

MINI CAMCORDERS

You'll FLIP For This

Small and lightweight, a mini camcorder can be extremely powerful for preparing listing videos and quick uploads to the Internet.

When Mark Palace, broker of Palace Properties International in Indian Harbour Beach, started working with a European customer, he immediately sent the customer to his Website and YouTube channel [youtube.com/palaceproperties] to view some videos of listed properties. “I had been working with him a couple months when he saw a video I took of a new listing. He loved it and bought it then and there—without ever seeing it in person,” says Palace. “Because my video was so complete, he felt like he had walked through the property without ever stepping foot inside.”

But, Palace wasn't lugging some large video camera around. He was using the incredibly small FLIP video camcorder, a new wave of equipment that fits in the palm of your hand, shoots high-definition video with sound and comes with a built-in USB port so you can upload your video to your computer in no time flat.

While Palace is extremely tech savvy, he says the FLIP camcorder is very easy to use for even the most novice of users. Palace has the process down to a science. He makes the video, loads it on his computer, makes a few tweaks (like adding music and credits or editing the video) and then loads it to Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and his own

Website. “I spend about 15 to 30 minutes on the more-time-intensive videos, like those I'm posting for expensive listings or some that need specific marketing,” he says. “But, it can take as little as 10 minutes from start to finish if you just load the video and then get it to the Internet through the FLIP software.”

Palace cautions that real estate professionals who aren't tech savvy may find themselves spending more time with the process, however.

Here's how Palace uses the mini camcorder:

1. Investment savvy

Palace personally invests in real estate and spends entire days viewing multiple properties to determine where to put his money. “I'll take videos of properties that look interesting so when I get home, I can study the property, do a budget analysis and determine whether or not I want to make an offer.”

2. Listing tool

Each listing Palace takes gets a personal video tour posted on his YouTube channel, his personal Web site and *Realtor.com*. “I walk through the property and offer commentary about the highlights [such as granite countertops, spacious family rooms or wood floors]. Palace also uses a service that automatically posts his videos to all his social networking sites.

3. Education of buyers

“We do a lot of international brokerage, and one of my goals is to educate people



Palace finds his mini camcorder to be versatile and a great tool in marketing his listings, analyzing possible investment properties and showing consumers how Realtors® advocate on their behalf.

Palace's Tools

Desktop: HP Pavilion a1423w

Cameras: FLIP MinoHD

Laptops: HP Pavilion Entertainment PC

Printer: Brother MFC 420CN

Software: Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Word, Skype



from around the world as to what our area is all about. I use the FLIP (and videos posted to YouTube) to show them the beautiful beaches, sunsets, space shuttle launches and more," he says. "From that, people will click through [from his YouTube channel] to my real estate Web site. Before you know it, someone who decided to rent for the winter is coming to me wanting to buy."

4. Showing of local flavor

For out-of-state or international buyers, getting to know the area is as important as finding the right home. Palace videos local hotspots, strip malls and neighborhoods. "If I have several listings in one subdivision, I'll walk the subdivision with my mini camcorder to show the common areas, club house and streets."

5. Consumer advocacy

Palace is a 2009 participant in the Florida Association of REALTORS® Leadership Academy and takes his role as a Realtor and consumer advocate very seriously. "Part of my goal is to show people that Realtors are professionals who fight for the best possible experience for buyers and sellers," he says. So, Palace will attend political events

in Tallahassee and video the meetings to show his role as a home ownership advocate. "This also keeps people abreast of the possible laws that will protect them and the real estate transaction."

While Palace can't imagine a life without his FLIP, "it's small and discreet so it fits in my pocket," he does note that there is a learning curve required to use it successfully. In addition, the microphone is not powerful enough to pick up voices from across the room, so he can't film someone speaking to the camera. "You can't take it to a continuing education class and film the speaker. You'd get the video but you wouldn't be able to get good sound quality."

Overall, though, Palace says that he's definitely benefited from increased traffic and better search engine placement [from the tags he puts on each video he uploads to social networking sites and listing portals] that his use of the FLIP has brought. "It's an appealing way to really show potential buyers what the listing looks like." ®

This column, designed to offer examples of the way salespeople and brokers are using technology, won the Silver Award in the 2008 Best Column category from the Florida Magazine Association. Opinions expressed here don't reflect an endorsement of the views by *Florida Realtor®* magazine or the Florida Association of REALTORS.

Mini Camcorders

FLIP MinoHD F460 Camcorder, Pure Digital Technologies, \$200, theflip.com

Vado Pocket Video Cam HD Camcorder, Creative Technology, \$100, us.creative.com



sell it

And we'll make sure
all the little details
are covered.

readvisors.com
Free E&O Insurance Quotes
800.753.3557

REO • ADVISORS

a NORMAN SPENCER company

**STATED INCOME.
VERIFIED ASSETS.**

**FOREIGN
NATIONAL
LOANS**

- ◆ 70% LTV loans
- ◆ 5.75% to 6.75% interest rate
- ◆ 30 year fixed
- ◆ No prepayment penalty
- ◆ Single family homes and condominiums qualified
- ◆ No foreign national credit report required
- ◆ Close in 10 to 30 days

1st Capital Group

(877) 357-3838
info@1st-capitalgroup.com
www.1st-capitalgroup.com