The Internet’s impact on the real estate industry can’t be overstated. From agent websites to online MLS systems and social media to blogging and the speed at which information can travel between agent and client, technology has truly changed the ways in which we do business.

But, as every new mode of communication or technology becomes mainstream, an understanding of do’s and don’t’s comes to light. Based on trial and error, observation, and expert input, it becomes clearer just which strategies work best and which should be avoided.

For now, let’s focus on what people are doing wrong when it comes to using online marketing in building and maintaining a real estate business. Below, you’ll find the top 10 most common mistakes that real estate agents make when they use online marketing in their business. This list covers many aspects of online marketing, including social media, Craigslist, email marketing, blogging, online listing tools, agent websites, and advertising.

1. Cluttering your website with too much information:
Online consumers have a notoriously short attention span. If your website has an illogical structure, a disorganized home page, an amateur design, or an overload of information, visitors will just move on to the next site. Keep it professional, simple, and informative.

2. Thinking more is always more:
Picture this: you’ve put in a lot of work creating a business Facebook page, promoting it to friends and colleagues, and building a good base of people who have started following your page. Now what? Many agents make the mistake of posting too much content, too often. Sure, you want to promote your business, but a daily plug for your website isn’t going to cut it. People will either stop following your page or hide you from their news feed. Content should be valuable, interesting, and establish you as the expert.

3. Casting too wide an advertising net:
Online advertising tools like Google AdWords and FacebookAds offer an affordable way to appeal to a targeted group of consumers. However, many real estate professionals keep their advertising too broad. For example, many agents use keywords that are too general, like “Los Angeles” or “homes for sale,” when they should be using more targeted keywords like “Brentwood houses” or “vacation homes.” Online advertising should help you find the right customers, not just the most.

4. Having a website that’s all about you:
In your market, there are probably thousands of other
real estate agents looking for new clients. A great website can really set you apart. But, potential clients who scour the Internet looking for an agent (or are otherwise referred to your page) want to know what value you, as the real estate professional, can provide to them, the customer. A website that is all about you and reads like a glorified resume won’t do the trick.

5. Forgetting the importance of links:
You can spend all the time and money in the world creating first-class marketing materials like YouTube videos, blog posts, Craigslist posts, and virtual home tours, but if these pieces float around the Internet without linking viewers back to your website, it’s all been for nothing. Online marketing materials should be created with the ultimate goal of routing viewers back to your site, where you can convert them into clients.

6. Neglecting your blog:
A blog is only as good as its content. When a potential client comes across a blog that hasn’t been updated in a long time or has low-quality posts that look thrown together, it gives the impression that you’re not taking your business seriously, or, worse, that you’ve gone out of business. If you’re going to commit to maintaining a blog, be intentional about your posting.

7. Overlooking professionalism:
When you create business cards, listing flyers, brochures, or newspaper ads, you probably check and double-check your work for typos or other errors. This should be true of your online marketing campaigns as well. Because of the immediacy of the Internet, many agents rush through the proofreading process in order to post something quickly. But, buyers looking for a professional agent won’t be impressed by grammatical errors, broken links, and misspelled words.

8. Shying away from video:
Short, informative videos are a great way to break up a text-heavy website and show potential clients a little about your personality and professionalism. But, many agents get stage fright in front of a video camera. You don’t need to have movie-star looks or training as a TV reporter to make a great video. And, practice makes perfect.

9. Not utilizing an integrated CRM system:
With a great social media presence, targeted online advertising, and a top-notch website, you’re sure to have plenty of site visitors. But what do you do with the visitors once they arrive on your home page? Not using a CRM system to gather potential clients’ contact information and convert them into future clients is one of the biggest mistakes that real estate agents make. Once they’ve taken the time to seek out and explore your website, it’s crucial to reinforce their interest with follow-up contact. Additionally, many real estate agents waste time using disparate systems to track and/or manually upload leads that come in from different avenues. Without a CRM system that organizes and tracks all of your marketing efforts in one place, you’ll waste precious hours tracking your success. Streamline your CRM system, and save yourself time that can be better growing your business.

10. Avoiding experimentation:
The world of online marketing is ever changing. You may have found a solution that gets you a lot of bang for your buck, whether it’s the time of day that you send out your email newsletter or the keywords you use to find new clients on Google AdWords. But, don’t be afraid to experiment with new strategies as well. The beauty of online marketing is that it’s easy and affordable to track how well a campaign is doing. If a new strategy isn’t working as well as you’d hoped, just move on.

Online marketing can be effective, affordable, and beneficial, when it’s used in a way that’s targeted, strategic and logical.