

Have you started thinking about your 2021 [social media plan](#)? Now is the time to start putting those building blocks in place, especially as a real estate professional.

The first step — and one of the most crucial — is to create a social media content plan. Let's start by talking about the basics of what content is, what it does and the forms it can potentially take.

Content is a vehicle that not only tells your story but also expresses your brand. It tells the tale of what it's like to work with you and your company, which is an essential that potential clients will want to understand before signing on the dotted line.

You'll find content in any number of forms: success stories, testimonials, images and videos. Most importantly, content can advance your brand, which is so much more than just your logo.

Make a content plan

Now, let's talk about the concrete steps you can start taking today toward getting down a solid [social media content](#) plan. The first and most fundamental thing you can do is get yourself organized and start implementing a system.

A [content grid](#) is beneficial here as it lays out in a neatly visual way the multitude of content you might incorporate into your strategy. Also, here's a resource where you can [download free calendars](#).

That said, know that the best social media content strategy involves content *and* thinking through what content looks like on different channels.

For example, for each blog post we publish, we promote that blog link on social media channels: [Facebook](#), Twitter, LinkedIn, [Instagram](#), Pinterest and [YouTube](#) (for video). But for each platform, we change how we present it a bit.

We may change the language or resize a photo — the key here is to “speak the language” of each channel but not reinvent the wheel.

Create a system

While you’re planning, understand that systems are critical. There are several ways you can start to establish one.

Here are a few starting points:

- Keep a notebook of your [ideas](#), and note the questions you get asked regularly.
- Look through your “sent email” folder for additional inspiration.
- [Brainstorm 30 ideas](#) for your strategy — this might take a little bit of time and thought, but it’s an excellent investment.
- Think about the content you already have that you could repurpose.
- Consider incorporating themed days into your plan, such as “Tip Tuesday” or “Fun Friday.”
- Schedule a specific time to write or create, and keep at it. Then, follow this up with a system for what happens after publishing a post or a video.

Ideally, you want to have 30-60 days’ worth of content lined up ahead of time so that each week you aren’t asking yourself, “*What am I posting today?*”

You need to know who’s going to write or create this content, *and* you also need to know who’s going to edit it and take charge of it once it goes live. Collaboration is easy through mediums such as Google Docs.

Make a schedule

Another thing to consider — are you providing the right content to the right people at the right time of day?

It's not just content — it's context. Time of day and platform are both things to think about when planning.

For example, what state of mind are you in on a Monday at 8 a.m. versus Friday at 5 p.m.? Think about the context in which your followers consume your content in addition to what you are creating. Scheduling means thinking beyond now. Tools such as Later.com or [Hootsuite](#) can help you successfully calendar your strategy to make it as seamless as possible. However, scheduled content should never replace the personal piece of social media.

Add extra padding for engagement

When scheduling content, always plan time to respond to comments and engage with others in your community.

As you plan your 2021 social media calendar, consider [time-blocking](#) and scheduling time to engage with others in addition to planning and creating content.

As we all know, real estate is a relationship business, and we can't take the "social" out of social media.

Katie Lance is the author of [#GetSocialSmart](#) and founder and CEO of [Katie Lance Consulting](#), a social media strategy firm and founder of the #GetSocialSmart Academy. She's been recognized by Inman News as one of the 100 most influential people in real estate and is a featured keynote speaker at many industry events. Katie is also the author of the best-selling book, [#GetSocialSmart](#).