

# MANSION GLOBAL

## For More Buyers, It's Love at First Favorite

Savvy buyers and brokers are making their luxury love-connections on Instagram

BY ANDREA LÓPEZ CRUZADO

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Brokerages like Dolly Lenz Real Estate are leveraging Instagram to attract potential buyers.  
[INSTAGRAM.COM/DOLLYLENZREALESTATE](https://www.instagram.com/dollylenzrealestate)

As summer 2015 wrapped up, one photo was enough to inspire three buyers to bid on a multimillion-dollar house in the Hamptons. The winner, who was on vacation in Europe at the time, signed the contract without ever visiting the property in person.

Welcome to the Age of Instagram, where luxury properties are appearing first on social media before more traditional sales channels. With more than 400 million monthly active users (three-quarters of which are outside the U.S.), the Facebook-owned photo-sharing platform is an increasingly important marketing and branding tool for real estate brokers.

But the benefits aren't reaped only by agents. Instagram gives social-media savvy buyers and sellers an edge, too.

### Offering Exclusive First-Peeks

When Jenny Lenz joined [Dolly Lenz Real Estate](#) in New York City eight months ago, the 26-year-old convinced the company's founder (and her mother) to open an Instagram account for the brokerage.

The Hamptons home, which captured the attention of a bidder an ocean away, was the company's debut on the social media service. The post included a simple greeting, "Hello from the Hamptons," and listed the property for around \$6 million.

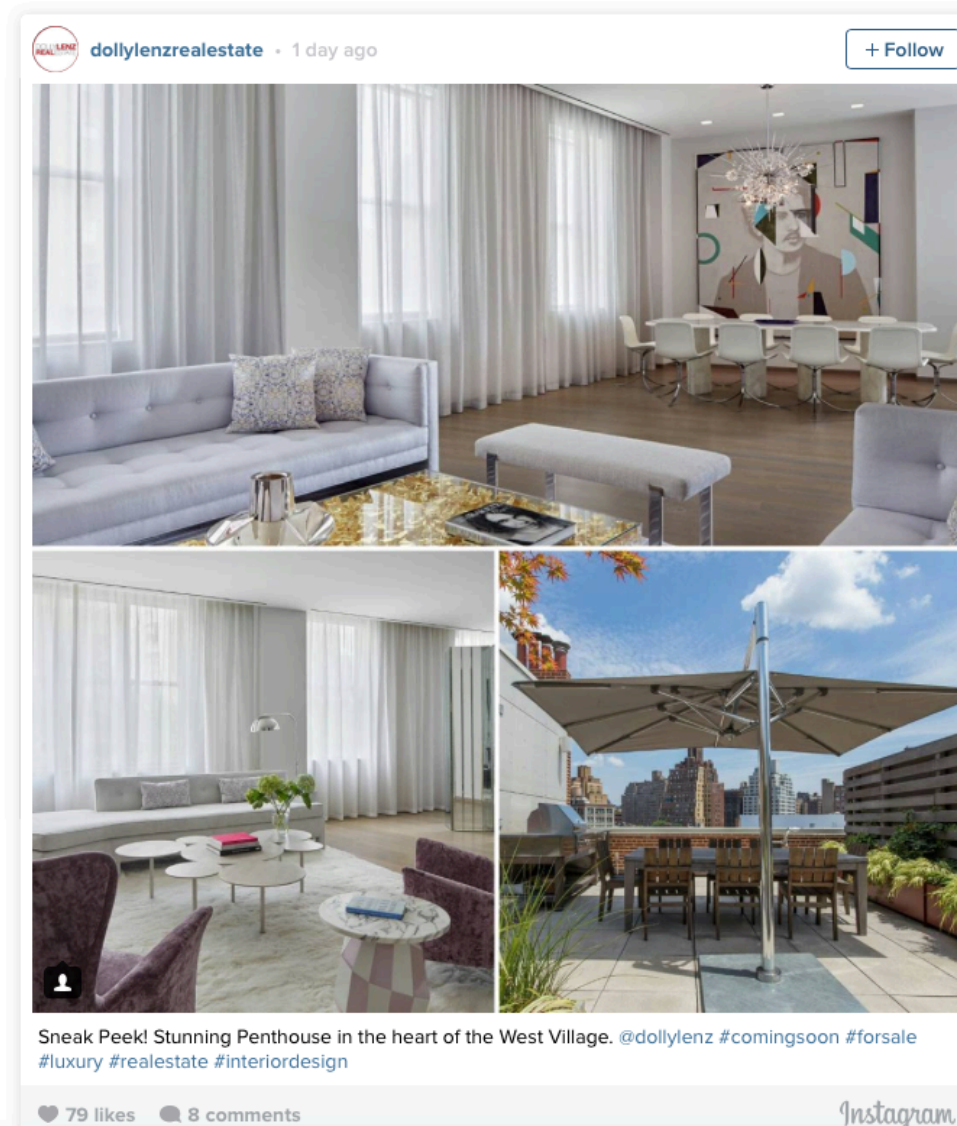


“Everyone says a picture is worth a thousand words, and it is true,” said Lenz. She now uses Instagram to introduce and promote properties, typically one or two days before listing them elsewhere.

The strategy is paying off. Knowing the importance of getting the first look, savvy buyers actively follow Lenz’s account.

Lenz recently Instagrammed a penthouse in Manhattan’s West Village with the comment, “Sneak Peek! Stunning Penthouse in the heart of the West Village.”

The first comment? “Consider it sold.”

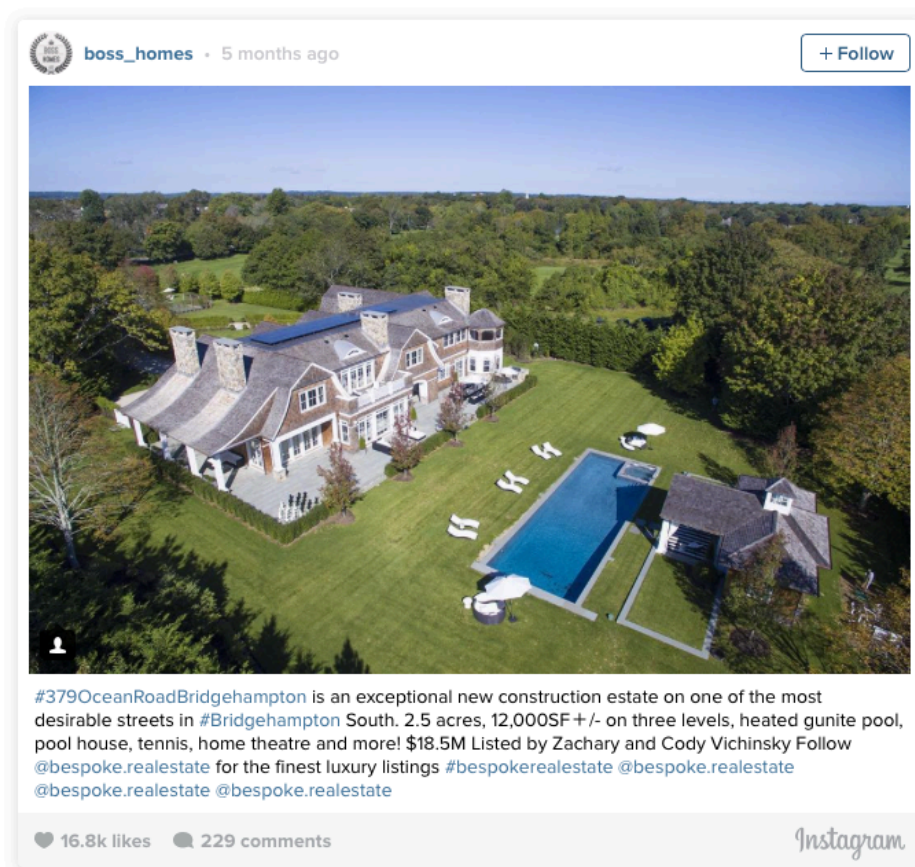


Of course, comments don't sign contracts.

But the real-world leads have poured in for past posts. After recently previewing a mansion property in Manhattan on the app, "We started getting phone calls from people asking, 'When you list it, can we see it first?'" Lenz said.

## Keeping Buyers Engaged

Michael Cantwell, chief marketing officer at [Bespoke Real Estate](#), makes clever use of hashtags (which help users find photos and subject matter that interests them). Searching for [#379oceanroadbridgehampton](#), for example, pulls up more than 100 images and videos of the \$18.5 million home.



"Without leaving the app you can have an in-depth look at the property," said Cantwell.

Additionally, the mobile version of the brokerage's website follows the design of an Instagram feed, providing a more seamless experience for potential buyers who use the app heavily.

"This is a platform they use every day," he said. "We make it very easy to go through our content."

## Building a Broader Reach

[Andres Perea-Garzon](#), an agent with Compass in New York City, has been using Instagram as a marketing tool since 2012. But it was a single post in 2014 that turned Instagram into a revenue-driver. When the 25-year-old agent posted a photo of the Pierre Hotel on Fifth Avenue, it sparked a conversation – which turned into a business relationship – with the landmark building’s management.

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Excited to Announce That Today Marks the Official Relaunch of The Residences at The Pierre. An Exclusive Collection of 14 Apartments at The Iconic Pierre Hotel. Priced from \$18,000 to \$500,000 per month. #ny #nyc #newyork #newyorkcity #manhattan #city #luxury #design #lifestyle #love #instamood #realestate #photography #architecture #me #life #chic #model #style #color #colorful #modern #fashion #man #ues #interiordesign #amazing #inspiration #architecturaldigest #interiors

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Instagram

He now lists 14 rentals at the hotel, and even found a tenant for a \$500,000-a-month unit through Instagram.

“It helps you create that buzz ahead of time,” he said.

For Perea-Garzon, Instagram is crucial to establishing his personal brand. By looking through an agent’s posts and photos, buyers can get a better handle on the agent’s personal interests and tastes – and then decide to make contact or not.

“Buyers are able to find their match, narrow the pool [of] who they want to possibly work with,” said Perea-Garzon. “It is kind of like dating.”