Cybersecurity For Law Firms and Title Agents

Tips To Keep Your Clients and Practice Safe

Presented by:

Chris Burhans
 EVP and Chief Information Officer
 Advocus National Title Insurance Company



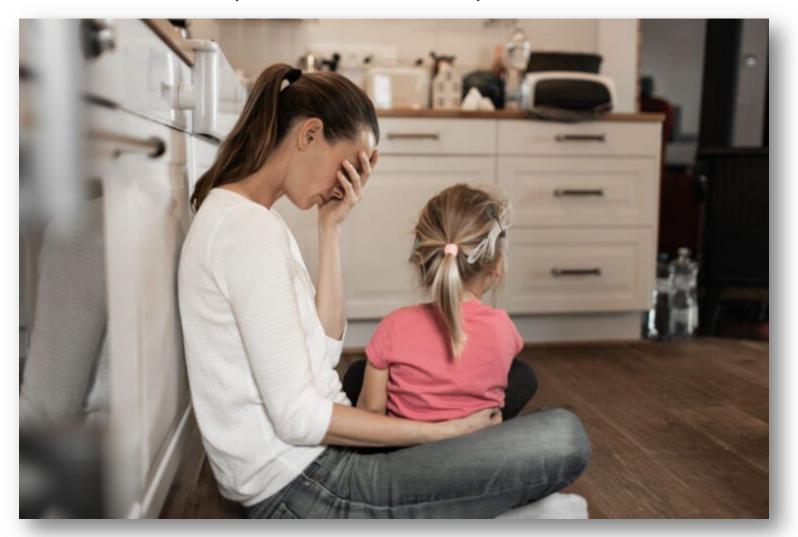
Please Scan QR Code For Presentation Materials





Downloading Passwords In Progress!

Your Clients, Your Practice, Your Livelihood



are all at risk....

Chris Burhans CISSP, C|EH, Sec+, MS

My Background

- 15+ years experience in Data Security
- Multiple degrees and certifications
 - Certified Ethical Hacker (C|EH)
- FUN FACT
 - Used to be paid to hack into banks



Why Real Estate?

- The pandemic-era housing boom led to soaring prices.
- Inflation is driving high interest rates, tightening housing inventory.
- There s extreme pressure to close transactions quickly.
- Digital currency and real-time payments accelerate money laundering.
- Property information is easy to obtain through data breaches and public records.
- Real estate wiring instructions are increasingly sent via email.
- Unprotected email systems are ripe for phishing enabled breaches.
- Multiple parties in a transaction provide spoofing opportunities.
- Large sums of money are transferred in a single wire.
- Lack of transactional familiarity exposes buyers and sellers.

Real estate wire fraud is the new reality...



Source: F.B.I. IC3 Report, March 2024

... And the losses are staggering.



Source: F.B.I. IC3 Report, March 2024

2024 Sued for Wire Fraud – Tom Cronkright (CertifID)



One in Ten Americans Targeted for Real Estate Fraud, One in Twenty Suffer Losses, Survey Reveals

LOCAL NEWS

'I went into full panic mode': Attorney loses \$240,000 through wire fraud

Attorney Nicole Quinn will never forget the day she lost \$240,000 of her client's money.

Posted 9:30 p.m. Mar 13, 2023 - Updated 1:12 p.m. Mar 21, 2023

Infographic: FBI PSA Warns About The Rise in Business Email Compromise (BEC)

Escrow Agent Held 100 Percent Liable for Phishing Scam

Who Is At Fault?

Negligence:

Companies owe clients a "duty of care"—to educate consumers about wire fraud, clearly and securely communicate wiring instructions, and protect personally identifiable information.

Breach of Contract:

Contracts for escrow services may be oral, written, or implied. Parties must clarify the nature of the client relationship and reasonable business expectations to prove breach of terms.

Deceptive Business Practices:

Divergence between a business's representation and the actual service it provides, particularly when these discrepancies result in significant failures beyond reasonable expectations, can lead to heightened legal consequences.

Breach of Fiduciary Duty:

Agreeing to accept and disburse funds places a fiduciary obligation on real estate parties, requiring careful examination of shared information, technology, and processes.

2024 Sued for Wire Fraud – Tom Cronkright (CertifID)

Understanding the Threat

The Threat Landscape

- Cybersecurity is ongoing and the threat is real
- People are often the weakness, not systems

Attack Types

- Ransomware
- Phishing / Spear Phishing
- Malware

Risk Mitigation Techniques

- Prevention
- Detection
- Recovery



Prevention





Wire Fraud Prevention Strategies

Establish Secure Communication Channels

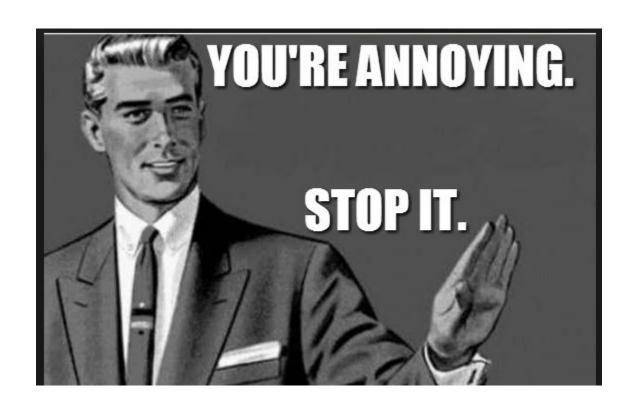
- Email
 - Multifactor Authentication
 - Password Changes
 - Start a brand-new email address
- Non-Email
 - Microsoft Teams
 - WhatsApp
 - Signal
 - Google
 - Business Domain



Wire Fraud Prevention Strategies

Relentless Education

- Your Staff
 - How to recognize attacks
 - Practice recognizing attacks
 - Ongoing education on new attacks
- Your Clients
 - Wire Fraud meeting
 - Visual Aids
 - Real-Life Stories
 - Contracts
 - Reminders (text?)



- In Authentic *Title Services v. Greenwich Insurance*, harm could have been mitigated if Maryanski had noticed the email sender was Brittany "Clork" instead of Brittany Clark.
- Similarly, a mimicked seller email address in *Mago v. Arizona Escrow* inconspicuously substituted the letters "rn" for an "m."
- Ms. Sylvia in *Bain v. Platinum Realty* confessed she could've been more diligent in reviewing her contact's email address before passing along fraudulent wiring instructions to her client.
- A series of emails littered with spelling, punctuation, and capitalization irregularities were at issue in Otto v.
 Catrow Law.

2024 Sued for Wire Fraud – Tom Cronkright (CertifID)

Wire Fraud Detection Strategies

Third-Party Tools

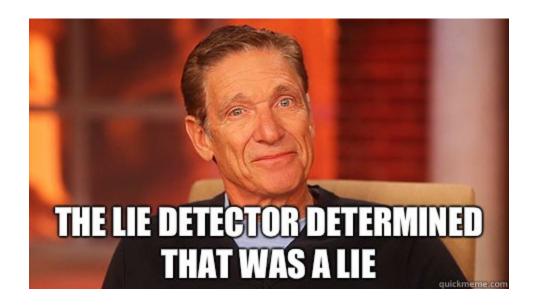
- CertifID / Qualia SHIELD / Plaid
- Account Name Verification

Multi-Level Verification Protocols

- Face-to-Face Meeting
- Multi-Party Verification

Suspicious Communication Patterns

- Misspellings
- Grammar Mistakes





Wed 2/28/2018 11:40 AM

Jane Smith <jane.smith@chase.bankq.com>

Payment Instructions

To Lawly, Wiliam

1 This message was sent with High importance.

Action Items

Hey Bill,

Chicago Title has requested that I forward you the payoff instructions, please see the attached document containing that information. To check the status after sending, please register for an account here.

Hope you're staying warm in this blizzard, our office was buried yesterday.

Talk to you soon.



Jane Smith | Loan Officer

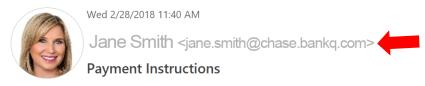
JP Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.

One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60606-4654

Jane.Smith@chase.com
Direct: 312-752-1241 | Fax: 312-224-0234

www.chase.com | Follow Chase on LinkedIn





To Lawly, Wiliam

1 This message was sent with High importance.



Hey Bill,

ATG has requested that I forward you the payoff instructions please see the attached document containing that information. To check the status after sending, please register for an account here.



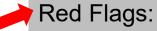
Hope you're staying warm in this blizzard, our office was buried yesterday.

Talk to you soon.



Green Flags:

- Comfortable salutation
- Partner referenced by name
- Industry Terminology
- Reference to weather



- Signature Email vs. 'From'
- Outgoing link and/or attachment
- Instructions to do something
- Normally grammar / spelling errors (SPAM filter)
- Timing

Wire Fraud Recovery Strategies

Contact Your Bank Immediately

Request to recall the wire

Notify Title Company

- Ryan.Murphy@advocustitle.com
 - Contact The Receiving Bank Immediately
 - Report Fraud To FBI
 - Notify Law Enforcement

Only 33% of wires are recovered when detected within 24 hours. (amount matters)

ASPEEDY RECOVERY,



Take Action To Secure Your Office

12 Action Steps to Secure Your Practice

- 1. Anti-Virus
- 2. Encryption
- 3. Physical Security
- 4. Email
- 5. Wireless
- 6. Documented Policies
- 7. Disaster Recovery Plan
- 8. Business Domains
- 9. Cloud Usage
- 10. Password Manager
- 11. Wire Fraud
- 12. VPN

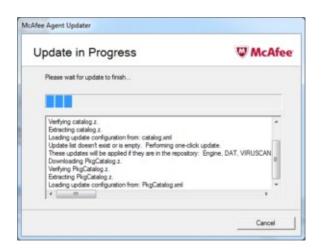
1. Anti-Virus / Ransomware Protection

Things To Consider:

- Who else uses it? Does it work?
- System Load / Requirements
- Ease of Use
- Price

- Make sure it updates regularly
- Check bells and whistles

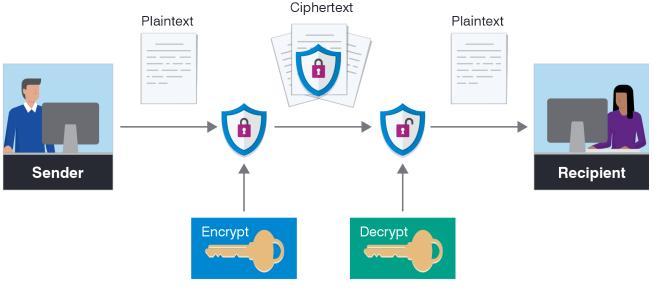




2. Implement Encryption

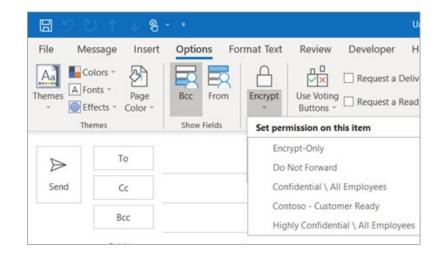
Types:

- In transit = encrypted email
- At rest = encrypted hard drives



Different keys are used to encrypt and decrypt messages

- Password protect files using cloud security
- Physical security improved
- Communication security improved



3. Pay Attention To Physical Security

Tips:

- Clean desk policy
- Server rooms under lock/key
- Shredding service
- Remote tracking
- Lock screens
- Mitigates risk against theft
- Prevents data leakage
- Adheres to standards

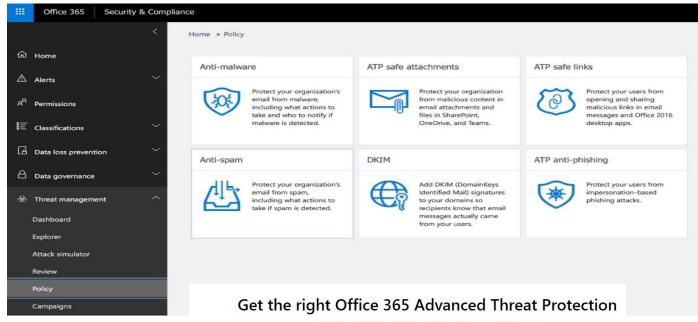


4. Secure Email With Multiple Layers

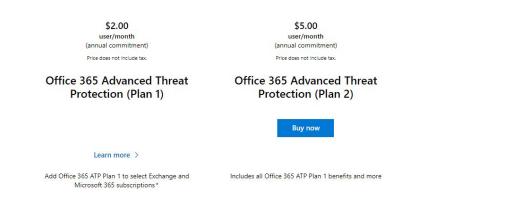
Recommended Layers:

- Spam filters
- MFA logins
- Attachment scanning
- Link scanning
- Simulated attacks

- Email is one of the biggest risks
- Real estate industry targeted
- Layered defense strategies



Compare and choose from Office 365 Advanced Threat Protection plans.

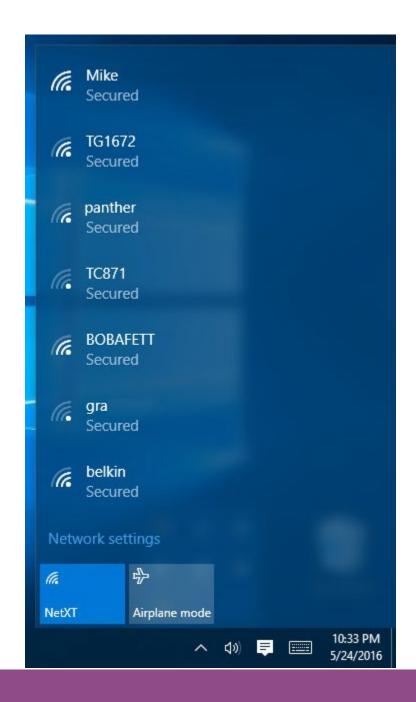


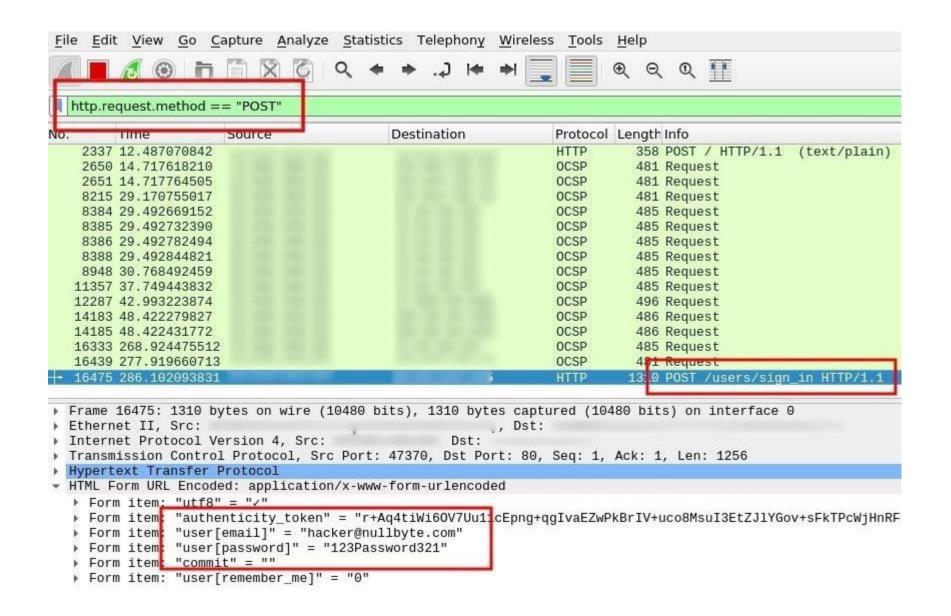
5. Over Protect Wireless Networks

Action Steps:

- Avoid old encryption methods
- Do not make SSID recognizable
- Change default router passwords
- Be mindful of rogue AP attacks
- Implement URL filtering

- Make public vs. private Wi-Fi separate networks
- Do not hang passwords on the wall
- Computers vs. phones



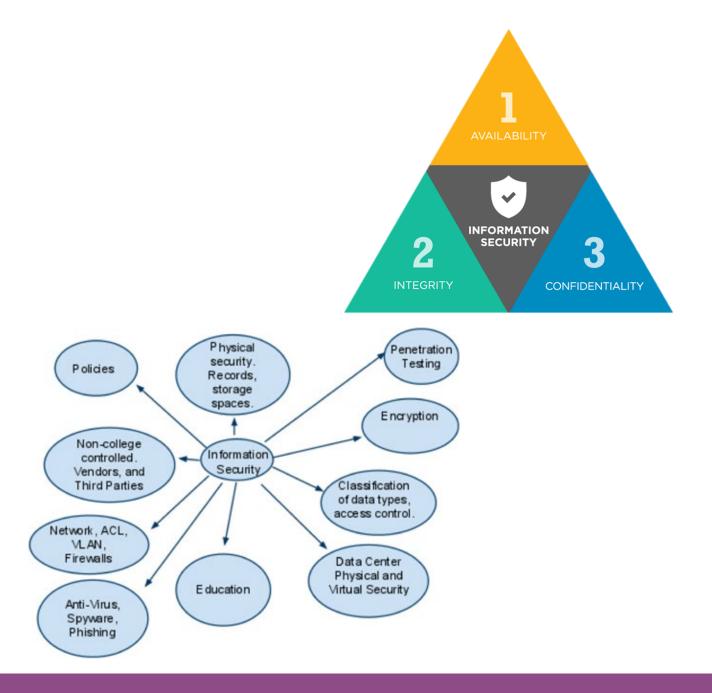


6. Document Policies

Should Answer:

- What information needs protecting?
- How will it be protected?
- Who oversees protecting it?
- Who does the policy apply to?

- Starts at the top
- Enforcement is key
- Start simple



7. Create Incident Response Plan

Three Primary Roles:

- Threat Researcher
- Triage / System Analysis
- Crisis Management

- How much would it cost?
- Never pay the hackers
- Step by step process
- Communication is key



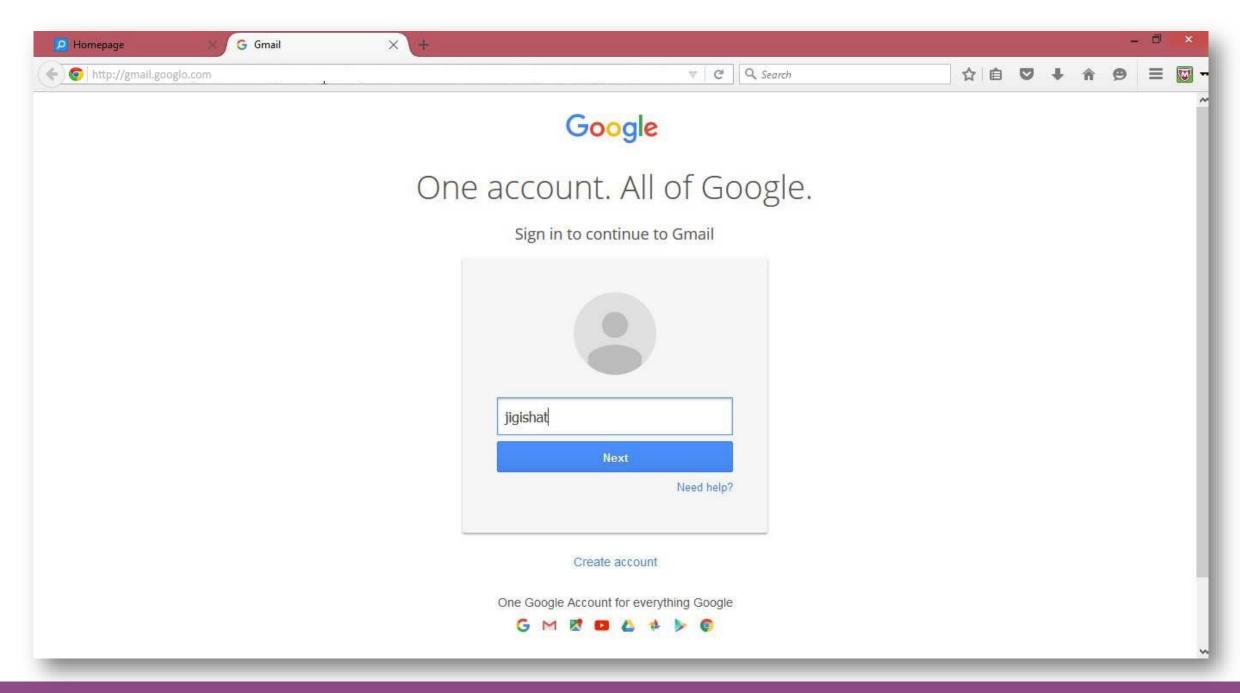
8. Use Business Domains

Business Domains Advantages:

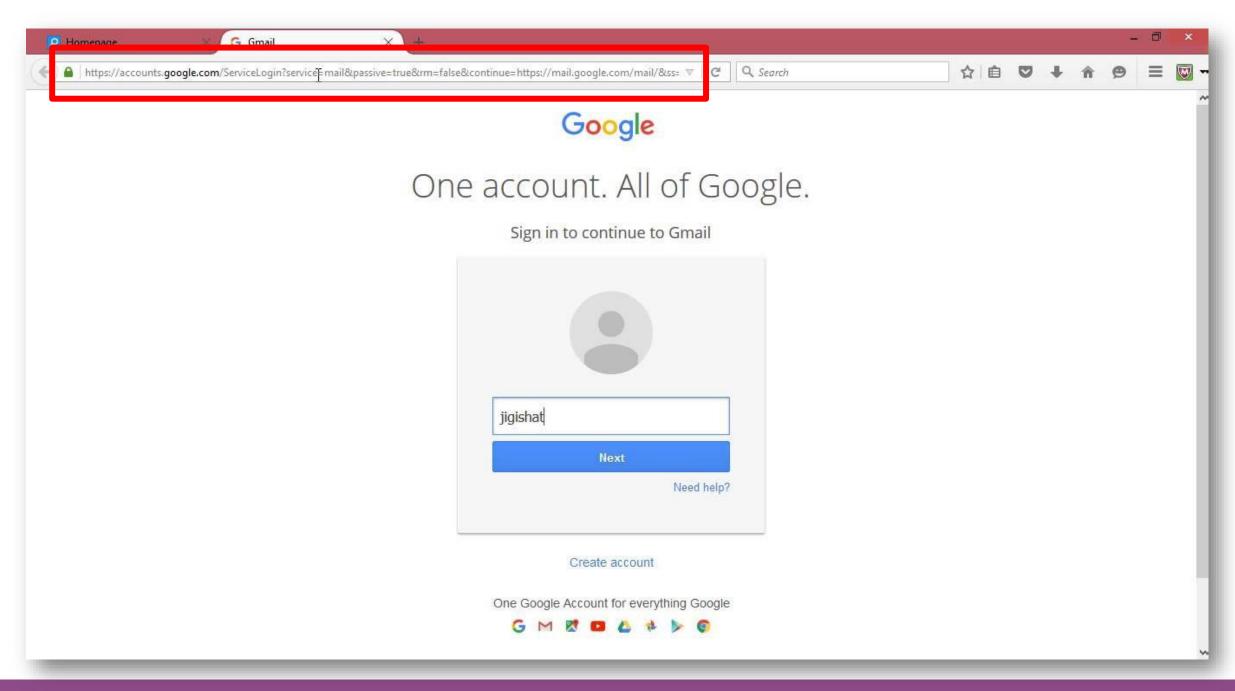
- Create trust
- Harder to impersonate
- Very cheap
- Know how to read them

- <u>lawyer123@gmail.com</u> vs. <u>lawyerl23@gmail.com</u>
- Tip: Read email addresses backwards
- Helps promote awareness
- Expect to be impersonated







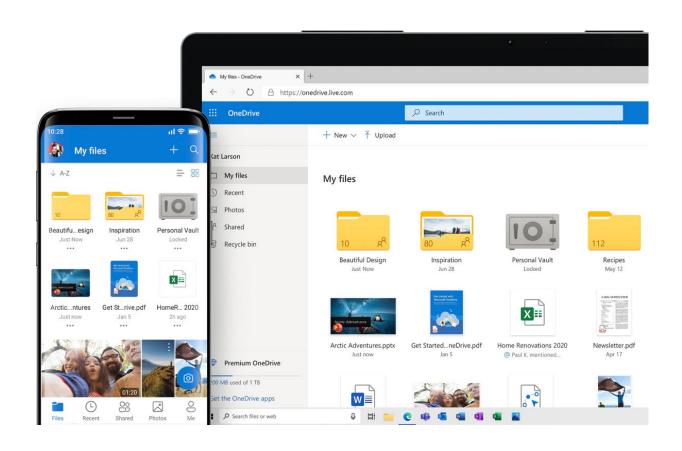


9. Use The Cloud

Cloud Advantages:

- Inherent security
- Integrated disaster recovery
- Integrated encryption
- Low storage price
- Share links, not attachments

- Use MFA for access
- Directory level security recommended
- Audit logs make triage easier
- Encrypt at rest and in transit
- Off-site backup built in

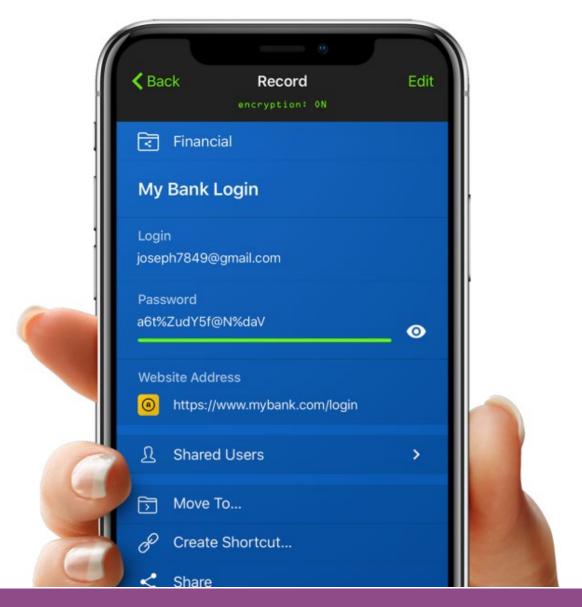


10. Consider a Password Manager

Password Manager Advantages:

- Used by thousands of companies
- Vault based password management
- Active directory integration
- Accessible anywhere

- Prevents writing passwords down
- Directory level security recommended
- Audit logs make triage easier
- Encrypt at rest and in transit
- Off-site backup built in
- Secure browsers can help



11. Go Above and Beyond For Wire Fraud

Wire Fraud Prevention:

- Create educational welcome packet
- Consider further protection with paid services
- Develop specific guidelines
- Create separate wire fraud response process

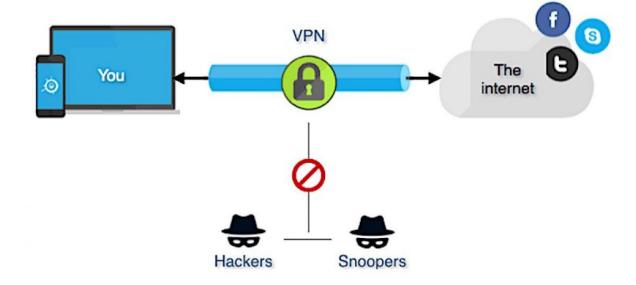
- Can't stop impersonation, need to educate
- You are on the hook
- Wires are foreign, further need to educate
- You cannot secure buyer, seller or agent
- Know what to look for



12. Consider A VPN

VPN Protection:

- Encrypts all traffic
- Conceals IP address
- Protection on public Wi-Fi



Using a VPN helps ensure your online activities remain private and secure, especially in environments that might expose you.

Easy Tips To Secure Your Business

Email

- Use private business domain
- Add multi-factor authentication to all company accounts
- Implement a SPAM filter, URL scanning, and attachment scanning
- Encrypt sensitive messages

Wi-Fi

- Change default passwords on router
- Disguise network name
- Ensure use of latest security protocol for encryption

Computers

- Update daily
- Encrypt sensitive documents
- Ensure you have effective patch management

Restoration

Backup to the cloud / or a server

Awareness

- Create process to regularly train staff on cybersecurity threats
- Create cybersecurity information packets for clients

Documentation

Create an information security policy and enforce it

Mitigate Risk

- Implement disguised cybersecurity exercises to test your staff
- Use a VPN when on public networks

Questions?



Putting the Consumer First

The Value and Protections Only Attorneys Can Provide

Presented by:

- Kelli Fogarty
 SVP, Counsel to the President
 Advocus National Title Insurance Company
- Attorney
- Founder & Past President
 Chicagoland Association of Real Estate Attorneys (AREA)



For Too Long Others Have Controlled Our Narrative

Taking back control:

Make public perception of your value a priority.

Marketing is a Must

Your Fee Says A Lot About You (and the rest of us)

Title Work Must be Reliable.

Explain the Title Work Required to Ensure a Smooth Closing Discuss the Liability and Risk Assumed when acting as Title Agent

Don't just tell people your services have worth, show them.

Do the Work Make the Connections Explain the Process

Doing Things the Right Way

Marketing is a MUST, Breaking the Rules is Not Understanding the Rule of Law for Lawyers 7.2 & 7.3

Why the Race to the Bottom Sinks the Ship

- Letters: If it seems cheap, it probably is because it is also misleading.
- Advertising: Be honest with me, this is "Advertising Materials", right?
- Marketing: An expert at nothing!

Why do I need an Attorney?

Answering the questions that shouldn't need to be asked

Dewy, Cheatem & Howe

Kelli and Dean Fugarty

Re: The Sale of Your Home

Dear Kel and D-dawg,

Your home just appeared on the MLS, so I am offering this deal only to people who received this letter from me because you are selling in an area that I have grown up my whole life, and is near and dear to my heart. I have established myself in the community and have been "practicing" real estate law for fifteen years as evidenced by this family photo:



I am offering my real estate attorney services to you for only \$99.99. This is a flat price the includes EVERYTHING a real estate attorney has to offer! I know that sounds cheap . . .

Sincerely,

Desperately Seeking Seller, Esq.



Real estate transactions are rife with potential issues, from contract inaccuracies to financing pitfalls. Choose an attorney that specialize real estate law. An attorney who is an expert in real estate law is the only type of attorney trained in risk assessment of real estate contracts. Choosing a specialist is the only way to guarantee you enter into an agreement fully informed and 100% protected from any harm.

#RealEstateAttorney #LegalInsights

A Whole New World!

Navigating Closings

Post NAR Settlement

Old Dogs ... New Tricks

Don't want a Broker, need an Attorney!

- Setting Boundaries and Expectations Will be Key to Limiting Your Liability
- Fees that Reflect New Services and Expectations
- Ask Now, or Postpone Later

A Whole New (tech) World!

Better Time Management and

Better Client Connections

Virtual! (no, I am not talking about closings)

Using New Tech To Connect and Save Time

- Don't meet your client for the first time at closing, connect at consultation.
- Videos!
 - Easy to Produce
 - Cost Effective
 - Counts for Facetime
 - Clients Actually Might Get the Info They Need



We Stop Business From Standing Still

the inertia group,inc.

Bill Hearn

President

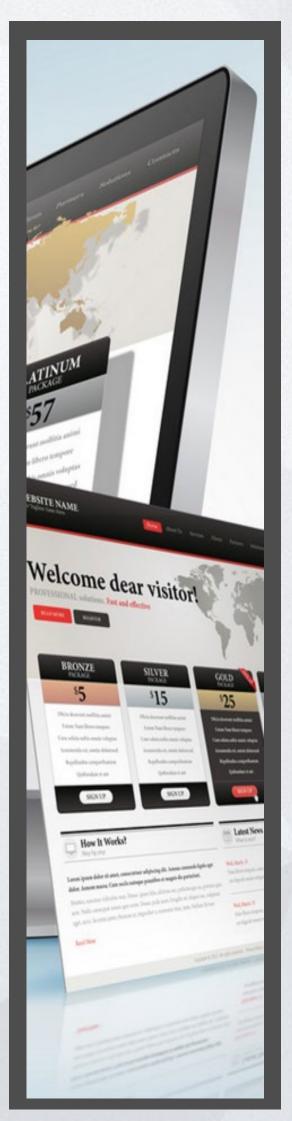
3

Known for

- 1. Websites
- 2. Internet Marketing
- 3. Graphic Design

Because we look at your business like you do, we detail a plan to reach your customers in the best ways at the best times for conversion. Timing is everything.

designemailsbloggingsocialmobilehostingSEMSEO







Our History

25 Years of Dedicated Service to Our Clients



Bill Hearn Founder & President

The Inertia Group, Inc.



Good To Know Some Things About Who Is Presenting Today

Competitive

Maximizer

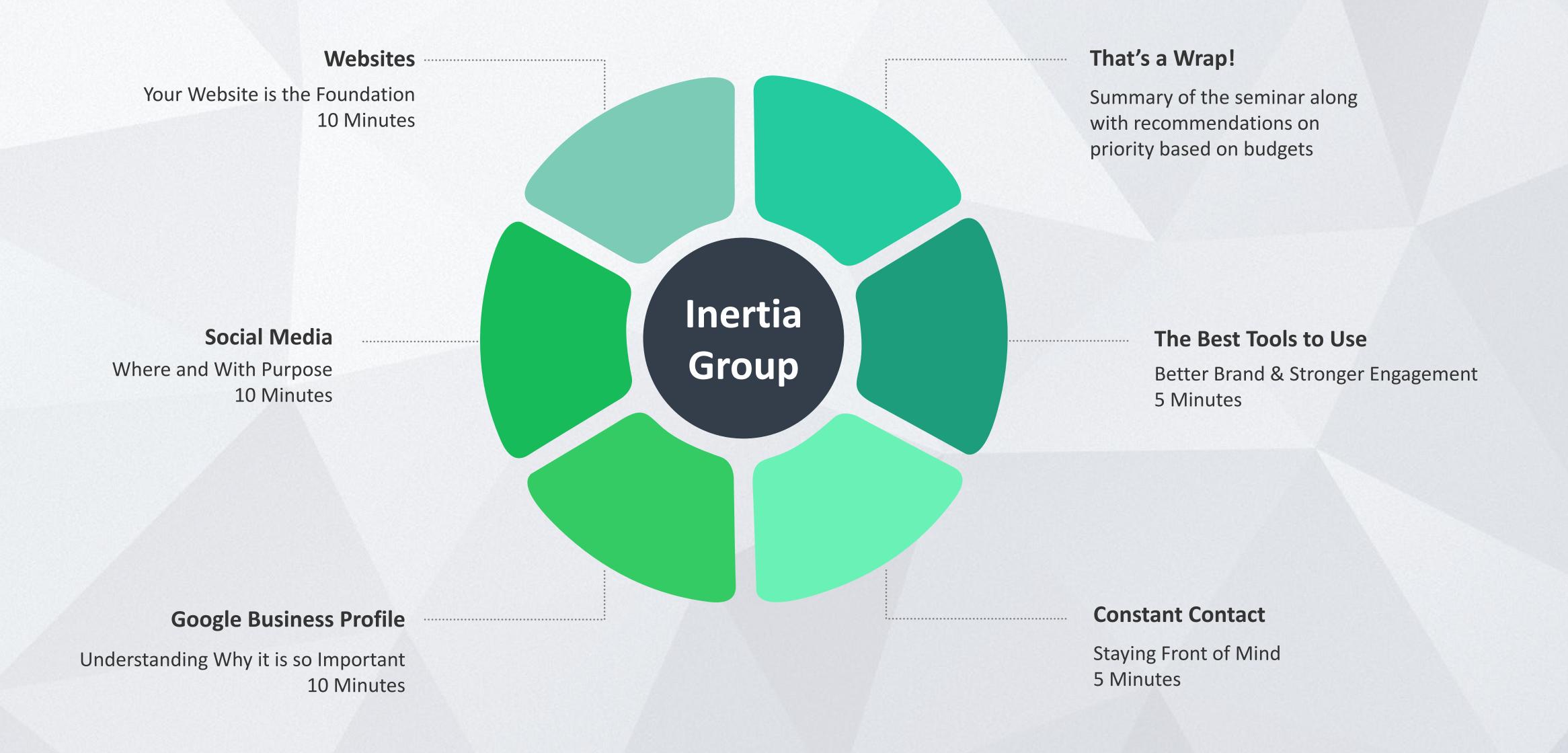
Strategic

Individualization

Analytical



Seminar Topics For Today



Best Solution for Every Business

Marketing is not a one size fits all system. This seminar is designed for an audience that has a beginner to moderate level of expertise. We always want to consider your budget and your targeted audience to see where your money should yield the best ROI.



Your Website Is The Foundation!

Template vs. Professional Agency Website

Brand Authority & Credibility

A professional website helps establish your firm as a trusted authority.

Enhanced User Experience

Intuitive navigation, multiple access points, properly sized images, clean design & expert imagery.

Scalability & Future Growth

As you grow, adding in new services, locations, redesigning header navigation and plan for growth. Someone to guide you.

Tailored Content (User vs SEO)

How does content on your website engage the user? How does a Google crawler view your website?

Customized Features (3rd Party Apps)

Online scheduling, payment portals, private resource center, live Google reviews and much more.

Mobile Responsiveness

A lot of template driven websites have problems with their mobile versions. 60% + come from mobile.

Ongoing Guidance & Maintenance

An agency will always be there for you every step of the way. Maintenance plans, keeping up with security updates and more.

Speed Test

Quick loading websites always rank higher & customers stick around. Templates are bloated with code & slower.

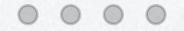
Targeted Marketing Integration

Every website should have proper lead generation tools, social media links, industry links and logos.

Your Website Is The Foundation!

Template vs. Professional Agency Website

BONUS TIP FOR YOUR WEBSITE





Make sure you are using GA4 so you can learn about what type of people are visiting your website and from what location and so much more.



Take advantage of this great tool that will let you know how well you rank and also if you have any broken links, mobile site that is not Google friendly and so much more.

Off-Site SEO

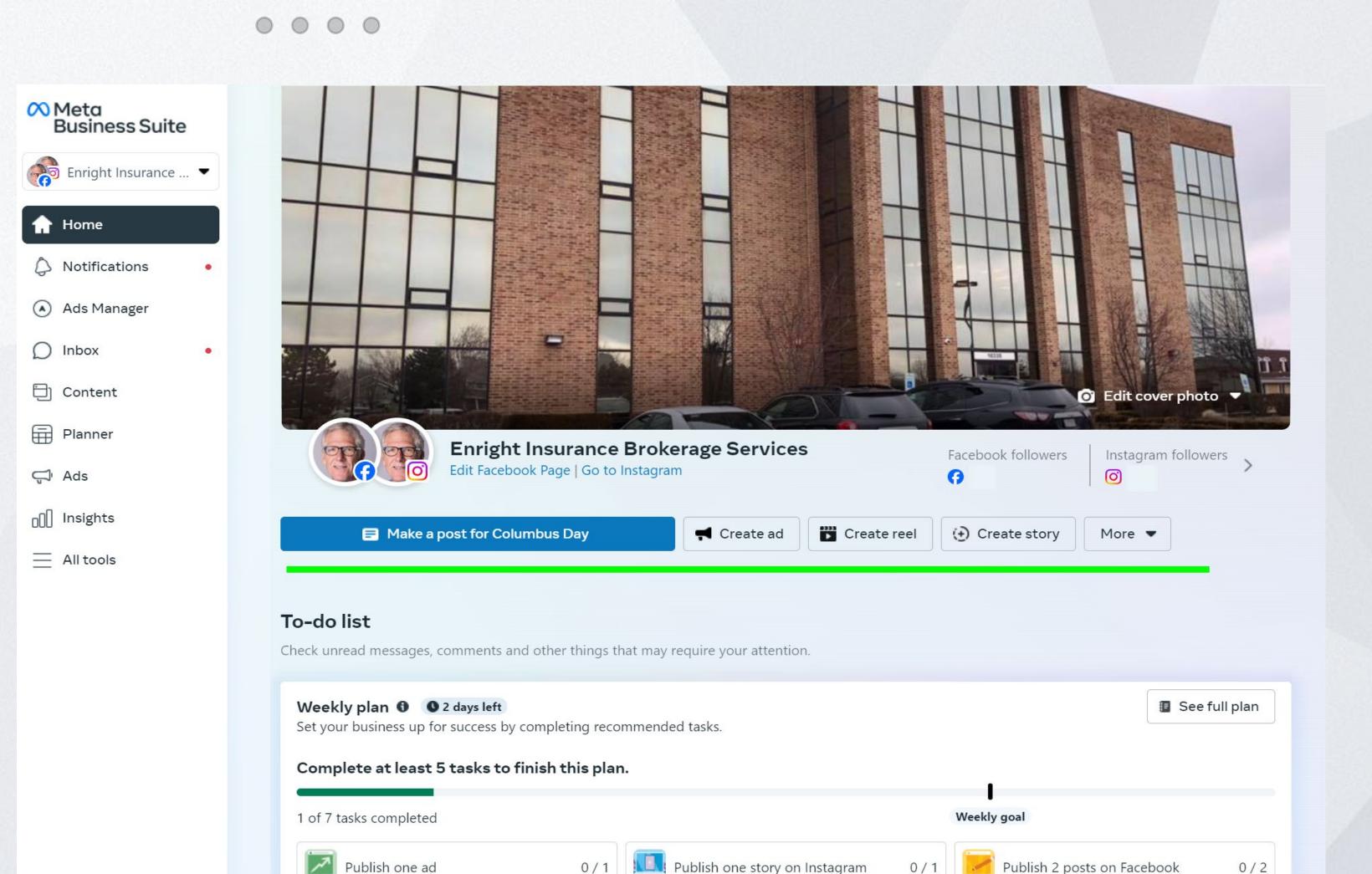
Where Should You Spend Your Time? Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube



Great tool called Meta Business
Suite. Is it easy to use? Yes, very
easy to use and it is FREE!

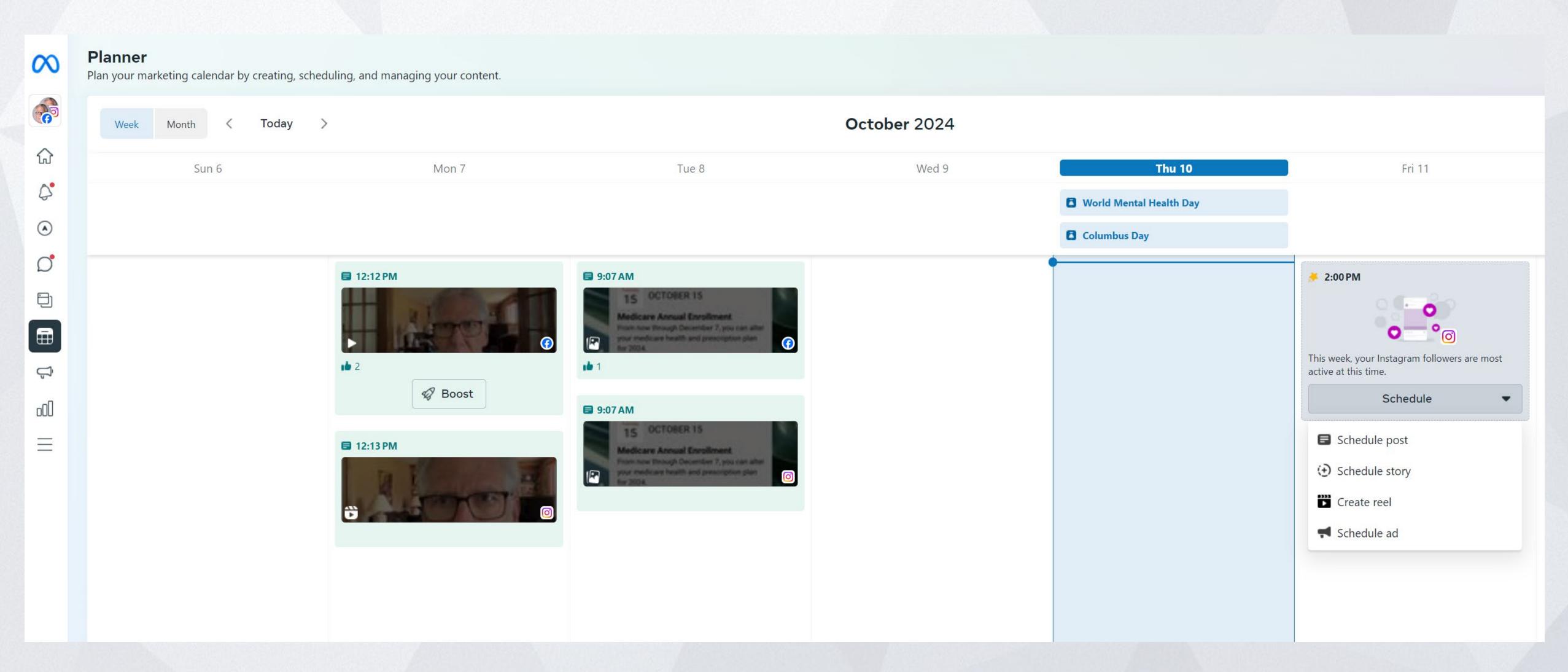
OFF-SITE SEO TIP!

When you are developing your plan for social media posts, make sure you incorporate the keywords you used when developing your website. When they are used across your platforms, Google and other search engines will pick up on that and rank you higher as long as you link back to your website.



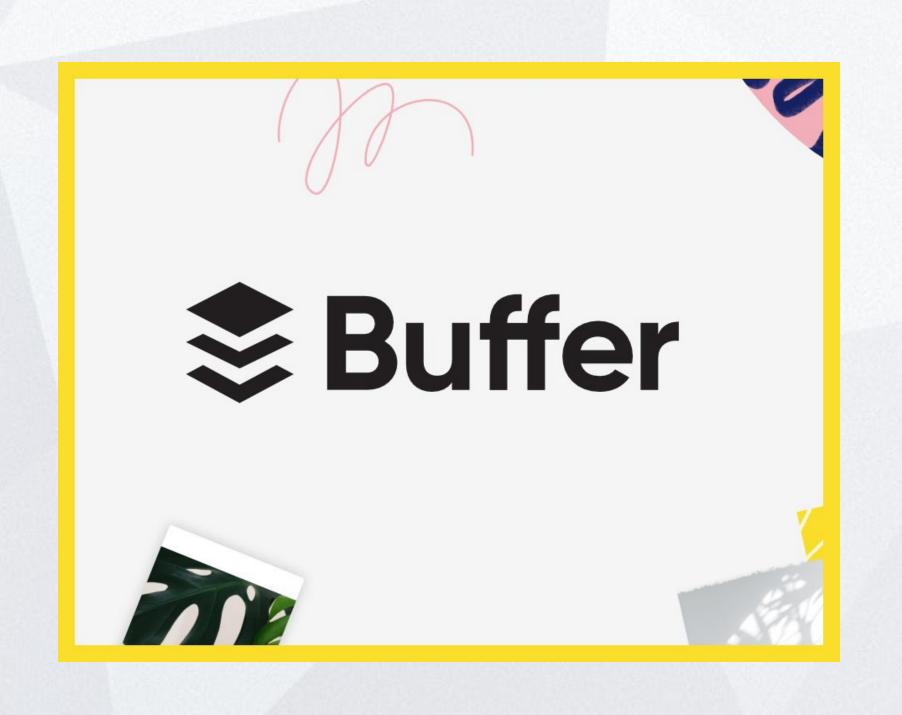
Off-Site SEO

Meta Business Suite Calendar/Scheduling

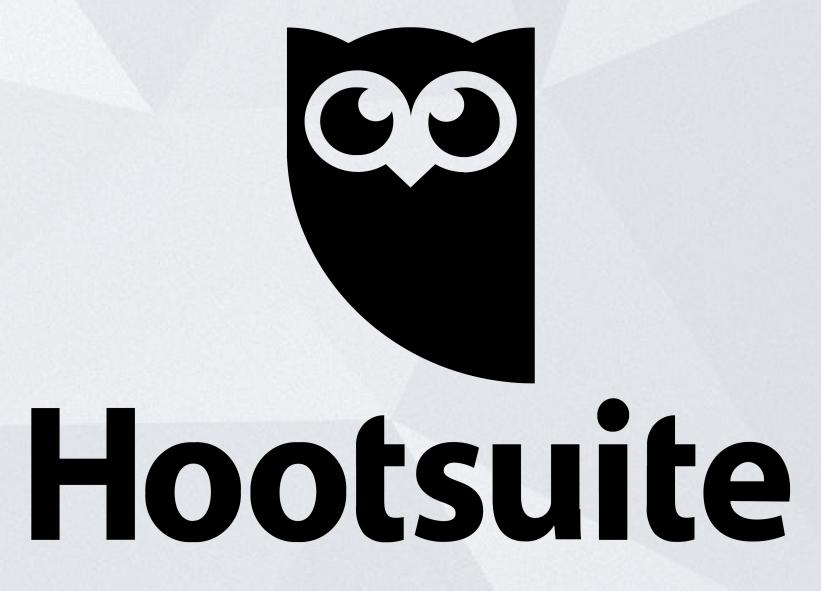


Off-Site SEO

Buffer, Canva Pro & Hootsuite







Off-Site SEO

General Guidelines for Effective Posting

Consistency

Stick to your schedule and ensure regular posting to build engagement. Using a scheduling tool will make your life easier.



Engagement

Don't just post – engage your audience. Respond to comments, answer their questions and share others' content when relevant.



Quality Over Quantity

Don't overpost. Posting frequently is good but make sure each post adds value to your audience.



- LinkedIn: Early morning or late afternoon (7:30–9:00 AM, 5:00–6:00 PM).
- Facebook: Mid-morning to early afternoon (9:00 AM-1:00 PM).
- Instagram: Mid-morning (9:00–11:00 AM) or around lunchtime.
- YouTube: Mid-week afternoons (around 12:00 PM-4:00 PM).



Offsite SEO

BONUS TIP FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

There are two types of people who share posts!

- 1. Someone who shares a post with no personal feedback. We refer to these as dead shares or dead posts because they don't resonate with anyone who you are connected to. While it is better than nothing, they don't gain much traction or are seen across others pages as much.
- 2. Someone who shares a post with a personal comment. These posts are seen more and also have a much higher level of engagement. When you share these posts make sure you mention any keywords in your comments to help the person who you shared the post from.



Google Business Profile!

4 Primary Reasons to Actively Use Your Google Business Profile

Increase Online Visibility in Local Searches

When potential clients search for "real estate attorney near me" or similar queries, your Google Business Profile makes it easier for your firm to appear in local search results and on the Google Map Pack. Being visible here means you're more likely to find people actively searching for your services or vetting you as a referral.

Boost Credibility & Trust

Your Google Business Profile has your firm's name and contact information, business hours and a complete list of services. People will choose a business that looks active, has great reviews and is well maintained.



Provides a Platform for Posting Updates

Google Business Profiles allow you to post updates, offers, or announcements. This feature enables you to share timely information such as changes in real estate laws, office closures or new services. These updates can improve engagement and keep your profile active, which Google rewards in rankings.



Get Those Reviews!

Social proof that you are doing well and responsive goes a long way when people are vetting your company online. Make sure you get and respond to reviews timely.

Your Google Business Profile!

You Should Be Actively Use Your Google Business Profile

BONUS TIP FOR YOUR GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE



Ranking better in your local market is key!

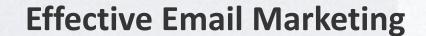
- 1. Review frequency does matter. Active profiles will receive more visibility than less active profiles.
- 2. Post pictures of your office and team.
- 3. Post pictures of seminars and events that you hold.

These pictures will all be geotagged by your mobile phone and Google will read that information. Google will interpret it as a location you do business, therefore giving you the possibility of being ranked better in those areas.

Constant Contact. Stay Front of Mind!

How Can You Stay Engaged With Your Clients?





You will have a variety of types of clients from real estate agents, homeowners and investment property companies. You can segment your lists to send targeted emails.



Event Management

Hosting a seminar or workshop with realtors? You can create an event and set up an email campaign that will manage RSVP's and send reminders.



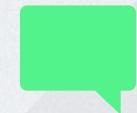
Social Media Integration

Use their social media integration to share your newsletters, emails and events.



Automated Campaigns

Set up an automated campaign when someone joins your list or registers for an event. Maybe you want to run a 5-part educational series on some of the latest real estate legal changes.



Easy-To-Use Templates & Customization

It's easy to drag and drop text and image boxes while building your next email or newsletter.

What is Birdeye?

Birdeye

It is an all-in-one solution for Reviews, Listings, Referrals, Webchat and Surveys and more!

There is no need to work with 5 different applications, just work with one and you get one unified interface, one customer support, one reporting system and one contract.





Reviews AI

Generate reviews on autopilot, reply with AI, gain deep insights into customer sentiment, and benchmark against competitors.



Social Al

Create and schedule social posts with AI, manage social presence across locations, and engage with customers seamlessly.



Listings Al

Build comprehensive and enticing business profiles to get discovered in local search and outrank the competition.



Chatbot Al

Optimize your website with an intelligent AI chatbot that can engage visitors, answer questions, and boost team efficiency.



Surveys Al

Collect valuable customer feedback and leverage AI to analyze sentiment and provide actionable insights to enhance experience.





Insights Al Competitors Al

Measure and benchmark sentiment, reputation, and online presence, and get targeted recommendations to drive growth.



Referrals

Digitize your referral campaigns at scale, identify your best advocates, and make it easy for them to refer.



Messaging Al

Leverage AI to streamline customer messaging across text, social, webchat, and email — all from a single inbox.

The Best Tools To Use!

Which of these tools we talked about today are good for your budget and create value?

0 0 0 0



Canva Pro: Best value for the money spent. Incredible templates, social media management tools and analytics. Al is pretty good too.



Best Overall Software Program on the Market

If you're firm is ready to make an investment in the future and create a strong digital footprint, Birdeye software will take your company to the next level. You will manage a lot of these tools from one location and have an amazing return on your local SEO and Social Media efforts. Their AI is being integrated in a much more effective and useful way compared to competitors.



Website Design

Look to move away from a template website. Very few are done right and with the time spent in-house to produce a really good website you could have hired a team and focused on what you do best at your office.



Best Email / Newsletter Company

We have worked with Constant Contact as well as MailChimp and feel that the value is stronger with Constant Contact with customer support and new tools they bring to the table.

Thank you

Let's schedule a 1 to 1 Soon!

Please put my number in your phone so have a personal guide at your fingertips.

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