

## **Blogging Basics**

Introduction to the blogging for real estate professionals.

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Real estate professionals spend thousands of dollars each year in advertising, and while such exposure may prove highly effective, it can cost a bundle up front. By contrast, blogging is a free marketing technique that can yield powerful results when done right.

#### **Why Blog?**

Blogging helps you establish yourself as an authority in your field. When you write compelling blog entries about the local real estate market or other issues relevant to homeowners, you drive traffic to your website. And, if your writing is compelling enough, you can get a healthy following and make a name for yourself in the world of real estate.

Not much of a writer? Don't have time to spend writing a blog? Consider hiring a freelance copywriter to ghost write articles for you. Use oDesk.com, craigslist.org, or elance.com to connect with skilled writers who can produce quality web copy at a reasonable price. Be sure to see samples from the writer's portfolio before you hire them... and don't go too cheap! There are a lot of second-rate writers out there, and if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.

#### **Where to Blog?**

You probably already know that ActiveRain.com, the largest real estate network in the industry, has a free, easy-to-use blogging feature (with more advanced features available to paying customers). Another option is WordPress.com, which is also free and easy to navigate. Both websites rank high in Google searches, which will help increase internet traffic for your blog. Every blogging website has its own look and feel, so explore your options before choosing a home for your blog.

If you have advanced technical skills (or know someone who does), you can set up a blog directly on your website, which will be easy to update if you're working with a Content Management System. If you have no idea what that means, talk to your web developer. The bottom line—with a little work upfront and the right software, you can house a blog directly on your website, bringing all the traffic (and potential customers) straight to *you*.

## **What to Blog about?**

The list is endless! You can cover everything from community news to market trends. If you're an Agent, consider exploring topics like home maintenance tips, your latest listings, or anything that may be of interest to your target market. If you're a Broker, you may want to blog about your firm's latest success and your winning sales team, which can help recruit more top agents.

When searching for topics, your competitors may be your greatest source of inspiration, so visit other blogs on a regular basis. Update your blog at least once a week, respond to comments, and keep the discussion fresh, lively, and fun!

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