to symbolise search.
- Follow a visual hierarchy. Important things go closer to the top of the page and are more prominent.
- Give clear instructions for required actions.

"You don't need to know everything. As with any field, there's a lot you could learn about usability. But unless you're a usability professional, there's a limit to how much is useful for you to learn".

**Steve Krug, Don't Make Me Think**

This list above can go on and on. The important thing is to use common sense and work with a studio that understands usability. In the end, what works and doesn't work needs to be determined by testing your design on real users (Usability Tests). It will quickly become obvious if something is blocking their progress.

## Takeaway

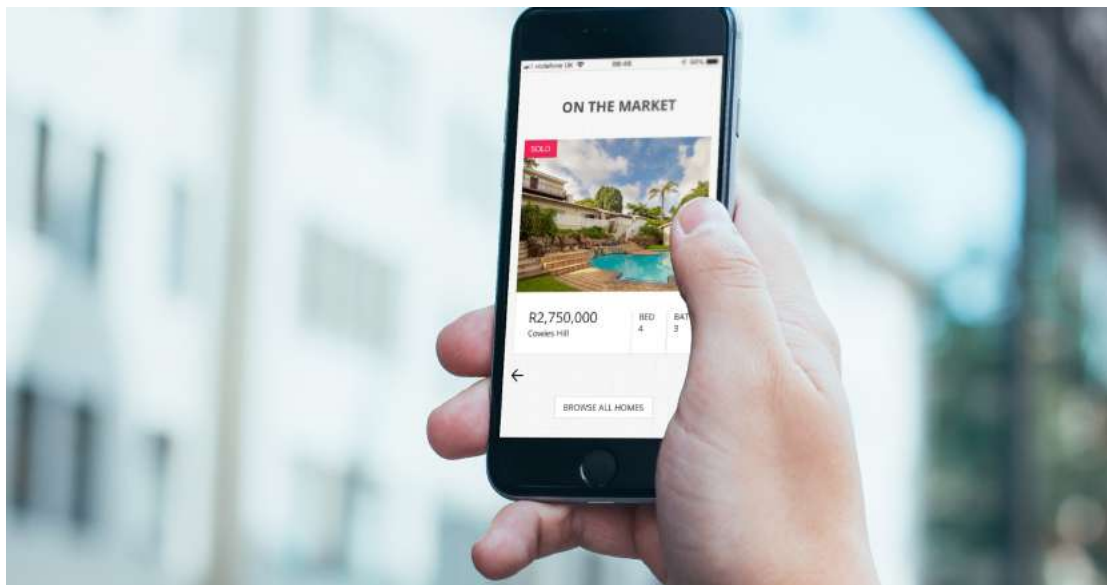
There are many factors that influence a user's experience of your website. One of the most important is usability. Test your website with real users to ensure they're getting what they need from it.

## Mobi

Mobile is still on the rise and continues to shake up the way that real estate operates. With more and more prospective clients turning to their mobile devices to find listings, agents and property-related information - it has become a prerequisite to have your website cater to mobile users.

According to recent statistics, released by Statista, approximately 95% of internet usage in South Africa is made up by mobile.

The numbers don't lie, mobile visitors are clearly the largest growing audience demographic. Which means that real estate websites can no longer ignore a user's mobile experience.



## Different Mobile Solutions

### Mobile websites

Designed specifically for mobile phones, they have a different URL and are separate from the full site. They work optimally on smaller screens, allowing for maximum functionality and convenience.

### Responsive websites

Designed using a development technique that dynamically adapts the layout of the website to the size of the screen. It adapts on a desktop, tablet or mobile using page sizing, flexible images and font sizes.

### Which is better?

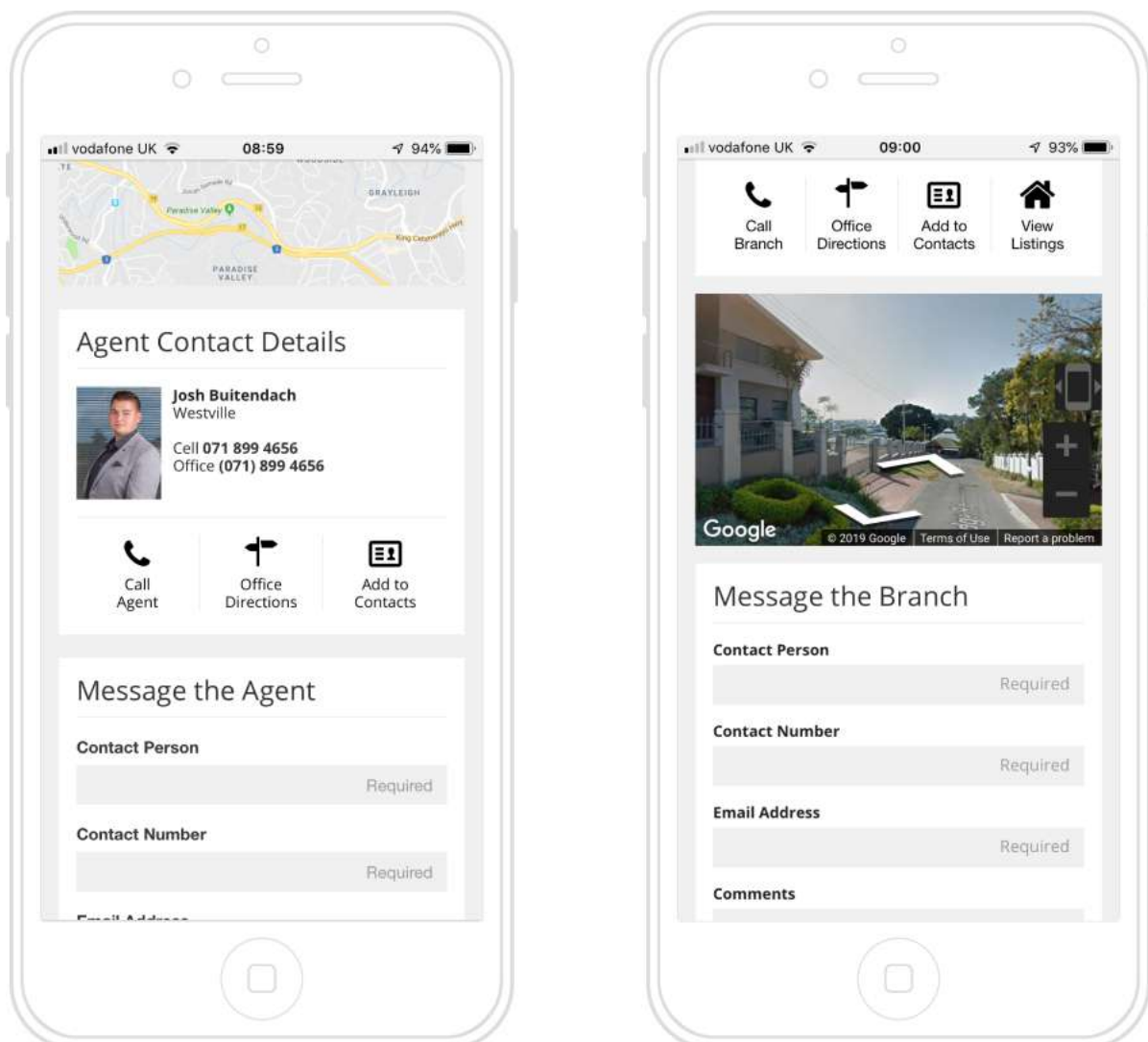
While mobile visitors may not notice an immediate difference between a dedicated mobile version and responsive website, your choice will affect what is possible to design. Website studios may also only develop for one type.

The type of mobile-friendly option you choose to have developed would depend on its intent. There is no definite right or wrong answer, but:

- For a single-purpose website, 'responsive' is generally preferred, as the content would be the same regardless of device. A blog or corporate information website are good examples.
- For a multiple-purpose or more interactive website, a dedicated mobile site is the best way to deliver content uniquely suited to mobile users.

### Mobile Website For Real Estate

Real estate mobile websites should be designed with the experience of sellers, buyers, tenants, landlords and investors in mind. Think about the tasks these users would need to accomplish while driving or walking around a neighbourhood. As these users are not static, they need information based on their current location.





Here are some convenient features of the mobile real estate website:

**Call an Agent**

Instantly go from viewing a listing to calling the agent. Making the interaction between browsing a website and making a call, seamless and much more convenient.

**Add to Contacts**

With a push of a button, prospects can download a virtual business card, with a full set of details.

**Properties Near Me**

Easily locate a list of properties that are in proximity to your current location, helping users find a new home in a suburb they are passing through or already reside in.

**On Show Near Me**

As with the 'properties near me' function, users can search for local on show properties instantly. This allows users to get travelling times, distances and directions to showhouses while visiting showhomes.

**Branch Near Me**

Branches are mapped to help prospective clients quickly find their physical location. This function is the fastest way for a mobile-website visitor to locate and visit their nearest branch.

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**Takeaway**

Mobile is here to stay and as the number of mobile users across the globe rises, it is critical to cater for this group of users. Decide on whether your company needs a responsive or mobile-dedicated website, add convenient features specific to mobile use and you will be on your way to making the most of the mobile age.

## Content for Robots and Humans

When we talk about website content, we're referring to images, copy, video etc. The importance of each of these depends on your service and user's needs. Pinterest, places emphasis on images, YouTube on video, but a real estate website needs to strike a balance between all the content types to offer users a rich experience that describes services and showcases properties. But how do we provide content that search engines love and still engages our users? Keep reading below....

### Essential Definitions

#### Search Engine Optimisation

SEO is a process by which you can enhance your website content to get more organic traffic from the search engine results page. By making certain adjustments, your website becomes more 'attractive' to search engines, increasing the chances of your website being displayed prominently in search results.

#### Search Engine Bots


Search engines want to deliver the highest quality content to their users, which means that it has to be relevant to what that user is looking for at that time. To do this, search engine bots crawl (scan) millions of websites to see if they include content with topics or keywords that match the initial search.

### How does it work?

Search engines have various moving parts, including; a crawler and an index. A crawler (also known as a spider, robot and bot) is a program that visits websites and reads their content in order to create entries into a search engine index.

So let's get cracking with good original content.

## Images



### Why Choose Us to Sell your home?

At Seeff, we believe that your reason for selling your home is "your business", but that selling your home is "our business". The experience we have gained over the past half century has given us the reputation of being seen as the smart move to make when it comes to buying or selling property in South Africa, specifically as we understand that most homeowners are looking to secure the best possible price for in the shortest possible time, when selling their home.

- > More than 1200 Agents who are area specialists
- > Access to our database of over 100 000 unique, active property buyers countrywide
- > Our dominance on the leading property portals as well as our Seeff.com website that attracts over 100 000 unique potential property buyers each month
- > A sophisticated referral system across close to over 200 branches, that provide us with qualified buyers wishing to relocate
- > Our exclusive partnership with Hamptons International provides us with access to a network of over 7000 offices across the UK, Europe, Middle & Far East and the USA - giving us unparalleled access to a unique international audience of potential buyers & sellers.
- > Our exclusive partnership with SAA Voyager, providing us unique access to the SAA Voyager database of over 2 million members, both locally and worldwide

Images obviously add value to a user's experience by making a page more interesting. They also benefit your search engine rankings. Here are some tips to keep in mind regarding images.

### Use Relevant Images

The best images are original ones. If you're talking about your team, don't use generic people in a stock image. If you have to use a stock image for budget (or context) reasons then try to stay away from obviously "stocky" looking images. You can use certain images from resources like Flickr under the Creative Commons licence or from sites like Unsplash. Please remember to credit the photographer though. This doesn't apply to primary images related to your brand - we recommend investing in professional images for these.

### Optimise Images

Ensure your images are optimised through tools like ImageOptim or TinyPNG. This will ensure your website loads quickly, especially for mobile, where data is more of a concern for users.

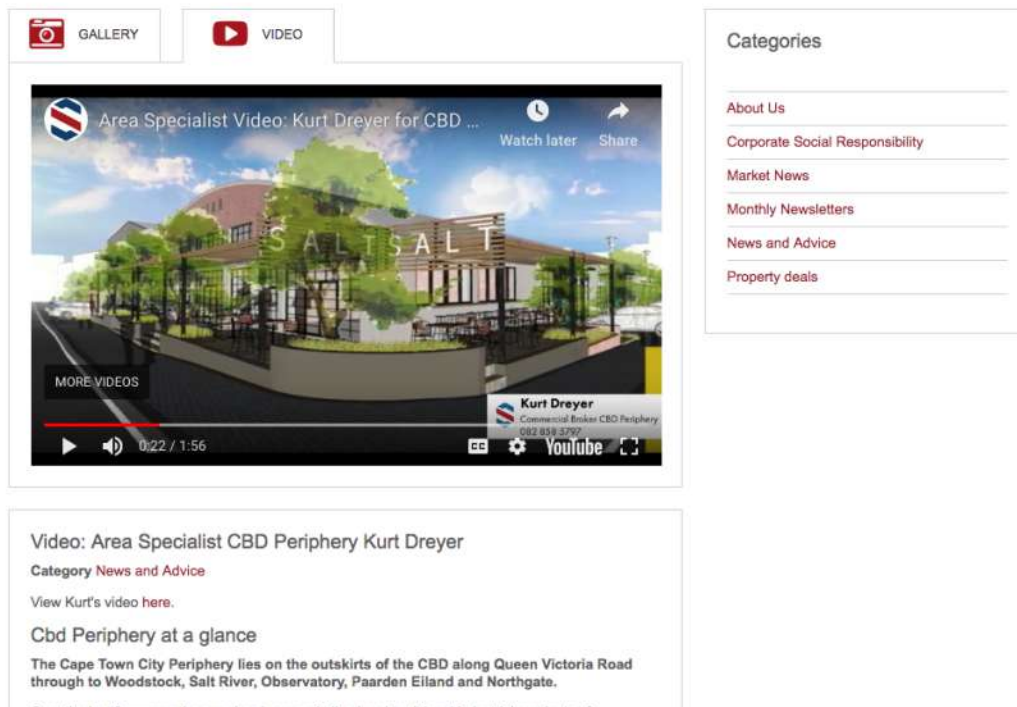
### Naming

Make sure you choose a good file name, ALT text (used by search engines and for users with vision impairments) and a caption if helpful.

### Social Sharing

Images are carried across when pages are shared to social platforms. Ensure the right image is taken by setting an OpenGraph tag. Depending on your platform, this may need to be actioned by your website company.

## Videos



Videos have become a rising factor for any successful website and consistently generate more engagement than images on platforms like Facebook. They'll help the appeal and ranking of a page, but will also be searchable by themselves in video results.

### Improves SEO

Videos with relevant content can improve your website's rankings on search engines. Google owns YouTube, so having content on your YouTube channel further increases the possibility of having that content appear on the first page of Google. Also, adding a transcript, will further increase its influence in rankings.

### Choose an Engaging Thumbnail

This is the first thing that people are going to see. Ensure that your thumbnail is attention grabbing and relevant to the overall video.

### Title and Description

Just like the thumbnails, these appear in results summaries, so ensure both are interesting for your users. These are also going to affect the ranking of your videos, so ensure they're relevant and include keywords, without stuffing them in unnaturally.

## Copy


*If you are real about a career in real estate, and want to work for a company that tells it like it is, we want to talk to you.*

Whether you've just graduated, or you're a professional looking for a career change and have a passion for people and property, Jawitz Properties offers a wealth of career opportunities. We've welcomed many professionals including lawyers, teachers, nurses and architects into our ranks, and we're proud to offer them rewarding careers with immense financial and personal growth opportunities.


Are you ambitious, driven and know how to move people? Then Jawitz Properties, a leading Real Estate in South Africa and a proud member of Leading Real Estate Companies of the World® is the place for you!

### Why Jawitz Properties?

We create 'WOW' experiences for all our stakeholders... always. This is reflected in a set of five values that epitomise the Jawitz Properties business style:



We're a performance-driven culture that recognises achievement and expects accountability and responsibility in a supportive environment.



We demand absolute integrity and do what is best for the client, the company and each other.

This is the most important content element to ensure good search engine rankings. Below are some of the key points to remember when producing copy for your website, either personally or through a copywriter.

### Keep It Manageable

As mentioned in the “User Experience” section, people scan. Ensure your copy is broken into bite-sized pieces. Lists, subheadings, extracts, images and info graphics are all ways to achieve this.

### Keywords

Don't stuff articles or pages with keywords. It will sound unnatural to users and can actually hurt your rankings. The phrases you want to be found for in the search engines should appear naturally in your copy if the topic is relevant. Look at including LSI (Latent Semantic Indexing) keywords into your copy. These are basically keywords that relate to the main topic of a page. An example would be “beaches” or “restaurants” for copy about the Cape Town Atlantic Seaboard.

### You're the Expert

You know your area. Write about what's happening, especially if it's relevant to the property market. This type of content is valuable to the users you want to attract to your business and Google loves it. If you know what you want to say, but not how to say it, hire a good copywriter.

## Blog length

A study in 2016 showed the average page 1 Google result had around 1,900 words. That doesn't mean all your articles need to be that long. Shorter articles are shared more and lengthy authoritative articles keep users on your site and can generate a lot of link traffic over time. It's more important that you keep adding quality content than focusing on length.

## Share

The whole reason to generate good quality content is to get users to your website, so share new content on your social media channels with links back to your site.

**Don't copy content from other sources even if you reference them. This can hurt your standing with Google. If their content is valuable to your users, include a snippet with a link and discuss the article in your own words.**

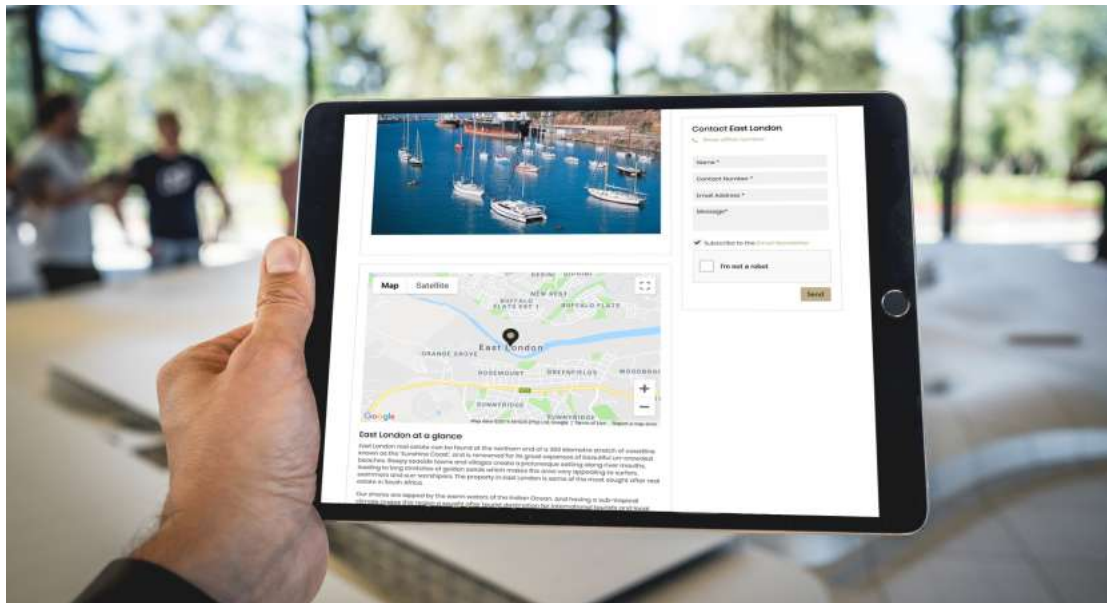
## Takeaway

Users like images and video, they take less effort to consume. For the times users actually read copy, it needs to be engaging. If you're talking about what you know in the areas you operate, it should naturally rank well. If you don't have time to generate original content (or just don't write well), hire someone that can.



## Area Profiles

An area profile is an authoritative page about an area that aligns to your marketing strategy. In other words, it's about an area that stocks the properties you sell or rent. The information is already out there. You, or your copywriter, are compiling and packaging the content so that it becomes easy for users and search engines to find and consume. These pages are extremely useful for your users and best of all, Google loves them!



As outlined in Content for Robots and Humans, it's a good idea to also include photos, video or maps to make the content more interesting. Also, because you're marketing property, this is a great opportunity to feature properties in that area. But remember, the page is information, not sales focused, so ensure properties are not prioritised.

### Evergreen copy

A lot of content on the internet has a shelf-life, however, if an area profile is done properly it will keep information relevant for years to come. A great example of a website that uses a lot of evergreen content to achieve outstanding search results is Wikipedia. Also, with content management systems, your area profiles can easily be updated as info on an area changes.

**“An evergreen’s value is that it has the potential to continue to bring traffic to your site for many months, or even years into the future if it is true evergreen web content”.**

Megan Marrs, 2017, [www.wordstream.com](http://www.wordstream.com)

## SEO and Interlinking

Area profiles help create better SEO results. They're naturally full of words that you want to be found in the search engines for. The true power of these pages is revealed when they are woven into the other content of your website. Area snippets on listings results for a specific area or linked to from listings and news articles are examples. This not only helps with keeping visitors on your site for longer but also with potential sales. Especially if your area profiles are well researched and interesting.

## What should I write about?

You can include anything that your users would find valuable, but it will differ depending on your market. Below is a basic structure of an area profile for a residential agency to get you started.

- Introduction
- A brief history of the area
- Infrastructure
- Hospitals nearby
- Schools in the area
- Distance from key points (airport/CBD)
- Malls/shopping
- Restaurants
- Special attractions

## Position yourself as the expert

Area profiles take time to research and produce and you can't just copy from somewhere else. Even if you reference another author, the search engines will penalise you. However, if you take the time or hire experienced copywriters to generate meaningful original content, the benefits are worth it. Your users are far more likely to have confidence in your abilities to sell or let a property if you can prove that you know the area inside-out.

## Takeaway

Play the long game with well-researched and interesting area profiles that will keep generating traffic for years. Ensure you link to and from these pages to create value throughout your website.

## News

We've called this section "News", but we use that term loosely. You can use a blogging or news system on your website to write about anything, as long as it adds value for your users. A film review on the latest Avengers movie is not going to generate quality traffic from the search engines for people interested in your services. But, if you add content in the context of your services and it's engaging, you'll have an edge over your competition and reap the rewards.



### Essential definitions

#### Evergreen Content

It's content that retains relevance, just like evergreen trees retain their leaves. It will continue to drive traffic to a website long after it is first published.

### What do I write about?

The sky is the limit, really. Almost anything can have a property spin put on it. Think about what is happening in the industry and how it effects your local market. The more localised your article, the more relevant the page will be for the users you want to read it. For example, there may be an event or festival coming up in your area. Write about the event and give advice on how to get the most out of it. "But, that's not property related", I hear you say. No, but it's evergreen content that buyers and tenants interested in your area will find valuable. It also shows that you're part of the community and that the area is vibrant and interesting. It should be easy to find similar opportunities. Here are some examples:

- 5 Great restaurants around <your area>
- Interview the headmaster of X school
- Up-and-coming property developments in <your area>
- 8 Fun winter activities in <your area>
- Did you know this about <your area> - 5 Fun facts

When you think about it, finding content is easy. Generating it is the hard part; let's dig deeper.

**PRO MOVE** - Include links to other articles, your area profiles and even property developments from your content. These links will help cement the relevance of your page with the search engines.

## Conversational Writing

This is the tricky part. You're not writing for the search engines. Although you want your content to rank well, in the end it's real people who are going to read it and who'll decide it's success. Remember some of the lessons from "Content for Robots and Humans".

Think about how you talk to someone and write in that tone. You want some of your personality to come through. Below are 2 examples of the same idea delivered in very different ways. Which one do you find more engaging?

*The FNB JoburgArtFair is Africa's leading art fair focused on contemporary art from the continent and diaspora. Now in its twelfth year, it continues to strengthen this position by presenting the finest of contemporary African art alongside memorable exhibitions and groundbreaking initiatives.*

*Hey Jozi, it's time to get your cultural fix again as we countdown to the FNB JoburgArtFair. First time hearing about this? Where have you been? You've missed out on 12 years of the finest contemporary African art, exhilarating exhibitions and ingenious initiatives. Begin practicing waxing lyrical about colour while sipping champagne.*

## Takeaway

In the age of easily accessible information, it's crazy not to give your users what they're looking for and generate quality traffic to your website at the same time. Plan your content strategy and hire a good copywriter if you don't have the time or talent to execute it.

## Quality Listings

How a property is listed on your website is critical. Amazingly the vast majority of real estate companies don't take advantage of the different ways to showcase a listing or tell a story to spark the imagination of users. Let's dive in to why this is so important and how to create listings that generate leads.

### Why you should invest in your listing's quality

#### Competition

Your listing is competing not only with other listings on your own website, but with others on the portals. Just like search results on Google or images on Pinterest, only the most eye catching get the attention they seek.

#### Search engine optimisation

A well-written property description should naturally contain key phrases that users are searching for. The more detailed your descriptions, (without repetition or being overly embellished) the better your listing will perform individually on the search engines. And collectively, good quality listings will have a massive effect on the rankings of your website as a whole.

**PRO MOVE** - Add value for your users and boost your SEO impact by including snippets of area profiles and news in your listings. Linking to other sections of your website for more information will improve your sites overall performance.

#### Brand identity

When users see that each and every listing on your website has a good quality description, considered photography and video they naturally feel that your brand is professional and will deliver. It's a small, but important part of the big picture.



## Descriptions that convert

### Describe a journey

The description is the best place to start when you're telling a story about a property. Although stating facts such as the number of bedrooms and the square footage are important, this information is not enough to engage your visitors and take them on a journey of the property. Instead, you need to envision that you're physically taking a potential buyer/tenant through a property and remember to trigger their senses.

*The master bedroom is a haven for luxury living and is well suited for those who seek the finer things in life. It features a custom walk-in dresser with enough clothing space for every occasion, an en-suite bathroom with exquisite marble and brass finishes and a rejuvenating Jacuzzi for moments when you need to unwind and relax. The bedroom leads onto a wrap-around balcony with sweeping sea-views of the Indian Ocean. Here, waking up and falling asleep to the peaceful sound of waves is a way of life that residents are immersed in every day.*

### Use brand names

If some of your listings have brand name equipment or fittings make sure you draw attention to this. These branded items raise the value, uniqueness and desirability of a home.

*The top of the line kitchen is spacious and inspiring with its custom designed blue cabinetry, black granite counters, double eye level AEG oven and stained glass display cabinets. The large granite topped central island is fitted with 3 gas and 2 ceramic AEG hobs.*

### Amenities

Other important elements to include in your description is the security features and the distance from key amenities such as schools, hospitals, shopping malls, restaurants and highways.

*With outstanding curb appeal, this home is elevated above the road and is built over two levels. It offers the privacy of retreat style living in a high-end residential community with guarded boomed access. The upscale Westville Mall and sought-after Westville schools are a convenient 10-minute drive away.*

### Headings

Special attention must be given to the heading as this needs to capture a user's attention and keep them intrigued for long enough to read on further. Often, agencies make the mistake of "fluffing" this section with unnecessary words that do not reveal anything about the property. Examples of what not to write would be:

*"Your dream home awaits you" or "Start making memories in this home".*



These vague statements hold no value for the user. Instead, the opening statement should sum up the highlights of the property in a few words and answer the one question that all visitors have, which is, what am I looking at?

Rather try “Old World Charm Meets Energy Efficient Home with Separate Flatlet”.

### **Pictures sell property**

Alongside a description that tells a story, you will need high-quality pictures. Unfortunately, many agencies fall victim to the following bad habits:

- Not adding or adding very few pictures to property listings.
- Using low-quality images with bad lighting and skewed focus.
- Not taking the time to make the most of each photographic opportunity.

These shortcomings will immediately lose the attention of your visitors, regardless of how well written your description is. To avoid this scenario, you can take the initiative to invest in good camera equipment and learn about the best photography practices for real estate. However, considering how busy the life of an agent can be, there is always the option of hiring a professional photographer to do the heavy lifting for you.

### **Home staging**

This should be done, to some extent, every time a property is photographed. This means that you will need to make a few non-technical tweaks to the home such as decluttering and depersonalising it so that buyers can imagine the space as their own. Depending on your budget, this can mean anything from fresh flowers to hiring a decorator to select custom art and furnishings.

Oh and remember, when you're uploading the images, be sure to select the best one as the primary photograph. This will preferably be a high-quality exterior shot.



**“A picture is worth a thousand words... and a video is worth a million pictures”.**

Ankala Subbarao (Poet)



## The instant connection of Video

The use of video in property listings has recently gained widespread popularity among real estate agencies and can arguably be the most effective component in enhancing your online visibility. It is a powerful tool when combined with quality descriptions and photography, and plays a vital role in triggering an emotional response in visitors.

Perhaps one of the most distinctive features of a video is its high “shareability” value on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. If done right, it has the potential to generate thousands of shares among potential clients and is, therefore, likely to generate high-quality leads quicker.

Ultimately, video gives visitors a visual story of a home and enables them to feel as if they are moving through it effortlessly. It is the most accurate way to showcase the size and look of various spaces, allowing visitors to make an almost instant connection.

## Other opportunities

Don't forget that you can add further value to your listings by including:

- **Virtual Tours**

There are some incredible tools available to produce lifelike 3D tours. Check out <https://matterport.com>

- **Floor Plans**

If you have floor plans, make sure you include them with your listing. These are standard in US and UK markets and will be a massive help in getting a user to understand the space.

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## Takeaway

We know it's often a race to get a listing online, but it's more important for your brand and for your users to have content that describes it beautifully and takes advantage of all the technology you have available. To compete with those doing this well, you should consider a well-written description, 20 good photographs and a video as essential.

## Tried, Tested and Growing

Over a decade ago, as social media platforms like Facebook started to rise in popularity, many marketers forecasted that email marketing was going to die out. However, these predictions were wrong. Email is not dead, it's growing.

Maybe because businesses have traditionally used email to communicate digitally and we can't break the habit. Or maybe because, in the era of instant messaging, we prefer to have a form of communication where a certain delay in response is acceptable. The reasons don't really matter. Email is here to stay and you need to take advantage of it.

**While there were roughly 4.1 billion active accounts in 2014, the number is expected to increase to almost 5.6 billion towards the end of the decade.**

### Automated Email

One of the reasons that email has remained a success story is the fact that it can be integrated to execute automatically within a business's framework. From a real estate agency's perspective, setting up the following will save you time and ensure you remain in contact with your users on an ongoing basis:

#### Property Email Alerts

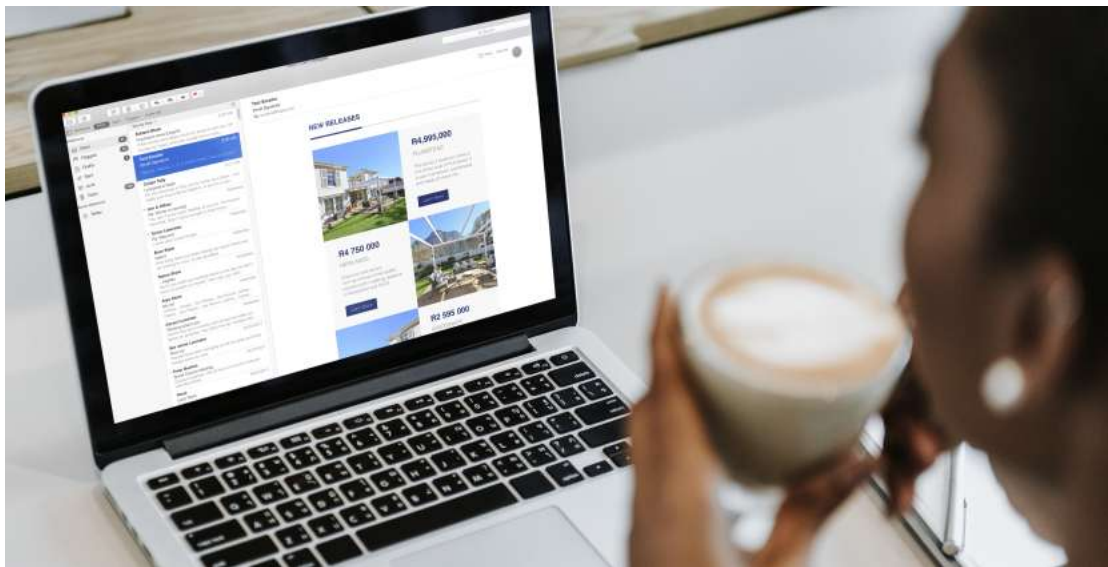
Whatever platform (e.g. Prop Data) your business uses, you should be able to encourage buyers and tenants browsing your website to register their requirements. The system should then notify the user whenever a new property matching their requirements is added to your system. Users love this because they don't have to keep coming back to look for new stock. You now have a lead even though you may not have had the property they wanted initially.



## Newsletters

Whatever your content strategy, you're going to want to inform users that new content is available. These days, marketing platforms allow you to set this up once and then sit back as future content is populated into your template and automatically sent to subscribers.

**PRO MOVE** - Segmented mailing lists make for happy subscribers. Gather as much information as necessary (without it becoming a barrier) when a user signs up to receive content. That way you'll only send them what they want. A tenant in Cape Town, for example, doesn't want to receive advice on the Johannesburg buyers market.



## Promotional Emails

Once-off emails are still a great way to notify your users about new services, development launches, special offers, events, etc. Use them in conjunction with social media to direct users back to your website. These promo emails can be designed in a way that makes them stand out from your regular automated email. One of the advantages of email is that you can track how many users read it and who clicked through for more information or to complete a call-to-action. So, it's easy to track a campaign's effectiveness.

## Design Considerations

### Responsive

Mobile accounted for 46 percent of all opened email (Litmus.com, 2018) - it's therefore critical that every email you send can respond down and look good on mobile devices.

## Email clients

Email is very tricky to design for. There are dozens of email clients (Outlook, Apple Mail, Gmail, etc.) and they don't all render email in the same way. For example, you can include a video in Apple Mail, but not in Outlook. The limitations continue when moving from desktop to mobile versions of these applications. Ensure your designers are aware of these issues and are experienced with email.

## Keep it simple

Like most design, it's best to keep it simple. People get a lot of email, so get to the point. Long, complicated emails stuffed with content won't be effective. You want to offer the user an introduction to your content and encourage them to click through to your website (remember, your website is the destination).


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## Takeaway

Email is still the preferred way for people to receive new content. Make sure you're taking advantage of how easy it is to automate email communication, but remember to segment your mailing lists as much as possible and only send users what they want. As long as they find value in your content, they'll remain happy subscribers.

## Newsletters

In the previous chapter, we covered why email is still a relevant and growing marketing and communication channel. We spoke about how easy it is to automate an email newsletter and send to a segmented mailing list. Now, let's break the newsletter down and see what you can include and should exclude to create an email that your users will love.



**Exciting new mixed-use development on...**


With any neglected space comes a huge amount of potential for various types of growth and rejuvenation.

[READ MORE](#)

**Intaka Island Century City**

As urban environments grow and more and more people migrate from the rural areas to the city.

[READ MORE](#)



## Content is everything

Before even thinking about your newsletter, you should have arrived at a content strategy. If you don't have engaging content that is relevant to your users, the newsletter is simply not going to be of interest and will be deleted from their mailbox before you can say "trash". You're competing with dozens of other emails, some legitimate and some unsolicited. Users will very quickly evaluate the content they are receiving from you and unsubscribe if you're not delivering.

This is not a space for lots of company news. Your content should be informative or offer useful advice. “8 Fun winter activities on the Atlantic Seaboard” in a June newsletter, will be much more valuable to a user in this area than “Our favourite cheesecake recipe”. Original articles should form the base of your newsletter as this is the type of evergreen content that is going to bring you success in the long term.

**Segmenting your mailing list ensures that subscribers only get properties and information that is relevant to their needs and location. This means fewer unsubscribes and more future interaction (clicking through to your website).**

Other content that could be included in your newsletter:

- **Featured Listings**

These shouldn't be as prominent as your articles! Users can always sign-up for property email alerts to receive new listings based on their specific requirements. Also, if your list is segmented correctly, users should not receive properties from regions that they're not interested in.

- **Featured sales or rentals**

Sellers and landlords like to see that you are moving stock, so you could feature important sales or rentals from the month.

- **Services and events**

Your newsletter is also a good place to promote any new services or upcoming events. Just remember that these will be competing with other items in the design and may deserve their own email.

- **Links to services**

Users may not have visited your website for a while, so your newsletter is a good place to include links through to your key services. They'll serve as a reminder about how you can help.

There may be other things you'd like to include, perhaps something that is specific to your service offering. Just remember that the quality of the content (images and copy) is critical and that a clean and simple design is the best approach. Take note of the design considerations we outlined in this article.



## When to send

There are many schools of thought on this. Traditionally, the consensus has been that the middle of the day and middle of the week (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) are the best times to send an email newsletter. They avoid the bloated email boxes of users on a Monday morning and the weekend attitude that people enter on a Friday. This doesn't hold true for everyone though and there are dozens of cases where companies have recorded far better results sending on a Monday than mid-week. We encourage you to analyse your analytics and see when your users are most active. Base the send on that, but don't be scared to experiment a bit to find the sweet spot.

How many a month you send is also dependant on your content strategy. If you're generating quality weekly articles, it may be valuable for your users to receive a short, sharp weekly email. If not, rather send once a month to ensure content is fresh.

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## Takeaway

This is not a space for the hard sell - your subscribers have already signed-up to your newsletter. Include well considered and quality content, but in bite size chunks that drive traffic back to your website.

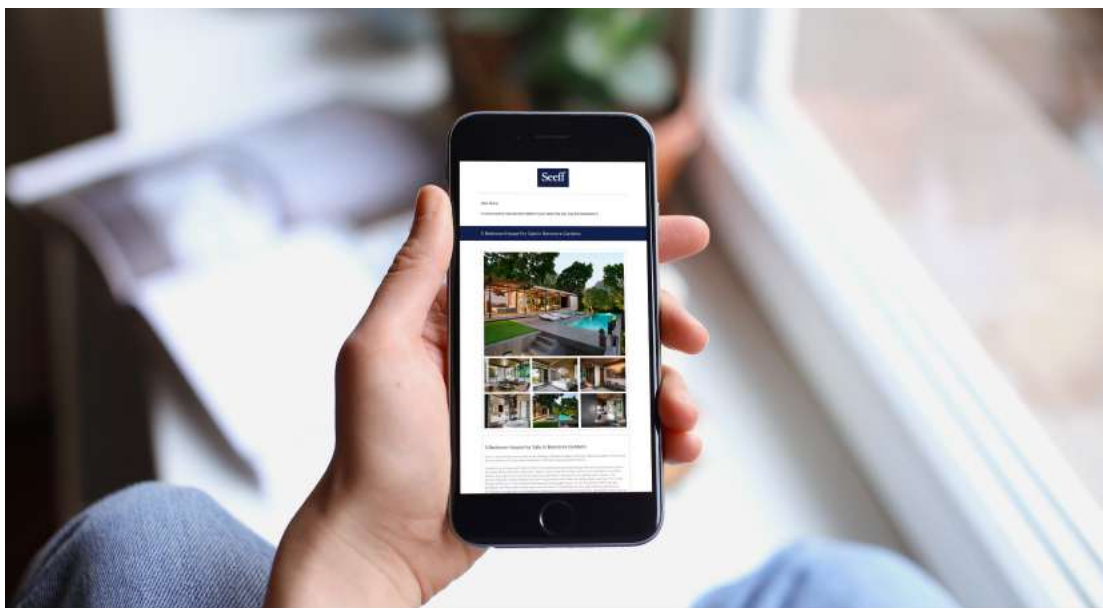


## Property Email Alerts

A property email alert is email notification of a new matching property sent to users who've registered their property requirements with you. Ideally, this process is automated and doesn't require human intervention.

Users love property email alerts because they do all the heavy lifting when searching. Sellers, tenants and investors can enter their property requirements online and sit back while new listings arrive in their inbox. It doesn't provide immediate results, but for the following it's perfect:

- Users looking for something very specific
- Users who want to be notified as soon as a home comes on the market in a sought-after area
- Investors who need an optimised workflow



### Benefits for you

So we can see how this facility can be useful for your users, but how does it benefit you?

#### Reminder marketing

It's a form of reminder marketing. Your brand is put in front of users who are actively engaging in the services you offer. Best bit? You don't need to do anything, it's automated.

#### First to view

By sending an alert as soon as a property is listed on your system, you are ensuring that you expose the user to the property before they can find it on competitor or portal websites.

## Design considerations

Mobile accounts for almost half of all email opens (and is growing) so ensure it looks good on small screens. Have a look at the design considerations for email in a previous course article.

## Design for click throughs

You want to give the user enough information to spark action. The email is not the destination, your website is, so encourage the user to click through and get the full picture online. The below is probably enough to include in the alert:

- Personal greeting. E.g. "Hi Peter".
- A description of what they are receiving so that it's not dismissed in error.
- A few images
- Basic property details including price, location and key features.
- A summarised description. Don't send a 600 word version.
- Agent details.
- A button or prominent link to view the listing online.

---

## Takeaway

Ensure property email alerts are part of your email strategy to keep your brand in the mind of buyers, tenants and investors. It's another way to automate email that benefits both the user and your business. Keep the emails short and sweet to encourage traffic back to your website.

## Promotional Email

As mentioned in Email: Tried, Tested & Growing, promotional emails are still a great way to notify your users about new services, development launches, special offers, events, etc. Use them in conjunction with other channels like social, paid and traditional to ensure you have a good spread across your entire user base.

**Almost 300 billion emails are sent every day. For every \$1 you spend on email marketing, you can expect an average return of \$32 (DMA, 2018).**

### Cost Effective

Unlike other forms of marketing, email marketing could possibly be the best value for money approach to marketing you can take advantage of. Google Ads cost money, Facebook Ads cost money and advertising on traditional platforms like television and radio can rack up exorbitant bills, however, this isn't the case with email marketing. Building a database of subscribers is free through your website and social channels. Even walk-in clients (with their consent) should be added to your mailing list. The only real cost would be to have your email professionally designed and developed, which we recommend. Remember email can be very tricky to design and execute.

### Design

Design considerations for promotional email are the same as for newsletters and property email alerts that we've already covered in this course:

- Keep it simple
- Get your message across early
- Use high-quality visuals
- Encourage users to click through to your website or landing page (the destination)
- Make sure it looks good on mobile
- Use a well-considered subject to help you stand out in a crowded inbox

**Greenhaven Estate**

Greenhaven retirement units available now

To: no-reply@greenhaven.co.za

Inbox 9:00 AM

[View online](#)**Your next step is a step up.**A unique *over 50's* lifestyle estate bordering Padfield Park and Kloof.**THE PERFECT LAUNCH**

The Greenhaven Estate Launch was a resounding success, with the response far exceeding all expectations... over 400 people and R45m transacted on the day!

[LEARN MORE](#)**Don't spam**

Even though email marketing is still considered to be a highly effective tool for marketing your real estate online, it's also not advisable to use spam to achieve this. Only send a promotional email to those who have signed up for it and who want to know about your products or services. If you fail to do so and send your emails out to people who have not given you permission, you will lose credibility, potential sales and even be blacklisted on mail servers (which prevents future emails from being received). Always offer an option for users to unsubscribe.

## Drip campaigns

A drip campaign is a set of predetermined emails sent over time to a user. Some examples of how these can be used are:

- Introducing a new client to key services when they initially join your mailing list
- Reminders in the run-up to an event like a new development launch
- A set of emails for a new seller covering how to stage a home

Again, keep these short and to the point so that users can quickly scan the email and click through to your website for more information if they find value in the content.

## Automate it

Drip campaigns and other promotional email can be automated based on time or user engagement through a number of tools like Mailchimp and HubSpot. This can be very powerful once set up correctly!

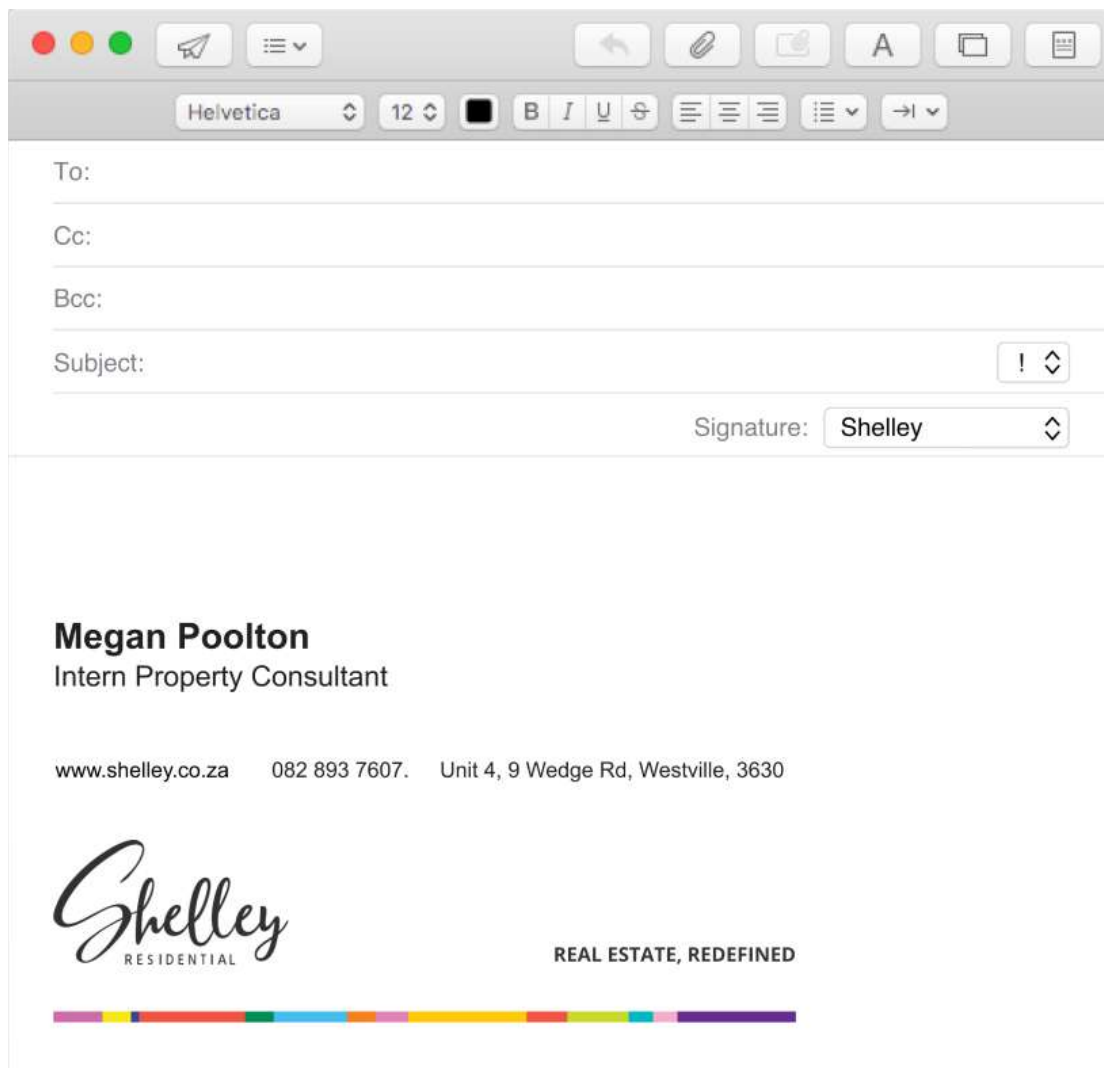
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## Takeaway

When you want to promote, well, anything really, use email. It's cost effective, easy to automate and can be tracked. Keep your emails short and to the point. Oh, and don't spam!

## Email Signatures

Research shows that a first impression is created within the first seven seconds of meeting someone or interacting with a brand. In the hyper-competitive world of real estate, a first impression can either draw leads to your company or drive them away to your competitors. Email may not be the first time a user comes into contact with your brand, but it's more often than not the first time they will receive a personal communication from your business. So let's ensure your signature is delivering.



An email signature, in its simplest form, is a block of text that is located at the end of an email, with essential information such as your full name, job title, company name/logo and contact information. But there is much more that can be included in signatures, or as it is often referred to, the 21st-century business card.

## Standard elements

You're going to want to include the following basic elements and contact details as default. Unlike business cards though, most elements can link to further information.

### Company Branding

Normally the logo would be displayed in isolation, but the signature may also include some of the elements of your brand identity to create consistency.

### Contact Details

- Name & designation
- Office and mobile number
- Website address

### Social Media

Include icons for your business social media channels.

### Photograph

This is where things get a bit complicated. Adding a photo of yourself to all the essential elements above, plus some of the value-added elements below is going to start making things look very busy. You don't want your signature to get in the way of the email. Ensure this is tastefully done or rather leave either the logo or your photo out.

## Value-added elements

These are nice-to-haves that add value to users communicating with a real estate business. We don't suggest you add all of these, but rather cherry-pick those that are the most important for your business.

### Email address

"Why isn't this required?" we hear you say. Well, most recipients of your email will simply reply or forward, not hunt for an email address. Including it can, however, make finding details of someone in a forwarded email a little easier.

### Qualifications

Depending on what country you operate from, you may need to include a link to a digital certificate of your qualification. PrivySeal is a good example of this service.

### Link to listings

If you're an agent you may want to link to a page of your active listings.

### Directions

If you have a physical office, you may want to include a link to get directions.



**Promotional**

You don't want to turn your email signature into a billboard, but when justified, you may want to include a banner to an important event or value-add. Look to services like Databias to accomplish this.

**What to leave out**

What to leave out of your signature is as important as what to include. Like everything, we recommend keeping things as simple and as uncluttered as possible. Make sure to leave the following off:

- Any personal contact details like your home phone number or address.
- Links to your personal social media profiles
- Fax numbers, physical or postal addresses. These can be accessed from your website or asked for via email.
- Animated GIFs

**Design considerations**

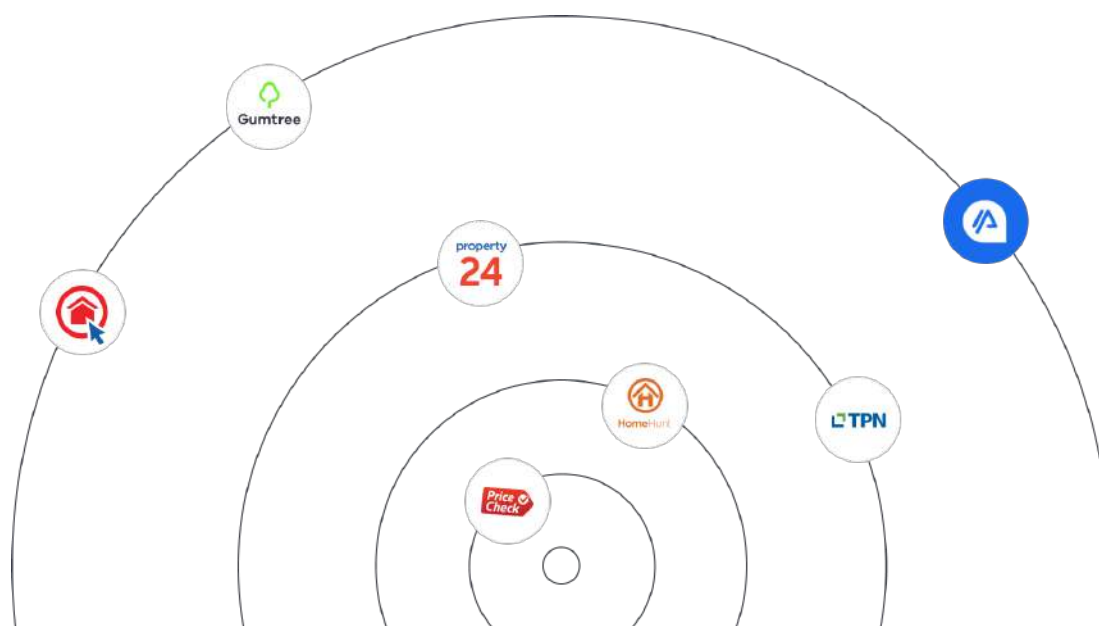
We've covered email design considerations in previous sections of the email chapter in this course. Email signatures should be given the same attention. Ensure they are responsive and text-based (not a single image).

**Takeaway**

Email is often the first piece of communication your users receive. Ensure you have a clean and simple signature that includes essential contact information, reflects your brand and maybe includes a few value-added elements based on your service offering.

## Maximise Your Exposure

It's no secret that many of your users are starting their property search on the portals. It makes sense to browse aggregated stock from more than one agency. So, let's ensure your listings are getting maximum exposure, with minimal effort.



## Essential Definitions

### Portals

A portal can be a website with a vast amount of information on a specific topic like [www.espnccricinfo.com](http://www.espnccricinfo.com), which covers cricket news, competitions, live scores, and more. A portal can also cover a wide range of topics like government websites - [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). The distinction is that it's a single destination with information (normally aggregated from multiple sources) that is presented in a uniform manner so that it's easily consumed.

### Feeds

Information is often aggregated from other sources into portals through feeds. This is simply a connection between 2 or more systems. One system will either pull or push data to the other automatically.

### Which portals should I list on?

Just like search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc.), there are a lot of property portals. And just like search engines you want to be on as many as possible, while only really worrying about the big players. What you define as “big” will change depending on your geographic location and the sector that you operate in. We encourage you to speak to your users and find out what they are searching with.

Although some portals are free, the most prominent ones will have some sort of listing fee. Like any form of marketing, you’ll need to evaluate its return against your budget to see if a portal is worth the spend.

### Capture Once

You also don’t want to perform double, triple, or more data entries to get listings on the portals. Make sure whatever system you use to list your stock allows you to publish to your website, social media (if desired), and all possible portals at the point of capture. Not doing this is going to create a huge amount of unneeded work.

### Listing Quality

All your competitors are also listing their stock on the portals, so it’s critical you make sure your listings are presented in the best light so that they stand out in the crowd. Have another look at our previous chapter on how to create quality listings.

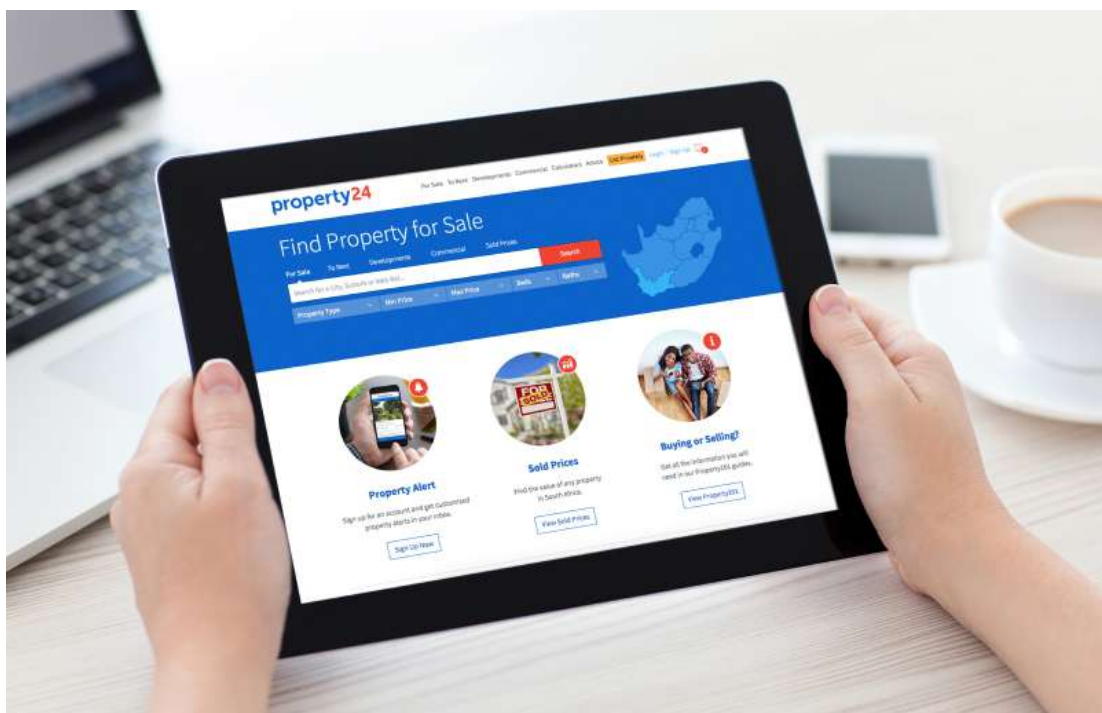
Each portal also has its own requirements and limitations. One, for example, may require 10 listing images and another 15. If you want to appear on the later you’ll need to ensure that the requirement is met. Some portals will also rank your listings higher based on what they deem quality factors. We cover the factors that affect some of the bigger portals in next weeks section.

### Takeaway

You have to be on the portals to compete. Focus your efforts on the most relevant ones for your business, but try to get on as many as possible. Work on generating listings that rank well on the portals’ quality score factors.

## Paid Portals

As an agent, property portals are your best friends. With more eyeballs on your listings, you'll stand a greater chance to make a sale. In the previous section, you learnt the basics behind property portals. Now you'll see how you can make paid portals work to your advantage.



### What are paid portals?

These are property portals that require an account or an agreement before they'll accept your listings.

You may already be familiar with these examples:

- Property 24
- Private Property
- Gumtree
- IOL Property
- Property Tube

The fees and structures vary and fluctuate, so we haven't listed them here.

## Advantages over free portals

Free portals can be an attractive option if you're on a tight budget. However, they do lack some important features that paid portals offer:

### Exposure:

When a prospective home buyer or renter searches online, they'll likely find a paid portal website along with, and often above, your website and your competitors. Paid portals boast SEO-friendly websites that get a ton of website traffic and page views. They also have the budget to ensure they appear in paid adverts for the most competitive search terms.

### Reputable:

Searchers are aware of the property scams online. As paid portals have a greater presence, they tend to be more trusted and respected.

### Lead quality:

Paid portals are better organised. You can expect more information when your listing receives a query. This translates to a better quality lead.

### Advert free:

On a free portal, your listing will often be placed next to banner advertising. The danger lies in the unknown. The advert could contain distasteful subject matter that would tarnish your brand. It could also be a competitor's advert which would draw attention away from your listing.

## Listing Quality

When you place your listing on these websites, you'll want them to stand out. Paid portals give additional weight to what they consider quality listings and, much like a search engine might, rank these listings favourably. The higher the perceived quality of a listing, the more exposure it will gain on a particular property portal.

Below is a quick overview of what two of South Africa's largest property portals, Private Property and Property24, consider when judging the quality of a listing:

### Private Property:

- 12 Unique images. Dimensions should be at least 1267px (width) x 848px (height).
- Full address, or scheme name if applicable.
- Show the property on the map.
- Provide rates and levies information.
- Detailed property information should include information such as the property size.
- Include a virtual tour or a related video (through their service).

**Property24:**

- 16 Unique images. Dimensions should be at least 1024px (width) x 768px (height).
- Supply and allow the address to be displayed (on Property24).
- Show the property on the map.
- Give your listing a strong title.
- The description should consist of a minimum of 2 short paragraphs - 250 characters or more and should also include a descriptive marketing heading.
- Include the erf size.
- Provide rates and levies information.
- Upload a Virtual Tour and/or video.

If your listing system doesn't automatically highlight requirements and quality listing factors, then make certain you understand the above before your listings reach the portals.

**PRO MOVE** - Publish to multiple property portals with the click of a button. Choose a syndication service, that manages the sending of your data, and save yourself time and headaches. Support is the biggest benefit as the providers will act as mediators with the portals. If you find your listing isn't published, it's comforting to have someone to turn to who can help.

**Takeaway**

You have to be on the portals to compete. Focus your efforts on the most relevant ones for your business, but try to get on as many as possible. Work on generating listings that rank well on the portals' quality score factors.

## The World's Biggest Business Directory

Back in the day, when your customers searched for a product or service they'd turn to a trusted copy of the Yellow Pages. Flash forward to the present and things haven't changed. Your customers are simply going online and using Google. The popular search engine has become the world's largest business directory. It's a powerful way to be found and to drive traffic to your website. The next couple weeks of our course will give you a great foundation to make the most of it.

Some Google stats:

- **Over 90% of the search engine market.**
- **63 000 searches done per second on average.**
- **The average user does between 3 to 4 searches daily. Mostly on Google.**

Look at those stats! It's likely your prospects are using Google to find a home as you read this. You can grab their attention using Google Ads.

### What are Google Ads?

Google Ads is an online advertising solution that you can use to promote your real estate agency, listings and services on Google Search, YouTube, and other sites across the web. Google Ads also allows you to select specific goals for your ads, like driving phone calls or website visits.

Let's say you specialise in properties in Pretoria East. If a potential customer searches for "complexes in Pretoria East" on Google, Google Ads will display your advert in their search results.

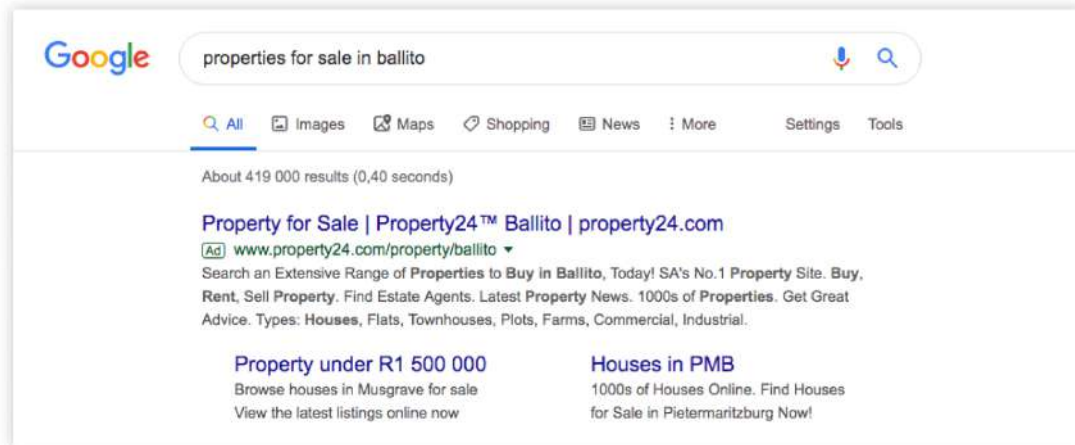
### Types of Google Ads?

Google adverts come in different formats that can help you appeal to your potential customers' unique needs and behaviours.



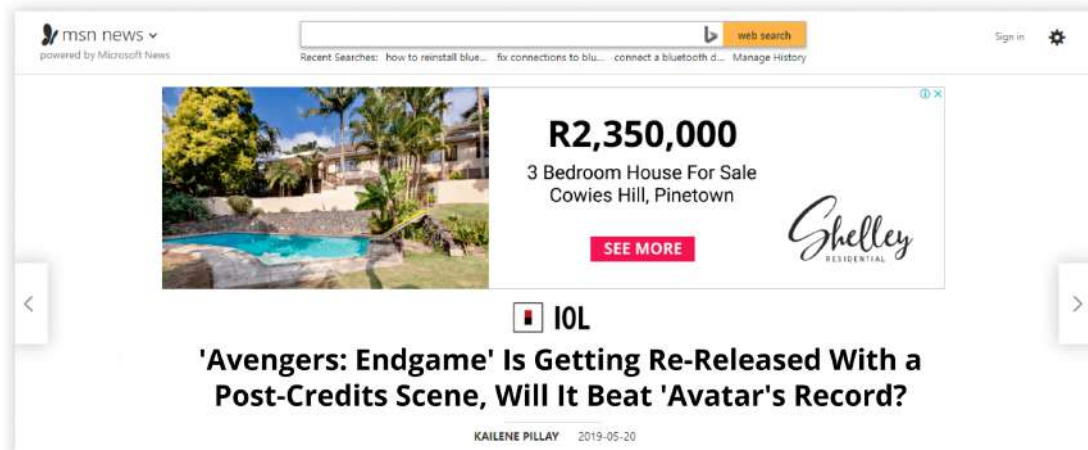
## Search Ads

These are text-based and are displayed among the search results on a Google results page.



## Image Ads

Also known as display ads, these are primarily image-based adverts that appear on websites or apps your customers visit.



## Video Ads

These are six or 15-second videos that appear before or during YouTube content.

Each format has its own benefits. For simplicity and affordability, opt for search ads. To entice with engaging storytelling, choose image or video ads.

## Grow your agency with Google Ads

You'll enjoy many advantages by using Google ads as part of your online marketing strategy. Here are some of them:

- Capitalise on Google's massive reach
- Target specific searches that relate to you
- Focus on people that are interested in you
- Get almost instant results
- Track your campaign's progress
- Create adverts that follow your customer across sites

Okay, you're sold. But, "I'm not tech-savvy", you say. Or you're worried about the costs. No problem! Google Ads is simple to use and you can even select how much you want to spend.

## Setting up Google Ads

To create an account, you'll need an email address and a website.

- 1 First, head to the Google Ads homepage.
- 2 Enter the website address of your real estate agency.
- 3 Click "Continue".
- 4 Click "Create an account" at the bottom of the screen and follow the instructions to create and confirm your new Google account.

**PRO MOVE** - Your success depends on the time, effort and resources you invest. It's a good idea to leave your strategy in the hands of a capable professional. The right marketing team can create your website, email account and Google Ads account. They should launch adverts that will help you meet your goals and will continually analyse results and refine which is critical.

## Takeaway

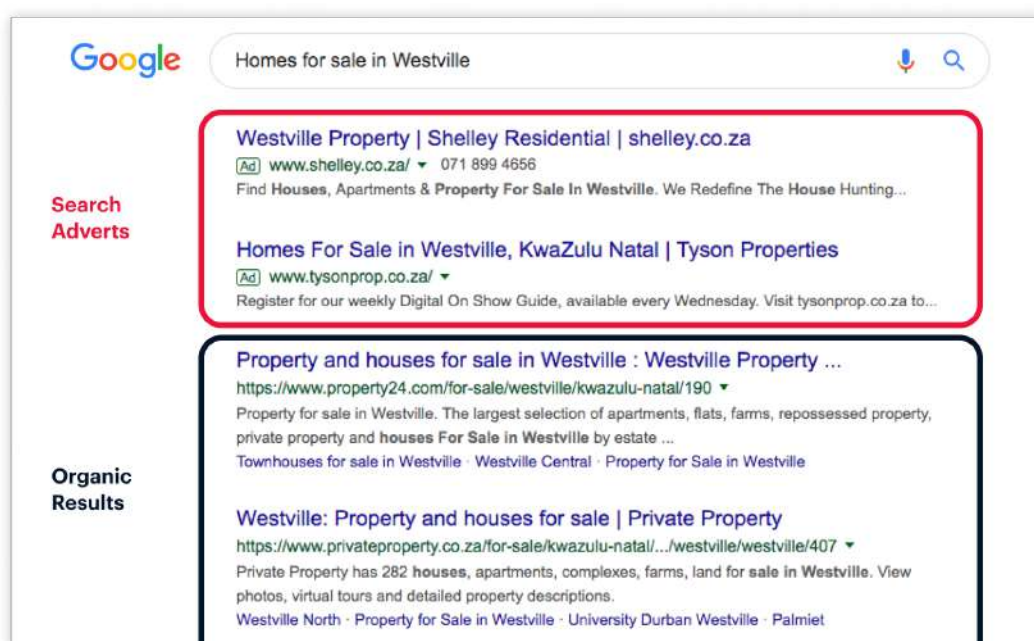
Google Ads is an indispensable part of your strategy. After all, quality leads and a strong online presence is the lifeblood of a thriving real estate agency. Now that your Google Ads account is set up, we'll dive into the details of setting up each ad type.

## Search Ads

Search advertising is growing in South Africa. The move you make now can help you meet your agency goals and get ahead of your competition. In the previous section, you successfully set up your Google ads account. Now comes the exciting part. You're ready to launch your first advert.

### Recap: What are search ads?

These are text-based adverts that appear when someone searches for a related product or service on Google. For example, when you google "Homes for sale Westville", here's a search advert that is displayed:



As you can see, search adverts look a lot like organic search results. They also appear right at the top of a search. When a prospective buyer or renter is looking for a property, they may click on an effective advert instead of exploring the rest of the search results. At the moment, Google only distinguishes adverts with a small green "Ad" label on them.

### Why use search adverts?

Search adverts seem simple. However, they're a potent way to get your real estate listings and services in front of the people that may need them. Here are some benefits of search adverts you'll love:

### Visibility

Optimising your website takes a lot of effort. Even then, there's no guarantee you'll appear at the top of a relevant search. Search adverts can get you where you need to be.

### Easy to write

Search adverts require a limited amount of copy. If you're not comfortable writing or lack the time, this helps you get exposure without much of a hassle.

### Quick results

Forget about newspaper classifieds. You can create an advert in minutes and have it approved within one business day.

### Options

Your real estate agency has objectives. Search adverts can help drive traffic to your website, get you leads and ultimately increase concluded deals.

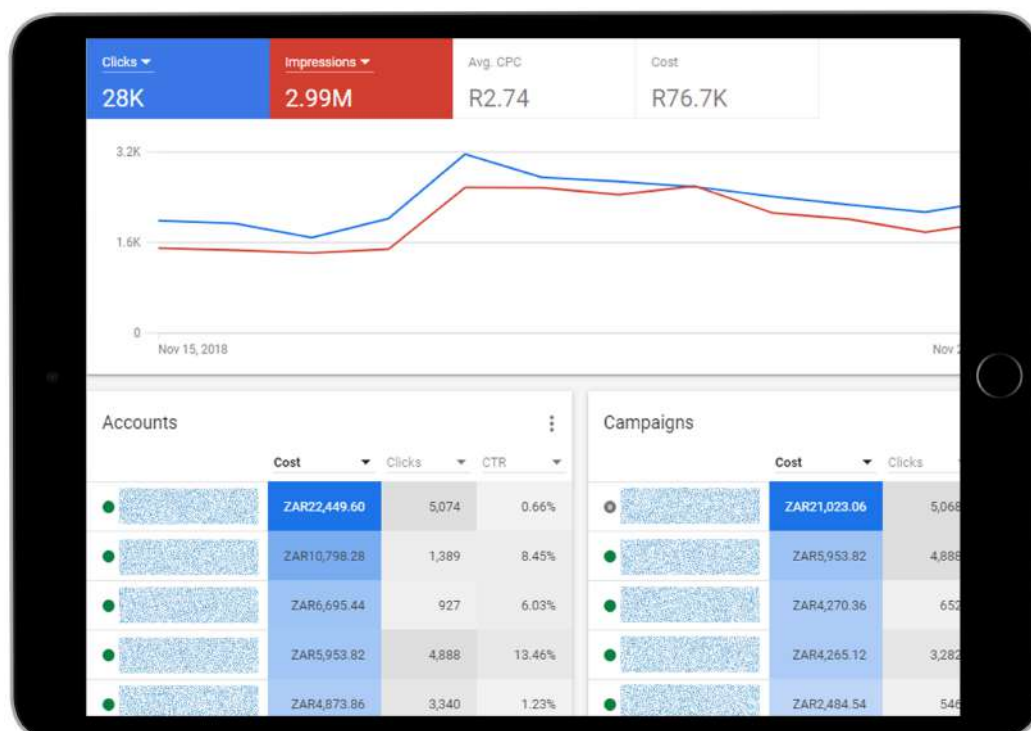
### Control

Search adverts give you so much flexibility. You can change your advert at any time, anywhere. You can create different versions of the same advert to find the winning version. You can set your budget so you don't overspend. You can even choose the location of your advert and its intended audience.

### Reporting

You can track how well your advert is performing. In real time, you can make adjustments to help them do better.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Google is always enhancing its product features to make the advertising process easier and more effective for your business.



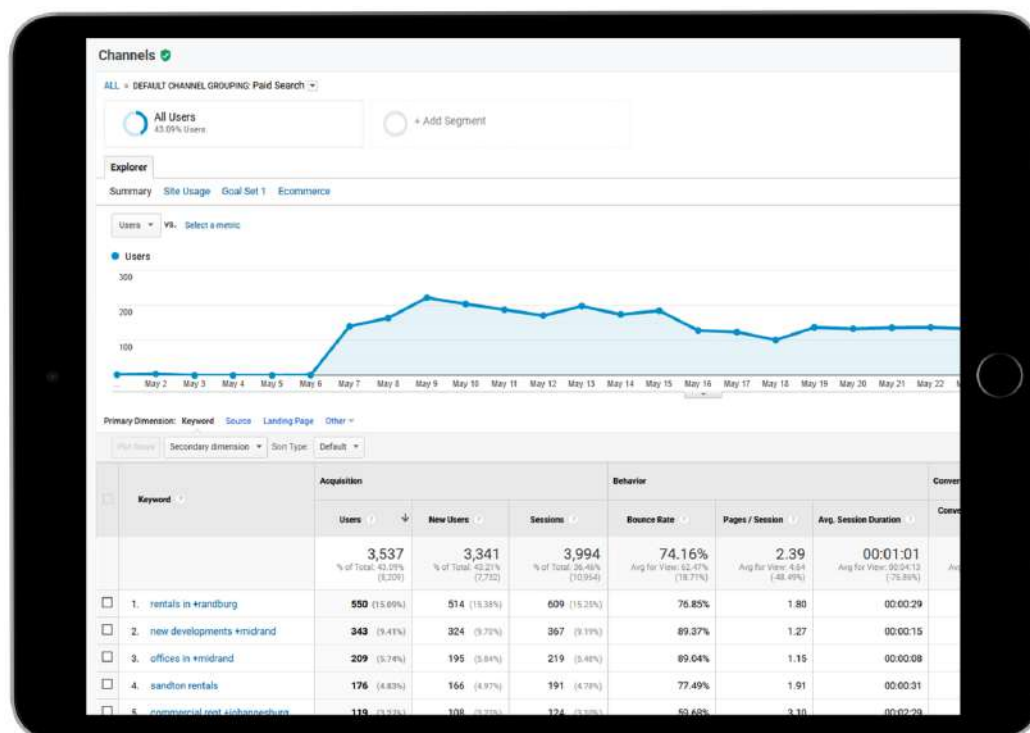
## How do search ads work?

Once your advert is up, you only pay each time your advert is clicked. This is known as “pay per click” or PPC. Clicking your advert could take them to your website or have them call your real estate agency.

When you create your advert, you will choose keywords that a searcher might use on Google. When they search using these keywords, your advert will appear in their results.

Remember, you’re not the only real estate agency around. Because your competition often has similar offerings, they’ll be selecting the same keywords. To have your advert appear at all, you’ll have to bid against them for the amount you’re willing to pay Google Ads when someone clicks your advert. This has an upside: The more you pay per click, the likely it is that your advert will appear in those search results.

When your advert appears in search results, it will be placed alongside your competitors. The rank is determined by the quality of your adverts, keywords, and landing pages. A higher quality advert can lead to lower prices and better advert positions. That’s why you need to take care when creating them.



**PRO MOVE** - You might not have the time or the expertise to run an effective search advert campaign. That’s okay. You can enlist the help of a professional. The right team can set up your campaigns, write killer copy that brings in the leads and track your adverts. They can also provide you with reports to show you how your adverts are performing.

## Post your search advert

You know the use of search adverts and how they work. Be confident and create your first advert with these basic steps.

- 1** Sign in to your Google Ads account.
- 2** Click “Campaigns” on the page menu.
- 3** Click the plus button and select “New campaign”.
- 4** Choose one or more goals for your campaign.
- 5** Select “Search” as your campaign type.
- 6** Select the ways you'd like to reach your goal.
- 7** Pick your campaign settings. This includes your advert location, audience preferences, your budget and bidding.
- 8** Save and continue.

It might seem a bit intimidating. Rest assured, you can edit or delete your advert when you like.

## Best Practices

You don't just want to create search adverts. You want to conquer with them. Here are some tips to help you make the most of them.

## Scheduling your advert

Pick the time your audience is likely to be searching. For example, picking a time after 4pm or 5pm can help you target those searching after work.

**Writing your advert**

- Showcase the best features of your agency, listings or services
- Use persuasive language
- Include the keywords your audience is looking for. You can use tools like Google Keyword Planner for help
- Use negative keywords to prevent your advert from being shown to the wrong person
- Proofread your advert to prevent embarrassing mistakes
- Don't forget a strong call to action

**Monitoring your advert**

- Update it when listings are sold or prices change
- Keep testing your advert to get better results
- Create a similar advert so you can compare performances

**Takeaway**

Although it will take experience to master, Google search ads are easy to get started with. You can be up and driving targeted traffic to your website very quickly. Start experimenting and analysing their performance before moving onto image ads.



## Image Ads

You always want to show potential customers you're their best option. You've learnt how to do this in Google with search adverts. But remember, an online audience isn't just looking for answers. They're checking their email, watching videos and playing games on their phones. You can reach them in unexpected and far-reaching ways using the power of image ads through the Google Display Network.

### Recap: What is an image advert?

Like its name suggests, this advert consists of a graphic or image. When someone clicks on it, they'll be directed to your agency's website. To attract their attention, you can use an image that's static, animated, or HTML5 format. It can also be in a range of sizes.



### Why use image adverts?

A picture may actually be worth a thousand words. Marketing with visuals gets more clicks, can strengthen your message and convert customers. Image adverts bring all these wonderful benefits and so much more.

**Reach almost anyone:** Image adverts can appear on websites and other places in the Google Display Network. The network has over two million sites and reaches over 90% of people on the internet. Your advert could be seen on a trending YouTube video or feature on a popular mobile app.

**Target the right people:** Your image advert can be shown to only people that are keen on property. It can also pinpoint new people that may be interested in what you have to offer. Your image adverts can also follow users online to help convert them.

**Save time:** Think you'll spend ages creating your adverts? Think again. Image adverts are responsive. Simply enter your advert text, add your images and logo, and you're good to go. Google will automatically resize adverts for different websites.

**Make your name:** You've likely seen hundreds of display adverts in your lifetime. Whether or not you've clicked on them, they're there quietly giving brand recognition to the company they represent. Imagine the possibilities for your agency.

**Track your success:** Google Ads can show you how your image adverts are performing. You'll also get some insight into customer behaviours.

There are so many ways image adverts can help your agency. The nice part? You can create one by yourself in minutes. Let's get started.

### Post your image advert

Here are the basic steps to launch your first image advert.

- 1 Sign in to your Google Ads account.
- 2 Ensure you're on the "All campaigns" or "Display campaigns" level before you start.
- 3 Go to the "Ads and extensions" page and click the plus button.
- 4 Select the ad template you'd like to use, or select "Upload display ads".
- 5 Create your ad with the template or upload it.
- 6 Click "Save".

Once your image advert is approved by Google, you'll be up and running.

**PRO MOVE** - Every second and cent spent is critical! Done well, image adverts can supercharge your business goals. Done wrong, and they can be a costly, time-consuming exercise. As a professional, you know the value of those with expertise. An experienced marketing team can create a beautiful advert and place it exactly where it needs to be. They can also monitor its success and keep you informed every step of the way.

## Best practices

To get the most out of image adverts, keep these tips in mind when you're creating your advert.

**Pick your keywords carefully:** Where your image adverts appear is determined by contextual targeting. Use keywords that are appropriate for your agency and match what a potential client might search for.

**Make smart placement choices:** You can select where your image advert will appear. For your agency, property portals like Property 24 and Private Property make sense. Websites that get a lot of traffic like News24 can also get your advert attention. You can also filter websites you may not want to be associated with your brand.

**Create a stand-out advert:** Image adverts act like brand ambassadors for your agency. You don't want to look sloppy.

- Ensure your logos are clear.
- Images should be enticing, authentic and relevant to your agency, listings or services.
- Keep it simple. Busy adverts can confuse or repel a potential customer.
- Don't forget your call to action.
- Need inspiration? Take a look at Google's Rich Media Gallery.

**Test your image adverts:** Create image adverts with different images and messaging. This will help you see what's resonating with your audience.

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## Takeaway

Google Image ads allow you to reach potential customers you can't with only basic search ads. Together with search adverts, you now have a basic toolkit to market using Google. Next week, you'll learn about remarketing. This strategy helps you win back people that have visited and left your website.

## Remarketing

You have a wonderful website filled with quality listings. Your branding comes through strongly on each page. Your copywriter has been hard at work, creating interesting news articles and area profiles. You're a well-oiled property marketing machine.

Your website is a powerful tool to convert visitors. But, you might not be getting the results you want. Visitors come through and leave without taking any action. What can you do? Just be persistent. By using remarketing, you can reconnect with them and reinvigorate their interest in your listings and services.

### What is remarketing?

This advertising technique targets visitors who have previously browsed through your website using highly tailored ads. These ads are based on the pages and content visitors have viewed and are displayed when they visit other high-traffic websites or social media sites.

These ads follow each visitor around the internet and continuously remind them of your brand. Also known as "reminder advertising", it's a great way to recapture the attention of those who have not taken a desired action when they initially visited your website.

If you've ever been on a website and noticed an advert for a product you recently investigated purchasing, you're already familiar with the strategy. The marketers of the shopping website are using remarketing techniques to ensure that you don't forget the products you've viewed.

You can be just as persuasive and reap the rewards of effective remarketing.

### How it works

A marketing expert will integrate a tracking code or "pixel" into your real estate website. This will track website visitors as they browse from page to page throughout the internet. Your ads will then be displayed to them if their website is part of the Google Display Network. Because it's pay-per-click advertising, you are only charged once a visitor has clicked on an advert and visited your website.



Google Ads' remarketing gives you all the features you need to really take advantage of remarketing.

- **Reach almost anyone:** Whatever their device, you can connect with people through over two million websites and mobile apps.
- **Target the right people:** You can create remarketing lists for specific cases. For example, you can create a remarketing list for those who viewed townhouses to let in a particular area.
- **Affordable:** Google has features like automated bidding which can help you create a high-performance campaign that fits your budget.
- **Easy to use:** You can create your ad for free using Ad Gallery.
- **Be in the know:** You can keep track of how your campaign is performing at all times.

## Best practices

You can do a lot with remarketing. Here are some helpful tips to get started.

- **Tailor your advert:** If it matches a potential customer's needs, they'll be more likely to click and return to your website.
- **Segment your target audience:** Each member of your audience is unique. By segmenting them, you can show them adverts that are relevant to what they are actively searching for.
- **Attract sellers and landlords:** You don't need to just focus on sales. You can use remarketing to encourage potential sellers and landlords to sign up for your services.
- **Build your mailing list:** Don't neglect your email newsletter. It's a great way to communicate your marketing messages and keep in regular contact with your clients. Use remarketing ads to promote your newsletter to previous website visitors. They'll be motivated to subscribe and you'll grow your database.

- **Recruit top estate agents:** As your real estate agency grows, you'll attract the attention of top-performing estate agents. Your competition can become your future talent. You can employ remarketing to display recruitment related adverts to anyone who has visited the "Career Opportunity" or "Join our Team" pages on your website.

**PRO MOVE** - As more people visit your website, your 'stalking' pool will grow. Keep refining your strategy and treat each month's results as a learning curve. It's smart to use the performance data from previous months to plan for the future.

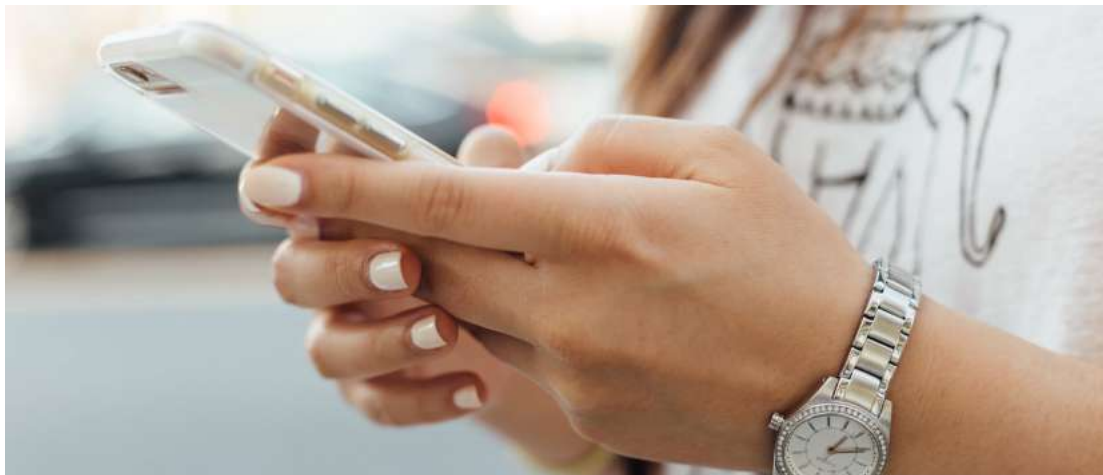
### Takeaway

Remarketing is a second chance to make a good impression. By using it, you can remind your audience about your real estate brand, properties, services or job opportunities and drive them back to your website.

## Making Sense of Platforms

**Fact:** South Africans spend over 8 hours a day online. A third of that time is used on social media. As a real estate agency, social media is no longer a “nice to have”. With such a huge following, they’re a pivotal part of your strategy.

You likely know about some of the platforms and what they can do for you. But, how does that work in practice? This is where our social media chapter comes in. The next 6 sections will help you shine in the world of hashtags, likes, trending topics and shares.



### Defining social media

Social media platforms are mainly websites and/or applications that enable users to create and share content as well as interact with other users. They are evolving at a rapid pace daily.

### Social media vs traditional media

Newspapers, radio adverts, television inserts - they’ve all been a solid part of your marketing arsenal, but social media boasts many advantages over traditional media.

- **Cheaper:** Most social media sites are free to use. You also won’t have to print and distribute your marketing material - it’s completely digital.
- **Immediate:** You can send out a marketing message without a delay. You can also use social media to engage with your audience in real time.
- **Targeting:** You can reach a substantial audience with either type of media. However, social media gives you pinpoint accuracy. Want to target a renter between the ages of 20 and 45 in the Pretoria area? With social media, you can be that specific.
- **Flexible:** Made a mistake with your advert? Or has an advertised property been sold? With traditional media, you couldn’t alter your message. Social media, on the other hand, allows for instant alterations through comments or editing.



- **Useable:** Compared to traditional media, social media is much easier to get the hang of. If you're digitally literate, you have most of the skills you need to market on social media sites.
- **Measurable:** Social media platforms provide a range of feedback tools so you can see how your content is performing.

Every real estate agency should invest in their social media presence. You can use social media sites to find leads, develop your brand, interact with potential customers, and much more.

Choosing the right social media platform can be a challenge. You have many options but we'll focus on the ones that have a strong South African interest.

## Social media platforms you should use

When you want to zero in on a specific demographic, you'll find some social media sites work better than others. By understanding each site's audiences, you can ensure your message is sent to the right people.



**Facebook** is the largest social media platform in the world with a massive user base. According to Brandwatch, 1.49 billion people log in to Facebook daily. With its built-in marketing tools, you can target neighbourhoods and specific demographics with your content.

*Great if you ... Sell or rent residential property. Most Facebook users are consumers which makes targeting them on the platform a breeze.*



**Twitter** allows for real estate agents to get creative in 280 characters. As most real estate websites have social sharing integrations, tweeting your listings from your website with a link is as simple as a click of a button. Retweeting and sharing by other people is a super-fast way to get great exposure for your listings.

*Great if you ... Have a playful or friendly brand presence. Twitter's functionality allows for short bursts of communication that can help you connect with your audience intimately.*



**Instagram** is an emerging platform for real estate professionals as many younger buyers prefer "the gram" to other social media platforms. Targeting Millennials and Generation X/Y with this platform allows you to gain more reach for your real estate posts, as well as increase brand awareness.

*Great if you ... Rent residential properties. The platform is dominated by those aged 25 to 34. You can use it to showcase beautiful properties, their features and surroundings to attract this youthful market.*



**Video marketing** for real estate is significant for the future of marketing for real estate agencies. YouTube is the leading video platform in the digital world. It aids the real estate industry with lead generation and conversions. Videos generate more engagement than images and are more likely to be shared across other social media platforms.

*Great if you ... Prioritise storytelling in your marketing. A YouTube audience wants to be entertained and learn new things. You can post informative how-to videos and show behind-the-scenes moments at your agency.*



Real estate agencies are already using **Pinterest** as a key marketing tool. You can use it to attract potential buyers by creating and sharing eye-catching boards rather than sharing tedious lists of homes for sale.

*Great if you ... Want to target a female audience. Almost 80% of Pinterest users are women. It plays an important role in their buyer journey.*



**LinkedIn** is a professional social media platform that is used for networking and job searching. However, it's a good platform to post high-quality content related to your real estate business. Being active on LinkedIn helps to establish your real estate agency as a professional brand.

*Great if you ... Want to market to businesses. Commercial and industrial brokerages should be taking advantage of it. This is a professional platform with an affluent and influential audience.*

The next sections will get you better acquainted with these social media platforms - and show how to use them effectively.

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## Takeaway

Social media is here to stay and you definitely want to be where your users are spending their time online. Ensure you are part of the chatter and stay relevant.

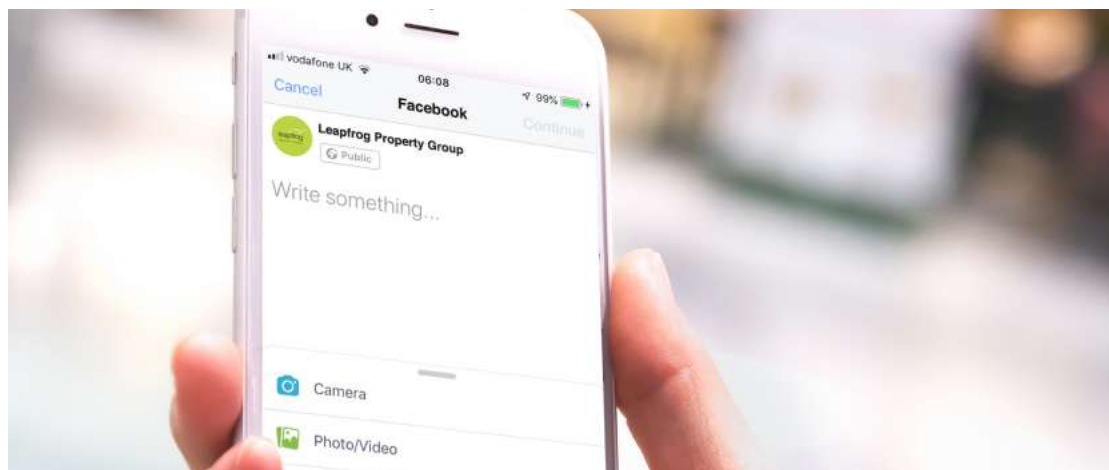
## Facebook

Since its launch to the public in 2006, Facebook has become much more than the ideal way to keep up with friends and family – it's a powerful tool for marketing your residential real estate agency. The global statistics about Facebook are mind-blowing, and they provide an indication of why the platform can be such a game-changing medium for your brand and its message.

- Around the world, **1.49 billion** people log in daily.
- **500 000 new users** are added every day – that means six new profiles every second.
- **45% of Facebook users** rely on the social network as a source of news.
- An average user spends about **20 minutes per day** on Facebook.

Setting up a Facebook page is free. It's never going to put a strain on your finances, provided that you have the time and the know-how to create regular posts that will appear in your followers' feeds and keep them thinking about your brand. If you don't have the time, we recommend hiring an experienced company to manage your engagement.

This section is all about posting on Facebook. Advertising on the platform will be covered in detail in a future chapter.



### So, how often should you be posting?

There's no benefit to starting a Facebook page if you're only going to post fresh content on it once a month. At the same time, if you were to post every hour, you would soon start to irritate your followers, who would then unfollow you. According to the experts, the "sweet spot" lies between posting three times every week and posting once daily. If you decide to choose the three times every week option, you should make sure that your posts are spread out through the week – Monday, Wednesday and Friday would be a great plan to follow.

## What goes into a great Facebook post?

The first thing you need to know is that a Facebook post without a picture is like going to watch a movie without popcorn – it just doesn't work. As the old saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words" and in order for your post to get noticed, your picture should be high impact.

Depending on the content of your post, you could upload a series of pictures of a house that you are marketing. You could also post a picture celebrating the notable achievement of an agent or a picture of an area you are profiling. Whatever the content of your post is, the picture needs to complement the words.

The text that you put into a Facebook post needs to be carefully structured – while Facebook's character limit is so high that it should never be a consideration, people have very short attention spans. Generally speaking, the longer your post is, the less likely someone is to read the whole thing. If you need to say more, direct the user to your website with a call to action. Make sure the text in your post is to-the-point, interesting and free of spelling/grammar errors.

## Great content for Facebook posts

With a little imagination, it's easy to find content that makes a good Facebook post:

**1**

### Properties for sale

Facebook provides an excellent platform to advertise selected listings, particularly properties that will be on show in the coming weeks. A post like this should include high-quality pictures of the property, as well as a brief overview of what it has to offer. This will need to be a summarised and social-media optimised version of the blurb about the property. Avoid just copying and pasting the existing text from your website. If you're a multi-office brand, keep your property marketing for regional Facebook pages so that followers only receive relevant content.

**2**

### Company insider posts

Let your audience get to know you a little better by keeping them up to date with what's happening in the office. Facebook provides a great opportunity to introduce new real estate agents who may have joined your team and to celebrate milestones like anniversaries or achievements.

**3**

### News articles

You can share news articles by pasting a link to the article into your post and then writing a sentence or two to tell your audience why it's interesting and relevant. Review this previous chapter on how to find relevant topics to write about. There's even a way to make the link text disappear so that the news article becomes a seamless element of your post.

4

**Industry tips and trends**

Your Facebook page is a great place to share snippets of industry-related information. For example, information about any changes implemented to the property-buying process would naturally be of interest to someone who has chosen to follow a real estate company on social media. Similarly, any changes to interest rates, repo rates or transfer duties will always be relevant to your audience.

5

**Video**

Videos are an important factor for your website's success. You'll find it works for your Facebook page too. Your social media audience is hungry for content that answers their questions, entertains them and tells them more about what you do. Rise to the demand! You can also use Facebook's live video streaming feature. It's a good way to showcase that luxury apartment, do a Q&A session with your top agent or give a behind-the-scenes look at an event - all in real-time.

**The 80/20 rule**

80% of the content that you upload to your Facebook page should be focused on your customers. Think of things to say that are related to why they have connected with you – which is to buy, sell or rent residential real estate. The other 20% of your content can be posts where you talk about your business – what you offer, what you have achieved and what sets you apart from your competitors.

**PRO MOVE** - Thanks to Facebook's scheduling tool, there's no need to be in front of your computer or on your phone at the moment when you want your latest post to go live. Facebook now has its own scheduling service, so making use of an external scheduling programme is no longer necessary. There are also ways to link your website and Facebook page so that news articles and/or properties are posted automatically without having to double data capture into Facebook.

**Takeaway**

Facebook is everywhere and thanks to the power of smartphones, it goes everywhere with your clients and potential clients. By posting regular, quality content on your Facebook page, you can keep your agency at your clients' fingertips and foremost in their minds.

## Twitter

The previous section revealed how you can use Facebook to promote your real estate business. With Twitter, you can expand on your goals. Launched in 2006, Twitter is a microblogging tool known for its punchy, rapid 280-character posts. The platform has become a go-to space to catch up on breaking news, keep up with celebrities and share your thoughts. When you log on, you'll instantly recognise it by its blue bird logo.

Twitter has a substantial following. Here are some fascinating facts:

- Currently, there are **330 million active** users.
- Each day, **500 million tweets** (Twitter posts) are sent.
- After a day, these tweets would fill a **10-million-page book**.

Those numbers are exciting but they present a challenge. You have to really understand Twitter to create a ripple in the Twittersphere. Once you do, it can help you grow your agency.



### Why you should use Twitter

Compared to Facebook, Twitter's seriously underutilised by real estate companies across SA. It's likely most of your competitors are using it incorrectly - if at all. With this in mind, you can leap ahead of other real estate agencies and ...

- Become a local authority in your community
- Find and engage with leads
- Create a strong brand presence
- Drive more traffic to your website

The world's biggest brands are on Twitter. You can join them in just six simple steps. Once you do, you'll need to think strategically.



## Understand your Twitter goals

It's easy to find yourself firing off tweets one after the other. However, it's best to create a clear and concise content plan which will guide what you post throughout the day, week and month. Your content plan should provide value-driven and brand-centric info like interesting facts about the neighbourhood/s you specialise in. It should showcase your local expertise and provide updates relevant to your market.

It's also important to figure out who your target audience is: Are you trying to gain the attention of buyers and sellers, tenants and landlords, or property investors and developers? Or all of the above? This will determine the direction of your content plan.

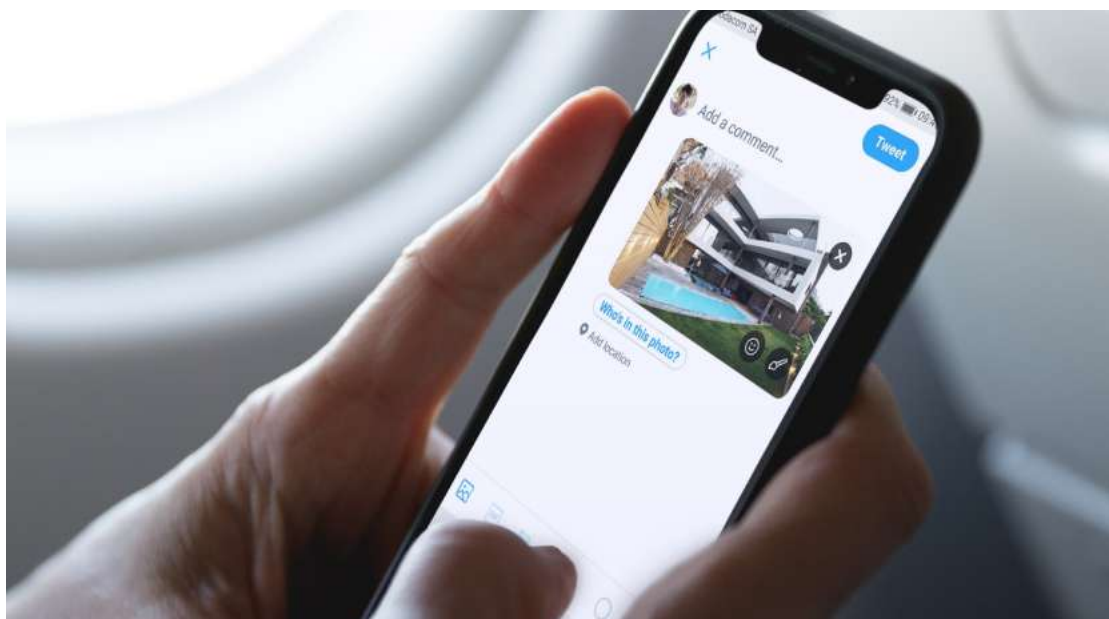
By first understanding who your target market is, you can then go on to answer other important questions on the road to determining your Twitter goals.

- What unique opinions/advice can you share that positions your company as a property leader in your community?
- How can you help or engage with your target audience?
- What makes your real estate company stand out? This could be your property listings, services, brand position, etc.
- What end results are you hoping to achieve using Twitter? This could be generating new leads, gaining new followers, etc.

Once you've set your Twitter goals, you're ready to start tweeting.

## Post a great tweet

There isn't a perfect formula that works all the time. However, top tweets tend to have at least some of the the following seven important features.





1

**Concise**

Keep it short, sweet and to the point.

2

**Call to action**

Don't be afraid to tell your audience what you want them to do.

3

**Topical**

You can add your thoughts to trending topics on the site.

4

**Hashtags**

Use one or two that are related to your industry.

5

**Human**

People want to talk to people - not a marketing robot. Be genuine. Add value.

6

**Creative**

You have so many options to make your tweet interesting: Photos, GIFs, videos and polls.

7

**Emotive**

If your tweet can create a reaction from your audience, it will be more effective.

Keeping this in mind, you won't have any problems getting likes and retweets for your content. By creating relevant posts, you'll successfully engage your audience.

## What you can post

You're well on your way to becoming a master property tweeter. Here are some ideas that you can use in your content plan.

- **Properties for sale or rent:** Promoting your listed properties will generate great exposure on the platform, especially if you choose to promote properties that are sole mandates, on-show or have sought-after features. Don't forget to back this up with a well-written description and high-quality pictures/videos.
- **News and advice articles:** Twitter is the perfect place to showcase your unique insight and opinions. You can share your articles from your website to the platform. A quality piece will drive traffic back to your website and over time these will cement your status as an industry leader. You can also share articles from other Twitter accounts that are relevant to your brand.
- **Insiders:** Throwing a Halloween party at your office? Reached a new milestone? Or are new staff members joining? Personalise your tweets a little and let your followers know what's going on behind the scenes. This not only adds colour and fun to your Twitter account but also allows people to get to know you better.

### How often should you tweet?

A SocialBakers study found that you will see the most engagement when tweeting three times per day. The general rule of thumb is that you should average between three to five tweets per day.

### When should you tweet?

The best day of the week to tweet is Wednesday. The best times are at 12 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm, and 6 pm. The tweets of business-to-customer real estate agencies perform 17% better over the weekends.

As you post, you'll quickly work out which times and days get the most engagement from your audience.

### Be sociable

Twitter is all about connecting. You should use Twitter to network, get your name out there and build a trustworthy reputation in your industry. Be sure to interact with relevant industry leaders - those whose opinions enhance your brand and can help you promote your listed properties and services.

You can engage with them by liking, commenting, retweeting and hosting ongoing group chats. However you choose to engage, remember to always keep it relevant to your goals of your agency and add value to the Twitter space.

**PRO MOVE** - To make engagement easier, you can use Twitter Lists. This lets you place your followers into organised lists that can fall into various categories such as clients, competitors, prospects and partners. Once these lists are created, you can monitor or reply to tweets in a more organised way. This also ensures that you don't miss any important enquiries.

### Takeaway

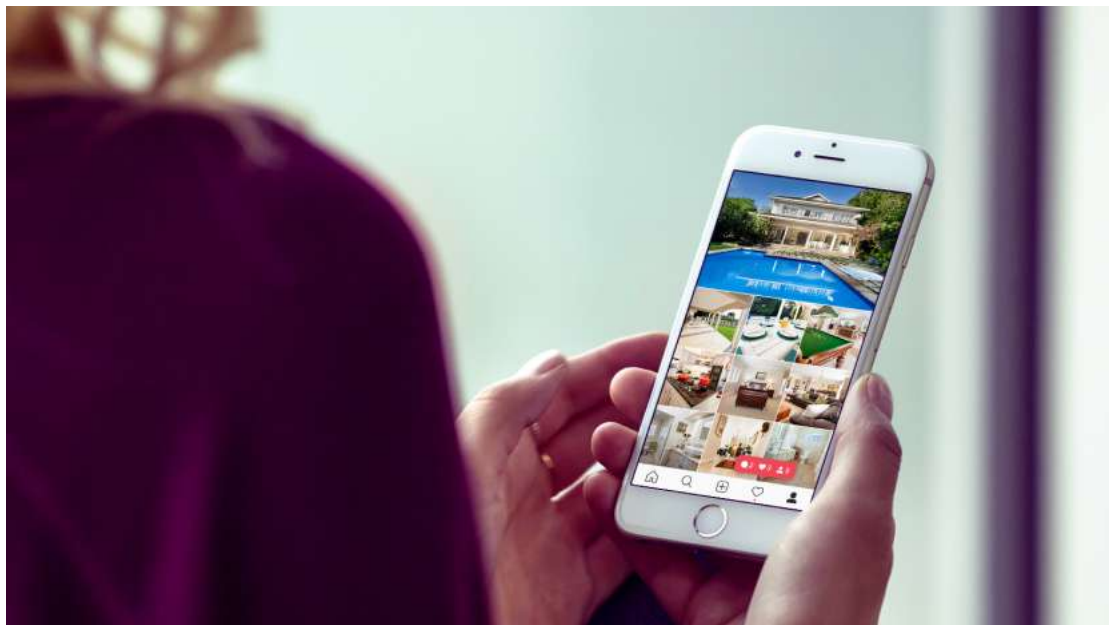
Like Facebook, Twitter is a powerful way to engage with your audience. By tweeting regularly with impactful posts, Twitter can help you become a trusted name in your community, create a friendly and approachable brand, attract new clients and cement existing relationships.

## Instagram

When you think “Instagram”, it’s easy to imagine celebrity selfies, avocado on toast and pet antics. Remove that cynical filter for a moment. There are 28,096,133 posts tagged with the #realestate hashtag alone.

### What is Instagram?

This is the largest photo and video-sharing networking app in the social media space. Instagrammers use the platform to connect with people sharing similar interests, find new photos or videos, as well as share their own content. Other users have the option of following you back if they’re interested in your content and interactions on the site.



### Is Instagram for me?

You’ve seen the advantages Facebook and Twitter can bring. Instagram is another powerful marketing tool at your disposal. You can use it to attract leads, get views to your property listings and even increase engagement with your potential buyers and sellers. Photos sell property and Instagram is the leading social platform for image sharing.

Need an extra push? Here are some facts you need to know.

- 1 billion people use Instagram every month
- 95 million posts are uploaded each day
- Users ‘like’ 4.2 billion posts per day
- 75% of users take action

The beauty of Instagram is that it's fun and really simple to use. You can share amazing photos and videos of your listings to your audience and edit them in-app and on the go from your phone anywhere in the world. All you need is a smartphone and a reliable internet connection.

## Setting up your Instagram account

It's easy to create your account. You can do it in five minutes by following Instagram's simple steps. Going further, these tips will help you promote your content:

**1**

### Choose an on-brand handle:

It's best to go with a name that matches your agency's name. If your estate agents create their own account, they should use their full name. If their name is taken, they should include their surname. For example, "@TonyStark" creates a better impression for clients rather than "@IronMan4Ever".

**2**

### Add a professional picture:

For your agency, opt for your logo. Encourage your real estate agents to use professional headshots with a smile - approachability is everything!

**3**

### Write a strong bio:

You have 150 characters. Make each one count! Talk about how you can help potential clients meet their goals. Highlight your achievements and include your contact info like a website or email address. Don't be afraid to add some personality with emojis. Instagram is a fun space - as long as it fits your brand, you'll be fine.

**4**

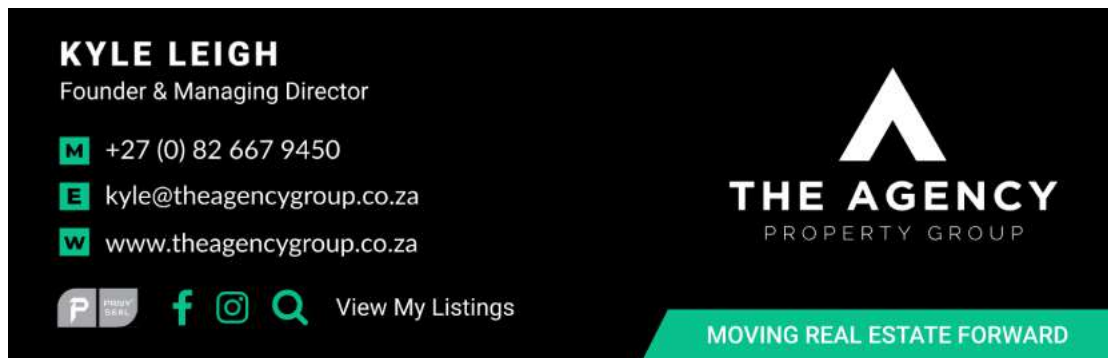
### Become a follower:

Instagram is about engagement. Be sure to follow users and brands that are relevant to your industry or linked to your agency.

**5**

### Promote your profile:

Get your employees, current clients and previous ones to follow your account. You should make an announcement on email or your other social media platforms. You can also include an Instagram button your website and your agency's email signatures.



After you're done, you should convert your account to a business account at a later stage. With it, you'll get access to business features and Instagram Insights that will help you better understand who your profile is engaging on the platform.

Now that you've joined the #InstaSquad, you can start posting. Of course, we'll show you how to do it strategically.

## How you can use Instagram

### Flaunt your listings

You've listed a beautiful home for sale. With stunning views, stately architecture and elegant furnishings, it's just the type of property you want to show on Instagram. Use the right hashtag to help your post rank higher in an Instagram search. These are a combination of letters preceded by the # symbol, eg. #propertyforsale #dreamhome #homedecor.

Posts with a particular hashtag will rank higher depending on:

- How often it is used
- How popular your post is
- When you shared your post
- The strength of your audience

The higher your post ranks in a search the more discoverable it will be by audiences who do not already follow you.

**PRO MOVE** - The more you post on Instagram the more engagement and traffic you will get. Include posts like photos from houses just sold/rented, success stories and testimonials from clients, walkthroughs of homes, as well as introduce your agents to your audience.

### Connect with potential leads

Did someone like your post? Check who they are. They may very well be a prospect you'd want to reach out to with a marketing message. Respond to comments and use direct messages to create a conversation.

## **Boost your client referrals**

Encourage your clients to tag their Instagram friends on your listing posts, testimonials or even a generic motivational post. This is a great way to attract new followers and build your client base.

## **Stalk your competition**

Are competing real estate agencies and their agents using Instagram? You can use the platform to keep an eye on their activities. Instagram is also great if you want to stay on top of real estate trends.

## **Market your event**

You can use Instagram to show off your open houses and other events as they happen. Use live posts and Stories to show your audience exactly what they're missing out on, as well as interact with them in real time. These features are also wonderful if you want to do a virtual tour of a new property you've secured.

## **Measure your performance**

Remember that business profile we told you to create? It's going to come in handy as you become active on the platform. Your business profile gives you access to Instagram Insights. This provides valuable data on specific audiences such as visitor traffic, clicks, and user demographics. Just like Facebook, your agency can use Instagram Insights to ensure that the audience you're attracting fits with the target profile created for your ideal lead.

## **Get an edge with Instagram Ads**

Your real estate agency can also optimise your Instagram account by using paid advertising. With Instagram Ads, you pay to post sponsored content on the platform. This lets you reach a larger and more targeted audience. Instagram Ads can assist your agency with brand exposure, website traffic, generating new leads, and converting current leads.

---

## **Takeaway**

Your Instagram account has the potential to be a captivating portfolio and lead generator for your agency. It's visually arresting, simple to use and growing. There's no better time than now to get your agency active on the app.

## YouTube

Let's turn our attention to YouTube, which, after Google, is the world's biggest search engine. YouTube is a video-sharing platform where people can upload videos as well as watch (and like or dislike and comment on) videos that other people or companies have uploaded.

If a picture says 1 000 words, then a video is worth 1 000 pictures. Think of a YouTube video of one of your listings as a showhouse which potential clients can attend without having to leave their home or their office. As an added bonus, once you've uploaded a video to YouTube, you can quickly and easily add the video clip to a property listing on your website.

Creating a YouTube account and channel is free. Once you start posting videos and getting subscribers, it provides a great way to get your message and your property listings out there.



### The epic success of YouTube

To get an indication of just how powerful video is, here are some astounding statistics on YouTube's popularity:

- 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute.
- Every month, eight out of every 10 people between the ages of 18 and 49 watch at least one video on YouTube.
- Almost 5 billion videos are watched online every day.

Those numbers hold great potential for your real estate agency, but if you're planning to hatch a YouTube marketing strategy, you need to know the ins and outs of the platform.



## Essential definitions

### Channel

Anyone who joins YouTube can create a channel. This groups all your videos in one place and gives you the opportunity to enter a personal description or introduction to your agency and what you offer. If you have a business channel, then your channel can have more than one owner or manager. This makes it easy for somebody who has been drawn to one of your videos to find other properties that you have showcased.

### Subscribers

A subscriber is someone who has signed up to your YouTube channel. If you get a notification from YouTube that you have a new subscriber, it means that someone has decided to follow your channel to make sure they don't miss out on any of your videos.

## The benefits of YouTube for real estate agencies

YouTube videos provide the perfect opportunity for you to bring your listings to life and expose prospective clients to engaging content.

Consider these benefits as well:

- It's free unlike some third-party applications! There are no costs involved to post content or respond to comments.
- The potential for exposure of your real estate brand on YouTube is phenomenal.
- According to research carried out in 2018, 78% of marketers report a good return on investment from video marketing.
- Putting videos on YouTube can help you to achieve a higher rank on Google.
- They help potential buyers and tenants evaluate a property, which will reduce the number of viewings arranged for properties that won't match requirements or tastes.

Those numbers hold great potential for your real estate agency, but if you're planning to hatch a YouTube marketing strategy, you need to know the ins and outs of the platform.

## So, how often should you be posting?

The general consensus is that you should upload a video at least once a week. That's not to say that you can't upload more often than that if you have lots of new listings. The purpose of uploading at least one video per week is to be consistent. Consistency breeds trust and if your subscribers can see that you are regularly showcasing new listings, they will recognise your agency as credible and trustworthy.

## Tips for taking great quality video

Good quality video is the heartbeat of your YouTube channel. While no one expects you to become a world-renowned film director or videographer, there are some easy tips you can follow to take fantastic footage of your listing.

- Use a camcorder if possible, or a top-quality smartphone if you don't have access to a camcorder. Make sure your footage is not grainy, shaky or blurred.
- Ensure that the home is clean and tidy. Clutter will never be a selling point.
- Take the time to stage the property, making sure that duvets have been smoothed down, personal pictures of homeowners have been taken down and that cupboard doors are all closed.
- Take footage of every room at a time of day when there is as much natural light as possible.
- If you have access to a drone, make the most of it and include aerial footage in your video.
- The footage that you capture will more than likely not be your final video. You will need to edit it to make sure that the final video flows from scene to scene and is polished.

**PRO MOVE** - Although any video is better than none, if you really want to impress your users, hire a professional to take and compile your video. Ideally this would be the same person taking your property photographs. They could create a video that includes still images, your branding and even subtle music.

## Posting videos as part of a plan

Videos form part of your content plan, just like Facebook posts, tweets and Instagram posts do. Having a plan has a wide range of benefits for your social media strategy. It means nothing will be accidentally left out, and that every video is well-timed and well-purposed. For example, there would be no use in uploading a video of a property that's on show this Sunday if it's already 3 pm on Sunday afternoon.

## Takeaway

YouTube brings together two of the things that people love most about the internet: a search engine and videos. By uploading high-quality videos of available properties, you give potential buyers a new way to discover their new home or their next investment.

## Pinterest

If you're wondering what Pinterest is, you're not alone. Most people, including real estate agents, know very little about this social media platform - if anything at all. If you're one of them, then you're missing out on big benefits that come with using it.

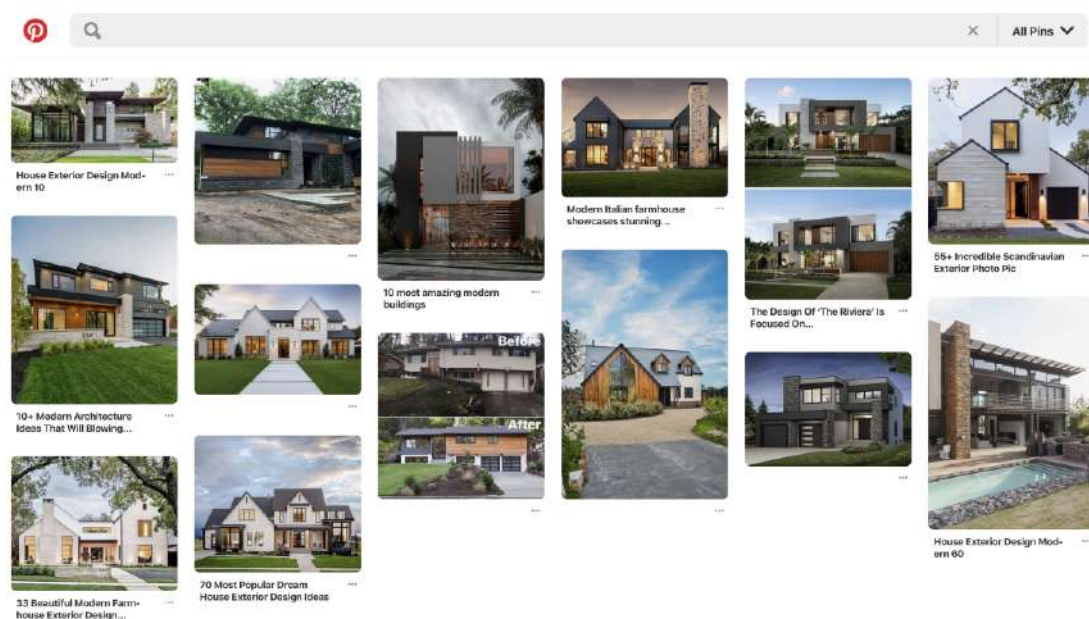
### What is Pinterest?

Pinterest is a free-to-use social media platform and powerful visual search engine where users share images, videos and blog posts with their followers.

Posting is known as "pinning". Whatever you pin gets added to your "board". Your board is a collection of pins, typically with a common theme, for example, homes with great entertainment features. You can also pin items to the boards of other users (if given permission), as well as browse what they have pinned.

Pinterest's goal is to connect everyone in the world through the 'things' they find interesting. From these interesting facts, you can see they're making it happen.

- There are 291 million monthly active users worldwide
- One out of every two millennials uses Pinterest every month
- 79.5% of Pinterest users are female
- 43% of them plan on getting their ideal home within the next five years



## Why you should use Pinterest

With so many users - many who plan to buy a home in the future - this is a good place to help you achieve your goals. Pinterest has the potential to:

- Attract more leads
- Showcase your property listings
- Draw attention to the location/s you specialise in
- Better engage with your target audiences
- Show that you are interested in other things that make a home a home, not just selling

## Keywords are important, always

Pinterest has a powerful ability to generate highly tailored results unique to the keywords that users are searching for. With this in mind, your pins need to contain keywords when you're describing them. This will ultimately help users find your posts. Remember, any form of digital marketing is pointless without being discoverable.

The key is to choose two or three keywords that most capture what the pin is about. Then incorporate these into your description.

## Promote a lifestyle

Before you create a content plan for Pinterest, it's important to remember that the platform is highly centred on the lifestyle of individuals. It's a place where people share their tastes, likes and discover new interests. In this process, it allows them to discover likeminded people.

Once you take this into consideration, Pinterest becomes a goldmine to attract new clients to your real estate company. After all, selling a home is ultimately selling a lifestyle. You can create boards that showcase the lifestyle that your homes offer. From living in luxury to enjoying wide-open gardens spaces, use the platform to promote sought-after and unique residential features.

## Your content plan

The content plan you create for Pinterest needs to be engaging, add value and capture the attention of those who come across your pins. It needs to convince users that your posts are worth clicking. And don't forget to add attention-grabbing image/s and well-written descriptions with every pin you create. Side note: Descriptions have a 500-character limit.

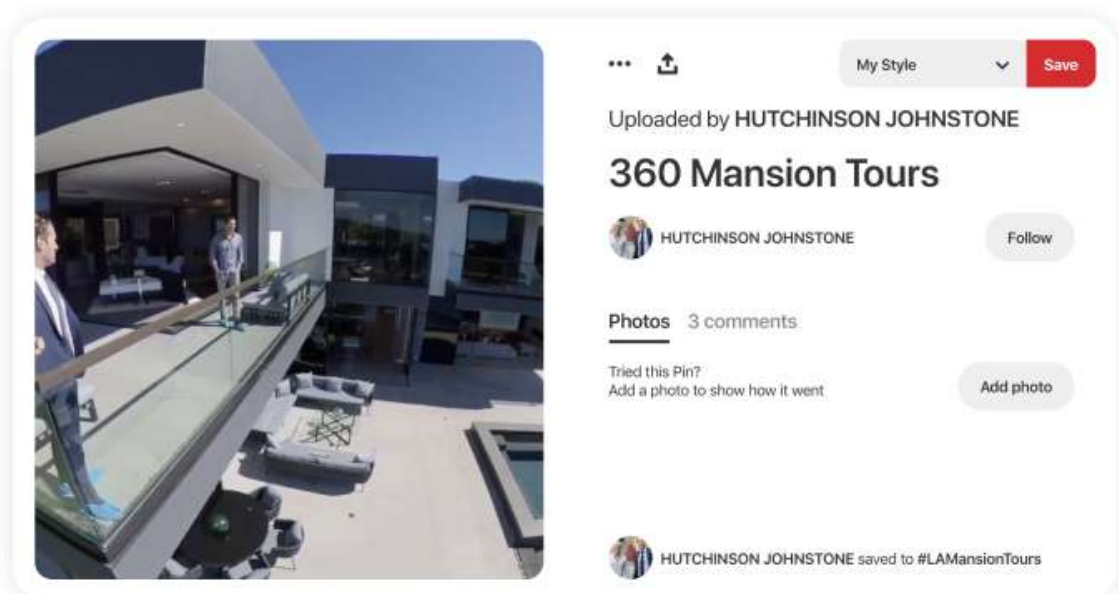
**Blogging:** If you have a website that enables you to post area profiles and news articles (or blogs), these will be great to share on Pinterest. It will also drive traffic back to your website when users click on it. These will need to be unique, engaging and written professionally. In this way, you will be seen as trusted and reliable. Write and share articles that are relevant to your brand, such as latest property trends, advice and tips and area information.

Below are examples of news articles you could share on Pinterest for a real estate company based in Randburg:

- 1 Randburg's distinct residential market generates healthy buy-to-let returns
- 2 The residents of Randburg love these 4 activities
- 3 Randburg lights up for families this festive season

**Listings:** What better place to promote your listings than a platform that focuses on stunning visuals. So don't let your listings hide on your website. Instead, release them into the world of Pinterest. Share homes that have been expertly photographed with beautiful features such as designer finishes, well-manicured gardens and trendy entertainment areas. Be sure to provide a link of the property listing in the description.

**Video:** Uploading videos on Pinterest is becoming more popular among businesses. It has now become simpler to upload thanks to the now easier-to-use video uploader located under the business profile section. Videos that perform well are those that are inspiring, encourage an action and provide step-by-step "how-to" tutorials. Take a look at a walk-through video of a home in Bel Air, Los Angeles.



## Uniquely Pinterest

If you already have a social media presence on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, you may be thinking of overlooking Pinterest. However, if you do, you will miss out on unique marketing opportunities that only the platform can offer.

The magic of Pinterest lies in how it allows you to organise the content you post. Thanks to 'boards', your pins can be organised into various themes.

### Create a board dedicated to ...

- Your listings, focusing mainly on sole mandates
- The neighbourhoods you specialise in
- Insightful property tips and advice

Once you start creating pins and boards, those following you (including your potential clients) can save it to their own Pinterest account. This gives your real estate agency a permanent home on their account.

### How often should you post?

Experts say you should post a minimum of three pins per day, with a maximum of 30 pins. You'll get your best engagement after working hours. The best time to post is between 8-11 pm. The best day is on Saturday.

**PRO MOVE** - Creating boards offers many great opportunities to be found on search engines and build your network with other industry experts. For SEO purposes, create a board that has your business name, address and phone number in the description to help people find you when they do a search, whether on the platform or Google.

## Takeaway

YouTube brings together two of the things that people love most about the internet: a search engine and videos. By uploading high-quality videos of available properties, you give potential buyers a new way to discover their new home or their next investment.



## LinkedIn

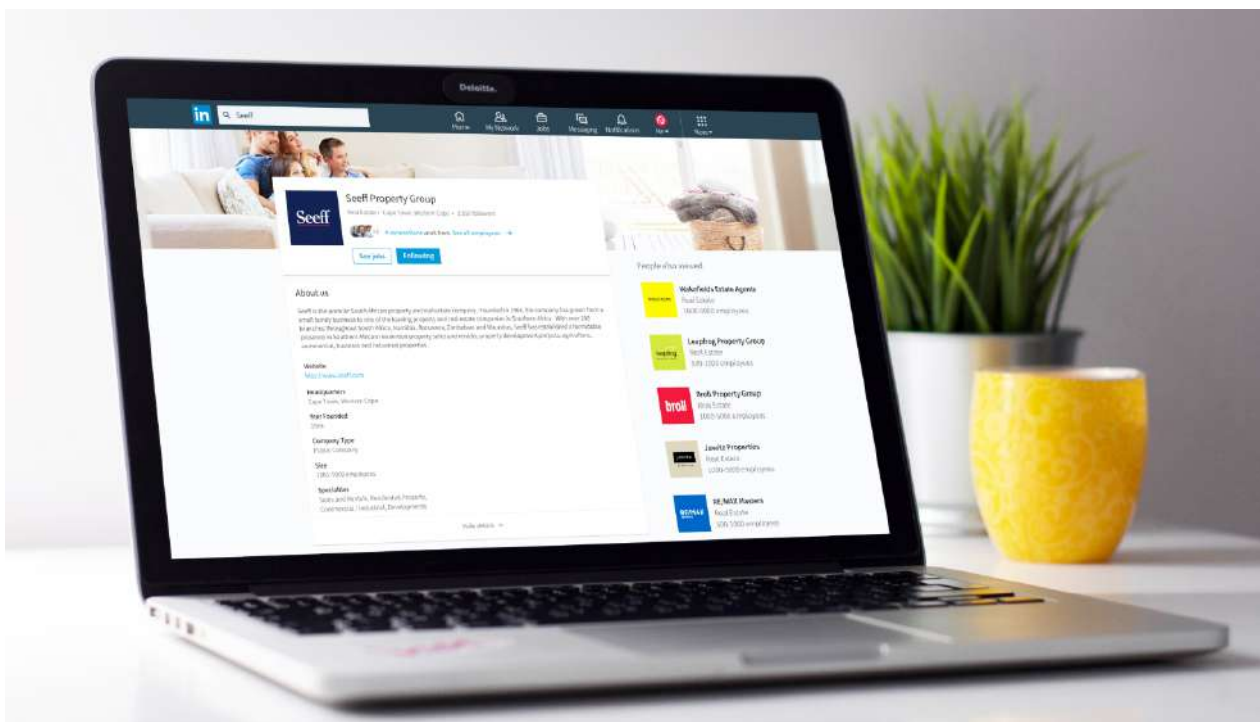
Your social media strategy is in full bloom. You've highlighted top listings on Facebook. On Twitter, you've launched your first Q&A session. Your Instagram account is showcasing your personality with vibrant pictures. On Pinterest, you've pinned the ultimate homeownership experience. You're not done just yet. LinkedIn is a power player in its own right. After this chapter, you'll use it to win the hearts (and business!) of its users.

### What is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a social media network that sprung to life in 2003. As a social network for professionals, career-focused content is a defining feature. The platform is filled with prospective and current employers, employees and colleagues. If you're wondering why LinkedIn matters for your real estate agency, here are some startling statistics:

- In South Africa, it's the second-biggest platform after Facebook.
- Two million posts, articles and videos are published on LinkedIn daily.
- 45 percent of LinkedIn users are in upper management.
- It's 277% more effective for lead generation than Facebook and Twitter.

Excited by the idea of targeting a successful local professional? Great! There are so many reasons you should sign up now.





## Why you should use LinkedIn

LinkedIn users may not be on the site to buy or rent their dream property. That doesn't mean you won't get any bang for time invested (yes, LinkedIn is free). Here are 6 ways the site can help you:

- 1** Boost your brand efforts.
- 2** Promote your products and services.
- 3** Drive traffic to your website.
- 4** Engage with current and future clients.
- 5** Recruit talent for your agency.
- 6** Keep an eye on your competitors.

## Setting up your LinkedIn account

Your LinkedIn account is the voice of your agency. To start, you'll need a personal LinkedIn account. Once you do, follow the simple steps on this link.

Of course, you'll want to get all the lead-generating, brand-building, star-employee-finding benefits the network has to offer. Use these tips and tricks to do just that.

- **Complete all your profile fields**  
This gives you credibility and optimises your profile for more visibility on the site.
- **Add a logo and background photo**  
Give your profile a personality punch by adding your agency's logo. For your background, choose something that speaks to your brand. It could be a product focus like a beautiful property, an image of your team or top-selling branch. Whatever you choose, ensure the image is high quality, eye catching and tasteful.
- **Optimise your bio**  
People might not directly be looking for listings on LinkedIn. But, they are searching for possible employers in the property industry or real estate agencies they might be interested in. You can add relevant keywords to your summary and About tab.

- **Add Career Pages**

By enhancing your account with Career Pages, you'll take your account up a notch. You'll get to add Life and Job tabs that give your audience a look into your agency, culture and work opportunities.

**PRO MOVE** - You can create multiple versions of the Life tab to target different audiences. For example, you might want to tell a different story to a real estate agent candidate than a marketing or finance candidate.

- **Create Showcase Pages**

These act as extensions of your account and let you spotlight different parts of your agency. For example, you could create showcase pages to feature different branches. You could separate the sales and rentals divisions of your agency. The advantage is that these pages have different personas you could target in a personalised way.

- **Tell everyone**

You should share your profile on your other platforms. Add contacts you've previously emailed and encourage employees - past and present - to join your network. You could also add an icon to your website, email signature and press releases to get the word out there.

## Posting great content

Your audience wants useful, insightful, inspirational and relevant content. Give them the kind of content they need and make them an excited traveller on your agency's journey.

- Create a content calendar with a defined strategy so you put out the right content at the right time.
- Share new services, property trends, job opportunities or give a behind-the-scenes peek at your agency's activities.
- Provide a variety of content like presentations, blog posts from your website and videos. You can give your blogs a higher reach by syndicating them to LinkedIn Pulse.
- Make sure your brand's personality carries through, but do keep it professional. The memes and lighthearted videos you might post on Facebook or Instagram will not resonate on LinkedIn.
- When should you post? According to Hubspot, aim to post on LinkedIn between 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Wednesday is the best day to be active on the site.
- Follow the four-to-one rule - for every four useful posts you share, you can get one out that directly promotes your agency.

- Share posts from other accounts to build relationships. This works well if your employees are creating content - you'll essentially be high-fiving them while making your own profile shine with new insights.
- You can focus your reach by contributing and sharing content to relevant groups. For example, you would get more traction on Real Estate Investor or Luxury Real Estate Network vs Gourmet Chocolate Industry. These groups have professionals interested in real estate that will help make your name as a thought leader in your field.
- Analyse your progress with LinkedIn's analytics. It will help you understand how your content is doing and enlighten you about your audience.

For many LinkedIn users, your content may very well be the first touchpoint with your agency. By following these pointers, you'll make a super first impression.

### Take it further with LinkedIn Ads

You can enhance your organic postings by advertising on LinkedIn Ads. With it, you can target your audience by job title, function, industry, and more. Is your goal lead generation, brand awareness or even event registrations? LinkedIn Ads will help you get the most from the site.



### Takeaway

Ignoring LinkedIn is a missed brand building opportunity. You've got the basics down. As you work your way through the site's features, you'll quickly build your confidence and start attracting the right people to your business.

## Powerful Choices

Facebook is everywhere. Those three powerful words concluded our Facebook chapter. And they've never felt truer. With now 2.37 billion monthly active users, almost everyone you know uses it.

You've started posting organic content to build your brand and nurture relationships. Is there a way to get even more out of the platform? Yes! With Facebook ads, you can get real results immediately.

### What are Facebook ads?

These are paid messages you can place on Facebook. Written in your voice, they can target the people who matter to you. You can create campaigns with specific advertising objectives to help you meet your goals. The ads you create will then feature in the News Feed of Facebook users and in the right column of their Facebook on the desktop version.

The image shows a Facebook sponsored advertisement for RE/MAX Masters. At the top left is the RE/MAX logo, followed by the text "RE/MAX Masters" and "Sponsored". Below this is the headline "10 Reasons you should join RE/MAX Masters". The main visual is a hot air balloon with the RE/MAX logo on it, floating over a landscape with green hills under a blue sky. To the right of the balloon, the text "10 Reasons you should join RE/MAX Masters" is displayed. In the bottom right corner of the image area is a red button with a magnifying glass icon and the word "Discover". Below the image area is a light blue bar with the word "Discover!" on the left and a "Learn More" button on the right. Underneath this bar, there are icons for likes and comments, showing "435" likes and "4 Comments 25 Shares". At the bottom are three buttons: "Like", "Comment", and "Share". The entire ad is framed by a thin grey border, and at the very bottom, the RE/MAX logo and "RE/MAX Masters Sponsored" text are repeated.

## Facebook ad benefits

The world's biggest social media platform has really invested in their advertising experience. Here are reasons that will have you launching your first Facebook ad today.

- **Get brand awareness**

Your ad stays visible on Facebook user feeds even if they don't click it. In this way, they are a constant reminder of your brand, property listings and services.

- **It's affordable**

You set your budget and control how much you spend from the start.

- **Impressive reach**

The stats are true. Facebook lets you reach millions of people. Imagine the possibilities for your agency!

- **Target your audience**

With laser-focused precision, you can get your ad seen by your ideal audience. For example, you might be selling retirement homes in Nelspruit. You can create a Facebook ad that target users aged 50+ older in that area.

- **Fall in love with remarketing**

You can also target people who have visited your website or signed up to your email newsletter. They'll see ads from your agency in their Facebook feed without even liking your Facebook page. You'll learn more about this in an upcoming section.

- **Bring in the leads**

Facebook ads help you find new clients and engage with your current ones. You'll be able to collect information including their names, email addresses, phone numbers , and more.

- **Simple to use**

You can create an account in no time and it takes just a few clicks to put your ad together. You can also boost your organic posts instead of creating Facebook ads from scratch.

- **Customise your ad**

There is a range of formats you can create. You can even choose to use images, videos and GIFs to make your ad engaging.

- **An updated platform**

Facebook is always introducing new features to make your advertising experience simpler and more effective. For example, they added customisable templates for creating holiday-themed promotions last year.

- **Analyse your results**

Facebook's analytics helps you track how your ad is doing. It gives you insights like the number of people reached and how they interacted (like, click, comment, share) with your ad.

If your agency has a Facebook page, you're already a step closer to enjoying all these benefits.

## Setting up your Facebook ad account

There are two ways to create and publish ads. You can do it from your business page or by using Ads Manager.

### Steps for your business page:

You can choose to boost an organic post. Just click on the "Boost Post" button to get started. You can also drive traffic to your website by clicking on the "Promote" button.

Steps for Ads Manager:

- 1** Click on this link to open the Ads Manager interface. You can also navigate to it from your agency's Facebook page. In the left menu toward the bottom, you'll see a link for Ads Manager. You may need to select "View More" before it is visible. Then, select "Ads Manager".
- 2** Choose your campaign objective. If your priority is making a sale, you'd best opt for lead generation.
- 3** Click on the "Set up Ad Account" button to continue. From here you'll get to customise your ad according to your intended audience, budget and time you'd like your ad to appear.
- 4** After you set up your account details, you can choose your ad format.


## Types of Facebook ads

**Images:** These ads are made up of an image and body text. To prevent your ad from being penalised, keep image text under 20% of the image. This will ensure your ad reaches its full audience.


**PRO MOVE** - You can use Facebook's Image Text Check tool to keep within the right text/image balance.



**Carousel:** This ad lets you show two or more images and/or videos, headlines and links or calls to action in a single ad. Anyone who sees your ad can then scroll through the carousel cards by swiping on mobile phones or tablets or clicking the arrows on a computer screen.



**Chas Everitt Luxury Winelands**  
**Sponsored**

Here are some listings that we think you would be interested in.



**VAL DE VIE ESTATE**

[View Listing](#)



**RESIDENTIAL ESTATE IN VAL DE VIE**

[View Listing](#)


**PEARL VALL GOLF COURSE**

**Instant Experience:** This is a full-screen experience that opens when your ad is clicked on a mobile device. Instant Experiences lets users browse, discover and buy/rent a property or sign up for a service you offer in a visually impactful way.

**Collection:** This ad includes an Instant Experience i.e. a full-screen experience. It is made up of a cover image or video, followed by images of your property listing images or services.

**Video:** As its name suggests, this ad lets you show off your agency using a video. Your video length can be 15 seconds (or less) with support for multiple aspect ratios depending on the placement.





**Shelley Residential**  
31 August at 04:00 · 🌐

#OnTheMarket: 19a David McLean Dr  
Westville Central - If you're looking for a spacious three bedroom lock-up-and-go townhouse with modern finishes and nature reserve in a secure central location, click here: <https://bit.ly/2ZD8srC>  
Or call Josh on 071 899 4656 to book an exclusive viewing. ... [See more](#)

WWW.SHELLEY.CO.ZA

**Central & Modern Lock-up-and-go!** [Learn More](#)

👍❤️😮 77 4 comments 9 shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share 🧑🏿▼

**Catalogs:** This is a container that holds information about your listings or services like images, prices, features, and more.

**Stories:** These ads are full-screen image, video or carousel ads that appear between stories on Facebook.

Each day, thousands of ads are placed on Facebook. To get noticed, pick the ad that meets your objective. You'll also do well by being creative. Choose vibrant images, intriguing videos and catchy copy to make your advert stand out.

## Takeaway

You've taken the time to get listings and perfect your service offerings. Use Facebook ads to reach people who need them. Next week, we'll take a look at how you can do this with attractive, click-worthy image ads.

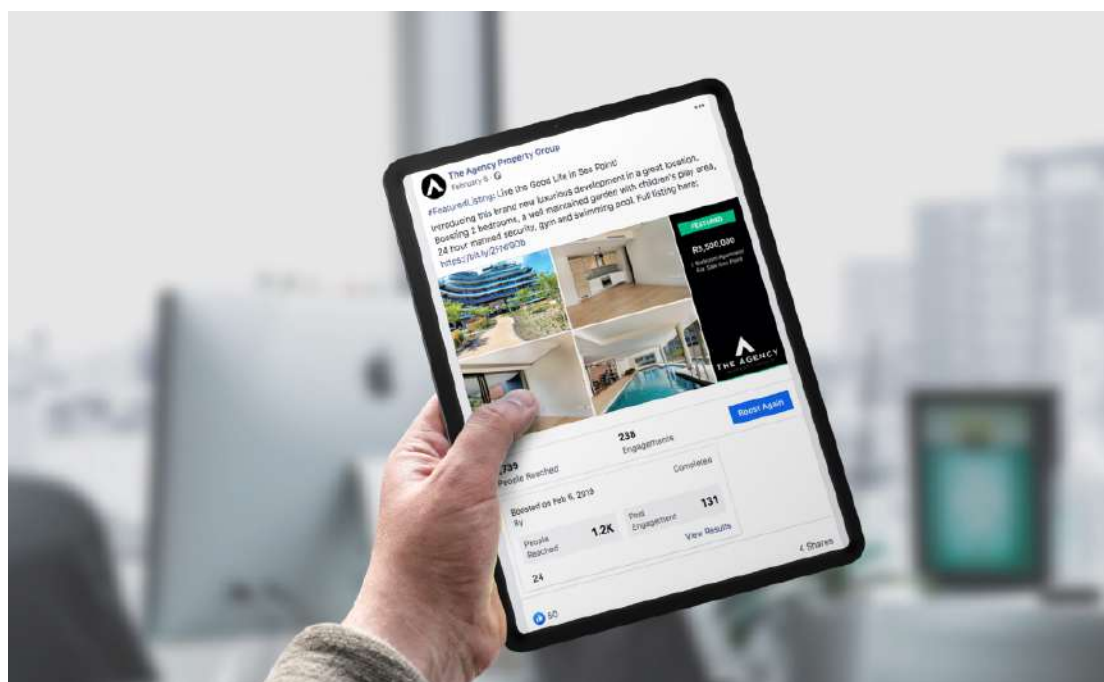
## Image Ads

2019 is already shaping up to be the year of visual content. Why get left behind? With Facebook, you have a trusted tool to attract, inspire and convert users into clients. The platform has a range of image and video choices that can help you create fantastic ads.

### Why use these Facebook ads?

Facebook ads can be as simple or as sophisticated as you choose. Whether you use quick and simple image ads or opt for engaging video ads, you'll benefit. Here's how:

- **Get brand recognition**  
When done well, your ad will attract attention.
- **Showcase your creativity**  
Your agency has a story to tell. Let photos and videos help you show potential clients what you have to offer.
- **You can afford it**  
Who needs a billboard? With image and video ads, you can get your message out at a fraction of the cost.
- **You have options**  
There's a range of formats to play around with. They're all interactive so Facebook users can click, like or comment on them.
- **Know how you're performing**  
Facebook's analytics will keep you updated from the moment you post your ad.



## Be strategic with your ads

Image ads are much easier and faster to create. However, video ads can get more views and feature on feeds at a higher rate than image ads. Whichever you choose, your creativity and value proposition will set you apart. Think carefully and consider ...

- Your objective – what are you hoping to achieve?
- Your target market – who are you reaching with your message?
- Your budget – how much are you willing to spend for each day of your campaign?

With this in mind, you'll create an ad that is unique, useful and within your price range.

## Types of ads you can use

Once you have an idea of who you're targeting and why, it's time to select your ad type. All ads on Facebook need to have a visual whether it's an image or video.

**1**

### Image ads

As the old saying goes, a picture says 1 000 words. A great image is an outstanding way to capture the attention of a Facebook browser. Facebook's single image ad format gives you the opportunity to showcase one image in up to six ads.

**Tip:** It's easy to get carried away by adding a lot of text on your image. Avoid the temptation! Facebook penalises text-heavy ads by reducing their reach. They can even prevent them from being posted entirely.

**2**

### Video ads

Video ads take reaching prospective property buyers on Facebook to a whole new level. You can bring your latest listing to life in their hand via a smartphone in a way that compels them to find out more. Video ads can be created from an assortment of photos or from actual footage shot of one or more of your listings.

**Tip:** Don't forget to promote your brand in your video. It's best to do it within the first 3 seconds so those watching will remember your agency's name.

**3**

### Slideshow ads

Slideshow ads are available when you choose the single image or video format. This format combines multiple images or videos, text and sound. The big plus is that you can create a high-quality ad without the expense or challenges of video production.

**Tip:** This ad type is perfect before you launch a major marketing campaign. You can use it to test elements of your campaign from images to music before you launch across platforms and formats.

4

**Carousel ads**

Thanks to Facebook carousel ads, you can bring up to 10 images or videos together in one ad. There has never been a more dynamic way to transport a Facebook browser from their current setting to the home they are going to buy or rent from you.

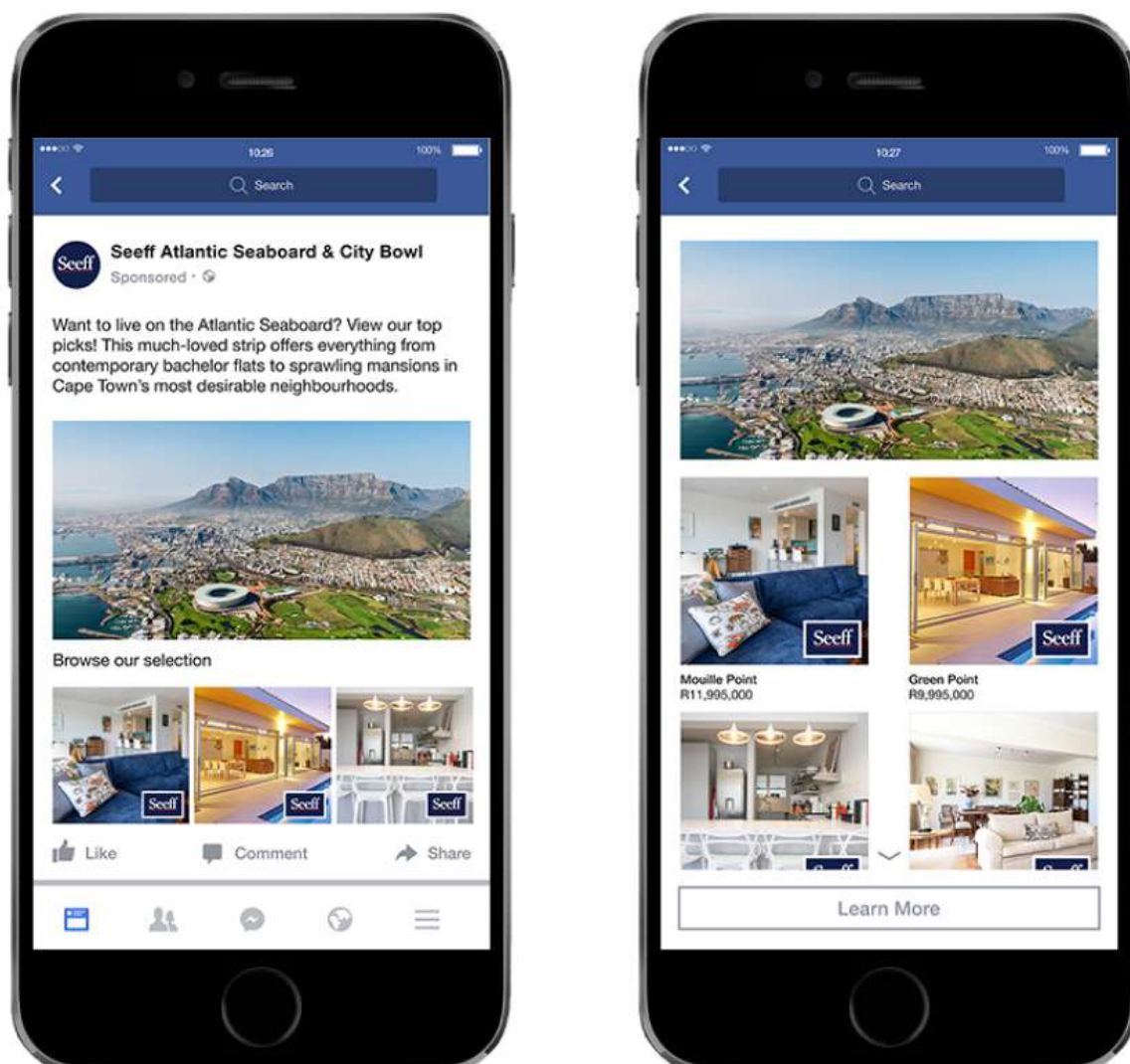
**Tip:** Carousel ads are the perfect way to highlight a listing or a series of listings available in a particular suburb. You can show off your top agents or punt the benefits of living in an area.

5

**Collection ads**

With this ad format, you can combine videos, slideshows or images with product images taken from a catalogue. Facebook users will interact with your ad and browse more products, or learn about the features of a specific product in a fast-loading, full-screen experience. All without leaving the Facebook app.

**Tip:** Testimonials are great for converting clients. Together with your offerings, you can feature words from happy clients you've worked with previously.



## 6

**Instant experience**

An instant experience is a full-screen experience that opens after someone clicks your ad on a mobile device. The beauty of this format is that it can be used with all Facebook ad formats – carousel, single image, single video, slideshow or collection.

**Tip:** This ad is made up of high-quality content. It's best to hire a skilled designer who can bring your vision to life with finesse.

**PRO MOVE** - As you run ads on Facebook, Facebook Ads Manager will become your new best friend. With this handy online tool, you can view and amend all your Facebook campaigns and ads in one place. Want to see at a glance how your ads are performing and what's happening with your campaigns? Facebook Ads Manager is the place to be.

**Takeaway**

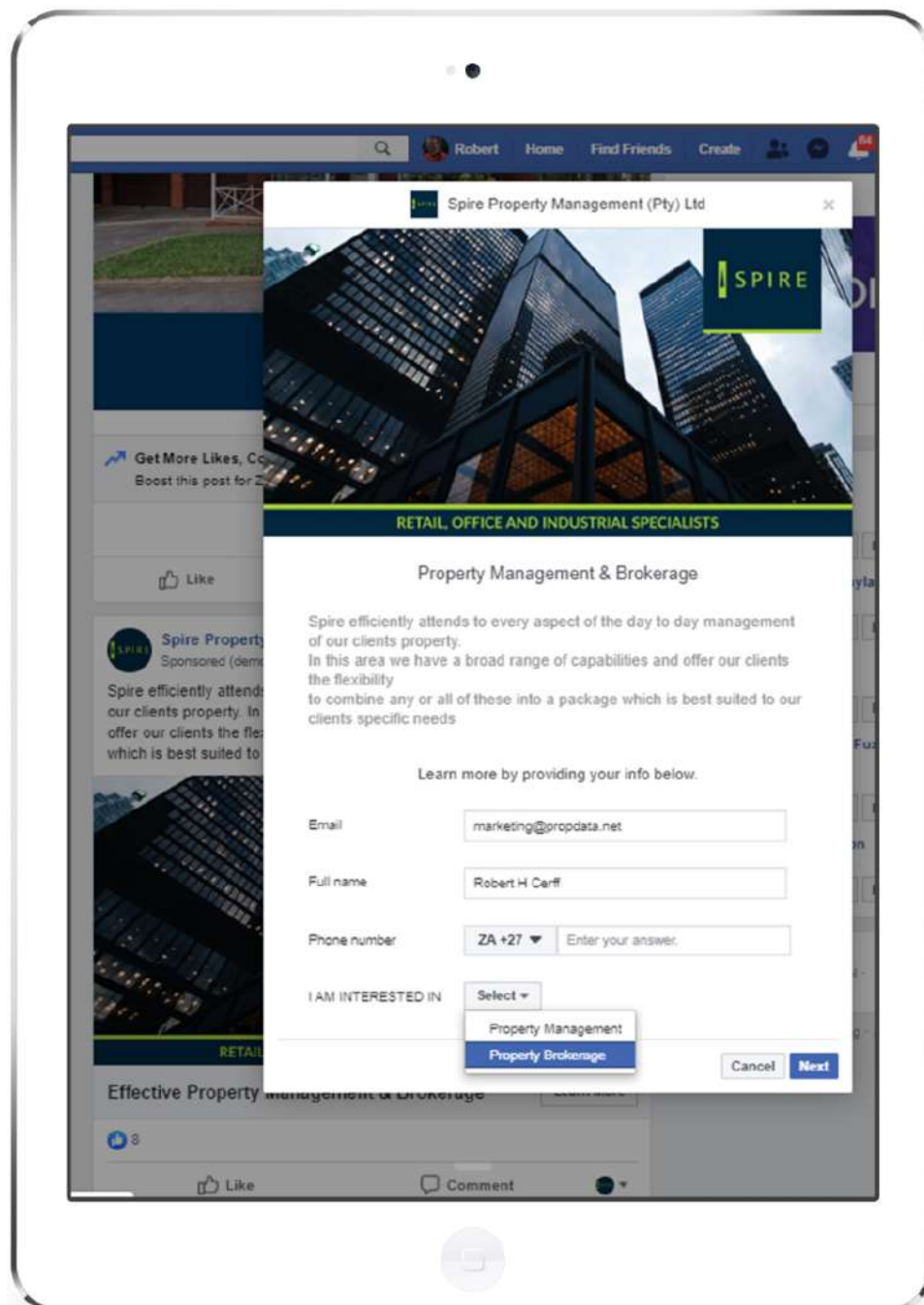
When users are scrolling through Facebook, you want your ad to catch their attention. By using our strategies, you can create a thumb-stopping ad. Remember, your creativity is your only limit. Create the kind of ads you'd want to see yourself.



## Within Facebook Ads

Lead generation can make or break your agency. Thankfully, Facebook makes it a breeze with two types of ads. Lead ads enable you to collect information such as names, email addresses and phone numbers. Boosted posts let you target a specific audience in a particular location. These posts can be more visible than an organic post. The result? More reactions, shares, likes, and comments from users.

These are arguably the most versatile forms of advertising. You'd be wise to make them a part of your online strategy.



## Lead ad and boosted post benefits

Lead ads have a variety of handy features. Here are some of them:

- **Multiple uses**  
There's much you can do with this ad. You can get sign-ups for your newsletter or showings, find property-interested clients or learn more about your audience's interests.
- **Quick**  
With just a few clicks, users can provide you with the information they need.
- **Customisable**  
You can tailor the questions in your lead ad instant form according to your agency's needs.
- **Easy to use**  
As your leads come in, you can download them directly from Facebook. You can also choose to connect your leads to selected customer relationship managers.
- **Mobile friendly**  
People who use mobile phones want a quick way to submit their information. The pre-populated aspect makes data submission quick and easy.
- **Warm leads**  
Those who respond to your ad have a strong interest in what you're offering. This can help reduce the time and effort in convincing them to buy or rent a property or take on your services.

These advantages of boosted posts make them a pleasure to use:

- **Affordable**  
You can set how much you want to spend over the duration of your campaign.
- **Convenience**  
There's no need to create a post from scratch. You can boost just about any of your posts already up on Facebook: status updates, photos, videos and events, to name a few.
- **Simplicity**  
To boost your post, you simply have to click "Boost Post" in the lower right corner of your post.



## How does each ad work?

There are two ways to create and publish ads. You can do it from your business page or by using Ads Manager.

### Lead ads

These ads appear in between posts on Facebook's newsfeed. They're made up of an image, text and a clickable button.

When a Facebook user sees an ad they like, they can click the button. These forms are already pre-filled out with the user's Facebook information and ready to be sent. With just a few clicks, the users can get the information they want. You, as the real estate agency, will get a qualified lead for your business. The simplicity of leads ads is just one of their many advantages.

### Boosted posts

When you boost a post, it'll show up in your audience's Facebook newsfeed as an ad. You can choose a post that's already present on your agency's page timeline and boost it by following only a few steps.

With millions of users on Facebook, you have a huge potential audience to convert. Excited? Great. Read on to learn how to create each ad.

## Set up your lead ad or boosted post

For lead ads, you'll need access to your business's Facebook page and the URL to your business's privacy policy. You'll also need a striking image for your ad. Once you have this, follow these steps to post your lead ad.

For boosted posts, you will need to have a Facebook role that allows you to advertise. These include Admin, Editor, Moderator, Advertiser and Jobs Manager. Once you do, choose the Facebook post you want to boost. Select "Boost Post" and proceed to fill in the details for your ad. You'll get to decide who you want your audience to be, your total budget and the duration the ad will run for.



## Best practices for lead ads and boosted posts

To make the most of each ad type, follow these suggestions.

### Lead Ads

- Have a strong value proposition. Lots of people aren't comfortable providing their details. By offering an enticing property or affordable service, you can help sway them over to your side.
- Keep on brand. Your lead ad is not connected to your Facebook page. It's important to have your logo on your image and ensure your brand tone comes across in your copy.
- Make it simple. Facebook users aren't on the platform for the ads. If yours is confusing or you have too many form questions, it can kill their interest.
- Be smart with how you target your ad. Facebook provides a list of strategies and features you can use to great effect.
- Take care with bidding. Lower bids may reduce the number of people in your target audience who see your ad. Pace your advertising accordingly. You can always adjust your budget when you feel you can keep up with the leads coming in.
- Budget well to avoid surprises. With Facebook's reach, you could end up with a large number of leads.
- Add Facebook pixel to your website. This will help you target, optimise and measure your lead ad campaign effectively.

### Boosted Posts

- Do boost your best content. You can use Facebook Insights to find out which posts have good engagement rates.
- Boost content that meets your goal. Your Heritage Day post might have gotten much love on Facebook. However, if you want leads for a property, opt for a relevant post that would help you sell it. It should also have a strong call to action.
- Boost to the right audience. With Facebook Custom Audiences, you can create a Lookalike Audience. This helps you find people similar to the ones that you're already connected to.
- Boost posts at the right time. If you post too soon, you could hurt the post's organic reach.
- Don't forget Facebook's ad image limitations. Text-heavy posts will be penalised.

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### Takeaway

These ads can transform the way you connect with potential clients. With just a few taps, you gain a valuable lead for your property listing or services. As you've learnt, personalisation is very important to make these ads effective. You'll continue creating tailored marketing experiences with the next chapter.

## Catalog

As a real estate professional, you've already used catalogues and brochures to great effect. These handy marketing tools showcase your offerings in an attractive visual format. In the digital age, little has changed. Your audience may have moved online. But, they still want to see relevant properties and services. With Facebook's catalogs, you can achieve this in a personalised, enticing way.

### What is a catalog?

This is a grouping of information about your property listings and services. The information can include images, prices, descriptions and more - just like a printed catalogue.



After you create a catalog, you can promote it using ads and commerce experiences. These pull information from your catalog to show people what you have to offer.

### Why use catalogs?

Like image ads, catalogs can make a difference in the way you market online. Here's how:

- **Large reach**  
Once you create a catalog you can promote them across Facebook, Instagram, Messenger and Audience Network.
- **Easy to use**  
With Facebook's Catalog Manager, it's a snap to launch and manage your catalogs. Use Catalog Manager to create your ads quickly.

- **Show unique ads**

Created dynamic ads? Great. These will show catalog items to people who have already looked at or searched for your offerings online. Dynamic ads match items from your catalog with signals from a pixel, a piece of code installed on your website. For example, a person might have viewed Bloubergstrand apartments for rent on your website. If they log into Facebook, they'll see the same listings they showed interest in. It's a great way to encourage them to give you a call or email.

- **Specialised features**

You have the freedom to create one catalog for a specific listing or service. You can also choose to create multiple catalogs. Your catalogs can be set up for people of different languages and countries.

- **Enhance your page shop**

If you have a page shop, you can connect it to your catalog. The products from your catalog will automatically upload to your shop. Don't have a page shop? Simply create a page shop from your catalog.

**PRO MOVE** - Done an organic post on a listing or service? If it's an item in your shop or catalog, you can tag it in your post. People can then click the tag to shop what you have to offer.

As Facebook adapts to the growing needs of online marketers, you can expect more benefits. Recently, it tested new shopping ad options to make purchasing easier and keep users in-app.

## Create your catalog

You can create catalogs using Business Manager. However, Facebook recommends using the Catalog Manager for a better experience.

- 1 Log into Catalog Manager.
- 2 Select "Create Catalog".
- 3 You'll get a list of categories. Choose "Real Estate".
- 4 Select how you'd like to add listings or services to your catalog.
- 5 A dropdown menu will ask you to choose the type of business your catalog belongs to.

6

Next, you'll get to name your catalog. Keep it relevant to your goal e.g. "[Agency name] homes in [Area]".

7

Select "Create".

## Add listings or services to your catalog

You have three options to fill your catalog with items.

- **Manual**

You can add them yourself by filling in a simple form.

- **Data Feed**

You can upload a spreadsheet populated with your listing and service details. This lets you add many items at once.

- **Facebook Pixel**

You can connect a pixel to import listings or service features automatically from your website.

Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. Don't be afraid to test each and see what works best for you and your agency.

## Catalog best practices

On average, Facebook users spend about 10 or 12 minutes on the site. As they're scrolling through their feed, you want them to pause at your ad. Follow these steps to stop them in their tracks:

- **Know your objective**

Creating a catalog with a clear goal will help. It will ensure you populate your catalog with the right listings or services.

- **Pick great visuals**

Choose attractive property listings that have been done by a professional. Crisp photography, good lighting and smart angles will help you spotlight the property in an appealing way. The design scheme you use should also work for your brand.

- **Be meticulous**

Nothing is worse than seeing a listing with the incorrect price or a service that is no longer offered. Give potential clients a great experience by keeping your catalog up to date with accurate information.

- **Check your copy**

Spelling mistakes on your descriptions look sloppy. You should proofread them carefully to avoid mistakes. Catalog copy is on the shorter side so make sure every word counts. Use colourful, compelling wording that helps you stand out.

- **Use product sets**

You can deliver dynamic ads to people who've already viewed your website listings and services. This lets them see a group of items from your catalog within defined categories. For example, if a person has browsed through Umhlanga listings, you can show them the most affordable options in that area.

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### Takeaway

A catalog can be a powerful push to get an enquiry. By following our steps and strategies, you can create a captivating catalog. This section touched on customised ads. Next week you'll take it a step further with Facebook remarketing.



## Remarketing

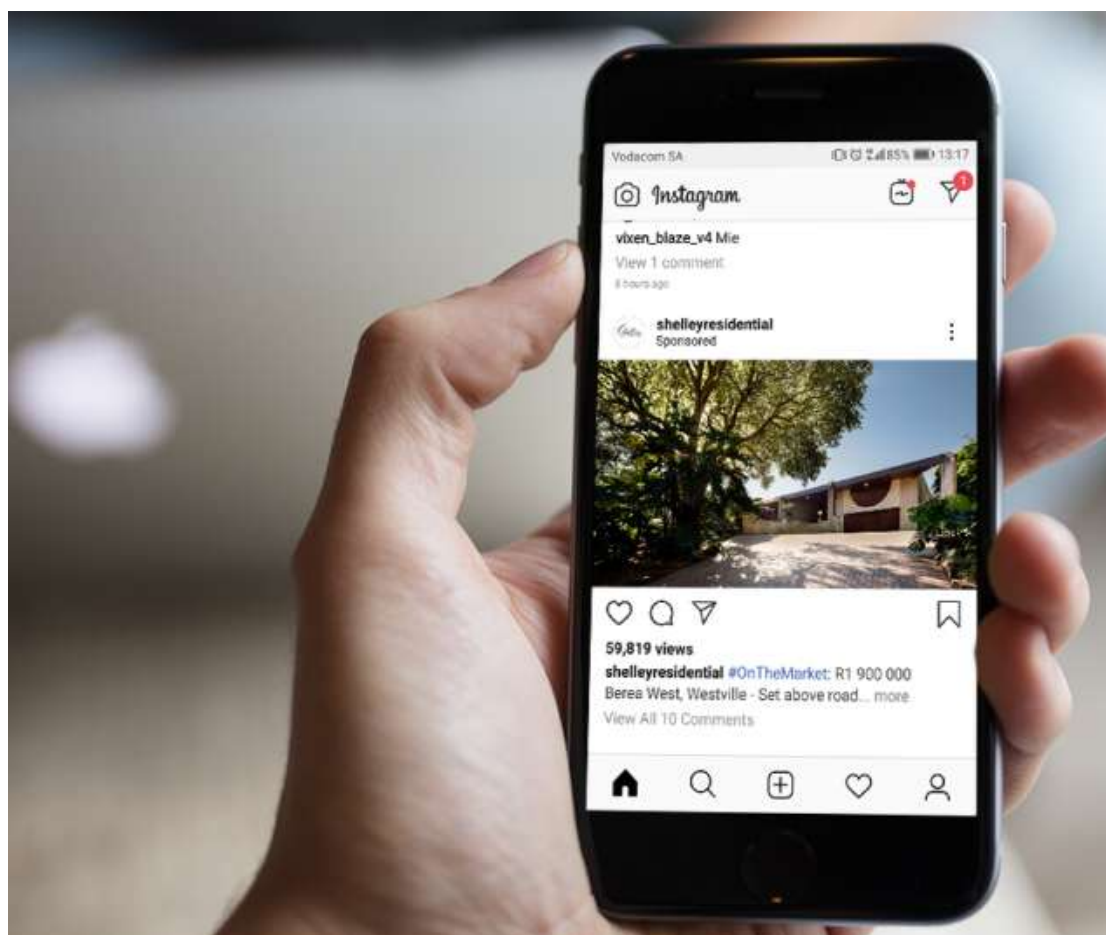
With this chapter, you've learnt how to create stunning image ads. You've built up your database with lead ads and attracted attention with boosted posts. Your catalog ad has spotlighted all your best listings and services. Facebook still has a few handy tricks up its sleeve. With its remarketing features, you can remind people about the offerings they've seen on your website.

### Remarketing refresher

As you've learnt in our remarketing section for Google Ads, this advertising strategy targets people who have previously browsed through your website. When they move to other websites or social media sites, they will see highly tailored ads. These will display the listings, services and even career opportunities they might have viewed on your website.

The ads follow your website visitors around the internet and continuously remind them of your brand. Done right, your previous website visitors return, potentially turning into a promising lead.

Facebook remarketing works in a similar way. However, the ads will only follow visitors around on Facebook, Instagram and the Audience Network.



## How Facebook remarketing works

Facebook remarketing harnesses the power of Facebook pixel. This is a small snippet of code that is pasted in your website. The pixel tracks the pages your visitors have browsed and uses this data to show them personalised ads on their newsfeed or the Facebook Messenger App. The best part? Because it's PPC advertising, you will only be charged once a visitor has clicked on your ad.

## Facebook remarketing benefits

The pixel comes with loads of other benefits beyond remarketing.

- **Take centre stage**  
Your ads will feature prominently on the newsfeed of your visitor. These ads are three times more engaging than regular Facebook ads.
- **Get the 411 on your audience**  
You can use it to understand their activities and behaviours as they browse your website. You'll also be able to track conversions.
- **Target with relevant ads**  
With Facebook pixel, you'll market offerings your audience has shown an interest in. This helps you convert more effectively.
- **Extend the shopper journey**  
Your website visitor might not be ready to buy listings or sign up for your services. By following them onto Facebook, it can help nudge them into investing in what you're offering. Being on Facebook may also put them in a more receptive mood to say yes.
- **Create a custom audience**  
You can remarket to audiences similar to the ones that have visited your website. This expands your marketing reach.

## Remarket using these Facebook ads

You can reach your audience with any type of Facebook ad. However, there are two ad types that were made specifically for remarketing.

- **Facebook dynamic ads**  
These ads automatically show the right properties or services to the people who have expressed interest in your agency through your website or elsewhere on the internet. To launch this ad, simply upload your 'product catalogue' and set up your campaign. Facebook will then present your dynamic ads to a targeted audience. The ads will include the exact properties or services they have searched for as well as up-to-date pricing and availability.

- **Sponsored messages**

This lets you send relevant offers, promotions or updates directly to the people your agency is already talking to in Messenger. If you have already connected with your clients on Messenger, either through a bot for Messenger or live chat support, you should use sponsored messages to re-engage with them.

## Set up your remarketing campaign

Head over to Facebook Ads Manager to get started. Then follow these five steps to create your first remarketing campaign.

**1**

### Build your Facebook pixel

Follow a guide to put your Facebook pixel together. Once it is generated, you can integrate the code into your website. You'll have the option of measuring the actions you care about. For example, if someone views a listing or clicks on your contact form.

**2**

### Create your custom audience

This is an ad targeting option that lets you find your existing audiences on Facebook. The pixel you've set up will provide you with a list of people who have visited your website combined with the actions they've taken. You have three options to create your custom audience: From a customer list, an instant experience or a lead form.

You can grow your agency further by using your custom audience to create a lookalike audience. These are lists of people you can target that are similar to the people currently engaging with your agency. For example, if you sell homes in retirement communities in Franschhoek, your audience will likely be over 50 and around that area. Lookalike audiences will pinpoint others within that age group and in that vicinity.

The screenshot shows the Facebook Audience Builder interface. On the left, under 'Audience', there's a section for 'Create New Audience' with a dropdown for 'Use Saved Audience'. Below this is a search bar for 'Custom Audiences' and a 'Create New' button. The main section is for 'Locations', with a dropdown for 'Everyone in this location' and a search bar for 'South Africa'. Below this are fields for 'Age' (18 to 65+), 'Gender' (All, Men, Women), and 'Languages'. There's also a 'Detailed Targeting' section with a search bar for 'Include people who match' and a 'Connections' section with a dropdown for 'Add a connection type'. At the bottom is a 'Save This Audience' button. On the right, there's a 'Audience Size' section with a gauge showing 'Specific' to 'Broad' and a 'Potential Reach' of 17,000,000 people. Below this is an 'Estimated Daily Results' section showing 'Reach' of 836 - 2.4K. A disclaimer at the bottom right states: 'The accuracy of estimates is based on factors like past campaign data, the budget you entered and market data. Numbers are provided to give you an idea of performance for your budget, but are only estimates and don't guarantee results. Were these estimates helpful?'

## 3

**Identify your campaign objective**

You'll need to decide what you want to achieve with your ad. Click the "Create an Ad" button and choose an objective for your ad. You can only choose one objective per campaign.

- **Awareness**

This will help you evoke interest in your listings or services. It's a great way to get your brand out there and increase your reach.

- **Consideration**

This will get people to think about your agency and seek more information. You can target people who are more likely to engage with your brand, drive traffic to a URL, collect leads and more.

- **Conversions**

This will encourage people interested in your agency to buy a listing or sign up for your services.

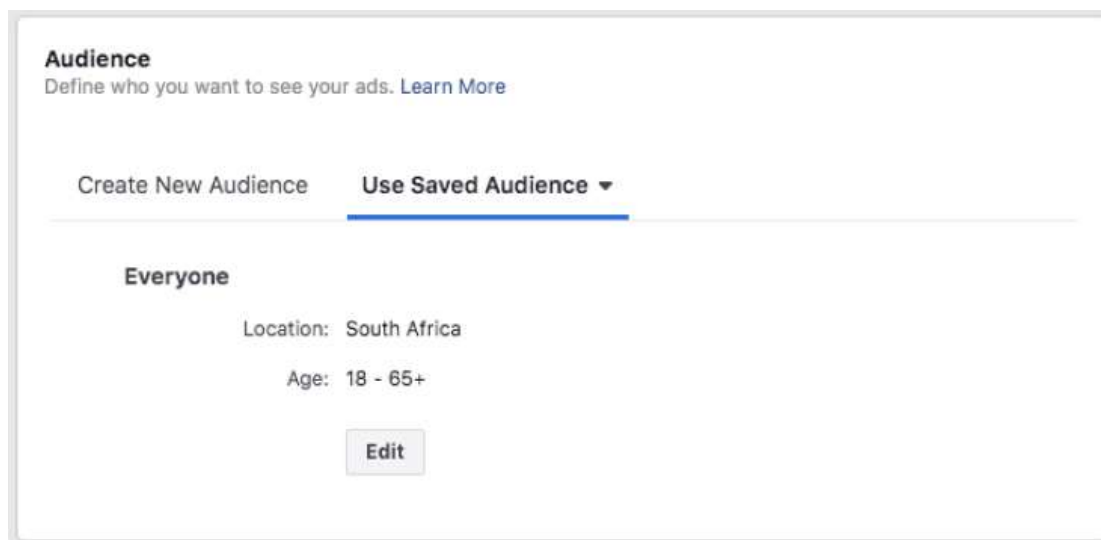
The screenshot shows the Facebook 'Create New Campaign' interface. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Create New Campaign' (selected) and 'Use Existing Campaign'. Below the tabs, there's a section titled 'Campaign: Choose your objective.' with a 'Switch to Quick Creation' button. The main section is titled 'What's your marketing objective?' with a link to 'Help: Choosing an Objective'. It features a table with three columns: Awareness, Consideration, and Conversion. The Awareness column lists 'Brand awareness' and 'Reach'. The Consideration column lists 'Traffic', 'Engagement', 'App installs', 'Video views', 'Lead generation', and 'Messages'. The Conversion column lists 'Conversions', 'Catalog sales', and 'Store traffic'.

Awareness	Consideration	Conversion
Brand awareness	Traffic	Conversions
Reach	Engagement	Catalog sales
	App installs	Store traffic
	Video views	
	Lead generation	
	Messages	

## 4

**Choose your custom audience**

After you've determined your objective, you need to select a custom audience that you created in step 2. Your custom audience can include people who've visited your website or landing page.



**Audience**  
Define who you want to see your ads. [Learn More](#)

Create New Audience    **Use Saved Audience ▼**

**Everyone**

Location: South Africa

Age: 18 - 65+

[Edit](#)

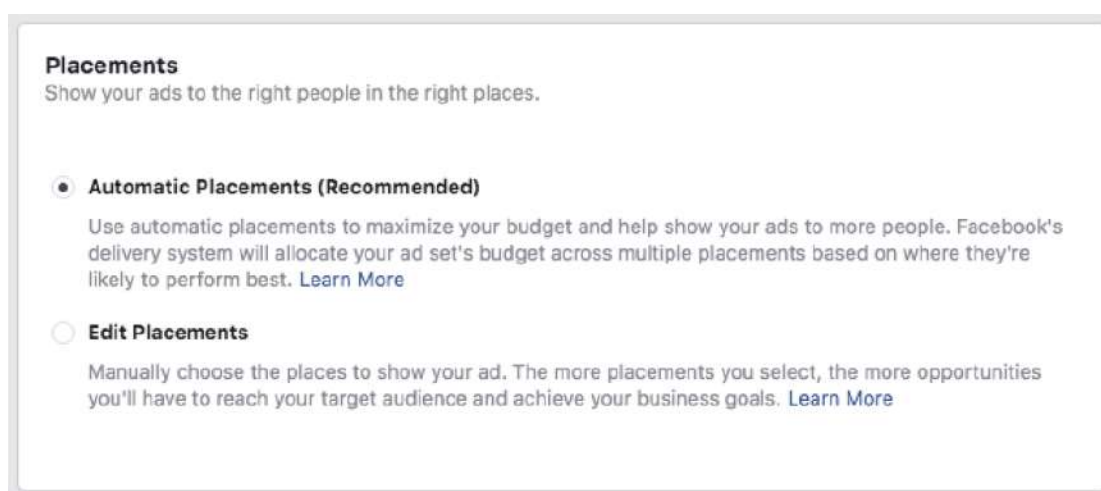
**5****The final touches**

These last few steps are relevant to all types of ads, not just for remarketing. Firstly, you need to pick where your ad will be shown (Ad Placements). Depending on your objective, your ad can appear in Facebook feeds, stories, during or after video content and more. You'd best choose Recommended Placements as this lets Facebook choose a placement where your ad best meets your campaign goals.

Next, you'll need to set a daily or lifetime budget for your remarketing campaign. It's smart to start small and raise your budget once you can determine your most profitable campaigns.

Lastly, you need to create your ad's content. This includes selecting your ad format, designing visuals and crafting persuasive ad copy. Remember, your ad needs to be captivating with action-inducing triggers so that it stands out in a busy news feed.

When all the steps are completed, you'll simply need to hit "confirm" and Facebook will then proceed to review your ad. Once approved, your ad will be shown to people in your custom audience list.



**Placements**  
Show your ads to the right people in the right places.

☒ **Automatic Placements (Recommended)**  
Use automatic placements to maximize your budget and help show your ads to more people. Facebook's delivery system will allocate your ad set's budget across multiple placements based on where they're likely to perform best. [Learn More](#)

☐ **Edit Placements**  
Manually choose the places to show your ad. The more placements you select, the more opportunities you'll have to reach your target audience and achieve your business goals. [Learn More](#)

**Budget & Schedule**  
Define how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear.

**Optimization for Ad Delivery** ⓘ

Ad Recall Lift - We'll serve your ads to maximize the total number of people who will remember seeing your ads.  
To help us improve delivery optimization, we may survey a small section of your audience.

**Cost Control** ⓘ

Facebook will aim to the most ad recall lift and spend your entire budget.

**Budget and Schedule** ⓘ

**Daily Budget** ▼

R50.00

R50.00 ZAR

Actual amount spent daily may vary. ⓘ  
☒ Run my ad set continuously starting today  
☐ Set a start and end date

You'll spend no more than **R350.00** per week.

[Show Advanced Options](#) ▼

**PRO MOVE** - When creating custom audiences, your audiences may overlap. For example, people could have visited your website and also read your newsletter emails. In this scenario, they'll be added to each individual custom audience and you'd be paying to target the same person twice. Avoid wasting money and bombarding them with ads! You have an option to exclude certain people who might overlap into two or more groups. All you need to do is select the "exclude" option under the custom audiences field.

## Takeaway

Facebook remarketing lets you bring visitors back to your website and remind them why your real estate brand is right for them. After all, they've already shown an interest, so why not reignite their curiosity.

## Sales Funnels

As a real estate professional, you know the pain of a missed sale. You've shown off a beautiful property to an interested buyer. Then, things just fall through. That ends here. Our course content from branding all the way to Google Ads are the magic ingredients for your online success. It's time to put them all together into a winning recipe. For that, you'll need to master the sales funnel.

### What is a sales funnel?

When you market to thousands of people, not everyone will be interested. But when they are, you want them to invest in what you're offering. This is where the sales funnel comes in. It marks out the journey this potential lead goes through before they (hopefully) buy or rent a property or sign up for your services.

The strategy gets its name from the shape of a funnel. As you know, a funnel is wide at the top and narrow at the bottom. The top end is where your potential clients lie. The goal is to get them to the bottom where they are converted and keen to do business with your agency.

### Benefits of a sales funnel

A sales funnel is more than just a clever metaphor. It's the very essence of a thriving business. Here are all the reasons you'll want one.

- Easily adaptable to meet your agency's unique needs.
- Puts a process in place to attract leads and convert them.
- Encourages automation of certain processes like newsletters.
- Builds your brand awareness through consistent marketing.
- Aims for repeat business after you've built awareness and trust.
- Once up and running, you can use it to make your profit-generation consistent. This helps make your agency more stable.
- Helps you understand which parts of your marketing are not working.

Sales funnels bring so much to the table. The best part? They're quite simple to set up. First, you must understand each of the stages that your potential client will follow.

### Sales funnel stages

As we've mentioned, your sales funnel can be tailored to your agency. However, there are some key stages all real estate sales funnels will have in common.





- 1 Awareness**  
When potential clients learn about your agency, listings and services.
- 2 Interest**  
When they actively express an interest in your offerings.
- 3 Evaluation**  
When they compare your offerings against your competitors.
- 4 Decision**  
When your offer is shortlisted and they negotiate the price of your listing or services.
- 5 Action**  
The moment you've been waiting for. This is when they buy or rent a property or sign up for your services.  
  
*Depending on your agency, you might want to resell new homes to your clients. Perhaps you've also sold them an investment property. With your sales funnel, you can market your rental services. The next stage would definitely work for you.*
- 6 Repurchase**  
They decide to sign up for your services again, trust you to find them a new home or sell another of their properties.

Each stage is important and needs a range of techniques to be effective. Don't panic. We'll show you how to be a sales funnel fundi in no time. In fact, if you've been following our course closely, you may have already applied some of these strategies.

## Sales funnel in practise

Consider this case study: Unathi is on the property prowl for a house in Kimberley. After receiving a promotion, she needs to relocate to the city. Unathi's a proud mum of two and is looking for a place she and her husband, Bheki, can both afford.

- **Awareness**

Ever tech-savvy, Unathi decides to start her search on Google. She types in 'Cheap homes for sale in Kimberley'. You've set up a search advert so your agency pops up first. "Wow, these guys sound great," she thinks after reading your cleverly written copy. She clicks on the link and lands on your website.

- **Interest**

Remember all that effort you put into your brand identity, logo and website? They've given Unathi a fine impression of you. She decides to check out your listings.

"What's the fishing scene like there?", texts Bheki. "Priorities", she texts back. Luckily, your Kimberley area profile tells her about the schools in the area. Your article on fly fishing in Kimberley keeps her husband happy.

After careful consideration, she messages her favourite listings. On your side, her query is logged as a lead and assigned to the right agents. Unathi also decides to sign up for your newsletter - there's an article on Kimberley clothing stores that needs further investigating.

- **Evaluation**

It's been a long day but Unathi is not done just yet. One agency couldn't possibly be enough. So she checks out Property24. Like your competition, you've placed your listings on the portal. She searches through the aggregated stock.

As she's comparing, she decides to read the news in Kimberley. You've gotten your marketing team to implement Google remarketing. So since Unathi's visited your website, your site's listing appears. "These guys - again?" she wonders. "Could they really be that good?" Her son suggests she check out your Facebook page. Here she compares reviews between you and the other agencies on her list.

- **Decision**

Your marketing has paid off. Unathi and her husband are impressed by your agency. They take time to see a few of your listings. They find a home they love and negotiate the price they want.

- **Action**

The price is right for your seller! Unathi signs on the dotted line. The house is sold.

- **Repurchase**

Years later, Unathi's children have left the nest. She and her husband have decided to put their home up for rent to pay the mortgage on a cosy cottage they've found in Hermanus. Who do they get to manage the property? You, of course. After seeing your newsletter in her inbox, Unathi is reminded of the great experience she had.

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## **Takeaway**

Your sales funnel takes time and effort to put together. Map out your stages, use the right techniques and you'll attract, engage and convert potential clients in no time.

## Killer Campaigns

Think about your favourite marketing campaign. What made it so memorable? It connected with you on a personal level and offered a benefit you needed. All in an engaging package. Effective marketing campaigns like these get results. In real estate, you want to bring in leads, get exposure and create loyal brand followers. You can! With this section, you'll learn how to launch campaigns that 'kill' where others fall flat.

### What is a marketing campaign?

These are organised and strategic efforts to promote a specific agency goal. For example, you may want to get a listing more views, increase newsletter subscriptions or boost the awareness of a new service offered.

Once you've decided on your goal, you'll need to carefully plot each step of your potential client's journey. Your campaign can target your audience in a range of ways like emails, social media posts and website content.

To help you be impactful, we've outlined the foundation behind a successful campaign and closed with a simple case study of a real estate campaign to see how it works in practice.



## Get your branding done

For your campaign to be effective, you need to build a strong foundation. By putting a brand strategy together you can stand out from your competition.

By understanding your potential clients, you can tailor your campaigns to their needs. Use personas to target your campaign to a specific audience. The more personal and relevant your campaign is, the better it will do.

There's a lot of real estate noise out there. You should take time to design a logo that visually identifies your company. Your campaign should ensure your brand identity comes through consistently across all your marketing elements.

## Design your website

Your website could be the start of your campaign or the endpoint. At the heart of every 'killer' website, is user experience. You want a website that prioritises your users' needs. In order to tick the UX checkboxes, your website needs to be easy to use. As more users start their search on their cell phone, your website should also be mobile friendly.

## Fill your website with content

Whatever campaign you run, your content needs to be in tip-top shape. Your potential client is looking for properties to rent or buy or services they need. Give them the information to help make their decision. Your website should have quality listings, well-written area profiles and regularly updated news articles.

## Send out emails

Your website's content will only 'kill' if people are viewing it. Get the word out there with email marketing. If you're not taking advantage of it, you're missing out on new leads and potential sales.

The best thing about email is that it can be integrated into your estate agency's online framework and sent automatically. It makes keeping in regular contact with your users simple and efficient. A killer campaign will incorporate drip marketing. This is a strategy of sending a pre-written set of emails to prospective clients over a set period of time. This tactic allows your real estate brand to remain prominent in the minds of prospective property buyers.

By using newsletters, you can remind your potential and current clients about your campaign. Has there been a property reduced in price? Or a new service you're offering? Your newsletter can get your campaign more exposure.

## Syndicate your listings

It's not just your website that gives your listings exposure. By uploading your listings to the prominent portals, you can get them seen with minimal effort.

## Make use of Google Ads

Any killer campaign could do with the opportunities presented by Google. From text-based search ads to image ads, you have lots of options to showcase your campaign. If you find your campaign isn't getting traction, you can use remarketing. This will help you reconnect with potential clients and reinvigorate their interest in your listings and services.

## Market on social media

Your killer campaign will slay on social media. South Africans spend more than two hours a day on social media. You need to make sure that some of that time is spent engaging with your brand. You have a wide range of social media sites: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest and LinkedIn can all be used to great effect.

Over and above Google adverts, social media also offers paid advertising. You can also drive your campaign objectives through Facebook image adverts, lead ads and catalogs, to name a few of your options.

## Case study: Greenhaven Estate

### The client

The Greenhaven Estate is a lifestyle estate aimed at active over 50s. The estate ensures that the next steps in one's retirement journey are run easily and smoothly.

### The problem

While the lifestyle estate's benefits speak for themselves, exposure was an issue. They needed to get the word out there - especially to target a tech-savvy mature audience and their children.

### The objective

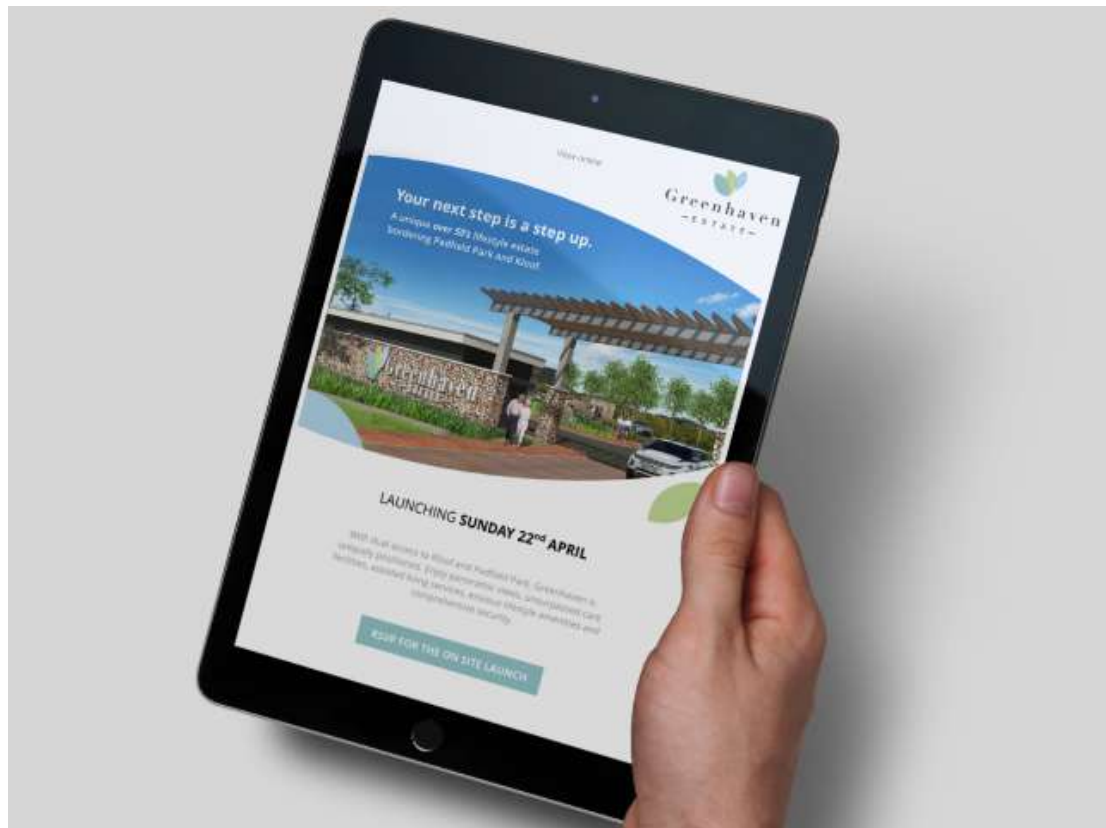
Greenhaven Estate planned to launch with an open day. To help attract people to the event, Prop Data decided to build a digital marketing strategy that would help get their message out in the right places.

### The solution

The first step in this campaign was to design their logo and come up with a tagline that captured the essence of this development. The phrase "Your next step is a step up" was carefully penned to create a positive impression around the idea of retirement and downsizing.



Next, we designed their website. A fuss-free single page design was used in keeping with the target audience.



A drip email campaign was implemented using the database of the company promoting the development – Wakefields. This database was also used to send notifications about the estate, as well as launch reminders.

Display and search adverts were created to drive visitors to this new website. These adverts were regularly updated to reflect the units currently available.





## The outcome

Greenhaven Estate had a successful open day. They attracted a sizeable amount of visitors and built up their brand presence in the area.

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## Takeaway

Always keep your potential client in mind with your campaigns and reference the toolbox of strategies in this course. By sending them the right message, at the right time and at the right place, your campaign will meet its objective.

## Lead Management

You've launched your email, Google Ads, and Facebook campaigns. Now the leads are coming in. It's exciting and maybe a little bit overwhelming. What's next, you ask? Lead management, of course. By learning how to manage your leads, you can convert them into clients. There'll be no moves to competing agencies on your watch.

### What is lead management?

It's a process of getting new leads, evaluating them for quality and segmentation, nurturing them, and finally – turning each lead into a sale. Lead management is important because it bridges the gap between marketing and sales. During the lead management process, your marketing team identifies a potential lead (buyer, tenant, seller or landlord), educates them about your listings and services and engages with them. When they're interested, leads will be passed from marketing onto your estate agents. With digital marketing, a lot of the heavy lifting can be done through automated processes.

The screenshot shows a CRM interface with a top navigation bar containing: Contacts, Conversations, Marketing, Sales, Service, Workflows, and Reports. The main section is titled 'Deals' and features a 'Board' view. On the left, there's a sidebar with 'All deals', 'All saved filters', and a 'Pipeline' section showing 'SALES PIPELINE'. The main area displays a Kanban-style pipeline with five stages: NEW LEAD (5 deals), LEAD QUALIFIED (3 deals), OPTIONS SENT (4 deals), VIEWINGS SCHEDULED (1 deal), and PROPERTIES VIEWED. Each stage contains cards for individual deals, each with a title and a close date.

NEW LEAD	LEAD QUALIFIED	OPTIONS SENT	VIEWINGS SCHEDULED	PROPERTIES VIEWED
318 Garlington Avenue Close date: 30 October 2019	80 Ocean Way Close date: 30 September 2019	51 Montgomery Place Close date: 30 October 2019	118 Greyville Avenue Close date: 1 November 2019	203 Carnation Way Close date: 31 October 2019
128 Hibiscus Road Close date: 30 September 2019	14 Kimberly Lane Close date: 30 September 2019	17 Jameson Street Close date: 30 October 2019		32 Placid Drive Close date: 31 October 2019
53 Sunset Boulevard Close date: 30 September 2019	216 Oxford Drive Close date: 16 September	32 Placid Drive Close date: 30 October 2019		118 Greyville Avenue Close date: 31 October 2019
21 Canyon Terrace Close date: 29 August 2019		91 Morrisson Road Close date: 30 October 2019		
63 Hampshire Street				

## Stages of lead management

### Acquire your leads

For your agency to be successful, you need to have a constant stream of leads. You never know where a lead may be hiding, so it's important to target different platforms. You're well aware of traditional sources like newspapers, radio and television. Throughout this course, we've shown you how to connect with tech-savvy clients. Your avenues here include email, Google, social media and your website.

Don't neglect your old leads. You may find you can resell them a new offering. For example, a client who bought a home could be interested in letting out their home while they travel over holiday periods.

When you've got your leads, your next step is to classify them.

### Classify your leads

You want to spend time on the leads that are most 'convertible'. These have provided as much relevant information as possible that can help you make a sale. For example, you will need to ensure you have full names, email addresses, phone numbers, requirements, and more.

If you've invested in a lead management software, you can automatically segment them by their age, area, gender and type of interest. By placing them in these categories, you can send highly targeted emails to ensure more success.

Consider this case study to see how your lead management could play out:

#### Case study:

You're an agency based in KwaZulu-Natal. You've placed a Facebook ad informing people you have exciting listings in the province. Kate (24) sees your advert. She provides her name, email address, her area (Westville) and property type she's interested in (rental). You can start segmenting your leads and place Kate with all the other leads who are from her area and looking for rental properties. Now, sending Kate the properties that interest her, is easy.

Once you've segmented your leads, you'll now need to engage them.

### Nurture your leads

There are many ways to nurture your leads. You can send SMSs with links to your listings. You can email news articles on recent property trends and even provide a rundown on specific areas.

In our case study, Kate is interested in Westville. A smart move would be to send her a beautiful area profile to grow her interest in the area. Let's say you called Kate and learnt she's a single mum. You could send her an article on "kid-friendly places in and around Westville".

By providing Kate with this information, your agency has nurtured her into a strong potential client. Now that Kate has become a warm lead, it's time to turn her into a client.

### Turn your leads into clients

By now, Kate is well aware of the area in general. She knows about the properties available that suit her and her family. By continually engaging with Kate, your agent can turn her "maybe" into a "yes". This is where the power of remarketing can come into play. As Kate browses on Google and even Facebook, you can continue to show her listings in the area she may be interested in.

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### Takeaway

You've put all that time and effort into bringing in your leads. By assessing lead quality, nurturing them and driving your lead to a sale, you can make your investment worthwhile. If you give your lead digital "pushes", you can get even further in landing their business.



[www.propdata.net/course](http://www.propdata.net/course)



**Prop Data**

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