

**A**s housing inventory continues to pile up in many markets around the country, getting a listing to stand out in the crowd—let alone sell—is a bigger challenge for agents than ever before. While price is always a deciding factor, **presentation and marketing are critical to getting and keeping a home buyer's attention.**

Today's agents know that it's not only a question of the quality of the marketing but the effective distribution of that marketing as well. Listing-Domains from Santa Rosa, California-based Properties Online, believes it is addressing both of these needs through its turnkey program for creating individual property Web sites.

Realizing that properties could easily get lost in the shuffle on traditional MLS and agency Web sites, Listing-Domains developed a patented technology that allows agents to create individual Web sites for each property they have listed. The property's street address becomes the actual URL, making the sites easily accessible and widely exposed. A house for sale at 1958 Falcon Ridge, for example, could be viewed in detail by prospective buyers at [www.1958FalconRidge.com](http://www.1958FalconRidge.com). The idea is to keep it simple, direct and fast.

#### **Making a Big Difference for Sellers**

A broker associate for Century 21 Alliance in Santa Rosa, California, Nan Pannell, was lucky enough to be part of the beta test group for the Listing-Domains product about eight years ago. She has been a raving fan of the

product ever since.

In the real estate business for 21 years and ranked in the top 1% of agents nationally, Pannell has ridden the rising and falling tides of the San Francisco-area real estate market. Programs like those from ListingDomains help Pannell and her agents balance the ups and downs of the changing market.

According to Pannell, Listing-Domains property sites offer her sellers immediate exposure to the Internet, critical in such a highly competitive market. The property URLs created through ListingDomains are clearly depicted on lawn sign riders located at the property itself. Home buyers can drive by a property they like and then go directly to the URL listed on the rider to find a wealth of details and images about the home.

"Exposure is number-one," says Pannell. "Sellers are so excited about this program. The Internet provides the instant exposure that people are looking for. We get the sites up and running as quickly as possible with a lot of pictures and a lot of text. They're so excited that they tell their friends and coworkers and the sites get hits like crazy."

Online marketing is also key to maintaining a strong relocation business for Pannell: "I have a client living in Maryland who is moving here but still trying to get her home sold there. If it weren't for the property sites, we couldn't do anything."

On the other coast, Suzanne Asher, a Realtor for Coldwell Banker in Long Island, New York, with 18 years in the business, reports that the property Web sites from ListingDomains not only help sell properties faster, but pay dividends in gaining her new clients, as well, who see the sites and want the same marketing for their homes.

"We went to do a market analysis on a home down the street from another home we had listed and sold quickly," says Asher. "We went into this customer's house and he said, 'I just had to call you guys—I looked at the Web site you did for that other house and you worked so hard on that site; I was so impressed.' His house had been on the market for a year with a smaller boutique agency, but then he switched to us."

#### **Making Execution Easy**

What Asher doesn't publicize to her clients is the fact that the sites she designs through the ListingDomains program actually take her only about a half-hour. "We do the sites for everyone," she explains. "People think we've spent hours on them."

And for good reason. The sites from ListingDomains are professional and robust. Agents can feature as many photos as they choose to upload to create a rich virtual tour of the property



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## Business Development



### A Site of its Own

Individual Property Sites Set Listings Apart

By Maria Patterson

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accompanied by a host of special features, from neighborhood information to floor plans and mortgage tools. The entire site is then set to music to take the overall professionalism a step further.

Asher appreciates the flexibility of the program. "With most sites you can only put six photos online—with ListingDomains you can put 20 or 30," she explains. "I go around a property and if something in the garden is starting to bloom, I take a picture, or I'll take a picture of the beach around the corner. Once I took a picture of the cat sleeping on the kitchen table and a dog lying by the dog door. It helps people envision actually living there. The possibilities are endless."

Rhonda Alderman, a Realtor for seven years with Keller Williams in Sonoma County, California, agrees. "Everybody thinks it looks great and I'm able to monitor the amount of hits I get. The sites drive a lot of traffic and also help bring people to my Web site."

"The ListingDomains sites are really easy to use and they have a lot of choices to make the sites look really professional to our customers," she adds.

Another benefit to sellers is the turnaround time in which the sites are produced. "We listed a home this last weekend on Saturday and by Sunday the Web site was complete and by Monday we had the sign rider," says Pannell.

### Longterm Positioning for Realtors

Perhaps most importantly, the property Web sites from ListingDomains help position real estate professionals as tech-savvy marketers. "Sellers are beginning to realize that if you're doing what was done back in the golden days of real estate then you're behind the times—at least in our area," says Pannell. "Most of our clients are all carrying Blackberries and they expect us to have our fingers on the pulse of the Internet. If you don't have your information out there on the Internet then you're dead in the water."

One way the ListingDomains program helps Realtors achieve this tech-worthy status is by keeping the property sites active for a full year, even after a listing has sold. As Pannell explains, "You can go to my Web site and see the links to those homes that are pending, and those that have sold. This provides not just a current buyer attraction but a way to demonstrate our marketing to potential sellers."

In the tech-savvy San Francisco area, all of this is especially important. "The substitute of the Internet and these Web sites for print advertising has been amazing," says Pannell. "Print advertising still has a 30-day before-print deadline—by that time the listing is old news. We'll never be able to sell a home completely online, but if you see it from the street, fall in love with it, and then go online and see all the pictures and get excited, you have a qualified buyer before you've ever met them."

The sites from ListingDomains also help extend a real estate professional's reach across a variety of online mediums. In Asher's case, for example, listings that are featured on Realtor.com through Coldwell Banker link back to the individual property sites she's developed through ListingDomains. Viewers can also link from one property site to Asher's full lineup of listings on her own individual site.

Bottom line, the property sites go a long way in building loyal relationships with customers. As Asher says, "To be able to say, 'Look what I can do for you,' helps us build relationships and get listings." **RE**