

Realtor Uses BlackBerry and Mobile Listing Advantage to Increase Efficiency, Effectiveness and Win Over Customers

Business challenge

Jim Soda, an award-winning realtor for Prudential Palms Realty in Sarasota, FL, is the definition of a truly independent, mobile professional. Spending most of his day working from his car and outside of the traditional 9 to 5 business hours, his success rides on how quickly and effectively he can find the right property for his customers. Timely communication and organization are the keys to his competitive advantage.

Solution

A year ago, Soda purchased BlackBerry® for its wireless email capabilities. Finding that most of his customers would rather communicate via email than phone, he began noticing his client contact increase dramatically, along with his ability to meet their needs.

"The average age of a home buyer is 25, they grew up with computers and are much more educated about buying property because of the Internet. The average age of a realtor is 50 to 55 – we need something to close the generation gap and make us just as savvy in terms of customer contact and service. Everyone is curious about my BlackBerry handheld, they think it's cool and they really appreciate that I'm never out of touch or out of contact."

– Jim Soda

At the same time, he also discovered that a local company – Retrieval Dynamics – offered a customized Multiple Listing Service (MLS®) property search solution for BlackBerry. Mobile Listing Advantage™ (MLA) is third-party software that functions on the BlackBerry platform. Using email transport, it allows quick, one-click searches of the local MLS database from anyplace at any time. Searches are conducted using standard industry search fields such as specific address, area, price range or a home's features, including the number of bedrooms, baths, garage, etc. A real estate professional can do the same search with MLA as they do on a PC, but by using their BlackBerry handheld.

Soda found that he was literally unchained from his desk and laptop. Before MLA, he couldn't instantly look up a house or street with curb appeal while driving through a neighborhood with clients. He had to call the listing agent or his own office and have them find the property listing detail. In the Sarasota area, Soda says many properties do not even post For Sale signs. But by using MLA on BlackBerry, he can instantly see what is on sale in any area, subdivision or street, whether it is advertised or not.

Industry
Real Estate

Company
Prudential Palms Realty

Employees
Two

Location
Florida, USA

Environment
Microsoft Outlook

"On-the-spot responses are magic for many people. They see how professional and efficient you can be with BlackBerry and are more apt to use you. It is an amazing tool and, even for someone like me who is technologically challenged, it is an indispensable part of me."

*Jim Soda,
Prudential Palms Realty*

"Our customers like Mobile Listing Advantage because it makes an immediate impact on their ability to deliver customer service. And responsiveness to customers – sellers and buyers – is key to making the sale. Add that to the ease of using the BlackBerry and MLA solution and people find the technology delivers proven ROI."

– George Stolpe, Retrieval Dynamics

BlackBerry delivers one final value to Soda's business – efficiency. He admits that he used to work from multiple DayBooks at work, at home, in his car, and it was easy to accidentally miss an appointment. Now he uses the BlackBerry calendar, which synchs with his Microsoft® Outlook on his desktop and sends him reminders of appointments. He no longer has to worry about missed appointments causing him lost revenue.

Benefits

Soda's experience with BlackBerry and Mobile Listing Advantage has increased his organizational abilities, his effectiveness and gained enthusiastic support from his clients. To encapsulate the results he's enjoyed from the BlackBerry and Retrieval Dynamics solution, Soda tells the story of the million-dollar sale. While meeting with friends for dinner one night, a new customer contacted him via email. Soda was able to respond quickly, with the relevant property information. In fact, his response time was so impressive, the new customer commented on it and then visited the area a week later to purchase a property in excess of \$1 million.

For additional BlackBerry case studies, success stories and customer quotes, please visit www.blackberry.com/go/success.

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