



Media/Social Media Conduct Education



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Guiding Best Principles

The Marketing Lift of Social Media:

It's a big part of our professional and personal everyday lives; but it's important that your professional reputation is never compromised by the personal.

As representatives of the RE/MAX network, and as an **ADVOCATE** for your clients and prospective clients who come from a wide diversity of cultures, ethnicities, faiths and identifications, you have a professional responsibility to your reputation, the reputation of your peers, and to the reputation of the brand to always uphold RE/MAX's core values of:

- Tolerance and respect to all citizens, clients and prospective clients
- No tolerance for any comments or actions that are hurtful, hateful or demeaning to any persons, communities, faiths or individual identities
- Consistent demonstration of impeccable professionalism
- Adhere to the Social Media Best Practices Guidelines (as set out by RE/MAX LLC and your brokerage)

Reminder:

Even if you use disclaimers like “the opinions expressed are my own,” you are still responsible for what you say. What you say publicly may impact you professionally. While these guidelines are more focused on professional/business profiles, they are also important considerations for personal profiles and pages, as you are a representation of the RE/MAX brand and your brokerage in all facets of your online presence.

RE/MAX Business Practices and Standards:

- Share a commitment to professionalism and honesty
- Maintain the highest ethical standards in the conduct of real estate activities
- Social media, advertising, or other materials involving the RE/MAX name and trademarks should meet the highest applicable standards of honesty, fairness, and equal treatment
- Personal belief or affinity group phrases or symbols cannot appear on property signs or other materials with uniform design standards
- Do not denigrate any competitor, or engage in false or misleading descriptions of competitors or their business practices





Rules of Engagement – Social Media Conduct 101

Social Networking: Rules of Engagement

Here are some basic recommendations for communicating via social media.



1. Identify Yourself

Let people know you're with RE/MAX [office name] when responding to work-related social media posts.

2. Show Your Personality

Your personality can be a powerful tool for building relationships, but not if you bury it in business-speak. Be conversational and professional.

3. Engage with Purpose

Chime in on industry conversations by liking and commenting on posts. Don't be shy – share your knowledge and establish yourself as a real estate expert with a tip, fact or link to a related article.

4. Discuss Ideas, Not People

Feel free to constructively discuss ideas, but not personalities. Never question anyone's motives in a public setting online.

5. Think Before Posting

"Think before you speak" applies to conversations on social media too. It's incredibly easy to type something you might regret later, and once your comments are out there, they can always be used against you, even if you delete. Never use profanity or demeaning language. For example, if you think your post may offend someone or receive backlash, don't post. Topics may include, politics, stance on LGBTQ+. Etc.

6. Know Your Stuff and Show It

When making claims, always refer to your sources using hyperlinks when you can. Always give proper attribution.

7. Deal with Mistakes

We all make them. Admit it when you do, and do what you can to correct them.

8. Listen as Much as You Share

Social media is not a soapbox. That wouldn't be very social. Keep it a two-way conversation.

9. If You Respond to a Problem, Own It

If you become the point of contact for the media, a client or colleague, stay with the issue until it is resolved.

DO's

- DO list the RE/MAX office as your employer in your social media bio (if you wish to).
- DO share RE/MAX LLC or your brokerage social media posts, events, and stories
- Do feel free to express your own opinion; however, it's important to remember that you are a reflection of your brokerage. Even if you make it clear that you're not.
- DO report harassment you've experienced or noticed to the social media platform or authorities as applicable.

DONT's

- DON'T engage with competitors in an inappropriate way.
- DON'T share RE/MAX office or brokerage secrets or confidential information of your colleagues.
- DON'T engage with trolls, negative coverage or comments. Let the subject matter experts respond to negative posts. You may come across negative or disparaging posts about the Company or its brands, or, see third parties trying to spark negative conversations. If so, please flag this as soon as possible.
- DON'T use your professional social media channels to promote personal interests or 3rd party interests (unless it has been previously approved by your brokerage).

Social Media Best Practices

DOs

Share Valuable Content

Share content that people will find useful. Mix it up with links to blogs, news, videos and photos. Every post helps establish your reputation as a trusted source for real estate information.

Be Yourself

Let your personality shine across your social media platforms. Whether that be through captions, photos or dialogue, use social media as a way for your audience to get to know you.

Get On Schedule

Create a content calendar, modeled after your business calendar, that helps you plan what to post. Include your activities, local market insights, community events and seasonal concepts or holidays.

Do It Daily

Try to post content to one of your social networking sites every day, including a weekly or monthly update on market conditions. Mix personal promotion with other content.

Be Consistent

Consistency is important when posting on social media. If you can't post every day, then spread out your content to ensure consistency. You don't want to post every day one week but have nothing to post the following.

Shorten URLs

Plug long URL links into the rem.ax URL shortening tool to convert them to shortened versions that are much easier to share. This service also provides analytics, so you can get some basic metrics about who is clicking on your links. Visit remax.net/shortener.

The perks:

- Shortens any URL to just 13 characters.
- All your rem.ax links are unique to you.
- You can track clicks and see analytics.
- The links are branded!

Respond to Comments and Reviews, Good and Bad

Respond promptly and courteously to engage readers who post comments or reviews on your social media sites. Be sure to follow the rules of engagement listed in the previous section.

Social Media Best Practices

DON'Ts

Disappear From Platforms

Nobody appreciates it if you announce your presence on a platform and then disappear for months. Maintaining your presence takes just a few minutes a day.

Think That You Are in Complete Control

In advertising, you control your message. On social media platforms, you can control only what you post. Other people can pick up the conversation and shape the message. Always be mindful of what you post and how it will be interpreted.

Forget To Use Video

Video is an important element of your marketing strategy. Going live is an option, or you can create a short-form video with your phone using Instagram Reels or TikTok.

Forget Social Media is Public

Avoid getting involved in controversial online discussions.

How to create inclusive content on social media

- Use inclusive pronouns (they/them/theirs/folks)
- Provide descriptive captions for images
- Be thoughtful about representation
- Don't make assumptions about gender, race, experience, or ability
- Avoid gender or race-specific emojis
- Feel free to share your preferred pronouns
- Use title case for hashtags (this makes them more legible for screen readers)
- Use diverse imagery and icons
- Report and remove any comments deemed sexist, racist, ableist, ageist, homophobic, or hateful to any group or person.
- Don't use your profile (professional or personal) to discuss religion or politics





Brokerage-Led Social Media / Community Management:

Sixty-seven per cent of North Americans obtain their news from social media frequently or occasionally, according to Pew Research. It is frequently the first location where people learn about and witness a disaster as it unfolds in real time. The first place that consumers will look for information about a brand problem is online.

When a crisis takes place, the key to managing a social media crisis is timeliness – if a response is appropriate, your goal should be to respond within an hour of the comment related to the crisis to avoid widespread negative sentiment. The response should be empathy but general while the situation is escalated. Each situation is unique and RE/MAX brokerages are fully responsible for their messaging and other actions on social media.

Situation	To Be Escalated?	Response *Examples only, you are free to develop your own response.
Someone has discovered hateful comments on another brokers social media	BROKER/OWNER	Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns. I have shared this feedback with RE/MAX [office name] and they are taking the necessary steps to investigate and address this situation appropriately.
Someone makes an accusation of poor/unfavorable business practices	BROKER/OWNER	Thank you for bringing these concerns to our attention. We take these allegations very seriously and want to ensure our clients and the public that we're committed to upholding the highest ethical standards. We appreciate your vigilance in holding us accountable.
Someone shares that they had a bad/inappropriate experience by an agent	BROKER/OWNER	Conduct like that has no place in our industry, and we're so thankful that you took the time to come forward with this. We're committed to actively investigating this situation and taking the steps to address it. Your feedback is invaluable to us and if you have further questions, we'd be happy to connect.




Top Principles/Actions Required



As social media is an integral part of growing a business which allows you to promote and define your niche, educate, gain clients, advertise listings, there are several recommended principles to follow:

- ✓ Avoid phrases or sentences that will translate negatively to your audience. For example, sharing crude humour or an inappropriate joke.
- ✓ Identifying if your social posts have any religious/political aspects involved. For example, sharing your opinion on politics or the way of the world.
- ✓ Do not share historical or political views.





When a social media crisis presents itself that has an opportunity to harm the reputation and image of the office and brand along with peers. Here is an action plan:

Step 1: Pause, monitor and plan

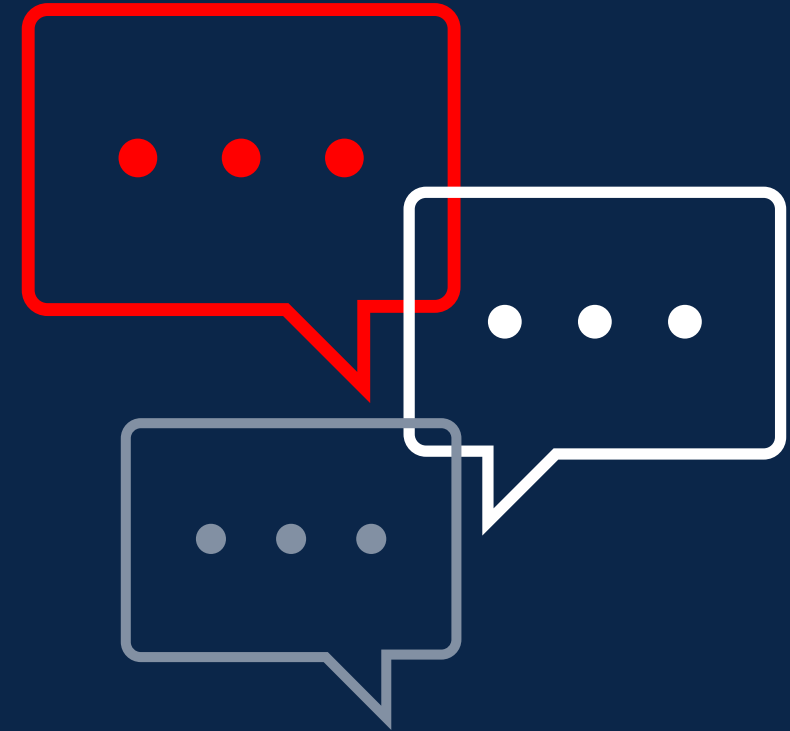
Step 2: Address the situation and flag with Broker/Owner

Step 3: Create a social media response guide (refer to slides 9 and 10)

Step 4: Based on the situation, we must assess if the broker should turn comments off on their social media. For example, if you are receiving too many hateful or negative comments and cannot engage with them all, you may want to consider turning off commenting during that time. Please note, turning off comments may add more negativity to the situation. This will be heavily evaluated prior to making this decision.

Step 5: Based on the above, if comments are kept on, evaluate if the office, or individual should engage with the comment.

If this was a situation caused by an individual, the individual and brokerage, it's recommended that they acknowledge the situation while expressing concern or sympathy that was impacted by the social media post/ statement.



Culturally Sensitive Communication Social Media Edition

When communicating online, it's important to ensure you're being culturally sensitive. Here are factors to consider.

Values, Faith and Behavior

- Does this post have any religious aspects involved? (e.g., A holiday with religious context.)
- Does the post inadvertently insult other cultures? (e.g., Mentioning the American Dream in a way that implies other countries are lazy.)

Language

- Does this phrase or campaign name translate incorrectly or inappropriately?
- Will humorous aspects of this post be widely understood by?

Symbols

- Do these colors represent a different message in this culture? (e.g., White is worn at funerals in India; blue represents mourning in Mexico.)
- Do the visual aspects of this post contain any important symbols? If so, does our team have a full understanding of the significance of these symbols, and in which context they should be used?
- Are there any non-verbal signals in this post that should be examined? (e.g., hand gestures, facial expressions)
- Does the imagery in this post align with the copy? (e.g., Don't show a picture of noodles for a caption with bibimbap.)

People and Roles

- Do you have a basic understanding of the thinking, feeling and acting of your clients?
- Does this post consider customary gender roles?
- Does this post consider current conversation around gender roles?
- Are cultural aspects of this post applied to the correct roles? (e.g., A women's leggings line that showcases a cultural tattoo reserved for men.)

Rituals

- Do you have a full understanding of the significance of any holidays or events included in the post?
- Do you have an understanding of the appropriate symbols and names for these holidays or events? (e.g., Avoid including meat for religious holidays during which people don't eat meat.)

Thought Processes

- Is this post respectful of the cultural practices of others?
- Does this post show an appropriate level of seriousness for the subject matter?

Politics and Institutions

- Is the posting date of historical or political significance?
- Does this post consider current events and political climates? (e.g. Choosing images that include diverse representation.)

Scenarios



When communicating online, it is important to identify and ensure that individuals are being culturally sensitive and not harming or offending your community, colleagues or brand. For example, sharing negative thoughts on Black Lives Matter or Transphobic slurs.

Here are a few scenarios to think about:

Scenario 1

As sometimes our personal profiles are our professional profile, do you believe it is appropriate to share your point of view or beliefs on politics or worldly events that has negative impact to several individuals/communities?

YES or NO

Scenario 2

If you see a fellow team member share offensive content on their brand or personal social media, what do you do?

Offensive, defined as causing someone to feel deeply hurt, upset, or angry.

A) Pretend you didn't see the content and carry on with your day

B) Flag to your manager or head office

Scenario 3

If you believe you have offended someone with a social media post, what would you do?

A) Delete the post

B) Continue to make more posts like this

C) Put forward a statement acknowledging your actions



Escalation Strategies





Managing Media Enquiries

Best Practices:

- If you or a member of your team receives an enquiry from a member of the media via email as it relates to an offensive post, action, or behaviour from another agent/broker, do not respond. Instead, the email must be immediately sent to RE/MAX's respective country brand and communication contacts (outlined below) to manage and coordinate a response directly. ***If another member of the team receives the enquiry, escalate to the broker/owner first, to be escalated with RE/MAX HQ.**
- If an enquiry from a member of the media is received by phone, it's acceptable to simply respond with the following statement:
 - *"Thank you for bringing this to our attention, we are currently investigating the matter internally."*
- If you receive an enquiry from media regarding the status of an agent's affiliation with the office or the brand, similar to the above, please flag with the key contacts below as soon as possible to manage and coordinate the request directly. Do not provide confirmation or insight either way on the status of the situation.
- If the enquiry from a member of the media is received by phone, it's acceptable to simply respond with the following statement:
 - *"We are currently investigating the matter related to this individual internally. As a result, I cannot comment on the status of their affiliation at this time."*

Key Contacts:

RE/MAX Canada:

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RE/MAX United States:

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Key Takeaways

1. Understand your representation of RE/MAX Network when creating social media posts.
2. When creating social media posts, adhere to the rules of engagement on Social Media.
3. When sharing social media content, identify the do's and don'ts of RE/MAX.
4. Identifying what a social media crisis is and steps avoid them/rectify.



Questions

