

Terry LeClair, Senior Vice President for First Team Real Estate/Christie's International in Irvine, Calif., was using a video company that just wasn't meeting the brokerage's needs. "I've been in the real estate industry for 22 years and built a few tech tools, so I knew the importance of a flexible, easy video program. We weren't getting that with our vendor. They were slow to process video and didn't allow for live video and other innovative technologies," he said.

That's when LeClair connected with iTOURMedia, a full-service video technology solution to assist real estate professionals and brokers with digital media strategies. "The founders, Mo Moses and Steve Marques were innovators in the virtual tour space, and they had come together from two different Virtual Tour companies to create a unique Video and Augmented Realty experience in Real Estate, so we jumped in right away. Both Mo and Steve have an impeccable reputation in the industry," says LeClair.

"Video content is key to so much of the search engines' ranking and the foundation of what is driving unique leads from Social Media, we as an organization could not ignore this path and needed to embrace this technology," he says. "We know that our agents hire and retain videographers and photographers—we have them on staff along with a green screen studio. We also know that our brokerage is encouraging agents to use more video (local, community, and neighborhood content) to grow search engine optimization Repet (SEO) and consumer awareness of what First Team/Christie's has to offer," says LeClair, who notes it's not all about the listing. "People buy from people—experts they can trust. We see video getting that story across and believe strongly that this will be the forum that will allow that to happen."

LeClair went on to say that although the features of the product are robust, automation is key! It takes time for agent adoption, and certainly launching in phases is a key strategy to any advanced technology deployed to the field. Recently, LeClair noted their company launched Phase One of the automated listing videos in multiple formats including You Tube. Here's how LeClair is using the product today:

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## **FLEXIBLE VIDEOS FOR ALL EXPERIENCE LEVELS**

The product pulls photos of the property off the MLS and enters them into a virtual tour/video format. “Everything is done for them. Agents don’t have time to create video tours,” he says. Once the tour is completed, it’s automatically sent to Facebook. “There is also an auto-syndicate feature so the tour video can be sent to Zillow, Trulia, Realtor.com and other portals. LeClair says that his brokerage hasn’t turned on this feature just yet, although they do send the listing videos to the portals manually. “We didn’t want to do that until the agents understood the product. When that happens, it will give us more exposure,” he says.

The brokerage does a video tour for each of the company’s listings. “We also have a YouTube video made as well, and they are distributed to our agents as well as a company push to Realtor.com and other sites,” he said.

## **BETTER SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION**

Because videos are “parsed by the property address, it gives us additional SEO on the address,” says LeClair. “With IDX, if someone types in a street address, that property/listing can show up in the search but the link goes to a competitor’s website. This gives us the higher search ranking. The way it’s done, Google doesn’t see it as an IDX listing, so the first mention of the property address links directly to us—the listing brokerage. It’s all organic,” he says.

## **INSTANT UPDATES**

One huge benefit, says LeClair, is that the video can be updated easily. Then, that updated video will automatically upload to YouTube. “For example, if I have a listing and I put low-resolution photos in the MLS, my video will pull those lower-quality photos. If the next day, I upload the higher-quality photos into the MLS, immediately the system will recognize that, grab the better photos, update the tour and re-upload it to YouTube automatically,” says LeClair, who notes that his old video service updated videos only once a week, but that now their new platform updates them once a day.”

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## APP ACCESS AND EDITING

Editing video tours is easy and quick with the iTOURMedia app, according to LeClair. “We love that you can add cameos to the video,” he said. By opening the app and choosing a listing tour, you can see all the photos in your listing tour as thumbnails. “Using your phone, you can add video (a cameo) introducing yourself or commenting on a specific detail of the house,” he says. It’s as easy as taking a video with your phone through the app. It will save as a thumbnail, and you can drag and drop it to where you want it within the tour. “You hit ‘save and submit,’ and it automatically uploads the updated video to YouTube,” he says. “The video will automatically play music, but if you add cameos with sound, the music will automatically stop and restart to allow users to hear the cameo,” he says. Want to do a voiceover instead? It’s easy, says LeClair. “I can watch the video on my phone and record my voice talking about the picture that’s showing on my screen. It syncs perfectly.”

## MORE THAN LISTING VIDEOS

While the product specializes in video listing tours, it’s flexible enough to be used for local community videos, agent cameos, drone footage and more. LeClair notes that you can go to a local business, interview the owner, create a video and link it to a blog. “The local business loves it and can use it for promotional marketing as well. It gives you a hyperlocal community feel.”

## THE NEXT PHASE: socialboost powered by iTOURmedia

In LeClair’s next phase of the rollout, he plans to launch the Social Boost product to capture leads and make digital marketing easy. “With Social Boost, agents can post their videos on their social pages. They have options to boost on demand to increase their sphere with Facebook. It’s a component we do manually today. But it’s all automated with Social Boost.” Social Boost autoconnects to the agent’s or company’s Facebook page, creates the demographics, posts and tags the video, and reaches a targeted audience.

The brokerage also plans to have weekly training sessions for agents so they can maximize the product’s potential. “We plan to train at three levels—modest, moderate and advanced—so all levels of agents can benefit.”

Overall, LeClair and Real Estate/Christies are excited about the product’s potential. Also, he says, “iTOUR’s customer service is really powerful. They created video tutorials and easy FAQs to keep our agents doing what they do best—selling real estate, not making videos. Plus, video is key to growth for the younger generation. We haven’t even scratched the surface of what the iTOUR platform can do for us. But we have a great partnership with them, and I know they’ll do what they can to help get us to that competitive level,” says LeClair.

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