

[Back](#)[Send to Printer](#)

Northwest MLS members continue to use Realtor.com

Realtor.com: No 'dramatic decrease' in use since bulk feeds cut from NWMLS

Tuesday, October 02, 2007

By [Glenn Roberts Jr.](#)
[Inman News](#)

While Northwest Multiple Listing Service, the largest MLS in the state of Washington, earlier this year stopped sending broker-supplied property information to the Realtor.com search site, most brokers continue to supply listings information to that site on their own, according to [Realtor.com](#) operator Move Inc.

Julie Reynolds, a Move spokeswoman, said Monday, "We have not seen a dramatic decrease coming from Realtors in that area," though she did not provide details on how many brokers in that market area have ceased sending the bulk of their property listings information to Realtor.com following the NWMLS decision.

Board members for broker-owned NWMLS, which has an estimated 2,100 member real estate companies representing about 26,000 sales associates, [last year voted](#) to end the submission of property information to Realtor.com at the conclusion of its contract with Realtor.com this year.

Even before the NWMLS decision, brokers for Windermere Real Estate did not permit a bulk feed of property listings by NWMLS to Realtor.com. Since the decision, "There has been a greater interest (by company brokers) to send individual listings to Realtor.com on a case-by-case basis -- and that choice I think is important," said Pat Grim, president of Windermere Western Washington Services Co.

Grim said that its franchise brokers in the Washington area believed that Realtor.com was serving "more as a destination than a portal" for real estate consumers, "and if it was more of a portal then it would get more support." Under the new system, brokers can be more selective about which property listings to include at Realtor.com, he said. "It's the appropriate way for Realtor.com to get its listings, and in my opinion it's more appropriate for the MLS," he said.

Realtor.com on May 29 sent a notice to broker members of NWMLS to describe how individual brokerage companies could submit property listings information to Realtor.com. The notice stated, "Unfortunately, the NWMLS has decided to no longer license the display of your listings on Realtor.com or to continue to send those listings to us on your behalf, effective July 1. While we will not receive data directly from your MLS, we do have the ability to accept your office's listings directly from you, as the Realtor broker of record, and we can continue to display your listings and primary photos on Realtor.com at no charge."

The letter described a process through which brokers could complete and return a "Broker Data Content Provider" agreement with Realtor.com and to work with a vendor to manage the data exchange with Realtor.com.

Also in May, Portland, Ore.-based Regional MLS, a Realtor association-operated regional MLS with about 14,700 members in Oregon and Washington, had sought to attract new members from NWMLS and other MLSs with RMLSlite, a service that pushes brokers' property listings information to the Realtor.com site.

RMLS, like most Realtor-operated MLSs, automatically forwards its subscriber-supplied property listings information to the National Association of Realtors-affiliated Realtor.com search site, though this new service allowed nonmembers to post listings at Realtor.com via RMLS.

The site was free at first, and RMLS began charging for the service on Sept. 1. "We saw there were MLSs that didn't send their listings to Realtor.com and there were other MLSs ceasing to send their listings to Realtor.com -- we thought it was creating a vacuum in the marketplace and we thought we'd try to fill it out," said Kurt von Wasmuth, senior vice president for RMLS.

The only requirement for submitting listings for inclusion at Realtor.com is that the nonsubscribers must be

Realtors, he added. At \$5 per listing, nonmembers might consider joining RMLS if they are planning to upload more listings

Von Wasmuth said it's no secret that RMLS was hoping that the RMLSlite tool would bring new members to the MLS. "We're hoping that in seeing how friendly our MLS can be and how quickly we can react to a need like that" nonsubscribers would join, he said, adding that he did not have exact numbers on how many Realtors are using the RMLSlite system. NWMLS officials offered no comment about the RMLSlite system.

Reynolds said that several of the major brokers that are members of NWMLS, including John L. Scott, Coldwell Banker and RE/MAX affiliates, "continue to want to have listings on Realtor.com and they submit them to us in their (Internet Data Exchange) feed. Unfortunately, the brokers that chose not to continue to send listings directly to Realtor.com just means more work for them," and that the NWMLS policy change was led by "one or two brokers (who) decided they did not want to list on Realtor.com anymore."

Ben Kakimoto, a Realtor for John L. Scott Real Estate in Seattle, said that he rarely asks his clients if they use Realtor.com, and his out-of-area clients "find me through Web searches, predominately Google." He stated in a blog posting last year that the NWMLS move is "probably not a big deal. In speaking with the general public and my own clients, no one ever mentions using Realtor.com to view listings. In the Seattle area, company Web sites such as Windermere.com, JohnLScott.com and Remax.com probably get the lion's share of user home searches."

Meanwhile, Chris Nye, broker for flat-fee real estate company MLS4Owners.com said he believes Realtor.com is an important marketing tool. The transition from NWMLS-submitted Realtor.com listings information to broker-submitted information was smooth, he said. "NWMLS gave us time to transfer over to a new vendor," and extended its original deadline for the transition by several months.

When his clients are choosing how to market properties, "Realtor.com continually comes up in the conversation," he said.

Send tips or a Letter to the Editor to glenn@inman.com or call (510) 658-9252, ext. 137.

Copyright 2007 Inman News

[Back](#)

[Top](#)

[Send to Printer](#)