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3 cool mobile apps for real estate agents

Tools from Real Estate Connect SF

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[Tablet computing](#) image via Shutterstock.

Mobile technologies are completely transforming how consumers experience the real estate transaction. As always, Real Estate Connect highlighted a number of new apps that can help you organize your real estate business as well as the other areas in your life as well.

Are you someone who suffers from "shiny app syndrome"? Even though you have plenty of apps on your mobile devices, you're always on the hunt for the next new app that will entertain or amuse, or help you grow your business. On the other hand, if you haven't jumped on the app bandwagon, don't wait -- and here's why.

Rather than sitting at their computers to search properties online, today's consumers are increasingly turning to their mobile devices to view real estate-related searches. IDX searches are a great case in point.

There are 48 million IDX page views per week. Five million page views originate from the Safari mobile browser (1.2 million from iPhones and 3.8 million from iPads.) Contrast this with only 42,000 page views from the BlackBerry. As a result, the first step in creating your personal mobile strategy is to make sure that your website is [optimized for mobile](#).

Ban.jo -- "Activate your social powers!"

[Ban.jo](#) was one of the most mentioned apps at this year's Real Estate Connect. Ban.jo's cutting-edge location-based mobile technology allows friends to connect across the most popular social networks, including Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare and Instagram, using their mobile devices. You can use Ban.jo's "powerful friend alert technology to know when friends are nearby." Ban.jo can also be used to see real-time posts related to geospatial events such as ball games or concerts in real time.

Ban.jo has numerous applications for the real estate industry. For example, if you have just taken a new listing and are holding it open, you could check Ban.jo to see if any of your current buyers or past clients are nearby. If so, send them a text message inviting them to join you for some refreshments and to preview your open house.

Open Home Pro

If you own an iPad and hold open houses, [Open Home Pro](#) is the one must-have app you will need to convert open-house visitors into clients. Obtaining valid contact information from open-house visitors and then contacting them later has always been challenging. While you can ask a visitor to sign the guest register, many people leave fake contact information. Even when open-house visitors provide valid contact information, only 2 percent of the agents ever follow up on those leads. Open Home Pro changes this whole dynamic.

When a visitor walks into your open house, ask the visitor to sign in by handing him your iPad. While some people may still give you phony names, the agents who use this app report that they almost always obtain accurate contact information.

Once you have the person's email, the system automatically sends a "thank you" email for stopping by the open house as well as a map and a link to the online listing information. The system allows you to post up to five pictures. It also indexes the listing on Google.

Where Open Home Pro really shines, however, is with price reductions. Almost no one contracts past open-house visitors to let them know there has been a price reduction. In contrast, Open Home Pro also will notify everyone who has seen the home when there is a price reduction. Best of all, there is a 67 percent open rate on price reduction emails from Open Home Pro -- definitely worth the \$3.99 for the app!

HomeSnap app

This nifty little app is great when a client asks you how much an unlisted house is worth, especially if you can't see the address from the street. To determine the property value, merely open [HomeSnap](#) and snap a picture of the property. Here's how it works:

"Using a combination of mobile phone sensors to determine location and orientation as well as MLS and public records data, HomeSnap can tell you everything about a home, including how many square feet it has, number of bedrooms/bathrooms, estimated price, and more. And it can do so even if the house is not on the market."

HomeSnap can be particularly useful on last-minute listing appointments. For example, a neighbor who is attending your open house wants to know how much her house is worth. To answer her question, walk outside, take a picture of her house, and the site will generate not only a price, but a wealth of other public record information as well.

Managing your to-do list

In addition to these real estate apps, many agents struggle with managing their time. Three apps than can help you with that are the [Wunderlist](#) app, the [Clear](#) app and the [Weave](#) app.

The best real estate apps either solve a problem or streamline a system, which ultimately makes it easier for you to list and sell real estate.

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