



Episode 10: Social Media Tips #NoFilter

Let's be honest -- REALTORS face an ever-changing industry. With emerging tech, growing trends, and a booming market, it's vital to keep up. Join me, Gilbert Gonzalez, CEO for the San Antonio Board of Realtors, as I get real with experts on what REALTORS need to know in this industry. It's time to get real.

GG (00:00):

With a pandemic and need for social distancing, REALTORS® are having to get creative in how they connect and engage with clients. Today. We're talking with Harrison Beacher, a REALTOR® from Washington D C area. Who's had a lot of success in creating meaningful connections in simple, yet unique ways. He's going to share his tried and true methods with us. Harrison, thank you for being with us. Thank you so much for having. Before we dive into your advice on engaging with clients. I want to give our listeners a little background on you. You're a member of the National Association of REALTORS®, young professional network, and a member of the REALTORS® Magazine's "30 under 30" Class of 2016. What got you started in real estate in the first place?

HB (01:04):

Well, I jumped in right after graduating college. I graduated college in May of 2008, got licensed in July, 2008 and my best friend's mother saw a lot of entrepreneurial spirit in me. AKA, I didn't really have another plan, so she encouraged me to get my license and just knew that I had a big network that I always had kind of a motor to go figure things out and a mind for sales and connection. So it was a great fit initially. But I did also like wait tables and have a DJ business early on that, you know, allowed me to pay my bills while I was building a real estate business. So that was a really big part of me being able to grow confidently without being like scared of not being able to eat, but it helps early on.

GG (01:49):

So one of the interesting things is in Georgetown, you got your degree with focus on digital art and photography and theology with a focus on social justice. Do you feel that this career has allowed you to use both of those

HB (02:04):

A hundred percent? I mean, a, you know, one of the Jesuit mottos as someone that went to Catholic school for a long time, is still ingrained in my head, is care of personnel is care for the whole person. And for me like that theology minor that I took really helped me understand the abundance that I've had in my life and realize that as I'm able to grow more and do more, that an important part that I have to do, right? Like it's not optional. It's finding ways to give back and that's really helped us grow and helped us earn more referrals and earn more opportunities because that's a core of all of our businesses is finding ways to give back, incorporate our community at the center of it. And it's a, you know, positive reinforcement circles so when we do it and do well and more business and opportunity comes. So that's the

theology back then and social justice is at the core of all of our businesses that we have. And yeah, wouldn't have it any other way.

GG (02:54):

We're talking today a little bit about the idea that you obviously are very comfortable on social media on this new way of marketing and engaging with consumers. And it's not as comfortable for a lot of people, right? So some people have said, Oh, COVID has happened, and therefore, I can't do my job. What would you say to them?

HB (03:19):

I say, life still goes on, right? It still has to happen in a lot of ways. Human needs have adjusted, right, but the need for housing and need for a place to live have not changed. So if we're at the core of this and if our whole spirit is kind of servant leaders and it's folks that are looking to help others with their housing needs, we need to do that at a high level. And for our team, we didn't retreat at all. If anything, we've named even more than double down and social media allows us the opportunity to like tell that story and talk about the detail within which we're still able to help people is a really natural way to market, right? I think some people get nervous and afraid of engaging with social media because they don't want to be fake, right. They don't want to seem inauthentic or they don't want to you know, present something that might get perceived in the wrong way. But my advice to folks now is it has to be a pivotal and integral part of your marketing strategy because consumers, especially millennials and younger really need authenticity and, and good social media strategy gives you a chance to authentically share who you are and what you do, and only good things come from telling your story in that way and engaging with your sphere,

GG (04:30):

How easy is it to find your authentic voice? What would you tell people on what authentic looks to you? Because some people want to authentic to them looks like the REALTOR® that they are expected to be. And it's not necessarily the REALTOR® that they are and people will probably love the REALTOR® that they are much better.

HB (04:48):

Yeah. Yeah. That's such, you said that so perfectly that the REALTOR® that people expect them to be right. And I think with anything in sales, especially with our business, that's a person to person business like that comes down to relationship one on one, people are gonna choose to get into a business relationship with you. They know you, they like you and they trust you as a professional. Now the know and like parts are really where I think social media can come in and that authentic voice with a, I'll put an asterisk next to the authentic voice because we are in an election season and there's a lot of polar thing. So maybe not all of yourself, just some of your views are more to the Karen, Kevin extreme, as we said before, but you know, be thoughtful with all of that authentic self, but the common interest things that people like, you know, low hanging fruit, babies, dogs, food, right?

HB (05:36):

Like the things that everyone else is going to engage with. Talk about how you see that, talk about what you see, talk about what you enjoy, what you like and have that as a part of the strategy and showing your business too. Like, it can't be just all personal life and no business in my opinion, but it also, can't be just all business and no personal life. That balance is something that, you know, I think you have to first study models of people that you think are it well, you know, you've told me we do it pretty decently, but I'm sure folks have folks in their market or somewhere nearby that they see them doing it well, rip off and duplicate man, but look at what they're doing in the same way, but then the authentic voices, your individual touch, your interests and what you do. And just being thoughtful with how you share it and sharing it systematically.

GG (06:15):

Do you think people should have a business page and a personal page or you think merge them together?

HB (06:22):

Hmm. I think if you've got, if you're starting, so there's two answers to that. If you are in the position where you're trying to build a brand and sales team or entity that can outlast you the individual, which was my path, right? Well, I started up individual sales person builds a brand and a team, and eventually I will be out of the everyday production. Like that is my goal and my wife's goal to like that would be out of production. If you have that path, I think having a separate, personal and business is why, so you can have a little bit of separation, but for 99% of agents, right, they're just going to be individual productive agents with one admin, you know, maybe buyer specialists with them, having a personal page where you are thoughtful with the business stuff you share on, it can be effective.

HB (07:06):

At the end of the day, you need to share where you have the most connection. You're going to put effort into building more connections, but everybody has, everybody should have some kind of connection relationship with people that are already connected with in some way. And that's where I put the most of my social media efforts, because that's the low hanging fruit. Those are the people that already know you. And like you, you just have to change their mind about that trust and the professionals. So new agents, personal page, build it out, more established folks trying to build out a team. So don't be shy with having both a personal page and business, excuse me. Yeah. Personal and business like we do. We've got both personal and business pages.

GG (07:40):

So one of the things in doing some research for today and you know, looking at your examples on social media, which I definitely want to dive into so we can, you know, share that information is that every profile page out there, whether it was REALTOR.com, NAR, Yelp, Twitter, you filled out all the blanks. There was never that empty photo. Your photo was on all of them, sometimes multiple photos. What is your advice to people on making sure that those profiles are filled out at all those free sites,

HB (08:13):

It's validity, and it is a free opportunity to tell your story. So, you know, I know if I'm real, dude, we joke about some of our more seasoned professionals that have been around for a while and have a headshot, you know, that they may be from the Olen mills, like nineties mall, you know, over airbrushed picture. If they have that in one place and you meet them in person, you're like, who is this dinosaur? And it doesn't look like their picture and their life. My, my goal, having them all be complete is that when people see me any space we meet in real life, they're not surprised, right? Like they have a pretty good sense of what to expect from what I choose to tell. And then if they want to dig deeper than when we meet in person, there's not a huge deviation from what I put online to what's me in real life.

HB (08:55):

So I'd argue that everyone should look at, you know, all those that you listed, build out a presence because it also serves as a digital business card, right? It lets people look up validate and do some third party affirmation and third party verification that you are, who you say you are. And even if you haven't had a ton of sales records yet, right? Everyone's got a story. Everyone's got a reason or a why that they chose to get into real estate sales. So with our new agents on our sales team, I'm encouraging them to double down on their passion statements on why they're in the business now, if you haven't sold a couple of hundred homes, you've got some reason why they're here now. Like there's gotta be a reason people pick you, but just having your license is not enough. They got 1.4 million other options. So I'm like, what's the you, what's the reason that they're picking you and all these different profiles give you the chance to really tell that story on your own terms.

GG (09:43):

And, you know, it seems so valuable because oftentimes I think REALTORS® will go to events. They will work their sphere of influences by going places and meeting people. So you don't need that photo, right? Because you're meeting people one on one, they've already made it. Now where that's gone its seeing what somebody looks like and, you know, filling out all those questions and answering it, it's really valuable as opposed to, if it's not there, then they're not going to see the information they're going to move on.

HB (10:11):

I was going to make assumptions or guess, right. But what I assume when someone didn't fill it out is that, that wasn't important to them. And that's a detail like any service provider I use, I mainly looked them up on the places where I want to be found. So I'm Googling them. I'm yelping them. I'm looking them up, I'm looking at their other social media pages and seeing what they share. I like it if there is something humanity, I like it. If there's some real, other connection points outside of business. And I'd like to see that there are some type of proof that other people have worked with them, giving them a good rating and giving them a good review and likes them. And that it's like real too, like nothing worse than like a fake review, like fake pages or like people that, you know, Pay, I think we talked about this before, but like folks that pay others to completely do their, their social media profile and I can sniff it out. Right. Like, I can sense if like something's fake, like, you know, you are super important.

GG (11:03):

So going in a little bit into the idea that, you know, the normal way that people meet is by in person. What have you seen people do to replace the mixers, the open house, the happy hours, the movie nights that people used to have, what have you seen to replace that stuff?

HB (11:22):

When people would get really creative with zoom and other kinds of virtual connection opportunities, if you know, a little bit into COVID now. So I'm a little sick of the, just everybody on a screen, like drinking, like Brady bunch, right. But with no direction, what I've appreciated folks doing is bringing in an outside professional and bringing in some type of activity along with the online connection. So as a sales team we've done a few different things that I think has worked pretty well. One was throw kinds of virtual parties if you will, where we'd have me playing music. Because like I said, I used to have a DJ business. So we would you know, have me playing some music and we would also create separate zoom rooms, like within the party where folks that they wanted to, we had a couple of tree trivia games in one, like we were creating things to do together instead of just talking and looking at each other.

HB (12:14):

So I think there's still tons of opportunity to get creative online, but you have to put a little bit more effort into it than just creating the zoom link and telling people to come into a place. Right. I think people that are doing this well now are getting like Somalia eggs or mixologists or chefs, or, you know, somebody that had a Gardner, right. Come on and talk about like gardening stuff, anything that can like educate folks right now and give them a focal point to talk about and discuss and learn. I think you're gonna find some good success with

GG 3 (12:43):

What do you say to the people though, who are at zoom fatigue, right? Like, I don't want to do anything on zoom anymore. I want to do something that is, that, that respects the law. Right. And, and respect social distancing. And I want to engage, I know I've heard, maybe it's putting your logo on face masks and then dropping them off at people's houses or anything of that nature. Like what else have you seen that is not necessarily online, but still engages with the consumer

HB (13:14):

Socially distant, smart social events say social one more time. For us, we actually went to support a local chef and right around the 4th of July we hired him to create a bunch of meals that we had our team then deliver it to their VIP. People can get thoughtful and creative with this too, because it's also creating a shared experience that like, if we pick the morning and it was like July 5th or 6th right after we gave our clients a heads up. So this gave us a reason to call and check in with him. This was our VIP client list of folks that referred us business, but we worked with a couple times and it could be a pretty big team. So this was about 250 meals total that we had on delivered. And you can get thoughtful. You can get lenders and title and other people in our world to help underwrite this cost.

HB (14:02):

Right now you can do this together. It doesn't have to come completely out of your pocket, but if you're the organizing body behind it, and then you bring that food to somebody, I call it spreading culinary joy, right? Like we're helping people with a meal we're supporting local business. We're checking a lot of boxes off. And another thing was important. It's what you actually deliver. So in the box, we gave him a little bit of our swag and gave him some stickers. There was a little note card that said, thank you so much. Here is the business we're supporting. And here's our social media platform. If you enjoy the food, take a pic and tag us in it. And we'd be really appreciative. We're always here to help, right? Like that message was really well resonated. And just from that one delivery event, I got three appointments personally that have since turned into at least one deal and the other two are going to be in the pipeline.

HB (14:43):

So like that's a way to be socially distant and be smart. And to be clear on how we did it, we had our individual sales team members, we masked up, gloved up and everything. Picked up prepackaged meals from the chef in his kitchen so that there was no contact with us in the food. And then it was going to a stapled bag that had, you know, what was on top of it. And in D C no, not like Texas. We have people with a lot of different culinary needs. So we had the vegan and the chicken only, and you know, the brisket, it wasn't like Texas brisket, but it was good.

Speaker 3 (15:14):

Well, you're speaking Texas. Now, if you're delivering brisket.

HB (15:18):

I know, I know, it was a good, it was good. It was very good. It wasn't like, yeah,

GG 3 (15:24):

There are parts that we, we do have a vegan culture here. It's growing, it's growing. It's probably not nearly as profound as DC though. So, you know, one of the, I think that a great example of that is also kind of working in with the nonprofits. I know the food bank here has been really stressed out as far as the demand and the need versus their capacity. And I think if brokerages or brokers, agents even individually can just, you know, use their sphere to help out either just bring donations, drop them off at our office, we'll take them in. I think those are great ideas to use as well.

HB (16:00):

And just being thoughtful, right? If we have connections, if we do our job even moderately, right. If we build a sphere, then being the one that disseminates information through that sphere can be really valuable. Right. And that's what I think a lot of people with both social media and with these other efforts I'm talking about right now, psych themselves out and put too much individual like action on their plate and say like, Oh, I can't do all of that. And my answer to them is, yes, you can, like, you can pick up the phone, you can start at email listserv. You can encourage people to support a thing and coordinate, like, if we can be good quarterbacks of activity, we don't have to be the one doing it all ourselves.

And that's what I think REALTORS® and sales team to do it right. Are kind of galvanizes of their community. Instead of being the ones, doing everything, you know,

GG 3 (16:47):

Do we, do we focus on the people we know or do we focus our approach on getting new people to follow our business?

HB (16:59):

I think it's gotta be a mix. Your, your raving fans are going to be the best way for new people to get to know you because what raving fans do is in addition to engaging with your content and by them engaging on Facebook specifically and also sometimes on Instagram, the other platforms, when someone comments or likes or shares, ideally your content has been opened up to their whole sphere too. So it's like a trick, right? Like here's this one branch that goes off to another branch into another branch. So I put effort into communicating with the people I know, right. Communicating with my sphere and that's a, you know, a secret, but the reason why I'm successful my team is successful with it. As we've built up a lot of real and organic connections over, you know, between me and my business partners and our team pages conservatively like 15, 18,000 that are real and, you know, both local and all over.

HB (17:53):

And what we judge is not just that we have a lot of those connections, but if I post, like I posted for an open house over the weekend and in my Instagram story, I saw that they had over 600 engagement, right. And that was, you know, people that saw it. And then we probably had about another 20 respond to me and like 15 share it themselves. So that shares it to their whole sphere too. And I know that like my people support me because their past clients, their friends, their family, they want to see us do well, but they also love cool real estate content. So if I'm sharing cool and interesting and engaging real estate content, it gives them an emphasis to share it beyond just, Ooh, Hey, I'm an awesome salesperson. Come send me business. Right. I focus on the narrative and the cool engaging stuff, but I know they're going to want to share. And I share that with my people. And then that kind of galvanizes them to be my raving fan and sheriffs to their people and their people share with their people, you know, and it kind of goes exponentially if you're thoughtful about what you share and you know, that doesn't come naturally to everybody. But I think if you spend a little time studying and just notice engaging things for you, you know, you can R and D man rip off and duplicate.

GG 3 (19:01):

Do you think that there is a, a fine line between the postcards people send, like, do we, do you still send postcards? Do you still send emails or have you focused completely on social media communications? Cause you say communicate. So what does communicate mean to you? How do you communicate with your, with your group?

HB (19:22):

So since I've got my, my sphere, my, my group of connections, already paying attention to what I do. Like I have established myself. Marketing is all about mind space, right? And in my sphere and a lot of people that may just come across me quickly, they know right away that I do something in real estate. And I've got the evidence of success to show that I'm doing well. So for me, by just sharing what I'm doing daily, weekly, monthly on my Instagram story, or my Instagram profile on my Facebook page, my Facebook business page, my connections, see it, know it, like it, share it to supplement that we do have a monthly newsletter that monthly newsletter goes out to everybody that's in our VIP or kind of current client list, a past client list. We also have a lot of agents on it as well.

HB (20:08):

And then any new lead that comes in, we have them automatically added to our newsletter list as well. When we find that the newsletter list, email newsletter is a great supplement to like synthesize and put everything in one place. The

open rate, you know, most, if an email newsletter gets, you know, 8% open rate, like that's good, ours is generally around like 20%. Like we get pretty good engagement and that's mostly driven by, I can't say credit for that. My partner Keith has come in and then two years had over 190 transactions and in two and a half years, so he's done a lot of transactions and a lot of them are first time buyers, they're emotional. They just love him. Right. And they've done so much with anything with his name on it or a team name on it. They engage with more and love and open and share.

HB (20:52):

So we have a higher open rate than your average, but also I work with our marketing coordinator to make sure that at the top of it, there's a message that the cool picture of us is a beautiful property. There's something in it that makes you want to scroll, right? Like that, that's how I judge that newsletter. And then in terms of postcard or actual snail mail, we have not actually done really any of that since we had a new signature listing at the beginning of this year, we did a little bit of mail right around it, right before the open house. And that was more of how I did my mail in the past was to drive open house traffic and to market listings, but to market listings, to sellers in that neighborhood to try to get more listings like I don't market listings to sell the listing, you know, cause it's gonna, our market buyers are going to engage in, buy it because they saw it online, I market listings to get sellers, to like me as I get calls about other listings. So we don't do it as much. But for our, this last wave we've had in this month in August, I've got my admin planning to do a couple mailings strategically in September.

GG (21:51):

So social media platforms, which one do you use?

HB (21:57):

My sphere, my connections, the people that engage with me most are on Instagram. So the most time on that then behind that would be Facebook. I do most of my Facebook personal page, but we've got both a Facebook business page for the team and I have a previously cause you know, this new team I just started in 2019. I had my other sales team from like 2014 to 2019. So I had about 1600 good real followers on this other page that is now co-branded me and the team, So I'm thoughtful with two to three posts a week on that business page. And then on my personal page is generally another four or five posts, but I spend most of my time in the story feature. So my Instagram story and my Facebook story, because that's what people are looking at daily. And I find I get the most direct messages and inquiries from that. So Instagram first Facebook second.

GG (22:50):

So I'll admit it, I'm new to stories. So stories is the video content that comes along with all of these posts, right? So it's not necessarily the posts, but there's, there's a short videos.

HB (23:02):

So Instagram stories is what Mark Zuckerberg ripped off of Snapchat, right? Where it was like the 24 hours of content. It can be videos, it can be pictures, but it's a little, you know, 20 to 30 seconds max segments that stay up only for 24 hours. And then go away. I also just added a new thing called reels, which is kind of like tik tok, tik tok album algorithm. I gotta admit, I'm not, I'm a lurker on Tik Tok. I haven't really engaged to post content on tik tok's, but it is I as a nerd of like social media and marketing, their algorithm is brilliant because if you spend a minute on there, the next couple of things they show are just like so engaging. And that's why Instagram copy that same algorithm because they have the oddballs. And now they're doing a real thing too. That like gets you, like if you open it up, it just automatically goes to the next and the next and the next and you're just trapped. You're like, Oh, that's another cat video talking dog video, you know?

GG (23:58):

Yes. That's the interesting part is that they give you the content you want, how often, you know, that can sound overwhelming, right? Like, Oh my God, how am I supposed to, how do I get into that algorithm? Or how is my content engaging? But first off, how often do you post, like how much of your time do you spend doing this to the point where you have a schedule perhaps, or how do you manage that?

HB (24:22):

So I got a, a setting calendar reminder for me between seven 30 and 8:30 AM, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. And the exact title I give it is what it is and what it should be with them best is storytelling on social media. And I put that from Monday, Wednesday, Friday seven 30 to eight 30 lately, because we've had so much success with closing. Some people purchasing properties like July 20, 20 is my best month ever and 11 years, which is just wild in the midst of COVID. So we had a lot of closing and quite a few of them had an interesting story. And I focus on writing in my posts, not, not just in my Instagram story, but he posts with a picture or a couple pictures of that story and the detail. And I think what's important about those posts doing well is that they focus on the people.

HB (25:10):

We helped write. It focuses on the human element, the interaction, like what they did, but then also how our team supported them in doing it. And that's a really different frame from a marketing standpoint, especially with real estate, because I feel like historically in real estate, it was always about me, me, me, top producer. I'm great. I felt this. I felt that, but when you change the frame a little bit and tell the story, I can't tell you, like from my two posts, I did last week about clothing. I have an appointment at six o'clock tonight and eight o'clock tomorrow people I didn't know at all. They're like, Hey, I'd love your Instagram post. That was inspiring. I'd love to work with you. Right? So for me, I scheduled that out three days a week, but then I spend probably another two to three hours a day again, just cause it works for me.

HB (25:55):

And I get a return on my story content total that I am both posting, which is some new stuff, which will be either like listings or funny things or lifestyle stuff, or food or sports and engaging with other people's stories, which is another part of this equation. People gotta keep in mind that you can't just use social media to scream out social media at the best of the conversations back and forth. So schedule out your posts, do them in the morning before the rest of the day hits you. When you have time, plan, time to go into the story, feature, share stories, engage with other people's stories. And then I keep it simple. I pretty much share almost the same text that I will share on my Instagram story on my Facebook page. I have it aggregate and post most of the time directly when I pulled from Instagram and posting on Facebook at the same time, let's save a step because I've got a slightly different crowd there. Some, a lot of overlap, but sometimes it's, you know, mostly my older folks that are engaging on Facebook and my younger folks that are engaging on Instagram.

GG 3 (26:55):

So you, you said it saves you time. I think some people are going to hear you spend two hours on a post and say, that's just insane. Why do you, and I think people need to, I hope they'll go and check out your Instagram. You'll have a photo it's usually of the couple or the person who's bought the house in front of the house or at closing with the key. And then you go into the, to the process with them, like what they were looking for. This is they're super excited or this is the neighborhood that they've wanted to live in forever. You kind of build that connection. I mean, it's not just so happy for my clients. That's why it takes you so much time. Why, why, how would you convince people that the two hours is worth it?

HB (27:35):

And I guess, let me clarify that it's normally not two hours total in writing it out. You know my grammar sucks. I'll write it up in 30 minutes, go back and fix it later.

GG 3 (27:44):

So people are going to get real excited to hear that. Okay, good.

HB (27:47):

Yeah. I rarely, right. And my wife was a communications major in college, so she will help, but you're like dude type of fix it. I'm like, ah, I have so much good story in my brain. Want to get it out? I think you have to do that in so much as you're comfortable with it, right? Like that's not gonna work for everybody in that same way, but I argue that people starting out should probably add a little bit more detail than they think, right? If you can have some incremental growth and improvement about the detail that you share, it's going to be better. And it doesn't have to be the two hours a day when I'm talking about four hours a day is generally in the story feature where I'm posting or engaging with people's story. And a lot of that's fun too. Like that's how I can stay connected with folks and another hack with that is by me, engaging with my sphere and their stories. When I do get the chance to work with them or have an appointment to talk about business because I'm watching their stories. I know what's going on. I can not creepily comment on something that they may have done recently. Like I can't say like, Oh, Hey, nice new outfit. You are like two weeks ago. That was nice. But I can say, Oh, that was fun.

HB (28:51):

Be thoughtful about your level of spying around is the right word, but paying attention to what's happening in people's lives. That's what the story feature. And that's where more of the time in my stories, they're probably only 30 to 45 minutes with typing at most,

GG 3 (29:06):

At the very least we hope no one will comment on clothing two months after the fact is because we know that's not good. You gotta be current. You gotta be relevant. It's gotta be, I mean, two hours now that I say it out there, if you, if most people go to their phone and time, their screen time, I mean it's six hours a day. The amount of time that people are on their phone. So it's not that shocking. But to stress this idea of engagement, social media means social it's back and forth. You can't just use it as a billboard and put it out there. How, I mean, you, you like comments, you'll comment on other comments or if someone

GG (29:42):

Comments on your post, do you engage that way? Tell us a little bit about why it's important that it's engagement and not just a simple billboard.

HB (29:51):

Absolutely. No. I mean, cause you gotta think I always frame it this way. If someone took the time to read my stuff, right? Write all my stuff, share my stuff or share anything that I posted. I want to at least thank them. Let me make it easy where you can double tap it hard. It like that's the minimum level. But I think the next level that people appreciate is when I go back and fake box and be like, thank you so much for sharing. Like it means a lot that you engage. So it's crazy the power of a couple sentences. Because you never know if someone like in terms of what's going on in their lives, especially right now with COVID. If you think thank you to them you know, can ink make their day better, make them feel better? Like there's a lot of power in that connection that makes social media is a tool when it's used best does that.

HB (30:36):

It gives people a way to stay connected to other humans. So it's super important that when people are engaging with your content, that you acknowledge it. And also as you're out there spending time on social media, don't just lurk. Don't just look, like comment, be positive, be thoughtful and do something more. Like, not my favorite thing to say is on someone's birthday. Don't just write HBB right? Like that shows you didn't care, happy birthday. Hope you're having the most amazing day. You're an awesome human. And I love that time. We did this in college, like right? Like those extra sentences. Like if nothing else that they social media 2.0 is the power of a couple sentences. A couple of sentences can go a long way. And it's not saying you're right. A million couple sentences, but if you go and write 10 more engagements beyond just a couple of words or a thumbs up a day, right. I challenge everyone that over the course of time, like the engagements, you're going to have the way people engage back with you and share your stuff will increase exponentially.

GG (31:38):

So you talked earlier about the hack on how you post on Instagram and it feeds into Facebook. I think there's some people who are probably saying this is a lot of time and where am I going to get all that content I've seen that you you'll post on new listings, garage conversions updates for COVID testing. You, you will even give advice about, Hey, there's a storm coming, clean your drain, right. So where do you get this content? Where would you tell people to go? Who are like, I can't come up with all this original thought. I'm I I'm, I'm just not that creative. What is your advice to them?

HB (32:15):

Sure. I'll blow people's minds. Some of the wealthiest people that might get revenue from their social media accounts are these like reposting meme accounts. They spend so much time curating content as opposed to creating it. So at a, at a smaller level I think people can look at both their local real estate board's page is a great first start. You can look at local news outlets that you trust. You can look at. NAR has got such awesome content on NAR REALTOR® and our research. REALTOR® Magazine has really good content. You know, Forbes, New York times, LA times, Chicago Tribune my like a lot of like newspaper profiles from around the country have really cool story and then architectural digest. Right. But people love beautiful home. I've got a list that I've shared with my team about like our hyper local, but real estate blogs and websites. You can just regurgitate some of that content. I'd give credit where it came from. Don't ever post something that someone else's like say that it's yours, but I, social media makes that easy. Now you just gotta tag them, just put that wherever you got it. So it takes a little bit of time to curate it locally. But I think that Sabre would be a great first start for folks. I'm sure y'all got some good people you're connected with.

GG (33:24):

So you mentioned the architectural digest and how they've also switched to doing videos. And we talked about this, it's like this fancier version of MTV cribs, right? It's very nice with a little bit of humor in there. What video or photo, I mean, what do you think consumers prefer? They want to see a picture and read or do they want to just click on something and watch a 32nd two minute video?

HB (33:53):

I think if you're doing video, it's gotta be good. I think there there's a smaller margin for error with photo. So I'm talking about what the people are creating out the gate, start with photo and work your way up to video. That's what I would say. If you're creating video content, it's gotta be good if it goes in your post, if it goes in your story, which is everyday thing that can be selfie, that can be handheld. That can be authentic. That can be a little bit more raw, but I'd argue that a good profile has a mix of both, especially on Instagram now, because it gives you the photo option, the real option and the IGTV option IGTV is awesome because it allows you to put longer videos. Huh? So you know, think out the gate, people should probably start with creating their own photos, but then if you're engaging in other professional, like if you

hire someone to shoot professional photos and videos of your listing, which everybody should do, you should not shoot them yourself, hire somebody, make them look good.

HB (34:51):

That blows my mind. We, you put a crappy listing photos, like no excuse, cause not that expensive. And they make a difference. If you have someone that's a professional has created some content for you share that content, right. Share it. So, you know, be thoughtful with what you're sharing. You want to say it and don't put out stuff that like looks bad and that's objective, but like study, like what looks good and what has engaged with the highest grossing and most popular social media pages of beautiful photos have beautiful videos. Cause it was thoughtfully done. Yeah.

GG (35:24):

Which, which, which we know now we don't have to make it all original. We can just repost give credit. But you talk about hiring somebody to take photos. Would you ever use a service? I know when I've go to NAR conventions, I've seen the services. There are people you can hire to do the social media posting for you. Would you ever recommend someone gets started on that? Especially someone who's new to the business and maybe doesn't have that huge knowledge base just yet.

HB (35:53):

I think if you get someone to consult and help you with the posts, that's better in my opinion than just paying somebody to post for you outright. Cause if someone's posting for you outright, you have no individual, a personal engagement with it. There's a pretty big gap between just the cheap posting services and like the consultants that like help you do it in your own voice. If resources allow the consultants to help you do it in your own voice, they make it look great because they're going to make sure all the photos, all the videos, all the, all the copy, everything is like cohesive and together. Whereas some of the other cheaper services, like I feel like there's a couple that might do like newsletters and you probably have this in your market too where like on Thursday at noon, everyone that has this newsletter service sends up the same generic newsletter that I know isn't them.

HB (36:41):

And I'm like, this is trash. What describing from you right away. And you don't want people to have that same feeling when they look at your social media, that it's pre-canned that it doesn't have any authenticity or, or individual content. So out the gate, I think you need to study folks. And, and a hack that we talked about before is look at some young people in your life, man, like find some, find a hungry 15, 16, 17 year old, who is a digital native and speaks social media as their primary language to help you with some of that content you're putting on. I guarantee you, if I'm ever walking down the street, I need somebody take a picture of me and my friends, I'll go and try to find the, you know, 13 to 16 year old girl walking back, she is going to take an amazing picture with the cell phone because that's how they live, their whole life. It's been language. So look for some young folks nearby or even college intern like you've used before, that's probably a better option than like paying thousands of dollars to a service unless that service is like consulting you on doing it. Anyway,

GG (37:37):

You can always tell because they're going to check the framing. They hold the phone a little bit higher to make sure it's the good angle. Hold on, hold on. You need the light over here. Yeah, no, you're absolutely right. So what, is there anything not to do? Like what do you think are the pitfalls don't do this. This is something you should avoid.

HB (37:56):

Don't write in all caps. I don't know who I need to say this too. But like people that write in all caps, you're screaming at me and it doesn't make it more exciting and it doesn't make me like, remember it. So this is to the people that also write in all caps on their listings and their social media posts do not write in all caps that's number.

GG (38:16):

So when they write a tension, yeah, they're yelling at you attention.

HB (38:20):

Oh, it's like, dude, stop screaming. I get it. Then the other part is, is be thoughtful and know your audience in terms of political, you know, more divisive slash you know, issues that might excite people, know your audience. I know DC audience. I know majority of the posts I engage with, So I am not afraid to share some of my views on politics and world events, right? I'm never talking down to people who disagree with me. I'm very thoughtful with anything I share. I'm not saying that anyone else is wrong. I want to share why I think of something, but that's also the same approach I take to marketing, right? Like if I can articulate clearly my thought, my vision, my understanding that's a really different thing than yelling out like, Oh, this sucks. Like, so don't be a, this sucks person because anyone can say this sucks, but a smart marketer, thoughtful person, a good business person can articulate their support for something without talking down to the detriment of something else.

HB (39:15):

So be careful with that, especially in 2020. And then also you got to build in some consistency. So don't have a week of doing stuff all day and all night and then go ghost for a month, right? Your, your connections are going to be used to looking forward to seeing your content and coming back to engage with you. And if you go away, they're going to not look to you and the algorithms, So an important part in social media, if you're not readily posting stuff and at least I'm not day to day, but like you see the best pages that have the most engagement are posting three, four, sometimes five times a week. So if you're trying to build it up, it's going to take a ground swell of energy and inertia and activity out the gate. And then once you've got the followings, you can be a little bit more strategic and, and spread them out. So yeah, those are my things. Don't be in all caps, don't be too political or over the top. And don't talk down to people and then build in some type of consistency in terms of the action of what you post. So folks know to come back and get more stuff home.

GG 3 (40:14):

You know, those don't do sounded like great places on where to start. And I was going to be, my next question is the person who's listening right now, where do they start? And that sounds like a good list. Is there anything else you'd say though, to the person who's listening and saying, all right, I'm ready. I'm going to jump in. Where do I begin

HB (40:32):

Study the profiles that have good engagement now? That's, I mean, that's a, I mean, social media and it's a big country, right? So there is a lot of different places that people work and can live and operate. And that's what I love about NPR and my involvement with NAR YPN is this true abundance mindset. Like I know if you spend a little bit of time looking at people's real estate profile, look up the hashtag real estate REALTOR®, you know, whatever your essay REALTOR®, right? San Antonio go to like, look up, who's doing it well in your market. Compliment them compliment, say, man, I love your profile. You've got great content. I look forward to staying connected with you and what you do. If you come at somebody first with a compliment, then they're gonna be like, Oh, thank you. That's so nice of you. And then you can say, Hey, your profile is really awesome.

HB (41:17):

Mind if I ask you a couple of questions about it coming from curiosity. And if you come from curiosity, especially in the social media space, I think people will be pleasantly surprised with the response that they get. Because my mind is, if you look at my page and want to try to copy what I do verbatim, it won't make sense because that's my voice. That's not your voice. But if you come and ask and say, Oh, Hey, how'd you do this? Or how you think about it? We love talking about especially people that are good at marketing, good at sale. They have an abundance mindset and not going to be afraid. And it's not a secret. Like I'm putting it out there to be consumed by everybody. So of course it might be copied, but spend a little bit of time early on studying and then build out that schedule that we talked about out the gate.

HB (41:52):

I think it needs to be at least three to four days a week. If you're starting from scratch, if you already have a following built in, I'd say a minimum of probably three days a week of some type of content, you're either curating or creating and do it every week. And if you take a week off and come back and do more the next week, but you know, be thoughtful in one app we didn't talk about is hoot suite hoot suite is a product that allows you to schedule outpost. I'm also on Facebook and Twitter. I believe they have an Instagram plugin as well, but that can she's going on vacation or the idea of posting everyday freaks you out. There's tons of products that can let you schedule a future post. And that's probably a good place for some people to start who aren't, you know, discipline with doing something three days a week. That way it happens without you having to do it every time.

GG (42:37):

Harrison, it sounds like the association has given you a really good strong foundation on meeting people and being curious, how important has the association and the YPN experience been for you?

HB (42:51):

And so YPN energy has really helped me become a better business person, but friend, It's really embracing that abundance mindset, but I think when you take a step up, right, like we all have our everyday sales and the people we connect with first connecting with your local association can help give you some perspective and connection locally, right? Let's you see that, man? What I'm thinking, what I know, what I feel. I have other peers that are doing this and feeling locally and an advantage of getting involved locally is when it's a multiple offers, competitive scenario, there's somebody I've engaged with or met through association stuff. And I am the conduit between them and my client accepting a deal. I'm going to feel better about someone I've had some engagement with through a local event. I've seen them show up. There are five major investors like this things that I can know and say about them that I don't know or say about people I've never met or seen before.

HB (43:40):

So the phrase I say all the time is when you make your world bigger, nothing bad happens from it. And I think our REALTOR® associations at the core are an opportunity for us to come together as sales professionals, as REALTORS®, as folks that have this higher calling want to do better and do more. And at each level I've continued to step up in leadership, seeing both the personalities, businesses, their minds, their strategies, the things that they do. I learned from them so much. I'm a sponge. And I take and incorporate things that I learned from my friends in Chicago, even my friends in San Antonio, right? Like some of my best friends are there at SABOR, and we have a great collaborative relationship, what we're sharing and growing together. And I would not have seen that, known that even existed without first getting involved locally then at my state and now at national.

HB (44:24):

So I think nothing bad happens from making it feel bigger and building connections. I just wish I'd done it earlier. That's my biggest thing. I just, I started in like 2014 with association stuff, but I've been in the business since really 2009 full

time. So I had like five years of just trying to figure it out. And I was stumbling but I was doing okay, but had I gotten into this circle earlier and had some of these ideas, it's just wild to think what more I could have been doing. You know?

GG (44:52):

Well, Harrison, thank you for making our world a little bit bigger by coming on and talking to us a little bit about how to continue to engage with consumers and each other during these times of Covid, we greatly appreciate it.

HB (45:04):

Thank you. And that's a pleasure, love what y'all are doing at SABOR, you ever need me always down and I want some of that brisket, next time I come down too.

GG 3 (45:11):

If you come down, we're taking you or I'll take it to you in DC next year. So have a good one. Thank you. Thank you so much. The ability for REALTORS® to continue to connect with the community is still available. It just might be in a different platform than we're used to, but now is definitely not the time to ease up on your marketing. If anything, it's the right time to get out there and get creative. And if you're looking for content to share, you're always welcome to spread the link for this podcast on every platform you use. You'll have no objection from me.