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A City Real Estate Obsession Leads to a Video Blog

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Staff Reporter of the Sun

For most city dwellers, the idea of moving is enough to induce a stress-related illness. But since moving to New York in 2000, Rachel Natalie Klein has changed apartments seven times.

"There's a reason behind each move: a breakup, massive noise problems, bad landlord," the former television reporter from Indiana, who now lives in SoHo, said.

With all the moving, Ms. Klein, 36, caught the real estate bug that afflicts so many New Yorkers. Marrying her television reporting experience to her obsession with city real estate, the telegenic brunette created a daily video Web log called *Intothebox.tv*. The Web site, which she launched two weeks ago, is already receiving a few hundred hits a day.

In each two- to three-minute video, Ms. Klein tackles a different topic, with a journalist's approach and a "Sex and the City" tone. She is personal, a bit flirty, and regularly interviews experts in the field for the videos.

Yesterday, wearing a low-cut dress, she discussed for 2 1/2 minutes simple tips for looking for a new place to live. Another video on renovations features a shot of a man's biceps while he hammers a nail, and Ms. Klein coos appreciatively.

Since starting the site, she has addressed the national credit

crunch and its effects on city real estate, common pitfalls in hiring a contractor, and the unreliability of Williamsburg's L train.

The project has been financed so far by her life savings and investments made by family and friends, Ms. Klein's business partner, Kimberly Lexow, said.

"She had this quest for finding a home in a city that was not originally her home," Ms. Lexow said.

The two hope to be able to make money from the site by allowing businesses to sponsor videos and include their advertising.

When Ms. Klein arrived in the city, she took a job at a public relations company, where she helped grow the broadcast division. It was not until January 2006, when she moved to Harlem, that she started reporting again, this time in the form of a blog called "Bagel in Harlem."

"The idea was that I moved to New York, this Jewish girl from Indiana, and I couldn't find a fresh bagel," she said. "Then it became bigger than me. I was in the middle of a firestorm of social and economic issues in Harlem. Newcomers were coming in and residents were saying how angry they were about that."

The blog was satisfying, but Ms. Klein had an itch to use her broadcast journalism skills. Thinking about her two interests, she conceived the idea for *Intothebox.tv*.

"It's my blood, sweat, and tears," she said.



DICK FARRER

BLOGGER Rachel Natalie Klein combines her interest in real estate and her reporting skills on her video blog, *intothebox.tv*.