



SOCIAL MEDIA FOR HOME BUILDERS

BEST PRACTICES & TIPS

group**two**

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A NOTE FROM GROUP TWO'S SOCIAL MEDIA DIRECTOR: CHELSEY KEENAN

I know I'm biased, but in my heart of hearts, I love social media and the possibilities it has created for our industry. So look at these guidelines as a love letter to social media — a love letter filled with examples of how to best use social media and the #puremagic (conversion and sales) that can come from it. We're not breaking up with it anytime soon, so embrace it. You don't have to live, eat, and breathe it like we do, but understanding is the first step. 😊

Where to begin?

Focus on these three.

Not all content is created equal. What might foster engagement and generate interest on one platform, might not on another. Different people log onto each social media platform with different expectations. Understanding those expectations is crucial to your social success. Lucky for you, we've identified the three platforms that are the most advantageous for BUILDERS to reach buyers and generate conversions.



FACEBOOK

Facebook is a personal network that users interact with to connect with friends and family. It isn't a salesy environment, so provide content they want to engage with like walk-through videos, featured QMIs, and galleries. Surprisingly, Facebook skews 55 and older, so it's a great place to engage with that buyer.



INSTAGRAM

Instagram tells a visual story. Think about your tagline or your mission statement — how can you carry that through on your Instagram feed? Are you all about the design details? Show beautiful closeup photography. Buyers will often visit your Instagram to review it as if it's your portfolio, so showcase your best work and do not sacrifice quality for quantity.



LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is used to build b2b connections (think vendors or businesses near your communities), establish thought leadership in the industry, attract talent, and engage with realtors. With a strong realtor following on LinkedIn, they can learn about you to better speak on your behalf and get updates on your move-in ready homes.



REALLY? NO TWITTER?

Nope! After many years of new home marketing experience, we observed very little engagement from buyers on Twitter. Twitter is all about quick thoughts and trending news, and we weren't seeing buyers show up enough to support the effort. Focusing on three platforms lets you give better support to buyers who intend to interact with you.

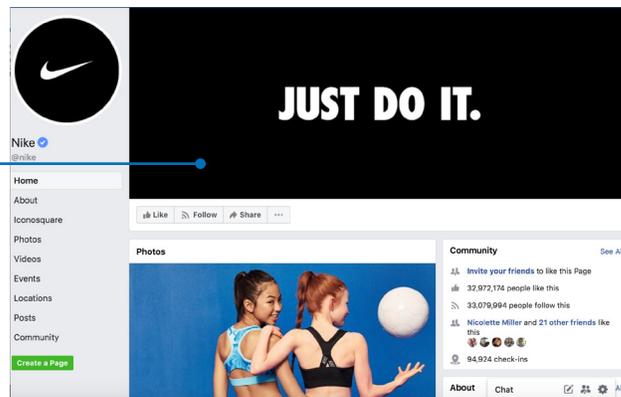
Brand your profiles.

Consistent branding across EVERY touchpoint, from signage to your website, to every single social platform is CRUCIAL to building and maintaining trust with your buyers. Generally, your profile pic should be your logo, and your cover photo can vary depending on the campaign you are running— or it can be a beautiful product photo or as simple as your tagline.



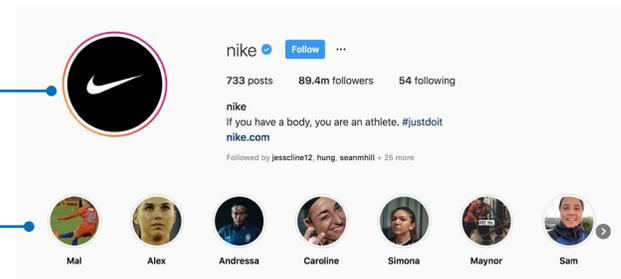
PROFILE
PIC

COVER
PHOTO



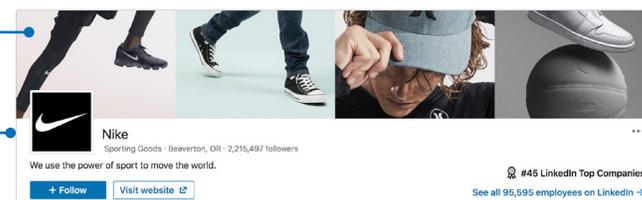
PROFILE
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FEATURED
STORIES



COVER
PHOTO

PROFILE
PIC



**WE'RE NOT
INCLUDING
THE SIZES!**

**Social media
sizing fluctuates
as the apps
make
updates and
improvements.
There are online
resources a
quick google
away that will
give you the
most updated
sizes for each
platform.**

Know your goals and plan ahead.

Using social media to drive traffic is a proven business strategy for builders — so take it seriously! Set actionable goals each month and plan ahead so you're not scrambling and can measure growth and results.



SAMPLE MONTHLY CALENDAR

WEEK ONE

Featured Floor Plan
 Summer Incentive
 Weekend CTA

WEEK TWO

Featured Community
 Featured Home
 Blog Share

WEEK THREE

New Home FAQ
 Featured Room: Great Room
 Weekend CTA

WEEK FOUR

Social Media Cross Promotion
 Featured Floor Plan
 Weekend Hours

WEEK FIVE

Featured Community
 Why Build With Us
 Blog Share

SHOOT FOR **3**
 POSTS PER WEEK!

Post ideas.

Good news: as a builder, you always have something to say. Here are a few evergreen content ideas to keep the conversation going.

HAPPY HOMEOWNERS



Celebrate your new homeowners in front of their new homes.

TESTIMONIAL GRAPHICS



Turn testimonials into graphics that show you in a great light.

AMENITIES



Feature the amenities that make your community special.

INVENTORY HOMES



Show off your available homes. Feature photography that sets them apart.

FLOOR PLAN EXAMPLES



Feature photography from each floor plan you offer so buyers can get a feel for the layouts.

WALK-THROUGH VIDEOS



It's never a bad idea to walk through your available homes room by room and give buyers an idea of exactly what your homes have to offer.

UPCOMING EVENTS



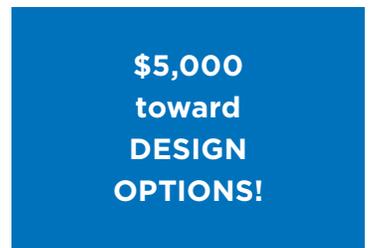
Start promoting an event about three weeks out. It can be as simple as lifestyle photography or a graphic with the location and time/date.

EVENT RECAPS



Is the event over? This is a great opportunity to highlight the best moments and recap the event's success.

INCENTIVES



If you have an incentive going on, share it!

Tips for photographing your homes for social.

Builders, we can't stress this enough — your photography is sacred. The lighting, the resolution, the angle, and the details *matter*. Photos sell homes. So here are a few quick tips to ensure your social photos are doing your homes justice.

1

Always use sharp, high-resolution photos. Your brand should never be represented with a pixelated or low-quality photo.

**2**

Don't put a lot of text on your photos, keep the details for the caption.



3 *Be cautious when choosing lifestyle stock photography that the background does not misrepresent your product or location.*



You may want to highlight a pool lifestyle, but these white trellises with flowers would misrepresent your actual pool.

4 *Exteriors: Make sure the entire house fits into the frame. Best practice is to make sure the eaves of the house do not touch the edges of the photo.*



5 *Always make sure you are photographing a clean exterior: no people, trash, porta-johns, dirt-stained roads, or equipment in the shot.*



6 Pay attention to distortion. A rule to always remember whether you're shooting interior or exterior subjects: Vertical lines should always be 90°.



Look for the lines in the shot and make sure they are straight.

7 If the room is empty, highlight the details.



There's nothing wrong with zooming in and taking detail shots. Focus on the included kitchen appliances, faucets, or cabinets (to show storage space), a take a close up showing the pattern of the granite countertop, flooring, wood, carpet, and tile backsplash.

8 Images should not look unnatural—effects should never compromise image quality. For example, avoid effects that create intense sharpening, contrast, strange color casts, or overexposure.



Video best practices.

Pull out that phone and hit record! If you've got an inventory home or an upcoming open house, record a teaser to get buyers excited before they visit. Videos don't need to be high production. You can shoot them with your phone — just make sure you're following these quick tips and you're golden.

1

Vertical or Horizontal?

This has been a big debate for a while, but you can use either orientation depending on where you're posting the video. A quick walk-through recorded on your phone? Vertical is probably best. If you think you might use the video in multiple places, the safest bet is to shoot horizontally, then you know you always have enough width to edit it vertically if you need.

2

Use Subtitles

Since most buyers will be watching your video on mobile, they could be anywhere — including a place where they don't want to turn their sound on. Subtitles will ensure your message is getting across, whether they have their phone on mute or not.

3

Keep it Steady

If your walk-through video is shaky, we guarantee buyers won't watch past the first two seconds. We recommend purchasing an inexpensive phone stabilizer with a weighted handle.

4

Keep it Short

Human beings have shorter attention spans than goldfish. The longer your video is, the less likely people will watch until the end. With some exceptions, no video should be longer than 60 seconds — but shorter than that is even better.

5

Include a Call to Action

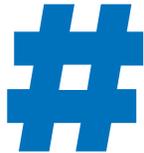
After a prospect watches your video, give them a next step. Social media is all about keeping the conversation going. Can they learn more on your website, should they call to schedule a tour, or RSVP to an event? Tell them!



PRO TIP: NOT ALL PLATFORMS ARE COMPATIBLE WITH EACH OTHER

Google is a competitor with Facebook, so YouTube videos aren't optimized for Facebook. That's why we recommend uploading video directly to Facebook. You'll be more likely to get organic shares AND the video will just look better.

Hashtags and emojis quickly explained.



Hashtags make your content easier to find for more people (primarily on Instagram). If you are posting directly on LinkedIn or Facebook, it's not as important to tag your posts. When tagging on Instagram, use industry relevant tags like:

#[City]RealEstate #newhomes
#newhomebuilder
#homedesign

**Tag all posts with
#[yourbuildername]**



Emojis bring personality to your posts. Studies have shown that using them increases engagement because they make you seem more approachable. Our recommendation: we like emojis when they are used sparingly and thoughtfully. Extra points if you use one to replace a word, like the camera emoji when giving photography credit, or the house emoji with a featured home.

Responding to comments.

The way your company interacts with users on social media IS a part of your customer service. We urge you to treat questions and interactions on your social platforms the same way you would treat them if the person was right in front of you in your model home.

REPLY ASAP

Social users expect a response to their comment/complaint within 1 hour.

COMPLAINTS

If the comment is negative or if a customer leaves a bad review, answer ASAP, but make sure to take the conversation offline. "Hi Frank, we're sorry to hear this. Please give us a call at 555-555-5555 until 6pm so we can assist."

DEVELOP FAQ'S

If you have a buyer response playbook or FAQ, it's a lot easier to respond to comments quickly.

NEVER IGNORE

Just as you would never ignore a prospect who asks a question in your sales office, you shouldn't leave a comment unattended online!

USE THEIR NAME

When you respond, address the user by name — it helps keep the interaction personal.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Be sure to tag your company on any positive responses to bring that comment to light over any negative ones!



PRO TIP: MONITOR YOUR MENTIONS

Good news: you don't have to stare at your social media all day! There are tools that will alert you when someone is talking to you or about you on social. Tools like "Mention" allow you to get live updates and even provide you with a collaboration-friendly dashboard so multiple people on your team can access.

Paid ads and boosted posts.

Up until now, we've been addressing "organic" social media, which involves posting without paying for boosted distribution. Organic social is strategic and necessary for community engagement and building your brand. However, **15-20% of the traffic to your website should be coming from social media**, so paid social advertising *must* be part of your marketing plan.



Guaranteed in their feed

As social media algorithms are designed to show posts from users' friends and family, organic social for business tends to not take priority. Boosted posts and ads guarantee a place in your potential buyer's feed.



Hit a new audience

Paid ads give you control over who sees your ad. With organic posting, you are limited to users who are already following you — this is great for community engagement, but doesn't broaden your reach. Targeting allows you to hook new leads, build brand awareness through consistent ad messaging, announce new incentives and QMI homes to more potential buyers, and grow your network in general.



Fit any budget

Social ad campaigns are not costly. In fact, the cost is directly related to how effective they are, since social platforms are "cost-per-click." It's ideal because you don't run the risk of paying a ton of money for ads that don't work. The more you refine and target your ads as you learn from their analytics, the better your ROI will be.



PAID ADS MEAN ACCESS TO DATA, BEAUTIFUL DATA.

Another reason we love paid ads? Facebook analytics allow you to gather market insight. You can learn, assess, and refine campaigns based on real-time data. Do QMI walk-through videos convert better? This insight allows you to identify your best targets and narrow the parameters to most effectively drive conversions.