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Top ten Apps for small business owners in 2017 - by Diana Podaski

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Diana Podaski, Linear Retail Properties

In meeting with two friends who have recently launched their own businesses (finance and real estate) we discussed ways that they can utilize social media.

With any social media network there are two things you always must do. The first is to create attractive and useful content, and the second is to engage with social media by liking other posts, commenting, thanking and answering questions.

This led me to recommending apps that any small business owner should have.

The obvious – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snap (formerly Snapchat) – These are your basic social media apps that you need to share content. If you are a new business, start with a presence on all of them and then feel out which two networks are best for your audience. For a more enhanced return you can advertise on them.

Buffer – Signing up for all your social accounts is easy, creating content and circulating it takes a bit more thought. Use Buffer to schedule, post and see analytics in one place. This will force you to create a content strategy calendar as well.

Nimble – A social media inclusive CRM system that aggregates all the ways you've connected and communicated with a client in one spot and automatically updates so you don't have to worry about entering information.

Dropbox – Store and share files in the cloud – anything from documents to photos and videos. This app is perfect for large files that you can't send via email.

Venmo and Square – If you're just starting out you'll need an easy payment option. With Venmo you can make and share payments at no charge between friends up to \$2,999. Square is for everyday business and accepts all major credit cards at 2.75% per swipe.

Charlie – By connecting your social media accounts to Charlie, you'll get a message five minutes before any meeting on your calendar with a total report about the person/s you're meeting with. Charlie scours social media sites, news sources, company websites and others to recommend talking points and make you feel in the know about whom you are meeting.

Triplt – A travel aggregator where you can send any kind of travel related email to the app (flight, hotel, car, restaurant confirmations) and it will organize all the information in an easy to digest format in one spot.

Slack – An instant messaging platform for internal and client use. This will cut down on clogging your inbox with email and keep all communication separated and ongoing. You can make the feed public or private and add as many users as you like. It also includes capabilities to add images, pdfs and other files.

Google Photos – This app allows you to search for photos by keyword without having to add tags.

This is extremely helpful for those of us that keep thousands of photos on our phones. It also auto-creates videos.

Google Home – If you have the Google Home device you need the app to control it. The device works similar to Siri but on a much larger, more accurate scale. Capabilities include: calendar management, traffic updates, calculator functions, call an Uber, translate words, get stock updates and so much more.

Social Media Fun Fact: Apple first introduced the App Store in July 2008.

Diana Podaski is VP - marketing and social media at Linear Retail Properties, Burlington, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540