

REALTOR® AE

NAR.REALTOR/RAE

FALL 2021

WE 'R' EVERYWHERE

REALTOR® associations help spread the word

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**EXPERT.
NEIGHBOR.
COMMUNITY
LEADER.**

Ask me the difference
between an agent and

**DRIVEN BY YOUR
DREAMS. GUIDED BY
A CODE OF ETHICS.**

Ask me the difference between
an agent and REALTOR®.

**FIRST-TIME
HOMEBUYERS
NEED LONG-TIME
HOME EXPERTS.**

**OUR
CODE OF
ETHICS
IS YOUR
PEACE
OF MIND.**

Work with
someone you can
trust. Work with a
REALTOR®.

DISCRIMINATION? NOT IN OUR HOUSE.

**THAT'S
WHO
WE**

**A SEARCH BAR CAN'T
NAVIGATE MULTIPLE
OFFERS.**

I CAN.

REALTORS® are members of the
National Association of REALTORS®

**THAT'S
WHO
WE**

**THAT'S
WHO
WE**

REALTORS® are members of the
National Association of REALTORS®

**I CAN HELP YOU
MAKE THE MOST
OUT OF
YOUR MOST
IMPORTANT
ASSET.**

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Joining Forces

Engineering a merger between two large MLSs wasn't easy but has paid off.

The Hudson Gateway Association of REALTORS® formed OneKey MLS with the Long Island Board of REALTORS® in 2018, merging their systems to provide a central listing service for the entire New York metro area. Since then, OneKey MLS has grown steadily to offer consumers and REALTORS® in 11 counties a variety of useful tools to facilitate real estate transactions.

REALTOR® AE recently spoke with OneKey CEO Jim Speer, pictured right, about the ins and outs of a merger that made it one of the largest and most comprehensive listing services in the nation.

Q: For association executives and MLS executives involved in or thinking about consolidation, what were the most important considerations before and during the merger?

Speer: Four major considerations took precedence when we began. First, all parties were encouraged to come to the table without expectations to engage in an open-minded conversation. We discussed our values and found commonality in our philosophies, but also differences. We asked a skilled consultant to facilitate consolidation, and they helped move us closer to a signed agreement.

Second, we dealt with the technical considerations surrounding the fact that both MLSs wanted to avoid disruptions and create functional continuity for subscribers and participants. The need to create a consumer-facing website that synchronizes data from the MLS systems was paramount.

Third, a unified policy of rules, regulations, and procedures was needed before



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merging. Tedious line-by-line examinations ensued. Once decisions were made, a consolidated rulebook emerged. To accomplish this required compromises from both sides.

Finally, the best way to educate and prepare more than 40,000 REALTORS®

for upcoming policy changes was a major consideration. We produced instructional videos, hosted webinars, created and shared informational bulletins, and established a nonbranded, generic microsite—newsmlsinfo.com—as a communication channel for REALTORS® to access prior to the merger, in addition to their existing informational channels.

Q: How has OneKey MLS helped you “up the game” in terms of building confidence with consumers regarding data integrity?

Speer: With our consumer site, we pride ourselves on supplying the most up-to-date and accurate information available—data that comes from the source. Consumers trust the MLS, and we continue to strengthen its reliable foundation.

Q: How are you addressing data integrity and accuracy to maintain your standing in the real estate industry?

Speer: We performed a tremendous amount of testing when translating and normalizing data between the two MLS systems to ensure that the data feed remained entirely trustworthy. Development of the software needed to accommodate the merger took more than a year. We performed extensive quality assurance at every step. Adhering to these practices streamlined the process of development, ensuring quality within the build, rather than post-development.

Q: In choosing to maintain two MLS systems, how are

you prioritizing technological progress and innovation?

Speer: Providing the very best service to REALTORS® is our primary focus, and maintaining two systems is currently best for them. Stratus, the vendor used in the Long Island market, made many changes, so those subscribers had to learn a good amount.

OneKey MLS staff and vendors shoulder the technical challenges of combining and maintaining data from two systems into a single, RESO-certified OneKey MLS data feed. Translating and sharing the data for consumption between systems so that it is equally accessible to all subscribers, within a nationally recognized standard dictionary for portals, internet data exchange sites, and back-office systems, is the highest priority in service to our REALTORS®.

Q: What apps or features can you now provide to REALTORS® or consumers that weren't available before the merger?

Speer: Since consolidation, OneKey MLS is able to offer HGAR and LIBOR members products like Remine Pro, RatePlug, and our own website templates, which are developed in-house and individually personalized to members' needs.

We recognize how critical lead generation is for REALTORS®, so we've built a beautiful, innovative, mobile-responsive, consumer-facing website for the New York metro area. The site provides a database of home listings that anyone can search. It generates thousands of monthly leads for REALTORS® and aids in their success.

Q: How does OneKey MLS provide enhanced value for REALTORS®

working in commercial real estate?

Speer: Our value for REALTORS® in commercial real estate comes primarily by virtue of our size and scale following the merger. With regional coverage throughout the New York metro area including Manhattan, members of LIBOR and HGAR working in the commercial market have access to a network of more than 45,000 REALTORS® and counting, covering 4,600 square miles.

Add this benefit to the increased exposure of commercial listings on the consumer site—50,000 page views in July 2021 alone—and the advantage is enormous. These professionals now have more opportunities, more exposure, and more options than ever before. More is more for REALTORS® working in residential and commercial real estate. ■



Innovative Property Data Backed By Real People

CRS Data's MLS Tax Suite delivers the most current and accurate property data in a beautiful, intuitive platform. Data is our passion.



Continuous Product Enhancements



Innovative Customization Options



30 Years Perfecting Our Tax Data Features



Comparables Include MLS and Off Market Sales



Seamless Integration With Your MLS System



Focused On Inclusion With ADA Compliance and Bilingual (Spanish) Report Options

Meet with us at the 2021 REALTORS® Conference and Trade Expo, booth #2409, and ask us about delayed billing options for new accounts.



Let's Start A Conversation

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