

The Instagram playbook: How to make your listings stand out in the age of visuals

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When today's emerging affluent consumer wants to curate a gallery of their lives through video and photography, they choose Instagram. **It's not news** that Instagram is an ideal platform for agents as well: it's a powerful channel for showcasing not only high-end properties and markets, but the exceptional lifestyles they make possible.

High-quality imagery and well-produced video turn your Instagram account into a client portal for viewing and experiencing your properties. But when your client base is inundated with imagery, how do you make sure your visuals stand out from the crowd? My team and I have found great success with our approach to listing imagery on Instagram, generating numerous qualified leads, and frequently hearing from buyers who tell us that our content caught their eye. Here are my top three strategies for curating an effective Instagram presence.

1. Focus on lifestyle

At the end of the day, if your buyers want to know how many bedrooms, bathrooms, appliances, and amenities your property has, they can check the online listing. For Instagram profile content, my goal is always to present visuals that are as polished as possible, but that tell a story.

Buyers want to know what the community has to offer. If there's mountain biking and hiking right outside the property's backdoor, we want them to realize that. If they can walk around the corner onto a beach, they should be able to see it in the post. Your photo grid should give viewers the same captivating thrill they might get from watching a program like Million Dollar Listing.

The descriptions you write for your posts should continue emphasizing the experience of living in the home — whether that's the pleasure of dining outdoors, of having your toes in the sand as soon as you step off the home's back patio, or of endless vistas from every window.

It's also worth noting that today's luxury buyers value in-home recreation, entertainment, and breathing room like never before. These are important features to focus on in your captions. Talk about yards, pools, tennis courts, gyms, and opportunities to get outdoors to drive extra interest in your properties.

2. Use Stories to connect

One of the other strengths of Instagram is that it's a great option for making authentic connections with buyers, and while this will be apparent in some of your profile videos and photography, the best way to share personalized content is through your Stories.

When my team and I create Stories, we normally shoot on an iPhone, and instead of trying to sell the property, we simply want to create a moment. For example, we shared a post where I simply sat on the back balcony of this beautiful oceanfront estate and enjoyed a Philz Coffee, which is everyone's favorite in San Diego. Instead of flashing to the home's hottest features and finest details, we focused on the morning cup of joe, and the message was clear — there's no better place to sip your Philz than sitting here, listening to the waves. There was no need to talk to my audience or sell the home; all we wanted to do was share that one amazing experience.

For your Stories, don't worry about how professional they look. In fact, if they look too put together, they won't come across as natural, spontaneous, and personable. And they'll disappear from your feed in 24 hours, so informal sets the right tone.

I also don't shy away from interspersing my visuals with fun pictures with friends and family that provide an authentic glimpse into what it's like to live

here. Bringing a personal touch to your professional account is important for showing that you're a real person people can feel comfortable reaching out to.

3. Balance in-the-moment content with professional video

Because your buyer is likely inundated with top-quality visuals, it's important you go above and beyond on formal listing videos. Like any top brokerage, my team and I spare no expense on professional real estate videography for our listings. We typically bring a team into town to shoot the home, along with the lifestyle that goes with it, and we produce four or five different videos per listing. These fall into two distinct formats.

The full-length showcase is a two-minute video that provides viewers with an immersive tour of the listing. These focus solely on the property; I stay out of these ones, and let the home and the surrounding environment do the talking. Because luxury buyers are increasingly turning to video and virtual tours when shopping for homes, we've been including slower edits in these long-form showcases, allowing the viewer's eye to linger on spaces and details instead of flashing quickly to every show-stopping feature.

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Overall, the most important thing is to stay true to who you are, and to continue striking that impactful balance between the beautiful home imagery and your personal life. Show your buyers that you're approachable and accessible to assist them with anything they need — but most of all, show them what your market has to offer.