

TUESDAY TECH TIPS

A weekly update of real estate related tech news and tips

Need a change?

If you are a real estate agent in the Danville, San Ramon, Alamo, Diablo and Dublin area and you'd like to work with a broker that "gets" technology, come and talk with me!

I am the manager of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Drysdale Properties offices in San Ramon and Danville. Let's explore the possibilities!

The Blog

For the past 9 years I have been publishing a weekly blog for real estate professionals. Each week I find some new app, software program or some new gadget that I think will be helpful to you in your business. Occasionally, I slip in a little sales training that I think you would find useful too.

And on rare occasions I publish a rant about something that rubbed me the wrong way. Check it out:

<http://www.RealtyTechBytes.com>



Google's new free tool to help people find you! Part 4

Google My Business offers several new and existing features which new users, as well as veteran users of

Google Places or Google+ Local, should be aware of. Once you login to the new dashboard, you can take a closer look at how each of these features work together to boost your overall online presence and help you save time.

Pages Type

No REALTOR® is the same as other REALTORS®, so Google gives you some choices when it comes to setting up your local page - based on your business type or industry. You can choose between the Store Front, The Service Area, and the Brand page. I recommend that you use The Service Area option.

If you already had Google+ Local set up then you should have already been upgraded to the appropriate page type. You can change it by editing your business information.

Virtual Tours

This feature lets you add video so that you can give customers a view of your business in action. Using this feature is a great way to reach out and connect with potential customers. Once people get



Here are some useful Links

(For when I can't be there)

TopProducer Help

<http://www.topproducer.com/campus/top-producer/top-producer-help>

zipForms Help

<https://www.youtube.com/user/zipLogix/featured>

DocuSign Help

<https://support.docuSign.com/>

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a behind the scenes sneak peek into your company, many of them will trust you more and feel more comfortable doing business with you.

Reviews

Google My Business makes it much easier to deal with customer reviews. As you may know from previous experience with Google+ Local, reviews play a major role in your ability to rank in Google's Local Search results.

Reviews also matter to your reputation. It's hard to get someone to try a new establishment if it has a steady stream of bad reviews. So it pays to encourage your customers to leave reviews and for you to engage and respond to reviews (both negative and positive).

Wish a bad review could go away? You can't remove reviews; only Google can do that, which is highly unlikely under normal circumstances. But you *can* respond to them. From your Dashboard, click "Manage Reviews."

As you can see, you can respond to each review by choosing the "View and Reply" button. Often, this is a very good idea, since it shows people that you actually care about customer service, and that you're willing to engage.

You can thank people for their good reviews, and you can try to work things out with those who have taken the time to leave complaints. Either way, it's far easier than the old process, which involved many more steps.

You can also take a look at review analytics. This is an incredibly beneficial tool, as it helps you monitor your reputation, not just on Google, but all over the web. It tells you where all of your reviews are coming from, so that you can check them out and respond to them as necessary on other sites.

There's a good chance that Google is using the sum total of all of this review data to make

decisions about how it will rank you. In the past, it looked like reviews on other sites had only a very small impact on your local rankings.

However, there are indications that reviews on other sites might start playing a larger role in the algorithm. Time will tell. In the meantime, gathering reviews continues to be an important part of the small business owner's marketing strategy. So I would recommend that most REALTORS® focus on getting customers to write the bulk of those reviews into Google My Business.

Insights

The Insights feature allows you to access analytics reports and data so that you can understand how your Google My Business profile is performing. You can view the number of views your pages are getting, the number of times people are clicking through to your primary website, and the number of times people ask for driving directions so that they can visit your establishment.

You can also view engagement on each of your social posts. If a post is performing particularly well, you'll know that you should use more content like that to drive additional engagement. If a post is performing poorly, you can adjust your social strategy appropriately.

Finally, you can get some insight on your Google+ followers. As you gather followers, Google will attempt to gather data on where those people are coming from, and who they are. If you aren't getting many followers, this data may not show up. But if you are, you should see their location, gender, and age. This data can help you plan more audience-appropriate content for your Google+ profile and other marketing efforts.

AdWords Express

If you use PPC campaigns to drive traffic to your business website, you'll really enjoy this more user-friendly AdWords interface. Before Google My Business you would have had to go to a separate login page to access AdWords.

Now you can create, launch, activate, and deactivate ads in the same place that you are managing the rest of your Google marketing efforts. You can easily track your ad's performance from the AdWords dashboard, as well.

From here, you can make some decisions—are you getting a large enough return on your investment? Do you need to deactivate some campaigns? All of this can be done from the drop down arrow next to the ad name. This will give you a menu that includes options for changing your ad's headline or editing the text, deactivating the ad, or removing it entirely.

Engage and Interact with Google+ Followers

You'll find that this feature functions pretty much as it always did. You'll see a quick social update feature right under your dashboard header.

You can simply type and share. However, you will have to get off of your dashboard if you want to interact with the greater social platform. To do this, you will select the Google+ icon on your menu.

By the way, if you haven't been using the Google+ social profile, you should really consider it. Google+ offers a distinct advantage over every other social profile out there because Google includes the content of your posts in the search results. This offers yet another way to get your business seen and heard in an increasingly crowded marketplace. Google+ has become nearly as important to the average REALTOR® as Facebook, so don't neglect it.

Next week we will wrap up with some tips on how to get the most out of Google My Business!