

Your Quick Stop Shop for Real Estate Technology Tools

Because technology is changing so rapidly, it can be hard to find a quick reference to the tools available to REALTORS® today. To assist you in your review and use of social media tools, DERA has added a Social Networking page to our website that contains many useful links that you may want to check out. Visit us at www.DERAREaltors.com and click on the Social Networking page.

Here is your handy guide to what's hot and inexpensive in the world of technology.

Major Real Estate 2.0 Tools are:

- **Blogs:** Quickly becoming the most widely used symbol of Real Estate 2.0, blogs are online diaries or commentaries. Blogs can be on a free-standing site you create, a brokerage site, a real estate-oriented site that also includes listings, or a site designed to host real estate bloggers. Costs range from free for a basic blog to \$2,500 a year for creating more elaborate, custom creations.
- **Wikis:** These are compilations of information from a variety of contributors. Real estate pros are creating wikis for their local communities, asking visitors to their sites to comment on schools, shopping, and other topics of interest to buyers and sellers. Web sites such as Inman.com and Zillow.com are also creating real estate wikis, asking real estate professionals to contribute their community insights.
- **Mash-ups:** This term refers to combining elements from different Web companies on your own site. That could mean combining Google maps with local demographic information. The goal, as with wikis, is to give potential customers community information that will help them decide where they'd like to live.
- **Social networks:** These are Web communities people join — usually free of charge — through a simple registration process. Members can post profiles of themselves and invite other members to become their friends. MySpace and Facebook are the best known of these sites. Because they were created as places for young people to meet up, these sites still skew toward the tween to college-age crowd, though that's changing. And social networking is finding its way into the real estate realm. Activerain.com, which hosts real estate blogs, also has a social networking component that has more than 61,000 real estate professionals signed up.
- **Videos:** YouTube is the best-known video sharing site these days. Its policy forbids commercial use of the site, though real estate videos are popping up there. Individual real estate sites are also making greater use of video, while third parties such as HGTV are creating new sites with more housing-related video content.*

Social Networking

There is no denying that social networking has become an integral part of our society today.

The latest statistics show that Facebook, for example has had an immense growth spurt and not with just the younger age users.

- 26-34 year olds: one hundred percent growth (13.4 million)
- 45-54 year olds: around 400 percent growth (4.6 million)
- 55-65 y.o. males: near 425% (1 million), 55-65 y.o. females nearly 550% (1.7 million) **

Now that you've got it all down, you can move on to these specialized sites:

LinkedIn (linkedin.com): This site is geared to professionals seeking to expand their circle of contacts. Once you're connected to someone on LinkedIn, you can link with whom that person is connected to. Only make "connections" with people you know or you've just met, said panelist Rudy Bachraty of Trulia.com.

Facebook (facebook.com): Facebook is a place to for just about everyone—family, friends, past clients, and colleagues of all age groups. It's OK to say you're a real estate professional in your profile, but leave it at that. To connect with other real estate junkies, join a specialized real estate group, but "don't force it," says Bachraty.

Twitter (twitter.com): Twitter is often called "micro-blogging." You can send short (140 character) messages to people who choose to "follow" you. You can "tweet" from your PDA or the Web.

MySpace ([MySpace.com](http://myspace.com))

MySpace is an online community that lets you meet business people and co-workers interested in networking.

Zolve (zolve.net)

Zolve is a referral network that enables real estate agents a platform to demonstrate their market and neighborhood expertise by sharing the information that home buyers, sellers, and owners are looking for on the internet.

Active Rain (activerain.com)

[ActiveRain](http://activerain.com) is a national site that allows real estate professionals to put up a blog without charge. ActiveRain was conceived as a way for real estate pros to connect with consumers, but it quickly became a place for real estate pros to talk and refer business to each other. (information from activerain.com website)

RealtyTimes.com,

This site already offers local market information supplied by real estate pros in its Realty Times Market Conditions feature.

Localism.com,

Localism.com is a new site that provides local market information across the country. Real estate professionals contribute information about their specific markets.

To find a directory of real estate blogs and blog sites of industries affiliated with and serving the real estate industry go to:

http://www.real-estate-blogs.com/blogs/SUB/Colorado-Real-Estate-Blogs_83_1.html

If you have questions on real estate terminology exclusively, you can go to:

<http://www.RealEstateWiki.com>

In any event and at the very least, REALTORS® should be looking towards technology to cut their operating expenses and to stay competitive, especially in a tough market.

Be sure to check out our links page on the DERA website at: **derarealtors.com**

*2.0 Classifications Reprinted from REALTOR® Online Magazine by John N. Frank

** Statistics reprinted with permission from iStrategyLabs by Peter Corbett