

2011



Broker Survey on
Syndication Issues

Council of Multiple Listing Services

Clareity Consulting
www.CallClareity.com

Executive Summary






On behalf of the Council of Multiple Listing Services (CMLS), Clareity Consulting conducted an online survey of brokers regarding listing syndication issues during the last two weeks of April 2011, with CMLS members encouraging their brokers to participate via email, website and social media channels. Once invalid submissions had been removed¹, there were over 2100 answers, resulting in a survey margin of error of +/-2.12%. Following is a summary of key findings:

- 71% support MLS syndication to publishers at broker's request. 11% are neutral and 19% are in opposition.
- 53% participate in an MLS provided syndication service. 30% do not and the remainder does not know.
- 46% syndicate both via the MLS and independently or through a franchise. 45% do not, 9% don't know. Among larger brokerage (over 26 agents), over 72% syndicate both via MLS and independently or through a franchise.
- 46% are aware that non-MLS syndication of listings is creating duplicate listings on web portals
- 70% are aware that many non-MLS methods of listing syndication don't provide methods of keeping listings up to date.
- 46% say that, if they syndicate listings by means other than the MLS, they always manually keep them up to date and take them down when a property sells. 22% only sometimes update the listings and 32% never update them. Among those who are aware that non-MLS syndication creates duplicate listings, 50% say they always update the listings manually, 24% sometimes update them and 26% never do so. Among those who are aware that non-MLS syndication creates non-updated listings, 50% say they always update the listings manually, 23% sometimes update them and 27% never do so.
- 22% have received information on syndication portals (traffic, their display practices and terms of use) from the MLS. Of those participating in MLS syndication services, 29% have received such information.
- 36% receive traffic information from the syndication providers (Point2 and ListHub).
- 78% are concerned regarding the level of listing data accuracy on syndication portals. 13% are neutral and 9% are not very concerned or concerned at all.
- 79% are concerned regarding unauthorized re-syndication. Among larger brokerages, more than 83% are concerned.
- 52% expect that MLSs will "very aggressively" police syndication portals and protect listing data. Another 25% expect MLSs will "somewhat aggressively" do so.

There were many comments made by respondents including complaints regarding the business practices of publishers, as well as accuracy and listing duplication; a desire to pull back from listing syndication – but also support for the syndication and its benefits; calls for controls over or rules for publishers and for the MLS to police them – but also a few concerns over MLSs policing the publishers.

¹ At least one Chicago broker decided to "vote early and often"!




Detailed Results

Many MLSs offer services that allow the firm to syndicate (send & display) your listings to portals like Zillow, Trulia, etc. Do you support the MLS sending listings to third party websites (syndication) at the request of the broker?	
Total Responses - 2104	99.62%
Strongly Support - 820	 38.97%
Support - 667	 31.70%
Neutral / Don't Know - 225	 10.69%
Oppose - 231	 10.98%
Strongly Oppose - 161	 7.65%

How many agents work at your firm?

Many MLSs offer services that allow the firm to syndicate (send & display) your listings to portals like Zillow, Trulia, etc. Do you support the MLS sending listings to third party websites (syndication) at the request of the broker?




	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 25	26 to 50	More than 50	Row Total / %
Strongly Support	509 38.7%	100 48.3%	64 34.6%	43 39.8%	78 38.4%	794 39.3%
Support	401 30.5%	58 28.0%	75 40.5%	35 32.4%	67 33.0%	636 31.5%
Neutral / Don't Know	163 12.4%	12 5.8%	12 6.5%	10 9.3%	19 9.4%	216 10.7%
Oppose	145 11.0%	23 11.1%	21 11.4%	9 8.3%	18 8.9%	216 10.7%
Strongly Oppose	97 7.4%	14 6.8%	13 7.0%	11 10.2%	21 10.3%	156 7.7%
Column Total / %	1315 65.2%	207 10.3%	185 9.2%	108 5.4%	203 10.1%	2018

Do you participate in a service offered by the MLS to syndicate (send & display) your listings to portals like Zillow, Trulia, etc.?	
Total Responses - 2093	99.10%
Yes - 1104	 52.75%
No - 630	 30.10%
Don't Know - 359	 17.15%

How many agents work at your firm?

Do you participate in a service offered by the MLS to syndicate (send & display) your listings to portals like Zillow, Trulia, etc.?



	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 25	26 to 50	More than 50	Row Total / %
Yes	584 44.6%	128 61.8%	118 64.1%	86 81.1%	153 76.1%	1069 53.3%
No	474 36.2%	42 20.3%	40 21.7%	16 15.1%	26 12.9%	598 29.8%
Don't Know	251 19.2%	37 17.9%	26 14.1%	4 3.8%	22 10.9%	340 16.9%
Column Total / %	1309 65.2%	207 10.3%	184 9.2%	106 5.3%	201 10.0%	2007



Do you syndicate your listings both via the MLS AND independently or through your franchise?	
Total Responses - 2095	99.20%
Yes - 970	 46.30%
No - 938	 44.77%
Don't Know - 187	 8.93%




How many agents work at your firm?

Do you syndicate your listings both via the MLS AND independently or through your franchise?

	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 25	26 to 50	More than 50	Row Total / %
Yes	493 37.7%	116 56.0%	106 57.3%	78 72.2%	146 72.3%	939 46.7%
No	694 53.1%	75 36.2%	63 34.1%	26 24.1%	33 16.3%	891 44.4%
Don't Know	120 9.2%	16 7.7%	16 8.6%	4 3.7%	23 11.4%	179 8.9%
Column Total / %	1307 65.1%	207 10.3%	185 9.2%	108 5.4%	202 10.1%	2009

Are you aware that non-MLS syndication of listings is creating duplicate listings on web portals?	
Total Responses - 2065	97.77%
Yes - 947	 45.86%
No - 1118	 54.14%

Are you aware that many non-MLS methods of listing syndication don't provide methods of keeping listings up to date?	
Total Responses - 2094	99.15%
Yes - 1456	 69.53%
No - 638	 30.47%

If you syndicate your listings by means other than the MLS, do you manually keep your syndicated listings up to date and take them down when a property sells?	
Total Responses - 1787	84.61%
Always - 820	 45.89%
Sometimes - 400	 22.38%
Never - 567	 31.73%

Are you aware that non-MLS syndication of listings is creating duplicate listings on web portals?



If you syndicate your listings by means other than the MLS, do you manually keep your syndicated listings up to date and take them down when a property sells?

	Yes	No	Row Total / %
Always	413 50.2%	391 42.0%	804 45.8%
Sometimes	194 23.6%	196 21.0%	390 22.2%
Never	215 26.2%	345 37.0%	560 31.9%
Column Total / %	822 46.9%	932 53.1%	1754

Are you aware that many non-MLS methods of listing syndication don't provide methods of keeping listings up to date?

If you syndicate your listings by means other than the MLS, do you manually keep your syndicated listings up to date and take them down when a property sells?



	Yes	No	Row Total / %
Always	622 50.1%	193 35.8%	815 45.8%
Sometimes	289 23.3%	111 20.6%	400 22.5%
Never	331 26.7%	235 43.6%	566 31.8%
Column Total / %	1242 69.7%	539 30.3%	1781






Have you received any information on syndication portals (traffic, their display practices and terms of use) from your MLS?	
Total Responses - 2038	96.50%
Yes - 445	 21.84%
No - 1593	 78.16%






Do you participate in a service offered by the MLS to syndicate (send & display) your listings to portals like Zillow, Trulia, etc.?

Have you received any information on syndication portals (traffic, their display practices and terms of use) from your MLS?

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Row Total / %
Yes	312 29.2%	98 16.1%	33 9.5%	443 21.9%
No	757 70.8%	512 83.9%	315 90.5%	1584 78.1%
Column Total / %	1069 52.7%	610 30.1%	348 17.2%	2027

Do you receive traffic information from the syndication providers you use (Point2, ListHub)	
Total Responses - 1989	94.18%
Yes - 725	 36.45%
No - 1264	 63.55%

What is your level of concern regarding the level of accuracy of your listing data on syndication portals?	
Total Responses - 2071	98.06%
Very Concerned - 1070	 51.67%
Somewhat Concerned - 564	 27.23%
Neutral - 264	 12.75%
Not Very Concerned - 114	 5.50%
Not Concerned at All - 59	 2.85%

What is your level of concern regarding the unauthorized re-syndication of your listings on the Internet?	
Total Responses - 2079	98.44%
Very Concerned - 1164	 55.99%
Somewhat Concerned - 474	 22.80%
Neutral - 241	 11.59%
Not Very Concerned - 116	 5.58%
Not Concerned at All - 84	 4.04%

How many agents work at your firm?

What is your level of concern regarding the unauthorized re-syndication of your listings on the Internet?

	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 25	26 to 50	More than 50	Row Total / %
Very Concerned	687 52.8%	117 57.1%	105 57.7%	69 63.9%	132 65.7%	1110 55.6%
Somewhat Concerned	326 25.1%	40 19.5%	44 24.2%	20 18.5%	35 17.4%	465 23.3%
Neutral	164 12.6%	25 12.2%	21 11.5%	8 7.4%	12 6.0%	230 11.5%
Not Very Concerned	67 5.2%	20 9.8%	8 4.4%	4 3.7%	14 7.0%	113 5.7%
Not Concerned at All	56 4.3%	3 1.5%	4 2.2%	7 6.5%	8 4.0%	78 3.9%
Column Total / %	1300 65.1%	205 10.3%	182 9.1%	108 5.4%	201 10.1%	1996

How aggressive do you expect your MLS to be in policing the syndication portals and protecting your listing data?	
Total Responses - 2085	98.72%
Very aggressively - 1094	52.47%
Somewhat aggressively - 525	25.18%
Neutral - 265	12.71%
Not very aggressively - 68	3.26%
No expectation for MLS to police - 133	6.38%

How many agents work at your firm?

How aggressive do you expect your MLS to be in policing the syndication portals and protecting your listing data?

	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 25	26 to 50	More than 50	Row Total / %
Very aggressively	664 51.0%	105 50.5%	106 57.6%	65 60.2%	112 55.7%	1052 52.5%
Somewhat aggressively	328 25.2%	53 25.5%	48 26.1%	23 21.3%	50 24.9%	502 25.1%
Neutral	180 13.8%	28 13.5%	19 10.3%	11 10.2%	18 9.0%	256 12.8%
Not very aggressively	46 3.5%	6 2.9%	5 2.7%	1 0.9%	7 3.5%	65 3.2%
No expectation for MLS to police	83 6.4%	16 7.7%	6 3.3%	8 7.4%	14 7.0%	127 6.3%
Column Total / %	1301 65.0%	208 10.4%	184 9.2%	108 5.4%	201 10.0%	2002

About Council of Multiple Listing Services

The Council of Multiple Listing Services was formed in 1957, as the Northwest Council of MLS. The three founding members of Northwest Council recognized the need to share ideas, service models and management concepts. The brainstorm of these MLS leaders evolved into a volunteer-led organization with a membership that stretches across all of North America. CMLS' mission is to successfully act as the premier forum and resource for Multiple Listing Service organizations. CMLS' goal is to provide facilitation of practical information and cutting edge management ideas to empower members (and their constituents) to meet the challenges of changing technology, legal issues, and organizational structures.

For North American MLS Professionals, CMLS is the only information-sharing organization that is solely dedicated to strengthening the MLS industry.

More Information: <http://councilofmls.com/>

*With Our Sincere Appreciation for Their Support,
CMLS Thanks Clareity Consulting & Clareity Security
For Preparing, Hosting and Compiling the Results of
This Survey*

About Clareity Consulting

Clareity Consulting brings clients a fresh insights and wide perspective gained by serving clients throughout the industry – associations and MLSs, brokerages, franchises, technology vendors and others. Clareity's services include:

STRATEGIC AND BUSINESS PLANNING

Clareity provides strategic, governance, and product/service business planning that bridges the gaps between strategy, tactics, and the timely activities needed to support your goals. Clareity also facilitates MLS regionalization and data shares.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Addressing leadership or large groups on timely topics – informative and fun - popular topics include MLS trends and system options, information security, and real estate technology trends such as cloud computing and mobile technologies.

PRODUCT / SERVICE / SOFTWARE REVIEW

Clareity performs customer surveys and market research, develops product strategies and specifications, performs usability and quality assurance, security audits, and facilitates user groups. Clareity also facilitates strategic alliances, mergers & acquisitions.

WEBSITE PLANNING AND REVIEW

Clareity helps improve website design, usability and content, accounting for key factors such as SEO and mobile experience. Clareity also creates specifications and helps clients select the best partners to produce, and provide compelling content for, their web application.

For more information please contact:

Gregg Larson
480-368-8100

Gregg.Larson@CallClareity.com

Or visit: <http://www.CallClareity.com>

SYSTEM SELECTION

From needs assessment and RFP to contract negotiation - for MLS, TMS, Public Records, and other offerings - Clareity's structured processes help your organization make a good business decision with stakeholder involvement.

COMPLIANCE AND RISK AUDITS

Providing information security, risk management and business resumption planning, staffing and salary reviews, and VOW / IDX compliance audits – Clareity brings both independent view and technical skills.

RECRUITING

Your business is only as successful as your leaders and employees, and Clareity has discreetly helped recruit some of the brightest minds in our industry for their current positions, both executive and technical.

EXPERT WITNESS

Whether it's a matter of the policies and practice of organized real estate or a more technical software dispute, Clareity can provide an expert witness with integrity and experience to write expert opinions and provide depositions and testimony.

Matt Cohen
612-331-1788

Matt.Cohen@CallClareity.com