

# Make the most of your home listing with online tools

**W**eb 2.0 is the term used to describe today's modern Internet, particularly in regard to community-based information sharing. For home sellers, social networks can readily increase a listing's visibility and credibility among consumers. Blogs, discussion forums and other Web 2.0 social media tools are a highly efficient and cost-effective means of sharing real estate details with prospects. Through such outlets, a given message can reach a large number of highly qualified people, often for little or no cost.

Here are some of the best ways to market property locally, nationally or internationally on the World Wide Web:

■ **Video:** With help from sites like YouTube, the popularity of watching videos online will continue to grow. Eighty-four percent of the U.S. population



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has cell phones. And with the advent of Apple Inc.'s iPhone and others, the popularity of video-enabled cell phones will continue to explode. Capitalize on this trend. On your own or with a professional's help, create a high-quality video tour of the property for sale and post it online. Your real estate agent should also e-mail the video to his or her entire opt-in database. Today, people are busier than ever and are looking for convenience, which is what video delivers.

■ **Podcasts:** Take that home-tour video, or create audio

market update MP3 files, and stream the feed to Apple's iTunes Store. People can subscribe for free to these podcasts, and listen to them on their iPods or MP3 players or watch them on-the-go on their iPhones or other Quicktime-enabled devices. The subscriber will automatically receive any new updates you make as they become available.

■ **Stealth Web sites:** Sellers and the real estate agents who represent them should also consider a buyer-friendly "stealth Web site." Consumers don't necessarily care about an agency's corporate Web site, and the seller's agent should consider a secondary "nonbranded" site such as [www.findmyhomelv.com](http://www.findmyhomelv.com), which caters to the buyers who may be likelier to ask for more information.

■ **Blogs:** There's no better way for real estate agents to share expertise, create loyal clients, or create Web traffic than with a blog. Sellers should ask their agents whether they have blogs, as not having one may be a red flag. Through blogging, agents can offer current information on the market along with insights that will have buyers coming back for more. Keyword-rich blogs are also a great search engine marketing strategy that will also help pull in valuable buyers.

■ **Social networking sites:** Whether you prefer MySpace, Facebook or another social-networking site, pick one and use it. This is a great free way to stay in touch with people that know you and to let them know about your property for sale. From these sites you may also stream your property videos and link to or your agent blogs. It's all connected.

■ **Portable document format files:** While PDFs, Adobe Acrobat-formatted documents, are nothing new, property sellers should ensure they take full advantage of this now ubiquitous tool. Property brochures, amenity lists,

floor plans, and other such resources can all be converted to PDFs and made available for download on all Web sites the property is being marketed on. PDFs can also be easily e-mailed to interested parties anywhere. Make the most of your marketing by having literature available in a digital format.

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