



Putting out the WellcomeMat

Local site's movies highlight homes for sale

Greg Avery, Camera Business Writer
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With high-bandwidth Internet connections more common these days, a local entrepreneur seeks to create the space where videographers and real-estate agents can make deals happen.

Christian Sterner, a 30-year-old University of Colorado alumnus, launched www.WellcomeMat.com late last year as a platform for real-estate agents to post streaming video tours of properties they're trying to sell.

The site also acts as a jobs message board for video producers. They can post bios and contact information so agents looking to have videos made of properties can find someone to make them.

"We're setting ourselves up as a marketplace," Sterner said.

The Boulder-based company would not have been possible a few years ago, when dial-up connections ruled and digital capacity was a fraction of what it is today.

The same technology that has enabled the rising popularity of the YouTube video Web site allows www.WellcomeMat.com to post clips several minutes long.

"The technology has come far enough that these sites can operate," Sterner said.

He envisions videographers and agents collaborating to make slick visual tours with narration, music and explanatory captions.

To drum up business, the site is offering 1,000 listings for free and then charging 75 cents for ones after that. [WellcomeMat.com](http://www.WellcomeMat.com)'s target audience initially will be vacation condo and time-share sellers, who both have high volumes of sales.

The Internet real-estate market is large.

A full 77 percent of property buyers use the Internet in their searches, the National Association of Realtors found.

"I can't imagine people buying a house without it anymore," said Walter Molony, an association spokesman on industry trends. "It has been a sea change."

Ken Murray, owner of Vision Web Design, builds Web sites for real-estate professionals. He has built more than 200 Web sites for properties being sold around the metro area.

Real-estate sites tend to use static pictures, flash slide shows or 360-degree images. [WellcomeMat.com](http://www.WellcomeMat.com)'s digital movie format may be unique, he said.

Murray used to discourage people from using large image files, such as movies or 360-degree panoramic views of properties, because they excluded buyers who only have dial-up Internet connections.

But there are markets now in which high speed Internet is almost ubiquitous.

"Boulder's one of the few markets where you can do it and get away with it," he said.

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