

April 11, 2006

To: David Charron
From: Steve Murray
RE: Copyright Report

“Strengthening the Foundation” is among the most important documents yet written that details the ability of real estate professionals to protect and preserve one part of the value they deliver to each other and consumers: listing content.

Regardless of whether you believe in sharing listing content widely to any and all parties who might want to use or display it, or you believe that it should be carefully controlled, all should agree that by first copyrighting listing content its producers also preserve the right to determine where and by whom it is used throughout its useful life. After all brokerage firms and real estate professionals expend significant expense in creating listing content. They should be able to establish legal title to listing content in return for the cost of creating it and sharing it with others.

While there may be disagreement about how much protection residential MLS content should have with whom it should be shared, even those firms operating non-traditional realty business would agree that copyrights, trademarks and patents should receive the full protection of the law and that creative entrepreneurs deserve to have their rights respected.

David Charron and the team of professionals who created this document and the simplified method for creating a copyright for each listing are to be commended for doing so. While many have talked about “protecting our data”, Charron, Erik Feig and J. T. Westermeier have actually created the necessary series of steps to create and preserve copyright protections for listing content.