

The Real State of Real Estate, By Carol Wolfe

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## Realtors Turn to Mobile Apps, QR Codes to Market Home Listings

An innovative new movement in real estate marketing is the use of QR codes.



As most home buyers and home sellers know, technology plays a major role in marketing homes these days.

Social networking, the Internet, smartphones, and other gizmos and gadgets, are all staples of the real estate trade. And more than 80 percent of home buyers begin their property searches online.

One of the latest marketing technology trends making its way into the business is something known as QR codes. The bar codes kind of look like figures out of the 1980s video game "Space Invaders."

Consumers can download a mobile phone application that allows them to take a picture of the QR code. After taking the picture, the mobile phone automatically downloads a Web site.

In the case of Rodeo Realty, the company I work with, we will be placing QR codes on newspaper advertisements, For Sale signs and elsewhere. The codes take prospective home buyers directly to our property listings.

If the consumer plugs in their geographic coordinates, the application will also allow them to view other listings within a 10 mile radius from where they're standing.

Pretty cool stuff! I'm a firm believer in leveraging technology to the advantage of buyers and sellers. And I think these QR codes will give people important information quickly.

Retailers and a variety of other companies also see the code's potential.

Scanning grew 1,200 percent from July to December 2010, according to the mobile payment and marketing company Mobio Identity Systems.

And the good news for real estate agents is scanning codes to receive information on a product or service makes up for 87 percent of usage. Payment scans only make up for 5 percent, according to Mobio.

The majority of QR scanning is coming from individuals in the 35-44 years of age bracket. And steady adoption is being seen amongst all age brackets between 18 and 54 years of age.

So if you start seeing more of these funny bar codes on For Sale signs and advertisements, don't be confused. Get the mobile phone application and start using the technology to speed up your home buying and selling process.