



THE POWER OF WEB-TO-PRINT PORTALS IN REAL ESTATE

Many growing enterprise level businesses are turning to web-to-print portal solutions to centralize, control and disperse marketing materials.

The real estate industry is no exception. For many major real estate firms, web-to-print portals help agents and brokers keep in contact with their audience without putting pressure on tight budgets and already exhausted resources.



■ WHAT IS A WEB-TO-PRINT PORTAL?

A web-to-print portal is an enabling-technology that centralizes and simplifies the process of creating, distributing, and tracking elements of cross-media, direct marketing campaigns. More simply stated, a web-to-print portal is a single location online where brokers and agents can go to order marketing materials, customize them for their local markets, and print them on-demand. Users of these portals can even create, deploy and track branded email marketing campaigns targeted to their local audience.

The benefits to organizations in the real estate industry that are using a web-to-print portal application are monumental. For an industry that thrives on a network of distributed field staff and, for an industry where timing and personalization is critical, web-to-print portals organize and streamline marketing efforts in a way that positively supports the agent and broker.

With a web-to-print portal, you can:

- Control branding elements and maintain integrity of brand identity
- Personalize and customize marketing materials at the local level
- Streamline the process of preparing and printing marketing collateral
- Reduce management, production, printing and storage costs
- Track direct marketing expenditures and campaign ROI

MAINTAINING BRAND IDENTITY

Using a web-to-print portal offers a level of control over brand image. Pre-designed, corporate-approved templates for various marketing materials can be made available online for agents to access when needed. This capability not only makes it easier for agents to quickly generate marketing collateral on the fly and customize marketing pieces for their local market, but also ensures that agents adhere to the firm's branding guidelines.

Champion Realty, a rapidly growing real estate firm, chose web-to-print as a turnkey solution for design, printing and mailing to help accelerate the marketing process, to better control branding and lower costs. “With the web-to-print marketing portal we have all the templates and process automation we need, but we can still customize as much as we need to. It’s just the right mix of flexibility and control for our organization,” says Lauri Ladd, Director of Marketing at Champion Realty.

Brokerages and real estate firms that are adopting the web-to-print portal platform, like Champion Realty, are experiencing a faster and more efficient process for ordering and distributing direct marketing materials to their target audience. Whereas the traditional process for ordering printed material is often slow and laborious, with web-to-print’s digital and print-on-demand format, it’s completely reasonable for agents to send a ‘one-off’ direct mail piece or automate personalized follow-up cards. The digital platform also makes it easy for brokers and agents to automate campaigns, such as lead generation and recruiting/retention programs.

Real Living needed an automated, technology-driven direct marketing system that allowed agents to set up mailings in advance. That’s when they selected a web-to-print marketing portal offered by QuantumDigital. “It allows them (agents) to set their campaigns for a year and keeps their focus on acquiring new business, not running to the post office,” says Gretchen Bartholomew, Director of Operations at Real Living. Since making the marketing portal available, direct mail usage rates have increased to 2.2 million pieces in 2007, an increase of 500,000 more than in the previous year. “The number is continuing to grow,” says Bartholomew. That growth is an indicator that agents find the web-to-print portal useful to effectively market their business.

PERSONALIZATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

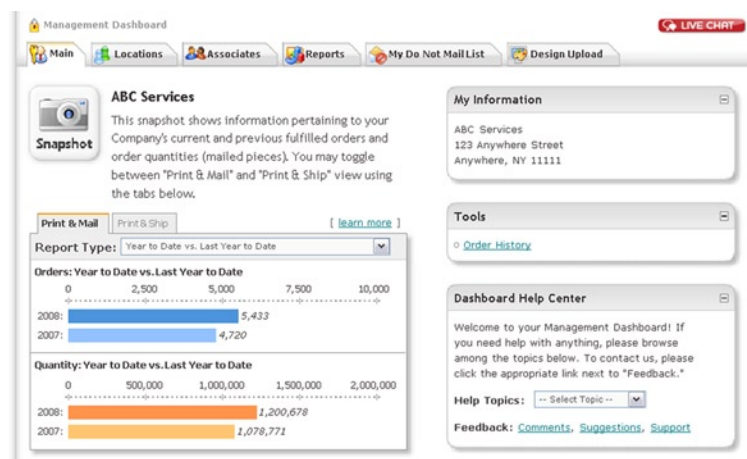
Another substantial benefit of using web-to-print portals is that the process of preparing and printing marketing collateral is directly accessible to agents. Rather than depending on office staff to place orders for marketing collateral, agents are able to select the materials they need, efficiently customize the pieces for their local market and move them into the mail stream—all within minutes, not weeks. And, since agents can easily go online and order marketing materials precisely when they need it and in the exact

quantities they require, brokerage firms save costs associated with storage fees and reduce overrun of printed marketing material.

MEASURING MARKETING ACTIVITY AND ROI

Finally, marketing portals offer brokers the ability to review reports so they can follow expenditures and monitor their offices' and agents' marketing activities. Real Living's web-to-print marketing portal features a Management Dashboard, allowing Real Living executives to keep a pulse on their company's direct marketing activity. "Before the online Management Dashboard reporting tool, we had to try and track our marketing activity manually. Now I simply login and view an up-to-date snapshot on all direct mail and printing activity," says Bartholomew. "I can drill down further to view detailed office or agent level reports. It has saved me a lot of time and effort."

As technology advances, the popularity of web-to-print portals continues to expand due to the ease-of-use and variety of features they offer. The case studies below describe specific instances in the real estate industry where web-to-print portals are helping to ease pressure points and grow business.



■ CASE STUDY: CHAMPION REALTY®

Champion Realty, a rapidly growing real estate firm, needed a more efficient and automated direct marketing solution. The company traditionally used a mailing house, but the vendor didn't offer the resources Champion needed to quickly produce and mail high-quality materials. The system required one dedicated employee to place orders for all the agents, which often created a backlog of mailings. When agents finally received their order, the information was frequently out of date or incorrect.

Champion needed an enterprise solution that streamlined the order process, offered corporate control over branding elements, and flexibility for agents to customize and personalize direct mail for their local audience. That's when they discovered a web-to-print portal solution offered by QuantumDigital, Inc.

Today, Champion Realty's staff and agents can quickly and easily log into their marketing portal account, select materials they want to print, personalize and customize them for their local audience, and mail them using a highly customized and targeted mailing list.

"With the web-to-print marketing portal, we have all the templates and process automation we need, but we can still customize as much as we need to. It's just the right mix of flexibility and control for our organization," says Lauri Ladd, Director of Marketing at Champion Realty.

Since adopting the web-to-print marketing portal developed by QuantumDigital, Champion Realty has seen tremendous gains in usage rates. All 657 agents have signed up for accounts, and 565 agents actively use the new system for their mailings—an 86% usage rate. According to Ladd, "Everyone here is happy with QuantumDigital. We got everything we asked for and more."

■ CASE STUDY: REAL LIVING®

As a result of rapid franchise growth, Real Living's internal direct mail fulfillment processes became labor intensive, slow and unmanageable. Real Living executives felt it was distracting them from their true business focus—being a top real estate agency. According to Gretchen Bartholomew, Director of Operations, Real Living needed an automated, technology-driven, easy-to-use direct marketing system. "Our current solution was cumbersome and labor intensive. We just couldn't offer our agents true flexibility," said Bartholomew.

Real Living sought a solution that would allow agents to customize, personalize, print and mail corporate-approved marketing materials for their local area. They wanted this solution to include automated mailing features so agents could maintain focus on acquiring new business and staying personal with their audience.

Real Living selected QuantumDigital to develop a web-to-print direct marketing portal that enables agents to implement custom and personalized automated direct mail campaigns either on the fly or scheduled up to a year in advance. With this tool, agents can choose from over 1,000 direct mail templates, customize them to fit their local markets, and conveniently mail them to their target audience—all from the convenience of the online marketing portal.

In addition, the Management Dashboard integrated into the web-to-print portal allows Real Living executives to keep a pulse on their company's direct marketing activity. "Before the online Management Dashboard reporting tool, we had to try and track our marketing activity manually. Now I simply login and view an up-to-date snapshot on all direct mail and printing activity," says Bartholomew. "I can drill down further to view detailed office or agent level reports. It has saved me a lot of time and effort."

Looking ahead, Real Living plans to take advantage of the new eMarketing offerings that will be added to their web-to-print marketing portal in 2008. Agents will soon have the ability to send personalized marketing emails to their customer and prospect base.

"QuantumDigital helped us create an automated technology driven solution. They are always investing back into making their system better and more functional and we get to reap the benefits!"
—Gretchen Bartholomew, Director of Operations at Real Living

ABOUT QUANTUMDIGITAL

QuantumDigital is a complete online service provider for direct mail, on-demand printing and eMarketing. For more information on QuantumDigital's products and services, please contact us.

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