

Tap into Gen X, Gen Y goldmine

If you're not marketing listings with video, you're missing out

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Video applications are one of the new hot applications in real estate. Are you up on the latest?

If you're not marketing your listings using video, you're missing a huge opportunity to differentiate yourself from the competition, provide a higher level of service to your clients, and reach the hot new Gen X and Gen Y markets.

Perhaps the most challenging question is where to begin and how much to spend. Not only are some of the names confusing, so is selecting the one that will work best with your business. The price points range from very little to very expensive, depending upon the level of quality you want.

Easy Ways to Get Started

There are a number of excellent video applications that have a minimum cost. Many agents already market their listings with a virtual tour. If you would like to make your own 30- or 60-second commercial, three different companies provide an easy-to-use approach that lets you upload multiple pictures that appear as a video. One of the simplest and least expensive tools comes from RealEstateShows.com. Their process is simple. You upload five or nine pictures and their system handles the rest. This system uses the Ken Burns "panning" technology that gives the impression that the show is actually a video. The panning and the music are automatically supplied by their system. You have the option of customizing it as well. The great thing about this approach is that it also allows you to create a single-property Web site for your sellers as well. In addition, you can have your commercial syndicated to your multiple listing service, Google, Trulia and Zillow.

Two other companies, SoundsReal.com and VizzVox.com, allow you to create a voiceover to go with your video. The SoundsReal.com product allows you to pick out keywords that are then added to your video by a professional actor. Alternatively, you can use your own voice.

The VizzVox product is called a "vizzie" and it also allows you to create your own audio using your own voice. You can make vizzies that include just photos or you can also upload actual videos. Simply turn on your video cam, record, and upload your video to VizzVox. Your video is ready to go out in your blog, e-mail or any other medium. They have a free membership that includes 10 vizzies or you can upgrade to the professional version for a minimum cost. Although they do provide real estate examples, they do not have the school, mortgage and other real estate-related information that RealEstateShows.com does.

High-Quality Video

If you want a high-quality video, consider hiring a professional production company such as TurnHere.com or WellcomeMat.com. Either will produce a television-quality commercial/movie, depending on what and where you want to use it. Publishing videos on the Web doesn't require high-quality images. If you plan to use what you're producing for regular television, however, you will need a much higher-quality image, preferably shot by a professional. One of the hot trends currently is to shoot your virtual tours in HD, or high definition. It's a powerful way to show your listings, especially if someone has a big-screen television.

Eyejot

Video has numerous other applications. A new service from Eyejot allows you to record and send video messages with the same speed and ease as composing an e-mail. Eyejot is a free, online video messaging platform that can be used for both business and personal communications. It works with any browser and on any platform. There is no

software to download or install. All you have to do is login, record or upload your video, and send it. The recipient is notified by e-mail that there is a new video message. To watch, all they have to do is click on the link. Eyejot supports iTunes and RSS (blog feeds), as well as mobile devices. They also have an Eyejot widget that you can embed on your blog. On the downside, there is no option to edit, resend or forward recordings. Their free account lets you send unlimited messages of up to 60 seconds each.

To use VizzVox and Eyejot, you will need a webcam. The Eyejot site had links to numerous reviews on different webcams. They vary by price and quality; however, you can get a great webcam for under \$100.

Marketing with Video

Once you have produced your video, the next issue is how to best get it out on the Web. The best choice for doing this is to use the universal upload tool at TubeMogul.com. Rather than uploading your videos separately, TubeMogul does all the work as well as tracking your viewership for each of the sites where your video is syndicated. Their Web site claims, "Users of the Universal Upload have witnessed up to 3X more views per video." Part of the reason is that they currently syndicate videos to 15 different sites, including YouTube, Google Video and Yahoo Video.

If you want to do more business, especially with the new wave of Gen X and Gen Y clients, it's time to jump in -- lights, camera, action!

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