

# A quick QR scan and you've communicated a lot

QR codes are an amazing way to communicate. I believe QR codes are very misunderstood and, more importantly, misused in the commercial real estate industry. I will attempt to explain why and share with you the ways QR codes (or MS Tags) work.

**What are QR codes, anyway?** QR, or quick response, codes are two-dimensional bar codes that allow the author to embed text, URLs, phone numbers or a virtual business card. They are free and easy to produce and are "open source," meaning they can be created by many companies, and each company's code reader should be able to read every other compa-



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ny's QR codes. Meanwhile, Microsoft Tag technology is closed, meaning you can only create and scan Microsoft Tags using Microsoft's platform.

"While some believe the open nature of QR codes will help them gain traction and become more widespread in the marketplace, others argue that by controlling the entire scanning process, Microsoft will be better able to assure quality, and thus rise to the top,"

said Nicole Hall, an account manager with Mobilize Worldwide, in a report at the 60 Second Marketer blog.

You will need a QR code reader application for your smartphone or tablet. I use the AT&T



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**QR codes can include text, URLs, phone numbers and more.**

scanner on my iPhone and iPad. The website for scanning MS Tags is [gettag.mobi](http://gettag.mobi)

**What is the best use for tags in commercial real estate?** Tags (whether QR codes or MS tags) should supply content that is easily viewable or

usable on a mobile format. As an example, my QR code includes contact information that automatically drops into your contact manager, so you don't have to insert the information manually. I also display this code on my business card, and I get a lot of questions. (And the wow factor is epic!) Folks that I meet and with whom I exchange cards have an easy way to save my information, so I don't end up in a stack of cards in their drawer.

Another great way to use tags is embedded video. Remember, the four things that can be baked into a tag are text, phone numbers, URLs and v-cards. Well, guess what? Video content loaded into YouTube has a URL that can be captured and em-

bedded. Using tags and embedded video content allows you to communicate a message in a way that a static website cannot do as well.

Specifically, a virtual tour can be recorded, a tag created and affixed to a brochure or postcard. Once the marketing collateral is received, the code can be scanned, and voila - the tour unfolds.

Have fun creating your tags, and you will unleash the power of scanning!

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