

The Real Estate Content Marketing Guidebook



CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGIES TO
MAKE YOUR BUSINESS **STAND OUT** ONLINE

Introduction



Content marketing is essential in reaching the ever-growing online audience.

Over 2.1 billion people are active on social media and according to Business2Community.com that number is expected to reach 2.5 billion by 2018.

A smart Content Marketing plan will generate leads, promote your brand, increase customer engagement, and position you as a thought leader within your industry.

Today, the most respected brands and professionals are using Content Marketing to tell their story and build engagement with their target audience.

This Ebook will teach you the essentials in building your own Content Marketing plan designed for Real Estate businesses.

“

Having a solid Content Marketing strategy opens the door to connecting with the people that are most important to your real estate business.

With content tools like blogging and social media, we can connect and engage with potential clients easier and faster than ever before.

The right Content Marketing strategy develops trust in your brand, organically positioning you as a thought leader.”

Sarah Malcolm

Chief Digital Strategist

The News Funnel

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CHAPTER ONE

Real Estate Companies Need an Online Presence



All members of the real estate industry can benefit from a defined online brand. A smart Content Marketing strategy provides you with an opportunity to showcase your standing as an industry leader and deep understanding of market trends.

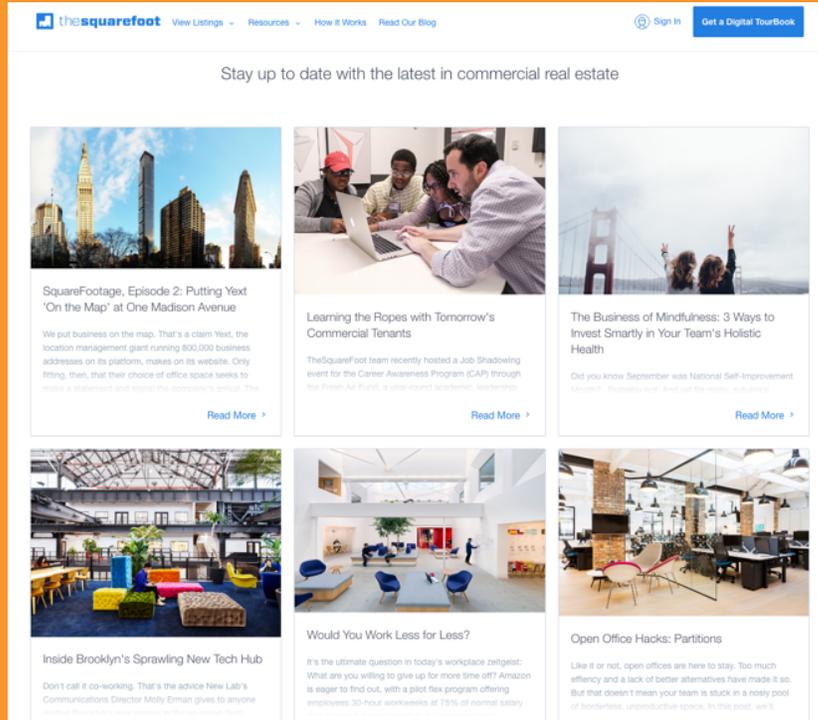
A HubSpot ROI study reported 69% of businesses cite blogging as a top lead generation source.

Companies actively using social media gain valuable insights into customer behaviors while growing a loyal following. Social-driven feedback is critical for improving a product and showcasing outstanding customer service.

Effective real estate Content Marketing must include a strategic social media presence using blogging, social media networks, and purposeful content distribution.



Jonathan Wasserstrum
Founder & CEO
theSquareFoot
@thesqfoot



“

Getting a new office should be one of the most rewarding milestones in the life of a company. Instead, it's often seen as a hassle, in part because commercial real estate has been slow to migrate to the web. Basic affordances you would find on a residential site like Zillow or Street Easy can be hard to come by when searching for workspace.

Our content plays a critical role in helping us become the go-to place for finding and leasing workspace. It starts with providing essential information on how to go about your search in the most efficient way and integrating that information seamlessly throughout the process. Our content also helps us pull back the curtain on everything from how commercial leases are typically structured to how to transform empty commercial space into the office of your dreams.

Next, we're working on showcasing the more aesthetically rewarding aspects of modern workspace and the companies who use them. We want our brand to represent the reward of a workspace that pushes a company forward. If we can inspire business owners to think creatively about workspace and how to maximize its potential, then we will have built a meaningful brand.”

CHAPTER TWO

What Real Estate Blogging Can Do For You

Whether a commercial architectural firm, a real estate tech product, or an agent, blogs are a crucial component of a Content Marketing strategy. In [an interview](#) with Great Colorado Homes, residential real estate agent Bill Gasset said, *"If I were to look back and say what is the #1 thing that I have done in my career that has brought more business my way, the answer would be hands down having my blog."*

Drive New Business

A regularly updated blog drives traffic to your website because it tells search engines your website is active. Once a search engine indexes the new posts, the additional content boosts a website's search engine rank. In fact, after 21-54 blog posts, blog traffic generation [increases up to 30%](#). Over half of today's companies with a blog report acquiring new customers thanks to blogging.

Showcase Industry Knowledge

Blogging highlights a real estate professional's knowledge without actually stepping in front of a potential customer. Residential agents use blogging to detail their local expertise. Commercial firms and real estate tech companies position themselves as industry thought leaders by reporting trends and new innovations.



Philip Russo
Founding Partner
MetaProp Advisors
@MetaPropNYC

“

As a successful 'lean startup,' MetaProp NYC practices what it preaches in funding, growing and advising PropTech startups. We use the power of thought-leadership blogging and tweeting, along with LinkedIn and Facebook cross-linkage to supplement our traditional news releases, all as more effective and cost-efficient alternatives to advertising.

The results were particularly noted recently at the New York City Real Estate Tech Week's flagship event, the MetaProp NYC-MIPIM PropTech Summit, during which numerous attendees and participants raved about how often and how much they learned about MetaProp NYC through our multi-channel content efforts. That was deeply satisfying!"

TWEETS 1,251 FOLLOWING 701 FOLLOWERS 1,411 LIKES 970 LISTS 2

MetaProp NYC
@MetaPropNYC

Global #RETech & #PropTech nexus and startup accelerator founded by @aaronblock @ZacharyAarons @clellapeters

New York, NY
metaprop.org
Joined June 2015

Tweet to MetaProp NYC

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

Pinned Tweet

MetaProp NYC @MetaPropNYC · Aug 24

Please meet the 2016 MetaProp NYC Accelerator class! #RETech #startups #PropTech buff.ly/2bg3azm

METAPROP NYC

Please meet our 2016 Accelerator Class!

Getting Started with Blogging

1.

Pick your platform

Start by selecting a great platform to host the blog. Wordpress, Squarespace, and Blogger are common. Some website hosts provide a blog as part of your package. Remember the hosting service must be professional and easy to use.

2.

Learn the Basics of Search Engine Optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) uses specifically chosen tactics to boost the number of organic visitors to a website by obtaining high-ranking placement in the search results page of engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo. Keywords are an important part of SEO. Free tools like [Google Keywords Planner](#) identify the best keywords for your blog. The search engine algorithms used to rank pages constantly change, but all emphasize quality content. Keywords should be used seamlessly inside well-written content for the best ranking.

3.

Determine a Posting Schedule

Deciding post frequency varies based on what topics fit into the blog's platform. A residential remodeling firm may have more material to write about than a property management service. Time available for writing is another critical factor when determining a posting schedule. At minimum, real estate ventures should post once a week to boost their SEO.

4.

Create a Content Calendar

Use a [basic spreadsheet](#) to plan the posting date, topic, and distribution channel several weeks in advance. Stick to the content calendar once established. Keep a running list of potential topics and schedule time to brainstorm ideas.

5.

Seek Assistance

Starting a new blog can be a daunting project. [Experts](#) in the field of real estate blogging can help new bloggers begin the process from set-up to publication. See The News Funnel's [blog](#) for more advice on getting started.



“Content Marketing, especially blogging, is a great way to maximize your marketing efforts. Each individual post can be distributed through multiple channels, pick up additional momentum on social media and continue to generate organic traffic to your site well into the future.”

Pauline Nee

Director of Platforms and Engagement
Honest Buildings
@HonestBuildings

HONEST BUILDINGS FEATURES CUSTOMERS ABOUT PRESS BLOG LOG IN

SUBSCRIBE TO UPDATES

SUBSCRIBE

Mid-Year CRE Tech Outlook: Five Industry Experts Weigh In

Real Estate Tech Financing History: Deals And Dollars Q1'12-Q2'16

Quarter	Deals	Dollars
Q1'12	15	\$49
Q2'12	22	\$82
Q3'12	19	\$29
Q4'12	16	\$62
Q1'13	25	\$143
Q2'13	21	\$35
Q3'13	23	\$62
Q4'13	42	\$219
Q1'14	43	\$325
Q2'14	36	\$101
Q3'14	55	\$353
Q4'14	40	\$366
Q1'15	54	\$325
Q2'15	52	\$657
Q3'15	53	\$425
Q4'15	53	\$462
Q1'16	64	\$435
Q2'16	44	\$1,377

CHAPTER THREE

What a Successful Real Estate Blog Should Do

1. Use research-driven topics

The most successful blogs address the topics that matter to their key audience. People are more likely to ask Google before a real estate professional. By addressing customer questions, the blog appears in the top of search results. Use [Google's tools](#) to discover search terms applicable to your platform.

2. Write on a variety of subjects

Blogs that research topics from local and national interests draw a wider audience. For example, a technology company could write about "5 Ways to Save Money in Commercial Property Management" one week and "What is the Internet of Things?" the next.

3. Use Best SEO Practices

Blogs with high organic traffic use pre-identified keywords strategically and naturally to boost placement. Quality images, sub-headers, and numbered lists further boost a blog's search engine rating.



“

Content and social are core parts of our marketing strategy at Hightower. They've driven very strong results in terms of traffic, leads, and brand awareness.”

Billy Fink
Product Marketing Manager
Hightower
@Hightower

4. Consistent Schedule

Maintaining a consistent schedule is key to driving blog traffic. Knowing your blog is published every Thursday provides readers with anticipation and helps boost search engine placement.

5. Share its Publication

Top bloggers initially gain traffic from announcing the latest publication on all their social media platforms, to a subscriber network, and in an e-newsletter.

6. Call to Action

Having readers do something with the content is vital in lead generation. Ask readers to share the post with others or to subscribe to a mailing list to stay updated with the latest market news.



Jonathan Schultz

Co-Founder & CEO

Onyx Equities

@JonSchultz_Onyx

“*Throughout my real estate career, I have always been passionate about culture, technology and marketing and how they come together and inspire greatness in people and organizations. As the co-founder of Onyx Equities, one of the roles I spend a great deal of time on, and thoroughly enjoy, is using blogging and social media because of its ability to help me have a voice in an industry I love.*

Not only has this been instrumental in helping me to engage with a community of like-minded thinkers, it has boosted Onyx's brand awareness and has been key in building our brand identity and our culture. As a direct result of my blogging and social media efforts, I have personally developed amazing industry connections and opportunities and it has helped my company to attract the best and the brightest talent who share in our brand culture.

I am that much of a believer in blogging and social media. It just works on so many levels. For me personally and for Onyx.”



Jeremy Neuer
Senior Vice President
CBRE
@JNeuer19

“

I am a believer in giving more than you take. While corporate real estate, as an industry, is a late adopter of technology, there is a core group that has been involved from the outset. Sharing my ideas about technology allowed me to be a part of a national conversation, learning best practices and being on the forefront of new tools.

Lately, I have written more about lessons for young brokers, which has given me a platform to invoke some change in the industry which has vastly underserved the needs of those early in their careers. We are just scratching the surface of what we can do with Content Marketing as new people engage in the conversations daily.”

NEURSPACE

HOME ABOUT NEWS CONTACT

CORPORATE REAL ESTATE WITH PERSONALITY

Recent Posts

Lesson from The Captain, Derek Jeter
Derek Jeter was on my mind a lot last week. All over social media, people were posting the replay of the famous "flip play" against the Oakland A's in the playoffs, which happened fifteen years ago. Time flies, but I remember it like it was yesterday, just like many of his other October heroics.
Oct 16, 2016

Lesson for Young Brokers: It's Not About You
Recently, I have been getting cold calls and emails from a variety of service providers for a variety of reasons. Being on the client side is nice for a change, but more than that, it's been a great learning experience.
Oct 7, 2016

Subscribe to NeuerSpace

Email Address

SIGN UP

Search

CHAPTER FOUR

Why Social Media Matters

Billions of people are active everyday on social media platforms.

Facebook has 1.32 billion monthly users. Social media is the source of an unlimited supply of potential clients and using it effectively expands a real estate professional's sphere of influence.

Social media's ability to reach large audiences is critical in establishing your brand and developing your voice. Platforms like Pinterest and Instagram add to a brand's personality while marketing the company's interests.

Social media experts use networks to make new connections to customers and to others inside the industry. They use social media to ask current and past customers for business referrals. Following competitors' Twitter and Facebook profiles is a great way to learn how others are marketing their business.



“

Content builds relationships. Relationships that you can nurture and develop. Relationships are also built on trust, and that trust is given over time with permission and loyalty. That permission, loyalty, and trust drives revenue. Revenue gained by creating authentic and valuable content.”

Duke Long
Managing Principle
PUR Ventures
@DukeLong

Getting Started with Social Media

1.

Learn the Platforms

Social media networks have different strengths and **different audiences**. Facebook is more popular with the millennial demographic, with only 35% of users being 60 and over. Instagram does not provide a link option on its posts. LinkedIn focuses on professional connections. Research each platform's primary audience to determine which best applies to your business.

2.

Brainstorm Types of Posts

Real estate professionals have no shortage of shareable content. Residential agents can share local events, tailored neighborhood information, or an upcoming association meeting. Capital investment firms can post about types of financing, changes in the market, or new development projects.

3.

Content Calendar

Schedule time every week to plan the upcoming social marketing strategy. Combine your understanding of social platforms with the types of posts to create a content calendar. For the best boost, include original content with **curated content from other sources**.

4.

Use Visually Dynamic Posts

Maximize the social shareability of content by **creating visually appealing images** for the content. Videos gain more traction than photos and photos gain more traction than text-only posts.

5.

Promote, Promote, Promote

Get the word out about your social networks. Add social sharing links to your website and blogging platform. Invite email subscribers to join the social networks and include social sharing buttons in every e-blast. Add important social handles to business cards. Identify and follow other industry thought leaders.

Top Tips for Using Social Media in Real Estate



“

Developing thought leadership is key in helping set you apart from your competitors. How you leverage that content to reach external audiences and influencers is a critical component in building a reputation as an industry thought leader. At NAI Global we strongly believe that Content Marketing should include a cohesive social media strategy and be implemented throughout the organization to help drive the brand.”

Lindsey Fierro
Senior Vice President
NAI Global
@NAIGlobal

Strategize your networks

Consider selecting two networks that best speak to your customer base as the primary channels and using others a secondary network. Learn how to use your primary social networks by noting what posts perform the best and how to maximize exposure based on time of day. Use platforms like LinkedIn to make connections. Search for “friends of a friend” and follow their other social networks. This method makes soft introductions that can grow into sales leads.

Use the header and profile images to your advantage

Strategically adapt to each network’s unique settings for your user profile. Start with an attractive design for the images. Include contact information and if available, use a call to action like “See the Demo!” or “Visit our Blog!” Use the header and profile space to showcase special announcements like an important anniversary, upcoming conference or new product release.

Avoid Overwhelming Self-Promotion

Promotion is fine, but be wary of over self-promoting. No one uses social to be blatantly sold to. Focus on being a useful member of the social community by offering helpful industry advice. Over time the effort will result in lead generation and business growth.



Allen Buchanan
Principal
Lee & Associates
@AllenCBuchanan

“

I get asked three questions about my CRE Content Marketing. Are you making any money with this stuff? How much time do you spend? How do I get started? I answer as follows – yes, not as much as you would imagine and just subscribe to The News Funnel!

My goal with Content Marketing is simple – to gain through my giving - a slogan I learned from my friend Ivan Misner who is the father of modern networking. Through the visibility that Content Marketing creates, you become an “expert”. Recently, I was discussing a deal with a broker from Austin, Texas. The deal was in Abilene, Texas. I live in Southern California. About five minutes into the conversation, he asks – “are you that guy that produces those weekly videos?” Case closed!”

TWEETS 14.8K **FOLLOWING** 3,576 **FOLLOWERS** 4,983 **LIKES** 4,680 **LISTS** 10 [Follow](#)

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

Allen C. Buchanan @allencbuchanan · 1h
DUKE! via @DukeLong - Can I Take You To The Real #CRE Promised Land?

CHAPTER FIVE

Why Content Distribution Matters

The end goal of blogging and using social media is to reach new and ever-larger audiences, translating into new customers.

Your target audience drives how to distribute content. According to [Pew Research Center](#), 2% of baby boomers use Instagram while 58% of millennials subscribe to the service. A campaign for first-time homebuyers would be better suited to Instagram than marketing a retirement condo.

Grow your brand by distributing content strategically.

The same study identified LinkedIn's highest demographic of users as 30-49 and that the majority has a college degree. A professional video marketing a new real estate tech product would be better received here exclusively marketing on Youtube.



Victoria Graham
Director of Marketing
WiredScore
@WiredScore

“

Marketing has always been about content. Even before the invention of digital marketing, marketers started with a message, turned it into content, like a print or radio ad and distributed it across the channels that were most likely to reach their target audiences.

For modern marketers it is just the same, except now we have the ability to use data to understand our customer groups in much more detail, creating personas and hyper-targeting those personas with content that is valuable and engaging to them at every stage of the sales cycle.”

Getting Started with Content Distribution

1.

Use Owned Platforms First

Sharing your high-quality content begins by using “owned” platforms. These are free distribution channels owned by your company: a website, a weekly e-newsletter, social media networks, and more. Promote the latest blog “10 Trends in Commercial Real Estate” by sharing a link to the post on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and any other owned channels: linking in the e-newsletter, citing in a white paper, or referencing in another blog post using back linking.

2.

Expand Your Network

Join a social media group like a professional association on LinkedIn. Select groups that are active, large, and relevant to your real estate venture. Get involved with the discussions by answering questions or posing your own. Share the latest content with the professional association, but avoid overt self-promotion.

3.

Leverage Industry Influencers

The easiest way to use influencers is by mentioning, quoting, or linking to them in your content and mentioning the reference on social media. Influencers often share that content with their audiences, increasing your reach.

4.

Publish with News Aggregators

Maximize the return on your most valuable blog posts by putting them back in-recirculation. Find the right platform for republishing your work. Examples include LinkedIn Pulse, Business2Community and [The News Funnel](#).

5.

Schedule with Automation Software

There is no shortage of content management services, from Hootsuite to SproutSocial to HubSpot. Use a service to plan and schedule the social posts and let it go. Remember: content sharing from other industry professionals is fine, but promote original content, too. Check in at least once a day to respond to the communities.



Mike Westgate
Vice President of Marketing
RealMassive
@RealMassive

“

Your content should be about your target audience, not about your brand. It doesn't hurt to utilize your brand or product to illustrate a point, but try to think from your audience's perspective and feature their thoughts/voices whenever appropriate. As a new, disruptive brand in a mature industry, we align our narrative to industry trends, then lean on influential voices and quotes to "host" an open dialogue. This not only presents us a seat at the table for salient topics, but allows us to produce multiple pieces of content (short & long-form) on a singular topic. Finally and perhaps most importantly, if your content isn't sharable, it might as well be that fallen tree no one heard. Leverage social sharability and slice/dice a longer story (blog, whitepaper) into social bytes which can be shared, commented-on, and repurposed.”

The screenshot shows the RealMassive website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the RealMassive logo and links for About, Products, Help, Blog, Careers, Contact, and Sign Up. Below the navigation bar is a large hero section with a teal-tinted aerial city map background. The RealMassive logo is in the top left of the hero section. The main headline reads "The New #CREcosystem" with a sub-headline "Predictions from the industry's emerging and influential voices". On the right side of the hero section, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google+, along with an email icon. Below the hero section is a dark grey bar with the text "Enter your email to get a copy of the 2016 Influencer Report." followed by an input field labeled "Your email address..." and a green button labeled "DOWNLOAD REPORT". Below this is a white section for a blog post titled "Trends Shaping the Modern #CREcosystem" dated "March 10, 2016". The author is identified as "by Craig Hancock, CEO and Co-founder at RealMassive" with a small circular profile picture of Craig Hancock. The first line of the article text is "The commercial real estate industry has reached an inflection point as traditional business practices".

Ways to Boost Content Distribution

Engage in Online Communities

Leave comments on others' social networks congratulating their achievements or responding professionally to their posts. Share their blogs and leave feedback. Draw others into the conversation by tagging their social profile.

Pick the Right Platform for the Message

We [recently blogged](#) about the value of Content Marketing where your audience lives.

Answer a Quora Question

Find questions relevant to your real estate company and craft a thoughtful answer. At the end, include a link to your content.

Use Guest Posts

Research other blogs publishing relevant content to your real estate company that will boost your reputation. Create a unique piece of content for the guest blog, but ensure the blog includes a bio and a link back to your website.



CHAPTER SIX

Improving Your Marketing Plan Using Blogging and Social Media

An active blog and thriving social community is essential in real estate Content Marketing.

The data demonstrates that blogging drives lead generation and boosts a brand's presence. Social networks help distribute relevant content and establish real estate ventures as thought leaders in the field.

If generating a content calendar strategy or the thought of writing quality blogs every week sound stressful, ask for help!

The News Funnel's team of expert real estate content managers is available to help design and execute Content Marketing strategies that will build your brand and grow your audience.



sarah@thenewsfunnel.com



content-marketing.thenewsfunnel.com