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ASIAN | REAL | ESTATE

The official publication of the Asian Real Estate Association of America

**IVAN
CHOI**

The 2014 AREAA Chair
unveils big plans
for his term

SOCIAL MEDIA & NEW TECHNOLOGY IN REAL ESTATE

HOW TO MASTER CURRENT
DIGITAL REAL ESTATE TOOLS

IN JUST **20** MINUTES
A DAY

INDUSTRY INNOVATOR: ONVEDEO

CHANGING THE WAY WE
PROMOTE LISTINGS,
ONE VIDEO AT A TIME



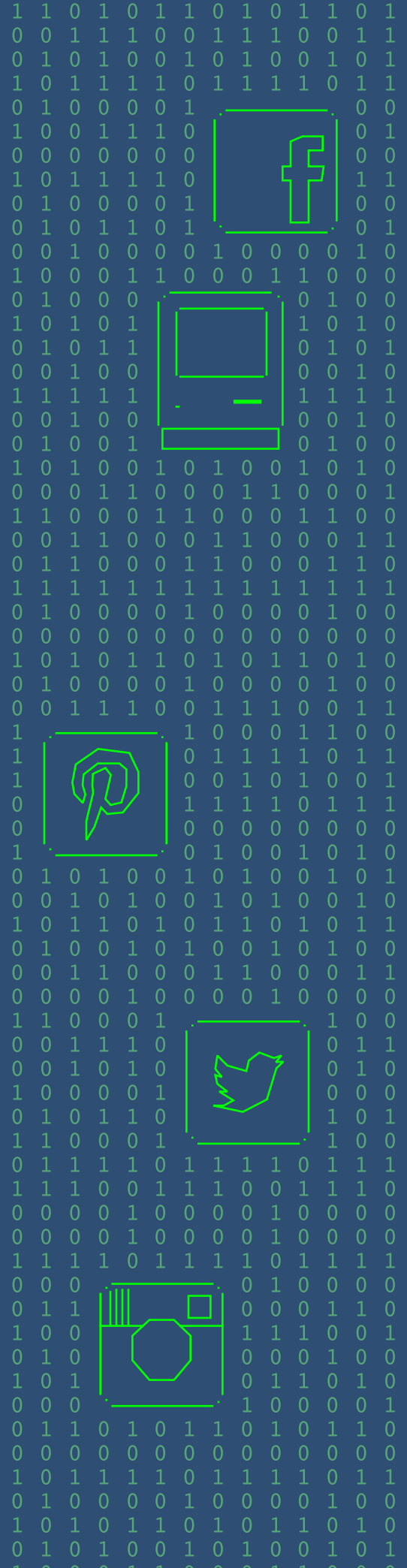
MASTERING SOCIAL MEDIA *and* NEW TECHNOLOGY *in* YOUR REAL ESTATE PRACTICE

By JOHN PERETZ, with JOHN REYES

You know the drill – we all should be using social media and introducing new technology into our real estate practice. So we start a program and are really good about it for the first couple of months, and then slowly but surely, we don't do the things we know we should be doing. But it doesn't have to be that way.

In just 10 minutes a day in the morning, and another 10 minutes in the evening, you can master social media and introduce new technology to take your real estate business to the next level.

The reality is that the more you do it, the more proficient you become, until you're the one that people are talking about as the expert in social media and real estate. The big thing is that you can't be afraid to jump in.



SOCIAL MEDIA 101 – FACEBOOK, GOOGLE PLUS, PHOTO SHARING & TWITTER

According to Mr. John Reyes, president of SocialNetworX, having an ongoing, authentic dialogue with clients and prospects through social media is all about adding value, staying real and being consistent. Mr. Reyes and his team are frequent speakers at many industry events, including AREAA and NAHREP national conventions and a variety of training sessions across the country for some of the top names in real estate.

But the harsh reality is that many real estate agents simply don't stay in touch in with their past clients as much as they should. Social media really helps to bridge that gap and leads not only to repeat business but also, even more importantly, *referral* business.

"If agents just rely on older tools like email and newsletters, they're going to have lesser results. That's because Facebook and social media are much more interactive and less intrusive," states Mr. Reyes. "When done right, it's a great way to stay in touch with clients, friends, family and prospects, and all of their friends."

"But try and promote yourself in an indirect way," Mr. Reyes explains. "Don't be the annoying agent and post things like, 'Hey I got another listing or another sale' – nobody cares about that. Instead share what you are doing with your daily activities and use that to tie in your business."

"So instead of saying 'I'm grabbing a coffee,' say, 'I'm grabbing a coffee because I'm getting energized to go show some great homes to my first-time homebuyer.' Or, 'I'm having lunch out here at Applebee's to celebrate the fact that I just helped Pam close on her first home.' So you are letting people know what you are doing, but you are indirectly promoting your business," Mr. Reyes concludes.

You shouldn't always reference work, either. It's OK to just update your status to say you are out at your son's soccer game or enjoying the holidays with friends.

"And be sure to acknowledge the people in your network – 'like' their posts, make comments and stay engaged. This will keep you fresh on people's minds when they hear about a friend or family member who is looking to buy or sell a home. It's a way of marketing yourself without even talking about your business. It does take a little work, but so do cold calling, mailers and door knocking," Mr. Reyes advises.

In terms of your Facebook page, make sure that they know you're a real estate agent professional. Add a nice photo of yourself or a custom visual.

You can even add a special Facebook app. The Proxio Social-Search app allows prospects to not only view your listings but also search the entire MLS right from your Facebook page, with a simple IDX tie-in from your MLS. And the app allows you to translate listings into 19 languages, so you can be a multicultural agent in an instant.

USING GOOGLE PLUS

Most agents are not on Google Plus, and that's a mistake. You can't ignore Google, the undisputed leader in search, as it can pay big dividends.

People will search for you to see what's being said about you, whether you realize it or not. And as a relatively public person, you want to show up on search results.

You can share similar content on Google Plus as you would on Facebook. Yes, there may not be

nearly the activity you see on Facebook, but placing content on Google Plus helps you with search engine optimization. Think of Google Plus as a content pusher. So open a Google Plus account.

INSTAGRAM & PINTEREST

There is a lot of debate about using Instagram and Pinterest as part of your social media platform. If you have the time or have an assistant, it's a good business practice. It gives you a very interesting way to showcase your properties, especially if it has some really unique features that can be uniquely photographed. And it really differentiates you in a listing presentation.

What are the main differences between the two platforms?

"Instagram is going to allow viewers to not only find photos but also engage.

With Pinterest you need to have more of a comprehensive online marketing plan in order to be successful," according to Mr. Reyes.

HAVE AN ONGOING,
AUTHENTIC DIALOGUE
WITH PROSPECTS AND
CLIENTS

Add Value

Stay Real

Be Consistent



...be sure to acknowledge the people in your network – 'like' their posts, make comments and stay engaged. This will keep you fresh on people's minds when they hear about a friend or family member who is looking to buy or sell a home.

UPPER DIVISION CLASSES – BLOGGING, REVIEW SITES AND TWITTER

BLOGGING

Blogging has been around for a while, and many real estate agents have abandoned it because it takes a commitment and structure. But blogging continues to be an integral part of SEO if done the right way.

You see, blogging helps you build Web content, and Google and other search engines rank *pages*, not websites.

To blog successfully, first come up with a list of words that you want to rank for. These are called keywords. Using a keyword tool like Wordtracker can help you find keywords with high search volume and low competition.

How often should you blog? We recommend a minimum of once a week. If you commit to doing this consistently, you will build a mountain of content over time.

Mr. Reyes wholeheartedly agrees. "I believe that local expert blogging is going to be the trend of 2014. Blogging increases your chances of showing up in search results. The consumers are already there. It's just a matter of who's going to pick them up."

If you can't find the time to do your own blog, hire someone to do it for you. Just make sure that you localize your blog headline, titles and content with the keywords you want to rank for. →

**DON'T BE THE ANNOYING AGENT AND POST THINGS LIKE,
'HEY I GOT ANOTHER LISTING OR ANOTHER SALE' –
NOBODY CARES ABOUT THAT.**

When you consistently update your website with fresh and relevant blogs, it will assuredly result in better page rankings and improve your search results.

REVIEW SITES

Review sites are becoming more and more important in search results. Yelp, Angie's List, Google

Dragon's Den competition at the AREAA National Convention held in Los Angeles this past September.

TWITTER

We've seen some real estate agents be very successful on Twitter.

But Twitter and other social media avenues require time, and

It's not about using technology and social media to be more competitive. It's really about utilizing technology and social media to stay competitive.

Plus and even Trip Advisor (weaving in a review with a relevant attraction or stay) move to the top of many search results because Google ranks "authority sites" higher.

Set up accounts for each one of these (except Trip Advisor) and ask your clients to please put a review up for you. Give them all the information they need, including the URL where they can find your review site.

This is one of the most under-used and highly-valued techniques to coming up higher in search rankings.

Ignore it at your own peril!

ONLINE VIDEO

It's been estimated that video content is eight times more effective than traditional print content. You could be adding video content for homes you have listed, as well as information about the areas you service, and even "how-to" videos.

Most videos are posted on YouTube, which controls almost 90 percent of the video market. Make sure that you post your videos with the right headline and tags to help you with your SEO.

A very cost-effective solution to posting property videos is OnVedeo, the winner of the AREAA

unless you're comfortable with it, Twitter may not be your most valuable social media platform.

According to Mr. Reyes, "Agents shouldn't jump to Twitter unless they are advanced in social networking. Agents should take the time to connect with their sphere of influence, and they're most likely already on Facebook. Do what you're good at first."

GRADUATE SCHOOL – CREATE THE SEPARATION THROUGH ADVANCED LEARNING

Well, here's an interesting thought. You really could get your master's degree from home, through the National Association of REALTORS®. Their Master of Real Estate program is offered through Realtor University and you can attend through a global online campus. In fact, AREAA is partnering with REALTOR® University in a major research study about Asian American home ownership, which will provide one of the most comprehensive studies ever done on the Asian American market.

PH.D. – NOW YOU'RE AN EXPERT TECHNOLOGIST: PREDICTIVE MODELING AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

One of the more interesting booths this writer saw at the latest NAR conference was a company from Seattle that specialized in *predictive modeling*. The company, Most Likely, takes a contiguous area and, through their proprietary algorithm, predicts those homeowners that are most likely to list. They'll give you lead information, send out postcards, set up Google Adwords and do banner ad "retargeting" based on those households most likely to list.

Another way to establish yourself as the undisputed expert in your area is to present yourself as a speaker.

Speaking can be a daunting challenge to many people, but if

you remember a couple of key points, it becomes a lot easier.

First, never believe that the subject is to talk about you. You're there to bring unique and helpful information to your audience. The audience is not interested in you – they're interested in themselves. The audience wants to know what they can use, what they can learn or, at the very least, how they will be entertained.

And second, make sure your delivery and presentation materials add to the message. If you're using a PowerPoint, don't overload it with words – in this case, less really is more. Practice your presentation until it becomes natural to you.

FINAL TIPS: THE REALITY OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AND REAL ESTATE TECHNOLOGY

Agents who don't evolve and embrace social media run the risk of being run out of the business by those who do.

It's not about using technology and social media to be more competitive. It's really about utilizing technology and social media to stay competitive.

The data backs it up. The vast majority of buyers actually started their search on the Internet.

The average homebuyer is much more comfortable with technology and social media than most real estate professionals. So in essence, it's the consumers that are the ones really demanding that real estate agents change.

The growing attitude is, "If you're not going to change, I'm going to go find and work with somebody who is." **a | r | e**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

John Peretz is the editor of *Asian Real Estate* magazine and also has his own marketing consulting practice, working with real estate and technology clients both domestically and internationally. Find out more at www.JohnPeretz.com.

John Reyes is the president of SocialNetworX, a company dedicated to training agents on how to use technology and social media to grow their real estate practice and enhance their marketability. Find out more at www.socialnetworxinc.com.

Find out more about AREAA Dragon's Den winner, OnVedeo, in this edition of **a | r | e**

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