

# How Can the World Wide Web Help You in the Overseas Property Market?

By Dr. Anthony 'Skip' Basiel

Since the birth of the World Wide Web over 15 years ago there has been a huge shift in the way people use the internet. We are moving from the Web as the world's greatest repository of information to an interactive, engaging multimedia space for professional networking. So, how can this help you in the overseas property market? In this article we will explore some of the strategies, online tools and 'tricks of the eMarketing trade' that can:

- 🚦 Get you noticed on the Web
- 🚦 Get clients coming back for more
- 🚦 Exchange information and ideas
- 🚦 Build an online community to expand your professional social network

In the early days 'content was king' – or 'sticky content' was even better. This meant that you had something on your website that would draw the visitors back time and again. It was believed that the 'more hits the better'. To get that return audience you needed to have a dynamic, ever changing 'story' to tell your reader. This meant that you may have done a few things that would keep their interest:

- 🚦 **Use SEO (search engine optimisation) techniques** to get good search results. Some examples of this can be to add web links to other websites and they link to yours, get Google Add Words, put meta-tag descriptions in the HTML code, etc.
- 🚦 **Update the text regularly.** (There is nothing worse than a website that has at the bottom of the page: 'Last updated: several years ago.'). It feels like a dusty old book shelf that no one has disturbed in years.
- 🚦 **New media news letters** can keep your clients and visitors up to speed on changes in the business. Adobe PDF files can now embed text, graphics, animations and more.

Another growing change is in the sales approach that new Web technologies can provide. More people are shifting from a top-down sales message to a bottom-up style. Rather than getting the word about your product or service from a sales representative you get your satisfied customers to promote you. This 'peer-to-peer' marketing design is easily seen in testimonials or case studies from successful experiences of the client.

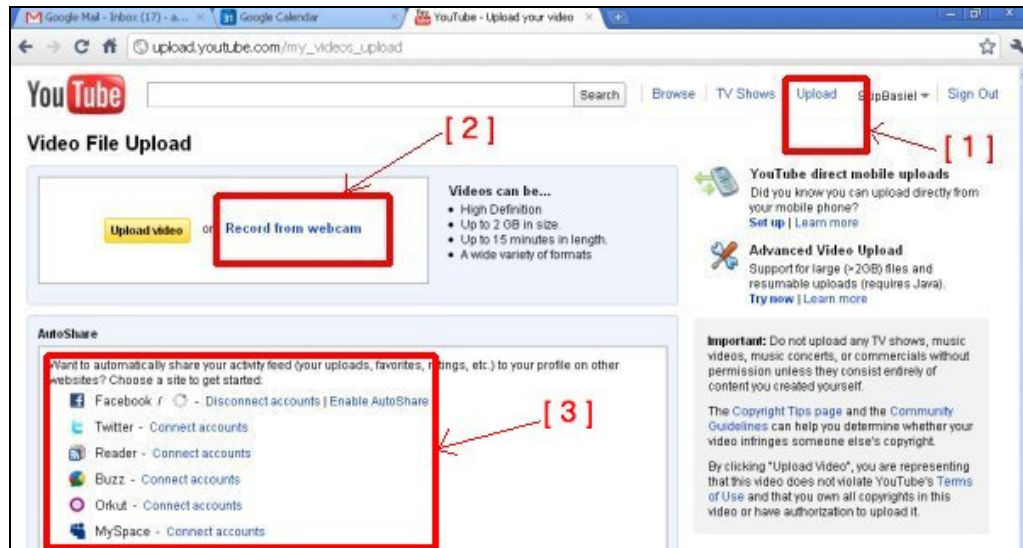
## Testimonials and video case studies

New media technologies now make it easy to capture and share the stories of your satisfied customers. With a mobile phone you can quickly get a photo to personalise the contribution. Digital audio can be recorded and linked to an image so the visitor can hear satisfied customers' experiences in their own words.

Web video has never been easier. All you need is an inexpensive web cam and a YouTube account. Here is how it works:

Go to <http://www.youtube.com/> and create an account

- 1) In the top right menu click 'Upload'
- 2) Click 'Record from webcam' in the middle-left of the page.  
(In the figure below number [3] gives you the ability to promote your Web video through social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter. )



- 3) Now you will be able to see yourself on the screen.  
Note: You may need to click 'Allow' to use the Flash Player.
- 4) Next click the 'Ready to Record' button in the middle of the video.
- 5) When finished click the 'Red Square' on the bottom left of the video.
- 6) All done? You have 3 options: Preview, Publish or Re-record.
- 7) If you are satisfied click the 'Publish' button to make your video open to the public to view your video.
- 8) In the new screen you have many options to give your video a profile. When you are finished just click the 'Save Changes' button on the top left of the screen.
- 9) Click 'View on video page' to see the final version. You can copy the web address in the Web browser to add the link to an email or Web page. Alternatively, you can click the 'Embed' button below the video to get the code to insert the video into your website.

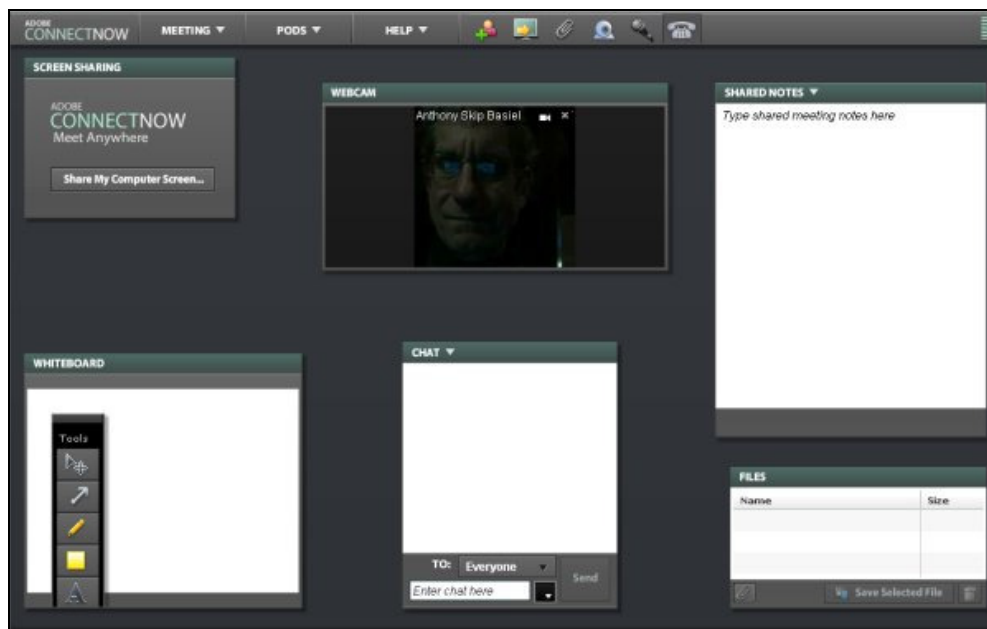
It is great to get the audience involved too. You can allow viewers to comment and rate the video. This can be a great way to introduce yourself or your company to possible clients around the neighbourhood or across the country, even the other side of the world in a personalised media format.

### **Exchange ideas and info**

There are many websites now that can help you promote your business through the exchange of ideas, information, common interests, etc. Blogs and Wikis help get the interactivity you may need to really get clients to engage with you and your business. Have a look at sites such as [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com) and [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) .

If you are looking to have a one-to-one web video conference there are many choices from Google, Skype and Adobe (<http://acrobat.com>) for free. This is a great way to see your clients and talk with them without the cost of a phone call. Some other features allow you to:

- ✚ share your computer screen
- ✚ use real-time text chat
- ✚ use a white board drawing tool
- ✚ share files



### **Develop communities and professional social networks**

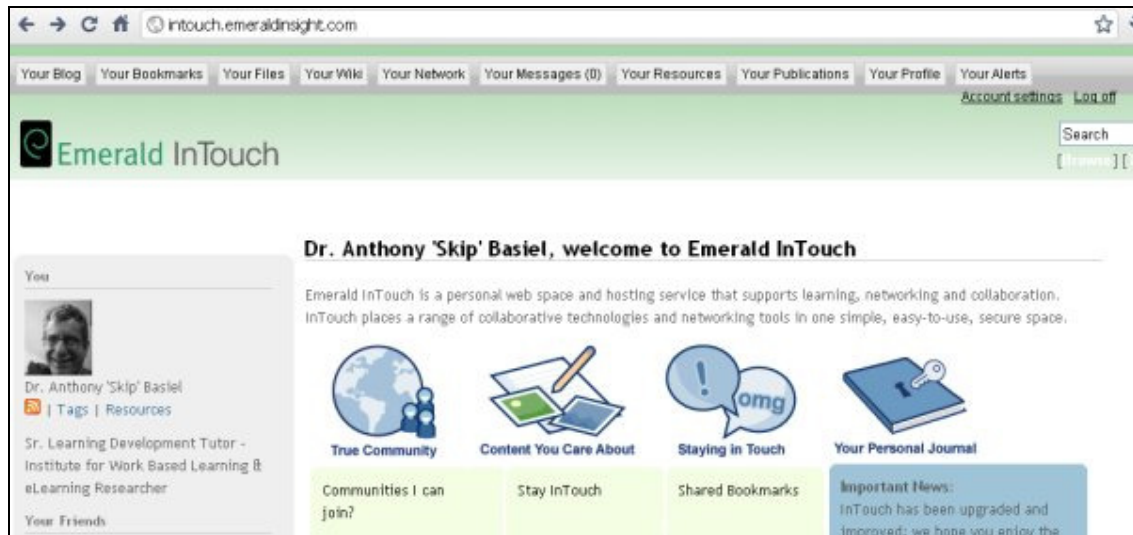
One of the growing trends over the past few years is getting people together with like interests online. These virtual communities have flourished into professional social networks where online groups can help each others business. One good example of this is [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) .

Another example of an open source (free software licence) online community is Emerald InTouch at: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/products/intouch/index.htm>

You can get a free account at: <http://intouch.emeraldinsight.com/>

This online community boasts some impressive features such as:

- Wikis, Blogs, RSS feeds
- Community groups with control over the membership
- Personal professional profiles using 'tags' which help you search for community members
- User 'tag clouds' ( a great way to see what topics of interest are in the community)



### Before you go

So, now you have had a taste of what the Web can do for you and your company. Don't be shy. Get your website design to go beyond static text and graphics. Join us in the interactive, engaging and collaborative virtual world that the Web has to offer. Let's see your business get connected.

### About the Author

Dr. Anthony 'Skip' Basiel is an academic and eLearning consultant at the Institute for Work Based Learning at Middlesex University, London – UK. See [www.mdx.ac.uk](http://www.mdx.ac.uk) . He is also a member of the Adobe International Education Leaders Programme.

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