

RealtiPLUSWeb

leading edge technology in legal practice

Ontario lawyers now have a tool that lets them reduce the time it takes to undertake real estate transactions by as much as 50 per cent: That tool is RealtyPLUSWeb – a fully integrated, Web-based, one-stop technology platform that brings the paperless office one step closer to reality for those doing real estate transactions.

Launched late this summer by LawyerDoneDeal Corp. (LDD), RealtyPLUSWeb offers real estate lawyers many advantages over other real estate tools currently in use:

- **State of the art file management and document production:** RealtyPLUSWeb integrates all of the capabilities needed in a real estate practice into one program. Information entered into the system automatically pre-populates the many forms and documents used in a transaction. Online access to a variety of databases – including a database of updated real estate precedents – lets lawyers bring knowledge of the latest legal developments to each transaction. The program also generates a number of management reports, and enables users to track the status of each real estate transaction anywhere, anytime.
- **Complete integration and connectivity with online tools:** RealtyPLUSWeb lets lawyers import and export data from e-reg™ and POLARIS, making it easy to search, retrieve and upload data and documents which then are easily integrated into transaction-specific files and documents.

RealtyPLUSWeb also provides lawyers with online access to selected bank/lender documents (such as mortgage rates, instructions) and builders' closing packages. In addition, users enjoy access to a database of information on specific new

home or condominium projects, many of which may also be enrolled in the TitlePLUS New Home Program. This information – such as the project's legal description, builder information, title data, etc. – automatically pre-populates the RealtyPLUSWeb file, providing yet another level of integration that sets RealtyPLUSWeb apart.

RealtyPLUSWeb is also integrated with an application for optional title insurance. Lawyers who opt for the TitlePLUS insurance product, for example, will see their applications processed seamlessly without duplicate data entry.

- **ASP model:** Because it is developed on an application service provider (ASP) model, RealtyPLUSWeb eliminates the need for lawyers to install upgrades to real estate software on their office networks and work stations. The software that is backbone of RealtyPLUSWeb resides on LDD's servers, ensuring lawyers always have access to the latest technology and information without the associated software and maintenance issues. All communication between lawyers' computers and LDD is encrypted, to ensure the security of data is protected.

"With RealtyPLUSWeb, lawyers are poised to complete a real estate transaction electronically, from start to finish," says Maurizio Romanin, President of LDD, which developed RealtyPLUSWeb.

"In the competitive, price-sensitive world that is real estate practice, lawyers need to be as efficient and cost-effective as possible – while also able to capitalize on e-reg™ and the many other online services now available," he said. "We believe RealtiPLUSWeb meets this need: It puts the lawyer in control – as quarterback in the transaction – and helps ensure lawyers play a pivotal role in real estate conveyancing in Ontario."

This lawyer-centered orientation reflects TitlePLUS's own commitment to real estate lawyers and their practices, and is the principal reason behind the collaboration between LawPRO

and LDD, says Kathleen Waters, Vice-President of TitlePLUS. "We are pleased to be the most integrated title insurer on the RealtiPLUSWeb system.

"Both LDD and TitlePLUS are committed to providing lawyers with tools that support the key role they must continue to play in real estate conveyancing if consumers are to continue to be properly protected and represented in real estate transactions – transactions which often are the most costly that they will undertake in their lifetimes."

Consistency and efficiency: The RealtiPLUSWeb advantage



Rob Robinson and law clerk Cheryl Twose

For Owen Sound lawyer Rob Robinson and law clerk Cheryl Twose, RealtiPLUSWeb offers two distinct advantages over anything they've used in the past: Speed and simplicity ("Frankly, I think we would have struggled to deal with the volumes we've seen this summer if we did not have RealtiPLUSWeb"); and the peace of mind that comes from using a system that lets them confirm that they've crossed all 't's and dotted all 'i's in the transaction.

"RealtiPLUSWeb eliminates duplicate file information: It's compact, faster, more comprehensive, but with fewer screens and less work, and with a much friendlier user interface," says Twose, one of nine staff in the firm of Kirby, Robinson & Treslan. "I also like the built-in discipline of the imposed checklists. Even if I am not title insuring a deal, those checklists make me look at the off-title issues and title inquiries. They're an excellent tool."

The checklists, adds Robinson, provide a level of comfort about the soundness of a transaction. "We start from the full list and narrow it down to issues that apply to each particular transaction. That way we know that we have made the right inquiries." The integrated access to title insurance is another plus: "Even setting aside the extra protection that TitlePLUS provides, it just makes economic sense to use title insurance on just about every deal."

"RealtiPLUSWeb ensures there's consistency in the way we in our practice, and lawyers generally, practise real estate – as well as offering us a tool that streamlines our practices."

Remote access a bonus



*Tom Rassos,
Goldstein Rosen & Rassos LLP*

Although his staff is still familiarizing itself with the many features of RealtiPLUSWeb, the benefits of using RealtiPLUSWeb far outweigh any short-term inconveniences, says Toronto-based real estate practitioner Tom Rassos of Goldstein Rosen & Rassos LLP.

“Being able to access RealtiPLUSWeb from any computer is a big plus. If your computer goes down, you don’t have to worry about losing access to the program – and to your ability to work. And because the Web-based version stores all data offsite, the strain on our backup system is less – which I hope will reduce hardware and software expenses,” explains Rassos.

As well, being able to review files remotely – from home, for example – enables him to review files at a more relaxed pace, without the inevitable interruptions that come with a busy practice.

The program itself also offers numerous pluses: “With various builder deals, most fields are pre-populated, saving my staff time and reducing the chance of errors. Similarly, the fact that RealtiPLUSWeb integrates all software required to complete a standard deal – from Teraview® to TitlePLUS to word processing – is a bonus. And because I can see a listing of all of our transactions on a weekly basis, I can better plan my work week.”

These many benefits more than offset the time it takes to learn all about RPWeb, he adds. “Our focus is on the long-term – and from that perspective, the benefits of RealtiPLUSWeb are very clear. Real estate conveyancing has changed dramatically. As lawyers, we can either be dragged into the future kicking and screaming, or we can embrace technology and enjoy the ride. With RealtiPLUSWeb, it looks like clear sailing to me!”

RPWeb shaves 30 minutes off each transaction



Randall Johns and Bobbi Brescacin

Even though it was mid-summer and the middle of the busiest selling season; even though she had never used an online application before; even though she had to teach herself where things were on the various screens; after only one deal Bobbi Brescacin vowed she'd never use anything but RealtiPLUSWeb.

"I enter data once, instead of three times. All parts of the file are updated automatically. Every time I save on the system, I can see my computer connecting to TitlePLUS – and if I have missed something, I'm prompted to give that issue my attention. So by the time I come to print off the final closing documents, I know that everything I need on that file is there," says Brescacin, law clerk in Randall Johns's busy Thunder Bay practice.

Johns estimates that using RealtiPLUSWeb instead of another conveyancing program shaves about 30 minutes off each transaction – about three person days in the last four months

alone. "Frankly, RealtiPLUSWeb helped us cope with a busy summer," he says.

He's also impressed with the fact that he can import his own precedents, customize documents and generate everything on his firm's letterhead – with minimal effort. He singles out the presentation and detail in the documents generated – specifically in the closing letter and cash flow summary – for praise. "They're more comprehensive than what we might have done in the past – but an excellent way of improving the service that we now provide to clients." And the checklists that RPWeb automatically generates are a bonus: "They provide reassurance that we've done the deal the way it should be done."

Moreover, RPWeb is a "natural fit" now that e-reg has come to Thunder Bay, he adds. "Once other lawyers dip their toes in the water and see how easy it is to work online, they'll want to dive right into RealtiPLUSWeb. The timing is perfect."