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Real estate video: moving beyond YouTube

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The Real Estate Connect [2] conference is always a great event to learn the latest and greatest technology in



Camera lens image [1] via Shutterstock.com.

real estate, cultivate relationships and to spark inspiration.

Brad Inman's keynote was excellent this year. He discussed how our country has transitioned to a "cottage economy," and small is beautiful again. There is a wonderful opportunity to be creative and to innovate, Inman noted.

One of the most intriguing workshops at Connect this year was the innovation track, "Mastering Video [3]." Video has become a powerful marketing tool for real estate professionals.

However, whether you're shooting a simple blog video or sophisticated property tour [4], the medium possesses unique challenges from a technical standpoint such as gear, editing software, lighting and video codecs. Beyond the technical hurdles, telling a story and crafting engaging video content is critical.

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"Anyone can shoot video on an iPhone and shoot it up to YouTube, but that's not telling a story," said Marc Davison, partner at [1000Watt Consulting](#) [5]. Davison moderated a lively panel with Christian Sterner, co-founder of video company [WellcomeMat](#) [6], entitled "The Art of Storytelling."

"Video is marketing, and the medium allows you to capture the way you see the world. And if your perception is poorly lit and not edited, it can be detrimental."

I ranked video fifth on my "[Top 10 real estate tech trends for 2012](#) [7]" list, and it could have been even higher. With 800 million unique visits each month and more than 3 billion videos viewed every day, [YouTube](#) [8] has become the second-largest search engine. It is a great place to promote your videos and potentially reach a lot of people.

But what if your video strategy and business moves beyond YouTube?

There are advantages to using a professional video-hosting solution, such as delivering a branded video player, with no advertising or related videos displayed. As a brokerage, it's important to understand the value of publishing content, especially in terms of search engine optimization and improved [Google PageRank](#) [9].

"Most large real estate companies haven't organized agents or brokers behind a cohesive video strategy yet. In addition, aggregators have for the most part ignored the video opportunity," said Sterner.

"Agents have so far been left to grasp for ... any distribution available rather than to gain the right video distribution. This is thankfully changing very quickly."

Here are three YouTube alternatives for real estate pros:

1. [WellcomeMat](#) [6]

WellcomeMat is a real estate-specific video platform that has been popular in the industry. As stated

on the website, "With over 14,000 real estate professionals, 3,000 real estate video production companies and many A-list real estate firms using our platform, WellcomeMat represents the most penetrated online and mobile video system in real estate."

The application integrates a branded video gallery, supports cross-platform video that plays across mobile devices, and has a strong community.

Click [here](#) [6] to learn more.

2. [Vimeo Pro](#) [10]

Vimeo has long been an alternative to YouTube for filmmakers and artists. As stated on the website, "From the beginning, Vimeo was created by filmmakers and video creators who wanted to share their creative work, along with intimate personal moments of their everyday life."

In August 2011, the service announced Vimeo PRO for business and commercial use. The application includes all of the features that you have grown accustomed to with the traditional application and supports enterprise needs such as advanced analytics, no bandwidth caps, mobile support and more.

Click [here](#) [10] to learn more.

3. [Kaltura](#) [11]

As stated on the website, "Kaltura provides the world's first and only open-source online video platform." Kaltura was founded in 2006 and has grown in popularity. Kaltura is an interesting platform offering a range of products and solutions. In fact, Coldwell Banker created educational portals powered by the framework. You can view the case study [here](#) [12].

Click [here](#) [11] to learn more.

As the real estate industry looks to take video to the next level in 2012, I suspect the needs and strategies of real estate pros will grow as well. The proper tools will be essential to accommodate this growth, and moving beyond YouTube may be inevitable.

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