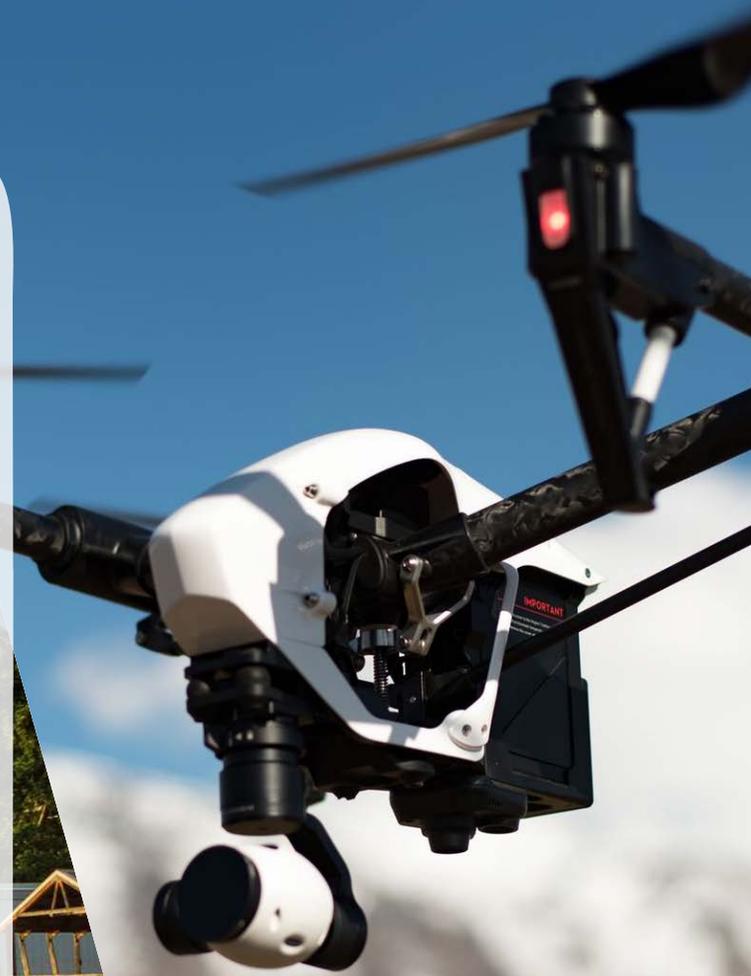


WHITE PAPER

# The Official Guide to Visual Real Estate Marketing Tools and Trends

Everything top agents use to  
win listings and sell homes



# Overview

Real estate marketing professionals should use this guide as a primer to the 2017 visual marketing landscape, covering everything from old-school photography to new wave immersive experience marketing.

## THE LANDSCAPE

With rapidly evolving visual marketing tools and technologies, the real estate market is more competitive than ever. Top agents leverage the newest tools to stand out. 2D photography and DIY video no longer impresses a new generation of buyers and sellers who expect engaging online experiences that truly provide an understanding of a property.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

In a changing landscape, real estate agents and brokers who leverage new technology to inexpensively and quickly deliver immersive online and offline experiences are best able to engage tech-savvy audiences. New technologies have recently made it easy and cost effective to create engaging, next-gen experiences for any property.

## THE ACTION PLAN

New technologies make it possible to create advanced, immersive virtual experiences to showcase a listing at any pricepoint, without deep technical training.

## MEASURING SUCCESS

Web traffic analysis and time-on-page statistics can demonstrate the level of engagement with new visual marketing assets.

# Competitive Landscape

Get a quick overview of the pros and cons of each visual marketing technique discussed in this guide.

	Immersive 3D	Digital Photography	Video Slideshows	High Production Video	Drone Video and Photo	360 Panoramic Tours
Optimized for mobile	●	●	●	●	●	◐
Social Shareability	●	●	●	●	●	●
Offline Availability	●	●	●	●	●	○
Easy to DIY	●	◐	●	○	◑	◐
Interior Capture	●	●	●	●	○	●
Exterior Capture	●	●	●	●	●	◑
24-hr turnaround	●	◐	○	○	○	○
Agent Branding	●	○	●	●	●	●
Schematic Floor Plan Generation	●	○	○	○	○	○
Room Measurements	●	○	○	○	○	○
Native/spatial annotations	●	○	○	○	○	○
Virtual-reality ready	●	○	○	○	○	○
Natural navigation	●	○	○	○	○	◐

## Snapshot: an industry in flux

Millennial buyers now comprise 35% of all new homebuyers on the market<sup>1</sup> (up from 32% in 2014), which means higher demand for more engaging, interactive and mobile-ready content from real estate professionals. In fact, 89% of buyers across demographics increasingly look to web and mobile tools to narrow down their list of properties to consider<sup>2</sup>.

This has fuelled innovation in real estate marketing. Immersive technologies that were once experimental are quickly becoming a standard part of listing presentations. Sophisticated real estate agents are learning to leverage new technologies to improve their ability to emotionally engage new buyers by better showcasing their properties.

This definitive guide surveys the 2017 landscape of traditional and emerging trends in real estate marketing.

- In the next two years, **80% of millennials** will seek to purchase a home, according to Trulia<sup>3</sup>. That's almost 67 million prospective buyers.
- In 2015, 39% of digital marketers believed that **more of their budget** should be reallocated towards creating compelling visual assets.<sup>4</sup>
- **Real estate listings with more visual content (like video) receive 403% more inquiries** compared to those without video.<sup>5</sup>
- **41% of home buyers found interactive maps very useful**, while 40% felt the same about virtual tours.<sup>6</sup>
- According to Apartments.com, visitors to their website spend **3x more time engaging** with property listings that offer an **immersive 3D experience**.<sup>7</sup>
- Redfin attributes **3D walkthroughs**, advanced presentation technology, and great customer service with the fact that their homes **sell an average of 10 days faster** and for **\$5,100 more** than comparable homes.<sup>8</sup>



Where does homebuying start?

***92% of homebuyers search the internet before contacting an agent<sup>9</sup>***

With buyers first heading online to scope out potential properties, high-end photography has become the price of entry for property marketing. But top agents use more than traditional 2D photography to

create engaging, emotional online buying experiences. The most successful marketing programs sell online buyers on the dream of living in a property, creating an emotional hook that brings them in for more.

# 2D Digital Photography

Digital photography remains the industry standard for visual property marketing. Online and offline buyers alike expect detailed photos of a property's interior and exterior, though quality expectations vary with the market.

Though real estate agents can now leverage smartphones to create 2D galleries themselves, the results can be inconsistent and DIY does not impress prospective sellers. Professional photographers can be sourced locally or through national networks.

For low-end listings, DIY options can be practical and budget-friendly. While a course on smartphone photography and image editing can help you get started, experienced agents weigh this against their own time investment. Often, an agent's time is better spent winning additional listings and

communicating with clients rather than editing and framing.

For mid-range listings, most real estate agents recognize the need to hire a professional who can quickly produce the magazine-quality shots most home buyers expect. Only professional shots, taken by photographers with high-end equipment and with special knowledge of staging, framing, lighting, and editing can hope to compete for the attention of a new home buyer. Specialty add-ons, like twilight sessions or neighborhood shots, can also make your listings pop, for additional cost.

For mid-range photography packages, agents can expect to spend between \$125- \$500, depending on the area, property size, and experience of the photographer. These packages typically include 15-25 images that are MLS and print-ready, delivered within 24 hours.

**DIY is not enough!  
Homes with professional  
photography:**

*Sell up to  
**3 weeks faster***

*Sell for up to  
**\$11,000 more***

*Are up to  
**44% more likely**  
to sell above list price*

*Are up to  
**17% more likely**  
to sell within 6 months*

## PROS

-  Expected as part of any marketing package
-  Readily available in any market

## CONS

-  Flat 2D format limits sense of space, flow, and context
-  No motion or engagement
-  Dependent on professionals

## COST



**DIY:** \$1,000-2,300 (equipment), \$120/yr (editing software) + 3h/ listing of agent time

**Outsourced:** \$125 - \$500/ listing

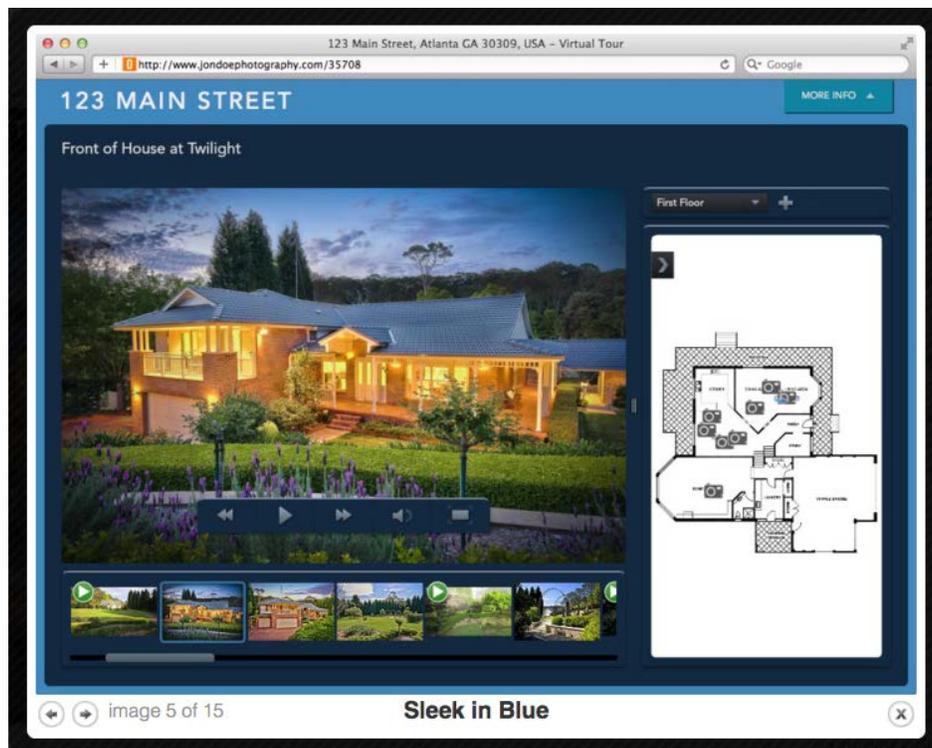
# “Virtual Tour” Video Slideshow

Traditional virtual tours are similar to today's screensavers. A series of still photos are curated and set to music, using transition effects. The resulting video file can be uploaded to YouTube or locally hosted and embedded on listing sites, and can also be included in most MLSs as video content.

Originally dubbed “virtual tours,” these still-frame slideshow videos are an easy, often DIY solution to quickly creating video content, and can be a good

solution for listings at the lower end of the market, where professional photography may be cost prohibitive

Slideshow software will run you \$100-250/year depending on additional editing options. Many photographers offer a video slideshow as an add-on to their base photography package for around \$100 per listing.



## PROS

- 👍 More dynamic than static 2D photographs
- 👍 Can add a sense of flow to still images

## CONS

- 👎 Requires technical skills, production experience, music selection
- 👎 Limits client interactivity / no self-driven experience
- 👎 High risk of “cheesiness”

## COST

- DIY:** \$125/year + 3h/listing agent time
- Outsourced:** \$200/listing



# Videos for Real Estate

Easy online video sharing changed the real estate game around 2005, with platforms like YouTube flooding the internet with simple, accessible video embedding and sharing.

Since then, the quality of video used in real estate marketing has risen rapidly. While smartphones make DIY video possible, it's not recommended. Results can be variable, with a shakey hand-held feel that may not inspire buyer confidence.

At higher price-points, videos may include shoots at multiple times of

day, featuring property views and staged scenes that truly sell the dream of living in a property.

As with 2D photography, stunning video requires a professional touch to compete for the attention of online homebuyers.

A 3-minute video can cost between \$250 and \$400 for a 2,000 sq. ft. property, with pricing typically based on square footage. Video is typically ready for use 48 hours after a scheduled shoot, after it is edited and set to music or voiceover.



Sample real estate video (cred to [www.interiorpixels.com](http://www.interiorpixels.com))



## The Facts About Video

Century 21 has stated they've experienced a **20% increase in sales** thanks to real estate video marketing campaigns run through social media sites.

**70%** of home buyers say they expect a video, either on a property website, Facebook or YouTube.

*Since 2007, online video marketing has gone from <math>\\$1M</math> to <math>\\$5M</math>*

*Mentioning "video" in an email subject line can **boost open rates by 19%**, according to a 2015 general study by Synecast.<sup>10</sup>*

## PROS

-  Much more engaging than typical slideshows and still-frame photography
-  Creates emotional resonance with property and showcases natural beauty of space

## CONS

-  Requires team of professionals with production experience
-  Passive experience with no interactivity
-  Long lead time

## COST



**DIY:** Cost of smartphone + 1h of agent time, 3h+ with editing

**Outsourced:** \$250 - \$400/ listing

# Drones and Aerial Media

In the past three years, aerial drones have added new dimension to real estate photography and videography. Cameras mounted to a drone can be flown high above a property to capture unique exterior character, landscaping, or breathtaking views.

For properties with unique exteriors, drones are a great way to present features that are key to generating leads and boosting offers.

Drones are best used in combination with interior video or photography to give online buyers a complete sense of the interior and exterior of a property. They can also be useful in highlighting a neighborhood,

or showcasing proximity to schools, downtown areas, and other attractions.

Drone video is often offered as part of a comprehensive real estate marketing package that includes professional interior and exterior property marketing.

Drone video typically costs \$400-\$500/listing, and includes video editing and interior shots as part of a package. As drones require a permit and training, it is not advised to fly them yourself.

In many markets you can find a drone pilot on networks such as Dronebase or find a local photographer with a drone and permit.



## PROS

-  Unique aerial perspectives get buyers' attention
-  Stands out against other video

## CONS

-  Requires team of professionals with permit and drone experience
-  Only captures the exterior of a property

**Increased immersiveness and visual quality is important.**

*In 2016, **35%** of all recent buyers of new homes were Millennials, more than double the amount of boomer buyers.*

*Generation X was the second large group of buyers at **26%**.*

## COST

**Outsourced:** \$300 - \$700 per listing



# Immersive Digital Experiences

Revolutionary camera and software solutions have fueled the next generation of property marketing - immersive virtual experiences that feel almost as real as actually visiting a property.

There are several immersive technologies on the market which use DSLRs or specialized cameras, and automated software or manual rendering techniques to create walkthrough experiences that combine 2D floor plans with 360° panoramas.

These are translated into self-driven walkthrough experiences that let online buyers explore every corner of a property, right from the web.

With homebuyers increasingly spending their property search time online, these engaging, video game-like experiences will be key to drawing millennial buyers in and prompting an in-person showing.

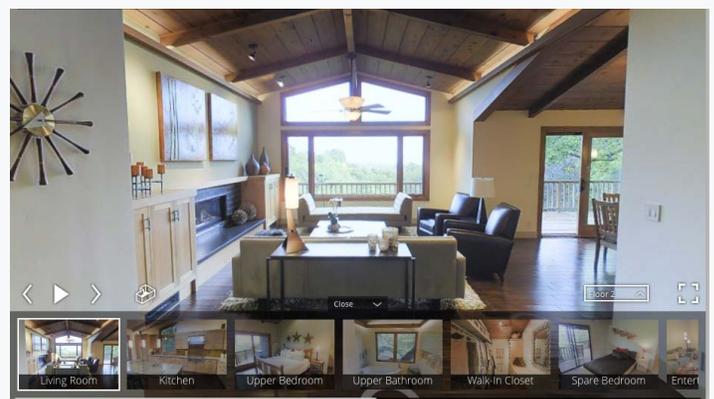
## *Passive vs. Active*

**Videos are passive media. The viewers sees only what you want them to see, in a designated order, with limited ability to explore particular areas in depth.**



Sample real estate video (cred to 360 Property Videos)

**Immersive 3D walkthroughs, like video games, are active media. By putting the visitor in the driver's seat, they increase engagement and are more informative.**



Sample immersive 3D tour, courtesy of Matterport

# 360° Panoramic Walkthroughs

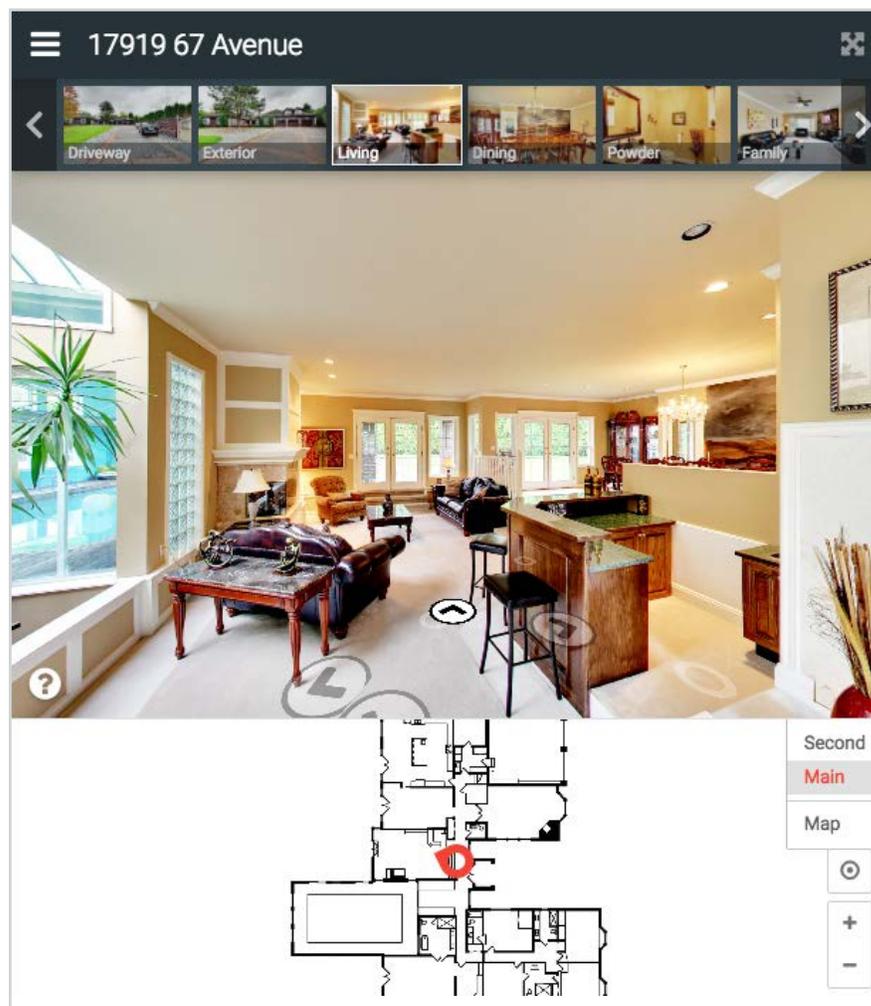
When 360° panoramic photography was introduced to real estate in 1999, it felt like the future. DSLRs on special dollies allow for complete 360° panoramic views, which give viewers a sense of where a scene sits in relation to other parts of a property.

Today, several companies will even map these panoramas together to create a walkthrough experience based on a 2D floor plan for added context.

These 360° panoramic walkthroughs give visitors an understanding of where the photos were taken, so they are better able to picture a complete property. Viewers access each panorama by clicking on the desired location in the 2D floor plan, with the option of turning from side to side, and looking up and down from a particular vantage point.

Some even let viewers move between photos within the interface, though they do not encode any real-world 3D data like measurements or actual spatial relationships.

A typical 360° panoramic walkthrough will run you around \$500, depending on square footage and your local market.



Sample panoramic tour (photo cred to [www.viyae.com](http://www.viyae.com))

## PROS

-  Adds a higher level of interaction
-  Hi-res photography creates positive emotional response

## CONS

-  Less immersion than other 3D services, with no measurements
-  High cost
-  No 24-hour turn-around

## COST

**Outsourced:** \$500+ listing, depending on square footage



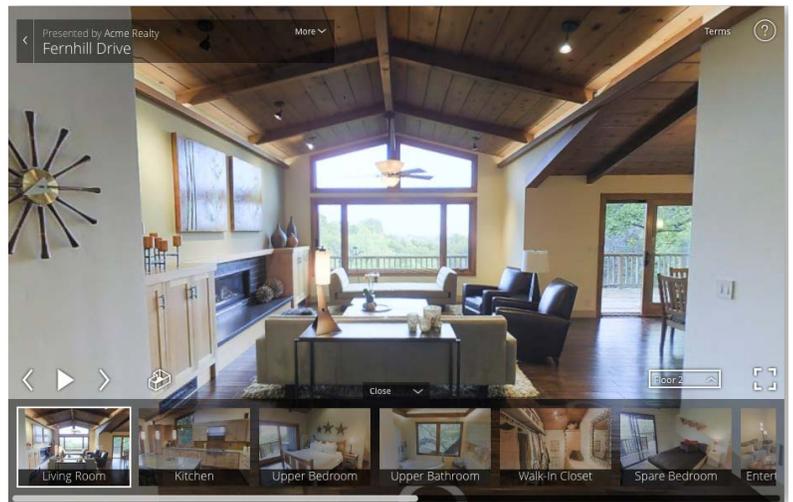
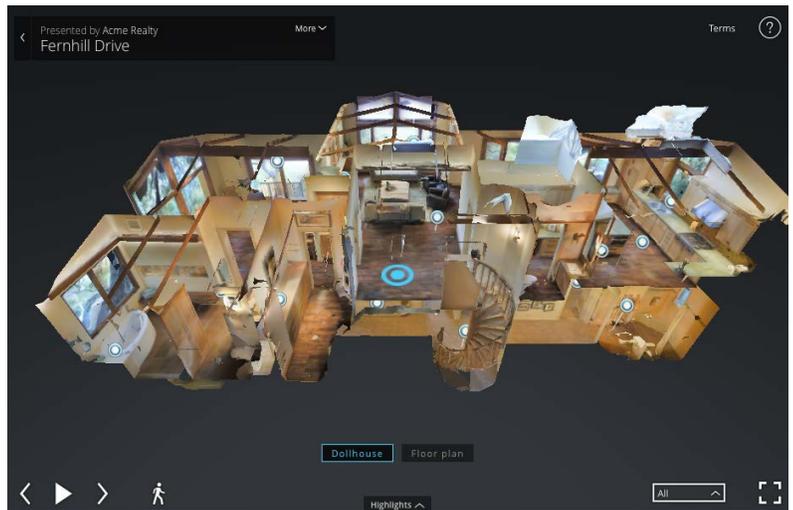
# Immersive 3D Tours

The newest generation of engaging property marketing content is true 3D. Some companies capture both 2D photography and 3D data about a property, automatically combining it to create a complete walkthrough experience that is similar to a 360° panoramic tour, with additional features like the ability to take measurements, annotate points in 3D space, download 2D photography, and manipulate a complete dollhouse view of a property.

These tours create a photorealistic experience of a property, while leveraging the 3D data to give viewers a sense of physical presence - the feeling of being in a space. Some even let you collect 2D photography for use in online galleries.

The price is comparable to other visual property marketing packages, dependent on property size and local market.

Agents may hire a local Matterport Service Partner who offers professional, quality, and complete 3D scanning services of properties for real estate agents.



Matterport Dollhouse view and immersive 3D tour, courtesy of Matterport.

## PROS

- 👍 Full immersive experiences created within 24 hours
- 👍 Easily shared via social channels for viral marketing
- 👍 Can also capture 2D photos, schematic floor plans, and dimensions

## CONS

- 👎 2D photos not print ready

## COST



**Outsourced:** TBD based on Matterport Service Partner offering, property size, and local market.

# Real Estate's Marketing Mix

2D photography is the price of entry for modern property marketing, but agents who want to create memorable listing presentations and stand out in their market need tactics that set them apart. Whether using polished drone video or immersive, engaging new experiences, Hollywood-grade marketing packages are key to really being competitive in your market and impressing a new generation of homebuyers.

Visual marketing is only one component of a complete property marketing program, which includes exposing your listings, sharing on social, and creating compelling stand-alone web pages for each property.

## ABOUT MATTERPORT'S SOLUTION

Matterport 3D Showcase is nothing like your typical "virtual tour" for real estate. It is a complete, immersive virtual experience that transports buyers to the property, right from their web and mobile device. With 3D Showcase, you'll wow sellers and win listings. Created from real 2D and 3D data about a property, Matterport 3D Showcase feels incredibly real, and is the only way to give online and remote buyers a true sense of being in a property, wherever they are.

Our solution is designed to be incredibly easy to use. It takes nearly no training to learn how to use our Pro 3D Camera, and all of the processing is automatic. You'll get a complete, immersive 3D virtual tour for your property within 24 hours. From there, you can add schematic floor plans, in-model annotations, create 2D photo galleries, and more to quickly, easily create a complete online experience for your listing.

### HIRE A MATTERPORT SERVICE PARTNER

Matterport's global network of Service Partners provide quick, professional scan services, so it's easy for you to get immersive 3D experiences for your property listings.

# Appendix:

## Statistical Information Sources

1. <http://www.realtor.org/reports/home-buyer-and-seller-generational-trends/>
2. <http://www.houselens.com/2015/09/09/5-myths-about-home-buyers-busted/>
3. <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/4-real-estate-trends-well-see-in-2016-2015-12-09>
4. <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/SocialMediaMarketingIndustryReport2015.pdf>
5. <https://www.inman.com/next/by-the-numbers-why-you-cant-afford-to-skip-video-marketing/>
6. <http://www.realtor.org/infographics/real-estate-in-the-digital-age>
7. <http://www.costargroup.com/costar-news/details/apartments.com-matterport-partner-to-provide-site-users-with-over-30-000-virtual-tours-of-rental-properties>
8. <https://www.redfin.com/blog/2014/08/introducing-redfin-3d-walkthrough.html>
9. <http://www.houselens.com/2015/09/09/5-myths-about-home-buyers-busted/>
10. [http://www.techsn.com/docs/video/whitepaper\\_realestate.pdf](http://www.techsn.com/docs/video/whitepaper_realestate.pdf)