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## Stand out among the crowd: Produce a podcast

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Several of my columns have covered diverse marketing tactics to expand brand awareness and increase web site SEO (search engine optimization). An effective and somewhat new solution for rounding out a real estate marketing strategy is the podcast - which is defined by Realtor.org as "an audio or video file that users can subscribe to through an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed." Done well and distributed regularly, podcasts can significantly boost web traffic and qualified leads. Introduced only in 2004, podcasts have exploded in popularity and now feature everything from celebrity interviews, the arts, and cooking shows, to news, career advice, and comedy. The appeal of the podcast is its convenience for the user - podcasts can be downloaded to a computer, laptop, iPod, or MP3 player and listened to at any time.

Real estate professionals are especially poised to benefit from the production and distribution of podcasts. With the market in constant flux, this medium provides an opportunity for agents and brokers to highlight their creativity, expertise, and industry connections. Real estate podcasts can feature upcoming events/open houses and even interviews you conduct with mortgage lenders, home inspectors, renovation specialists, and others that would lend valuable advice to buyers and sellers. They can also integrate video to showcase new listings and informative local attraction tours. Being innovative is the key to building a solid podcast following; identify what topics and formats benefit your listeners most and be creative.

Your podcast should be featured on your web site, shared via social media sites, and listed in your email signature footer. In addition, a variety of free podcast directories exist online for users to easily find and subscribe to your podcast. Be sure to also ask businesses you regularly work with (and refer your clients to) to include a link to your podcast on their web sites.

There are many easy and affordable software programs and microphone headsets for producing a podcast from a personal computer. For more details, or for assistance with getting started, contact an integrated marketing firm.

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