



GREAT IDEA

Want to reduce mobile data usage while you're out recording a Snapchat story? Switch your phone to airplane mode. Later, when you're back on Wi-Fi, you can upload all your Snaps at once.

SNAPCHAT

Your Real Estate Reality Show

Build an audience 10 seconds at a time.

Alex Wang was looking for a way to convey to people what being a real estate professional is all about. “The public has this perception that we all drive fancy cars and cash large checks,” says the broker-associate at Sereno Group in Palo Alto, Calif. “But we are much more. Name one other profession where you can meet someone, get invited into their home and, within a span of [30 minutes], know their family and financial situation. I believe in this industry and the value of what we do.”

Earlier this year, Wang found in Snapchat the perfect tool to demonstrate that belief. A free mobile messaging app with nearly 200 million users worldwide, Snapchat lets him share his entire day with followers via photo and video messages called Snaps and Stories (compilations of Snaps). He uses the app to create vlogs (video blogs)—under the username “HelloAlexWang”—of his daily life as a real estate agent in the Silicon Valley. “I’m using it to build and establish my brand” he says. “It’s like a reality TV show. My goal with Snapchat is to give people a behind-the-scenes perspective about me as an agent.”

Here are four ways Wang uses Snapchat:

1. DRAW IN VIEWERS.

Snapchat messages are fleeting. Each Snap is viewable for up to 10 seconds, and Snapchat stories disappear after 24 hours. Wang says that creates a sense of urgency that he uses to his advantage. “It’s not about how many followers you have; it’s



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about how they engage with your content. With Snapchat, their attention needs to be locked down because the content disappears.” He can enhance his Snaps with captions, stickers and geofilter overlays, and he can draw doodles on them. He also posts teasers for upcoming events. When he was recently featured in an episode of TLC’s “My First Home,” he took a photo of the program lineup on his TV screen and built a Snapchat Story around it.

2. CONNECT WITH PEERS.

Wang’s largest Snapchat audience is other real estate professionals with whom he exchanges ideas and referrals. “There are brokers from across the nation who follow me. Let’s say I’ve got a client relocating to Florida. I [know] at least 150 agents in Florida who can refer someone.”

He joined a Snapchat group (a Snap Pack) with six other sales associates from different areas who meet up online. “When I talked with them on Google Hangouts [a video chat platform], it was like a family reunion where [we were] sharing different tips.”

3. CREATE DIRECT-MESSAGE AND PRIVATE CHATS.

If Wang wants to communicate directly with a buyer, a seller or another sales associate via Snapchat, he can send an instant message or engage in a one-on-one video chat with that person. When both parties leave the chat, it disappears. “Direct messages disappear in 10 seconds, so [recipients] have to be focused when they open them. It’s an easy way for me to get my message out there.”

4. SHARE THE LISTING PROCESS.

When Wang gets a new listing he creates a Snapchat story about the property. “I’ll start with a photo of the house and [add a caption] with the address and sometimes the price,” he says. “Then, I’ll take videos of the interior.” He can broadcast the story so that his followers and people browsing through published stories will see it. He will also send it directly to his contacts.

The only drawback to Snapchat, Wang says, is that it can become addictive. “Like any other social media platform you should probably use it in moderation.” #

Tech I Can't Live Without:
iPhone

My Favorite Apps: Evernote, Spotify (music) and Waze (travel)

Biggest Tech Challenge:
Making myself take a break from technology.

Favorite Website:
Google

4 MOBILE MESSAGING APPS

Clipchat,
clipchat.com

Snapchat,
snapchat.com

WhatsApp,
whatsapp.com

Wickr, wickr.com