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Thanks to a Movie Mention, HomeExchange.com Has Become a Leader in its Field

Posted by Arthur Frommer at 3/9/2010 10:35 AM EST

When Ed Kushins agreed three years ago to have his company, HomeExchange.com (www.homeexchange.com), featured in the movie *The Holiday*, he didn't fully foresee the transformation which that lucky break would bring about in his life. A big movie hit, that featured Kate Winslet and Cameron Diaz exchanging homes and finding love as a result, the film brought an avalanche of new members to HomeExchange.com, making it undoubtedly the single largest company in the field today.

As a result of the film, the website now has more than 32,000 home exchange listings (35% in the U.S., the remainder around the world), and continues to receive between 400 and 500 new listings each week.

Home exchanges (which can also be apartment exchanges) have now become mainstream, according to Kushins ([whom Pauline and I interviewed on our radio show this past weekend](#)). Whereas once people would inquire anxiously about the safety of a home exchange, they now focus instead on the mechanics of the exchange, having concluded without any problem that the procedure is quite acceptably safe. According to Kushins, in 18 years of arranging home exchanges he has never once received a report of thefts or malicious damage. The fact that someone has negligently knocked over a piece of bric-a-brac is the usual worst report.

We asked Kushins to name the chief factors that had brought about this enormous surge in the amount of home exchanging for vacation purposes. He of course cited the speed the Internet can bring to the process, the fact that people can now post virtually unlimited photos to their listing, that they have no limitations of space in describing their homes or apartments. He did not mention, but we brought up, the recession, which obviously has caused people to search for ways in which they could eliminate the cost of accommodations on their next vacation trip. Using your own home or apartment as an asset, you now have the ability to completely eliminate the cost of housing from your vacation budget. That latter factor has had a special impact on the demographics of the audience for home exchanging.

Years ago, seniors and teachers were the predominant group that engaged in home exchanging for vacation purposes. Today, the key group are families, especially those with young children.

So there you have it. What used to be a group of half-a-dozen or so companies that arranged home exchanges, has now grown into an industry of at least two dozen major companies. Pauline recently wrote an extensive feature about finding the best exchanges in major destinations around the world, and you can read that article here: "[Complete Guide to Vacation Rentals](#)."

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