



THE VIRTUAL SALES CENTER STARTUP PROCESS

Wondering what it looks like to implement a virtual sales center? **UTOPIA** checked in with [Roomored](#) for an overview of their process from start to finish. Here's what you can expect:

Analyze your needs

The first step is understanding what your company needs in a virtual sales center. What are your objectives? What does success look like? From there, Roomored can match their technologies and services to your company's goals.

Onboarding call

Roomored conducts a kickoff call to provide an introduction to the process and the data elements you'll need to provide. You'll also identify main points of contact, stakeholders, etc., and Roomored will set a cadence and expectations for each player's role, all with deployment dates in mind.

Determine IT infrastructure needs

Implementing a virtual sales center experience requires some minimum technology discovery to ensure a seamless integration within your systems and hardware infrastructure. Roomored works with you to determine the optimal customer relationship management (CRM) solution and, if using their on-premise immersive application, the minimum computer requirements to run Roomored's gaming-engine-based applications.

Analyze categories, create the spaces

Just like building a home, Roomored will look at each interior element and its data points and build it into your virtual platform. They will need CAD/Revit drawings for each floor plan and standard interior specifications (for example, baseboards, lighting, stair rail styles, archways, etc.). They will create 3D models of each product that goes into your homes, from the specific tiles and flooring you offer to the sofas, rugs, and art you want to decorate your virtual model homes with. Using this information, they will build the interior virtual space of the home and give your buyers the ability to experience different finish options throughout the home.

Ongoing meetings

Again, just like building a home, Roomored meets with you in stages to ensure everything in the virtual space matches the physical offering, starting with the framing stage then following cabinets and doors, then after staging, etc. Each step matches a pre-set cadence created by Roomored's in-house process.

Back-end technical setup

Roomored works with your IT team to determine how to incorporate the sales center into the website, how to track leads, where touch screens will be installed, etc.

Training

Training the design team starts with understanding their current process in order to determine how best to get from where they are now to where they want to be with a virtual program.

Ongoing analytics

Once the virtual sales center is launched, Roomored continually analyzes traffic and engagement and provides insights that inform the builder's strategies to maximize the experience and lead generation.



TO-DO LIST FOR GETTING STARTED WITH VIRTUAL SALES AND DESIGN

UTOPIA spoke with several early adopters and industry experts about making the transition from in-person to virtual sales and design consultation. They offered the following 11 tips to ensure success with going virtual:

Don't wait

Buyers, particularly younger generations, expect to be able to do more online and on their own.

Sell it from the top down

Ensuring buy-in from the staff requires directive and enthusiasm from the executive level.

Get buy-in

The tools won't work if your team isn't using them. Make sure they have an understanding of the benefits and good training. And the earlier, the better.

Keep an open mind

Change is hard. Determine how to make the program fit into your current processes and how to maximize the benefits.

Don't neglect your website fundamentals

Ryan Murphy, president of MurphTech LLC, which handles IT services for the South Beach at Long Branch luxury development in New Jersey, notes that you can't just add these features to your website and leave it without considering things like bounce rate. Make sure your website leads the visitor to the things you want them to see—using landing pages, calls to action, etc. If they can't find it quickly, they'll move on to another builder.

Stay involved

Don't just hand buyers a tablet and send them on their way. Leverage the benefits of the tool to sell when and where it makes sense, such as promoting different floor plans available for the model.

Engage immediately on the web

Use 3D tours to draw them into your website, keep them engaged, and help them realize the unique buying experience your company offers.

Ensure walk-throughs are seamless

Some virtual walk-throughs can feel distorted or run slowly. Make sure you're investing in technology that makes the process easy and realistic so as not to turn off buyers.

Be prepared and streamline

To make the process go smoother, have your products and options narrowed down and ready to go. Understand that limiting house types and plans may make the process less overwhelming for buyers as they navigate selections more independently.

Get comfortable first

Make sure staff members using the tools, from Zoom chats to virtual design software, are comfortable with the programs and the nuances before using them with customers to ensure a confident buying experience.

Combine tools

Especially during times of social distancing, plan to go the extra mile to get buyers what they need and accommodate comfort levels, including blending video conference calls with in-person meetings. Epcon Communities, for example, will take a one-off video of a specific home site for a remote buyer in addition to showing 3-D tours of models.

More on virtual sales centers at:

[Constructutopia.com/technology/builders-go-virtual-pandemic](https://www.constructutopia.com/technology/builders-go-virtual-pandemic)