

Tech Trends in 2017

Innovative tech, sites, and apps poised to change the way you work

In the world of technology, engineers often talk about Moore's Law, which speaks to the rate at which progress accelerates. In the simplest of terms, tech is twice as good this year as it was last year. You can see it everywhere, from better phones and smarter TVs to the rise of Kickstarter, Uber, and Snapchat. Likewise, real estate benefits from tech innovation as well. What kind of apps and services can you look to for improving your business in the coming year? We've rounded up five of the most interesting innovations.



Rooomy

www.rooomy.com

» It's no surprise that staged properties tend to result in higher conversion rates and increased commissions. Indeed, at least one survey indicates that staging can increase the value of a sale by more than four percent.

Staging is costly, though, which has led one company to offer an exciting innovation: virtual staging. Rooomy is an app that allows REALTORS® to display a property with any style and set of furniture to best represent the listing.

Rooomy doesn't require costly or complicated graphics work on the part of the listing agent. REALTORS® simply upload ordinary photos of the property to

Rooomy, where they're converted to a 3D model. The Rooomy team digitally erases existing furniture and decorations from the scene, and virtually adds furnishings in whatever style is desired. The listing is then published on the free Rooomy app as well as the Rooomy website. A plugin is also available which you can use to display the 3D staged environment on your own site. It takes about 48 hours for the Rooomy team to transform a room, at a cost of about \$100 per room.

Once the property is published, potential buyers can further customize it; furniture can be dragged and dropped into the room almost like a game of The Sims, plus they can "tour" the room in 3D by spinning, zooming, and panning through the space.

Virtual Reality

<http://bit.ly/virtualrealityvimeo>

» Virtual staging is great, but it's still essentially just a two-dimensional experience that clients are seeing on a small screen. For a totally immersive 3D experience—and for a peek at what is almost certainly the future of real estate sales—try some virtual reality (VR) on for size.

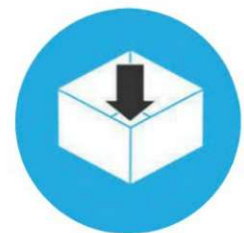
Neoscape is a marketing agency that creates virtual reality content to augment other marketing material. The effect can be stunning. Depending on the campaign, the virtual experiences can be viewed on



inexpensive VR headsets such as Google Cardboard and Samsung Gear VR, as well as more sophisticated platforms like Oculus Rift.

Want to get a taste of what VR showings have to offer? Neoscape created an app (<http://bit.ly/Neoscape>) for Dallas-based Gaedeke Group to promote One Legacy West.

Neoscape's VR solution is clearly a high-end marketing offering, but the seeds of VR are being sown at every level. Software developer Valve, for example, has released a free program called Destinations—a program that makes it relatively easy to combine photographs into an immersive 3D environment that can be toured using an HTC Vive VR headset.



MoveIn.Space

movein.space

» Innovations like 3D and VR may be a great peek into the future, but tech is also solving problems as old as real estate itself. In the world of property management, for example, how does the landlord or tenant prove that "it was like that at

move-in”? There’s the move-in report, of course, but it’s fraught with problems. It’s on paper, for starters. And it often lacks specificity and visual evidence like detailed photos. Here’s a problem begging for some sort of high-tech solution.

MoveIn.Space is an online move-in report. It’s free and works in any browser—on both the desktop and the mobile. It can be started by the landlord or tenant, and allows users to enter detailed information about the property, including photos and information about the condition of appliances. The form can be configured to send a reminder to update the document when the lease is up. The completed report is shared, so both landlord and tenant have access at all times.

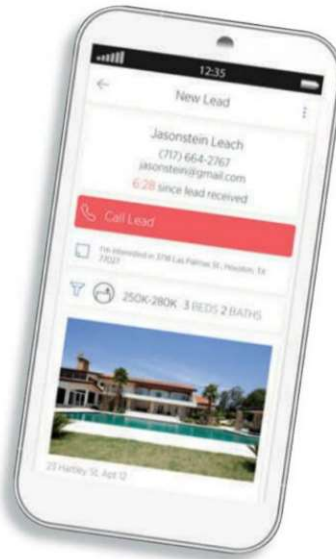
The site has just launched, and while it’s promised to always remain free, it’s possible that premium subscription features could be coming in the future.

Skyler360

skyler360.com

»» Perhaps you’re not quite ready to join a virtual brokerage. That’s okay, but you might still be intrigued by tools designed to help automate one of the most challenging parts of the sales process—timely lead response. Skyler360 is an artificial intelligence that ensures you don’t miss leads, and in fact takes action autonomously on your behalf. After all, that’s often the most fragile moment in the customer experience—when a lead slips away because you didn’t engage quickly enough.

Skyler360 doesn’t just send a canned response. Working from a sort of customizable script (configured via the web), the software responds to phone calls, text, and social media, interacting with leads via text message. The software can make sense of what the potential client is looking for and craft replies that move the conversation forward with relevant questions, links to video and properties, and handing off leads to you when appropriate. To be clear, Skyler360 is smart enough to fake being human, and leads probably won’t realize they’re interacting with a bot. Skyler360 is available in several tiers of service starting at about \$100 per month.



Real

joinreal.com

»» Increasingly, the office itself is going virtual. Consider Real, for example—a new sort of brokerage that the company describes as “completely technology powered.” In essence, at Real, your office is an app. As an agent, you sign on with Real and then interact with both clients and the “brokerage”

through software on your phone.

Tamir Poleg, Real’s founder and CEO, said that Real is a natural evolution for the agent/broker relationship: “The Internet has changed many technologies but it hasn’t impacted real estate in the same way. The model in which agents work for brokers used to make a lot of sense—brokers would advertise, provide office space, and help with admin. That model has eroded.” Real is currently operating in 14 states, and should be licensed in California by the time you read this.

Working with Real means using an app to get leads and communicate with clients from your phone. Real offers an 85/15 split on sales, and claims that there are no hidden fees. The business offers E&O insurance, personalized branding, and a support hotline. The comparison is obvious: Real is the Uber of real estate, and you should expect to see more of this in the next year or two. ♦

Dave Johnson is the editor-in-chief of Techwalla.com.

An advertisement for Help-U-Sell Real Estate. The top half features a photograph of a family (a woman, a man, and a child) looking at a document with a real estate agent. The background shows a house. The text reads: 'On the Cutting Edge for 40 Years!', 'The nation's premier set-fee real estate company', 'Our Brokers: > Charge less > Earn more > Have happy clients', 'Contact us at 941-951-7707', 'Ask about our special franchise financing offer!', and the 'Help-U-Sell REAL ESTATE' logo. The website 'www.HelpUSellFranchise.com' is at the bottom.

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