



Media Optimization and Real Estate

How to accelerate my Real Estate photographs and videos for better conversion?

Introduction

The world today is increasingly digital, and finding a home is no exception.

The Real Estate industry is in the constant winds of change, starting from the consumer market, ways of promotion and prices that are still on the way up.

In 2022, touring future homes in bed has become a reality for many prospective home buyers. Even though physical sales are still present, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) found that the first step of property search among all generations of home buyers starts online. Buyers looked at various properties, compared and contrasted them and went on virtual tours, even before contacting a Real Estate agent or agency.

Online property sales are increasing rapidly by the second. First-time Millennial buyers now have the **tech-smarts and tools** to do part, or if not all of their purchase online, with **63% of buyers making an offer on a home even before seeing it in person.**



37%

of sold homes in 2021 were bought by millennials, making up the largest share of home buyers.



97%

of home buyers used the internet to search for homes.

Today, **over 90% of Real Estate companies have websites.** Online conversions and website traffic directly correlate to the on-site visual content and user experience. Knowing how to **differentiate yourself from others** in this industry can **make or break your business.**

According to Real Estate statistics from theclose.com, **high-quality photographs and videos** of property listings are no longer an option to show off your products. In many markets, they are **now the norm** with **9 in 10 buyers highlighting that photographs were the most important feature.** Furthermore, aerial photography and videography by drones are fast becoming industry standards as properties shot by drones **sold 68% faster.**

Yet having videos and images on your website can significantly slow down your websites loading time, but we don't want that, do we? Instead of opposing speed and beauty, what if it was POSSIBLE to have BOTH?

This white paper explores current media optimization trends facing the Real Estate industry, with a desire to speed up page loading time through image and video optimization, while keeping branding and design at 100%.

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1. What is trending in the Real Estate content industry?

In life as on the web, you only get one shot to make a Good First Impression. The first impression you make on the newcomer can turn them into a lifelong customers or make them leave your page immediately.

As much as there are plenty of interested buyers, there are also countless agents and agencies that can meet their property purchase needs. To catch your buyer's attention as a Real Estate agent or marketer, you simply must be able to deliver high-quality, attention-grabbing content.

Below are 4 trends we have observed in the fast-growing Real Estate content industry:

1. Professional Photography

Nearly 90% of buyers think that photographs are the most important feature on a Real Estate website. Research has shown that listings with professional photographs receive **60% more attention** online than amateur ones. The use of drones for aerial photography also help **drive sales faster by 68%**.



2. Virtual Tours, 360° views

Progress in digital photography and virtual imaging has made virtual tours possible. Real Estate websites offering virtual tours **increase visitor retention by 5 to 10 times**. Customers can now virtually experience a potential home from anywhere around the world.

360° views, sometimes coupled with audio stimulus, provide close-to-reality visualizations and a trustworthy perspective of how the space looks. These images add an interactive layer to your website and improve engagement.

Websites with 360° images and virtual tours increase Real Estate leads by **more than 64%** and have shown significant impact on Google search results.



3. Videos

Video marketing resources helps real estate professionals increase visibility and reach a wider audience.

Through videos, buyers can make an emotional connection with the property and that emotional trigger is closing the whole process here. All you need is a visual that can start it.

Videos make customers believe they have all the **necessary information** to make the right purchase.

“Go for the feeling. Make your prospect feel like home as soon as they lay their eyes on your property”



4. Mobile-Responsive Websites and Images

Websites that aren't mobile-friendly often fail to provide a pleasant client experience. With increasing mobile internet usage, mobile visitors accounted for **51% of all internet traffic**, and responsive website designs optimized for various device sizes are essential!

Websites that are inadequately optimized have **poor load times**. No one likes to wait, and this can contribute to site abandonment. Even with aesthetically pleasing images, videos, and 360° experiences, all these go to nought if people don't see them!



The Future is VISUAL!

2. Speed as a factor for Real Estate business growth

SERP Rankings

In 2020, Google announced the **Core Web Vitals** update where page speed would become an even more important ranking factor in both desktop and mobile searches.

Websites that show up on the first page of Google search results typically have an average loading time of less than 2.3 seconds and claim up to 95% of all click-through traffic.

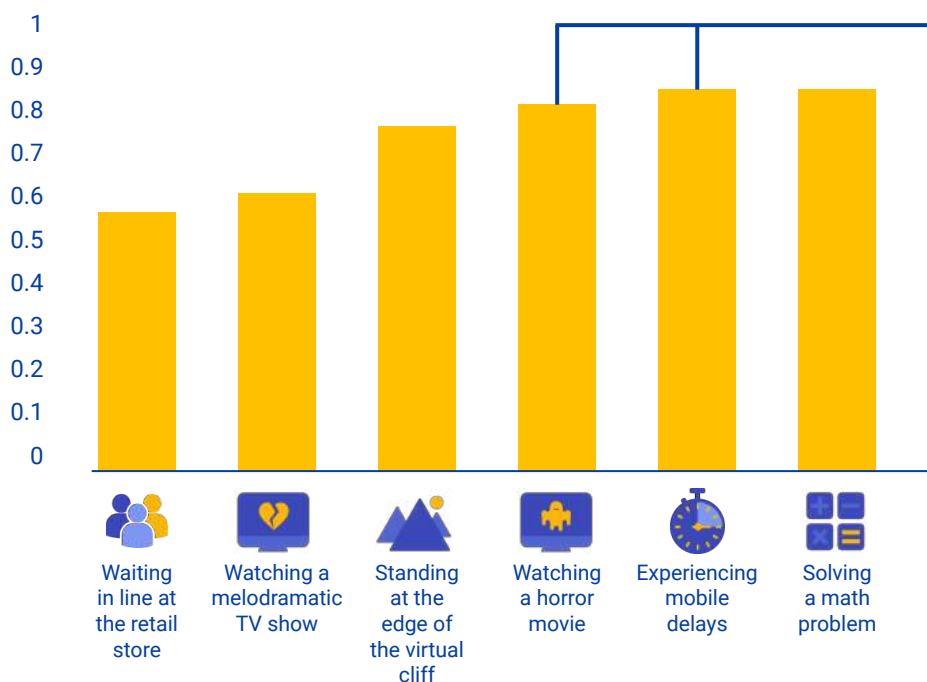
Even within the top ten results, there is a direct correlation between **page speed** and **search ranking**. In turn, pages with higher click-through rates are identified as valuable and are pushed further towards the top, thus reinforcing the importance of optimization.

Facts:

- Fast sites are easier to crawl
- Fast loading sites have higher conversion rates
- 40% of consumers wait no more than three seconds before abandoning a site
- It improves general user experience (less stress!)

Cognitive load associated with stressful situations

Source: Ericsson ConsumerLab, Neurons Inc.

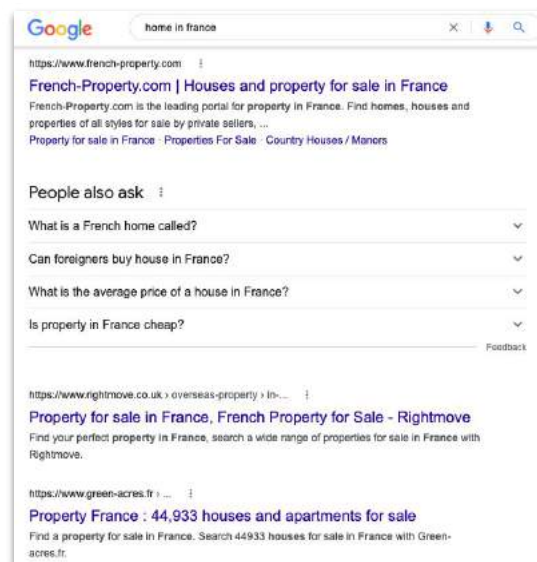


Higher Revenue

The above benefits translate directly into a greater revenue: according to an often-quoted statistic, **every 100ms improvement in loading time results in a 1% improvement in revenue.**

This means that if an Real Estate site was making \$100,000 a day, **a one-second page delay would result in \$2.5M of lost sales per year.**

While this figure might not hold across the board for websites experiencing different volumes of traffic, page speed still correlates strongly with revenue across various case studies.



Top Players

We tested the previous statement, and went with the intent of finding a home in London.

The Top 3 Organic Results showed the following mobile loading speed (mobile is selected as most of the home search process take place through these devices):

Website	LCP	FID	CLS
rightmove.co.uk	2.6s	31ms	0.13s
savills.com	3.5s	20ms	0.22s
zoopla.co.uk	3.1s	64ms	0.72s

LCP stands for Largest Contentful Paint, which measures the loading performance of a webpage.

FID represents First Input Delay that measures the interactivity of a webpage

CLS refers to Cumulative Layout Shift, which measures the visual stability

rightmove.co.uk, which ranks first on Google for this search intent, performed better than the third placed *zoopla.co.uk*.

Speed Matters!

3. How to speed up by optimizing visual assets?

In order to succeed in real estate, one has to balance two aspects of the customer experience that seem to be mutually exclusive: **speed** and **visual appeal**.

Studies show that “people remember only 20% of what they read, but 80% of what they see - and that is because the human brain processes visual cues better than the written language.”

Unsurprisingly, the average image weight per web page has **more than tripled** between 2011 and 2022, increasing from approximately 260KB to 960KB, making up **more than half of the average web page’s total size**.

However, big visuals also mean heavy image and video files that slow down the page loading time. Design components will become meaningless if customers leave the page before it fully loads.

Here are 6 suggestions to help you overcome this challenge.

1. Generate all images server-side and deliver the right image size at the right moment of customers’ journey

There is no point in serving a large original image on the client’s web browser or mobile application to create a small thumbnail. Instead, all image sizes (thumbnail, preview, and full size) should be generated server-side and then delivered to the client-side accordingly.

For the average broadband connection, server-side image handling accelerates **up to 1200% of the loading time**.

2. Leverage JPEG compression to reduce image size

The JPEG image file is the most commonly used format for images on the Web and can be compressed without visible quality loss. While JPEG does downgrade the quality of images in the interest of file weight (in MB), it is often able to reduce the image weight by three or four times without a visible reduction in image quality.



300 x 555 px
q100 ⇒ 41.3 KB



300 x 555 px
vq70 ⇒ 12.5 KB

3. Deliver modern image formats like WebP/AVIF to compatible browsers, and JPG/PNG to non-compatible browsers

Developed by Google in 2010, WebP is a modern image format that delivers superior lossless and lossy compression for images on the Web. Compared to PNGs of similar SSIM index quality, WebP lossless images are 26% smaller in size. WebP lossy images are 25 – 34% smaller than JPEGs of equivalent quality. Moreover, according to [CanIuse](#), WebP format is now supported by more than 90% browsers.

In 2019, non-profit Alliance for Open Media, developed an open-source AVIF, which supports both lossy and lossless compression. Offering a more efficient compression than WebP, video-on-demand and cloud providers use high-quality AVIF compression to reduce their data streams. The only downside? AVIF is supported with fewer browsers as compared to WebP. AVIF works with most versions of Chrome, Firefox, and Opera (but not Safari, IE, or Edge).

The example on the right shows an image that has been reduced without any visible loss in quality to WebP and AVIF.



JPEG weight: **21.9 MB**



WebP weight: **5.8 MB**



AVIF weight: **3.2 MB**

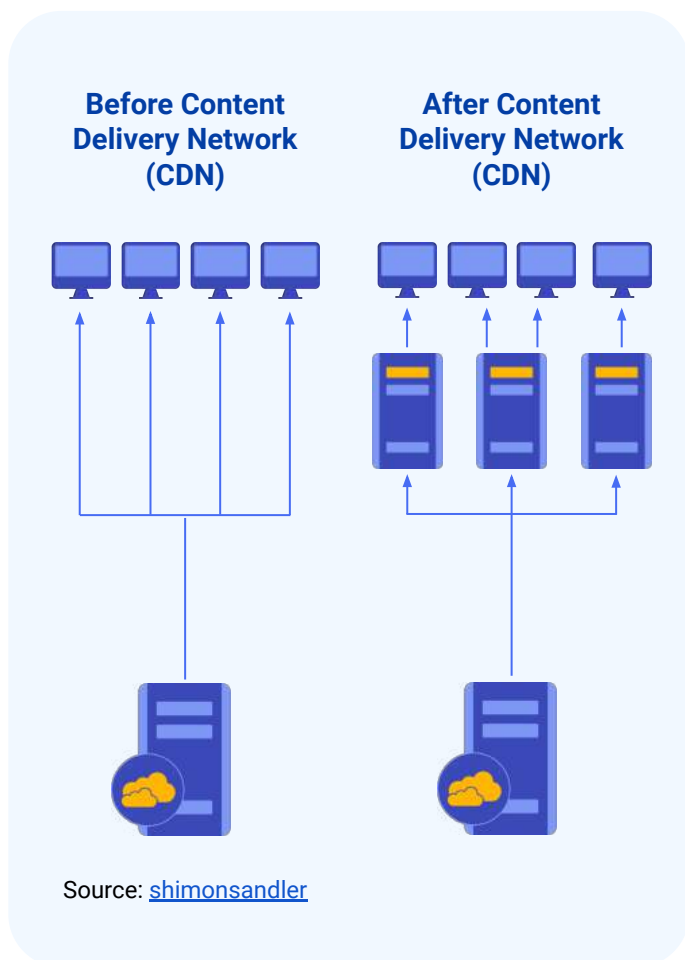
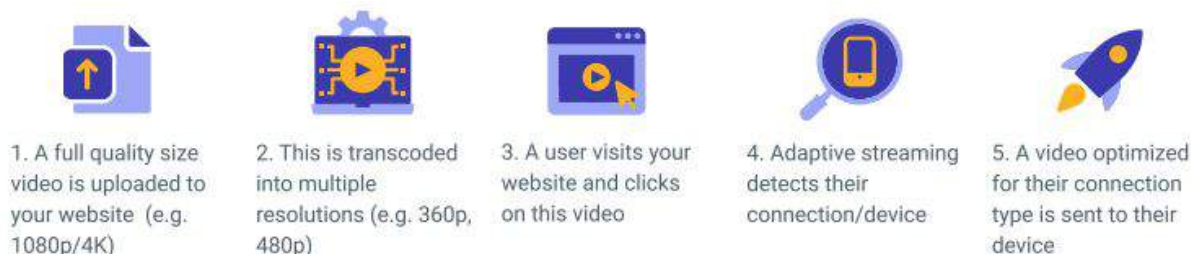
4. Leverage the HTML5 <picture> element to make images responsive to different screen sizes

Responsive images allow for an optimal user's device type, window size, orientation, or resolution. A responsively designed image does not rely on the default browser resizing to display images on various devices: it would be a huge waste of bandwidth to deliver an image prepared for a 15-inch laptop screen on a low-resolution four-inch smartphone screen. Instead, responsive images are prepared in various resolutions to serve all form factors optimally.

5. Video Transcoding & Adaptive Streaming

Similar to how images should be responsive to fit different screens and to load fast, Video Transcoding enables the generation of multiple video resolutions from an original high-resolution video file (HD or 4K).

Adaptive Streaming then ensures that end-users don't have to wait for your videos to load. The technology analyzes and determines your visitor's device and internet connection, and serves a video optimized for their device and connection speed.



6. Deliver images via CDNs

After generating server-side images and compressing them using modern image formats, the last piece of the puzzle is to deliver the images to the end users via rocket fast content delivery networks (CDNs). Likewise for videos, after Video Transcoding and Adaptive Streaming, a CDN is crucial to deliver the chunks of video as fast as possible around the world.

A CDN refers to a network of geographically distributed servers which cache a website's static content near the location of visitors.

CDNs offer three main benefits:

- Users located far from the data center where the Real Estate application is hosted will experience lower latency and faster loading time.
- CDNs absorb high load during traffic peaks and save money on hosting infrastructures.
- CDNs keep websites safe by absorbing Denial-of-Service-like attacks.

4. Filerobot and Cloudimage – the easiest way to optimize and accelerate images and videos for Real Estate websites

Save time and effort

Find the right balance between creative media and fast loading time using a third-party solution. The Scaleflex team helps out hundreds of high traffic Real Estate websites to accelerate their media, no matter how creative they are!

Filerobot - Digital Asset Management solution of Scaleflex combines all six recommendations (and more) for faster and better images and videos into a single, easy-to-use Cloud SaaS. The benefits?

- Replaces the need for an in-house image or video management solution
- Includes **Cloudimage - On-the-fly Image Optimization, Acceleration & Delivery** solution of Scaleflex
 - URL-based transformations that require no learning curve. Users can set up and start implementing Cloudimage within an hour.
 - 360° pictures are automatized and optimized with a plugin.
- Comes with in-built automated Video Transcoding & Adaptive Streaming capabilities and a scalable multi-CDN architecture
- Optimize your media assets throughout the content-lifecycle, from upload to publishing



Easy Media Upload

Image, video, PDF, JS, and CSS
Back-office integration
Scalable technology
Pre-optimized media



Intuitive Media Search

AI auto-tagging
Validation workflows
Filter and organise by folders, format, tags
Avoid Duplicates



Seamless Image and Videos Updates

Powerful Image Editor for non-tech users
360° views creator
Metadata Edition for SEO
Video Transcoding & Adaptive Streaming



Collaboration & Media Control

Configure Approval Workflows
Create and assign Teams
Give Permissions



Advanced Media Analytics

Get rich insights into your media-performance
Understand how you can improve



cloudimage

Acceleration & Delivery

Advanced WebP / AVIF Conversion
On-the-fly image resizing
Responsive Media on any device
CDN Delivery for a global-outreach



Reduce costs, Scalable & Flexible

Cloudimage, Scaleflex's Media Optimization Solution:

- Offers the most competitive pricing in the market, thanks to a traffic-based pricing structure and low internal costs.
- Unlimited origin images' transformations.
- Reduce costs for image storage and image resizing hosting infrastructure.

Filerobot, Scaleflex's all-in-one Digital Asset Management Solution:

- A flexible and transparent pricing model, with on-demand add-ons and services
- Select from Filerobot's Headless DAM for Developers, or Collaborative DAM for Marketers to meet your Real Estate Digital Asset Management needs

Find out how to maximize your Content Operations and connect with our Digital Asset Management and Image Optimization experts at sales@scaleflex.com

[Schedule a Demo](#) to discover Scaleflex's solutions!

About Scaleflex

Scaleflex is a global leading B2B SaaS company developing the most powerful and scalable Digital Asset Management and Media Acceleration solutions. Our mission is to load, store, organize, optimize, publish and accelerate all media assets (images, videos, static files such as JS and CSS files, etc.) for websites or mobile applications.

With more than 2 billion brand assets per month under management, Scaleflex helps over 1000 organizations, including Michelin, St Gobain, Toom, Printemps, WhiteStuff, SeLogger, Knight Frank, Sotheby's Realty and various SaaS companies to provide more engaging, personalized experiences for their customers around the world.

For more information, visit scaleflex.com.