dsSearchAgent

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SOLUTIONS

Introduction

Diverse Solutions' dsSearchAgent IDX program was created out of a need for agents and brokers to have a superior public-facing property location system. Previous technology by other companies attempted to address such a desire, but different shortcomings in each solution prevented it from becoming the de facto solution in any given market. Given the radically changing web landscape and the massive increase in buyers turning to the Internet to find a home, we took on the tremendous task of developing an application to serve the needs of everyone involved.

What we came up with is unique in so many ways. With our detail-oriented staff of software engineers, we were able to produce something that addresses every issue that other IDX programs have and create a feature set that overcomes even the largest real-estate search sites on the Internet today. Our IDX solution, which makes an interactive map onto which properties are plotted the central focus point, is blazingly fast, incredibly flexible, extremely simple to use, and is even powerful enough that many agents have told us that they use our solution instead of their MLS's own search capabilities.

Our forward facing search for buyers (and even agents) leaves nothing to be desired. Visitors can search for properties by just dragging and dropping different elements on the web page and by interacting with the map. Every search that a visitor makes is returned instantly, and the matching results are displayed on that same page without reloading; essentially, there's just no need to wait. Each individual property, whether on the map or listed in the search results section, can be clicked on to instantly switch the program from the map tab to a full-featured property details tab. On it, the visitor will find all of the information about that property as well as a contact form, a mortgage calculator, a Zillow Zestimate (when desired by the agent or broker), a Google Street View of the property, a mini-map, school and community information, and so much more.

What Makes dsSearchAgent Unique?

Cutting Edge Interface

We have used the most advanced programming techniques to date to ensure that everything a visitor does is responded to instantly. In fact, we were able to speed things up so much compared to other IDX providers that we were able to combine the entire property search experience seamlessly onto a single page. While it is still a web page in nature, it performs very much like a desktop application that is already on your computer. dsSearchAgent uses a multi-tab interface to allow visitors to quickly flip back and forth between the search panel and the results panel and the map panel and property details panel. This approach entirely eliminates the cumbersome multi-page search interface that all other IDX providers have.

Complete Customization

Nearly every single feature discussed in this document, and then some, is completely customizable. The controlling agent, broker, or MLS has the flexibility to change everything from the colors that are used, to the way visitors narrow down their search, to what the map actually displays, to the map's starting point, and even which panels are shown within each property's details area.
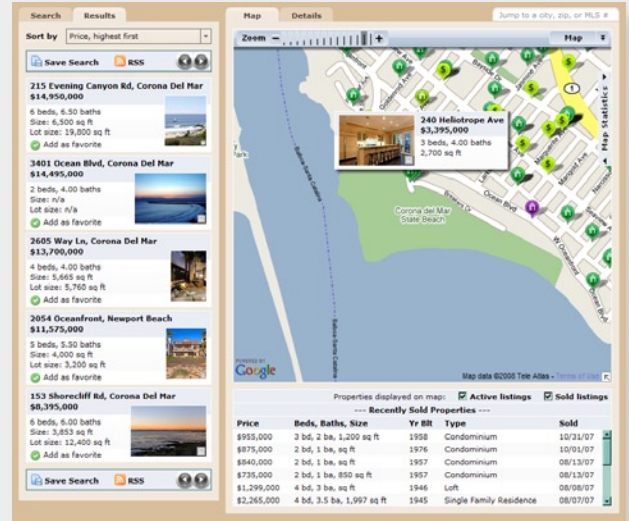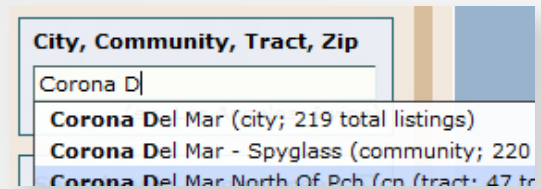
Searching

Search Criteria Input

Instead of overwhelming visitors with a sea of textboxes, checkboxes, and city selection dropdowns, we choose to keep things simple yet powerful. By default, dsSearchAgent presents visitors with a number of different "sliders" that visitors can drag and drop with their mouse to narrow down their search. Visitors are also given the option to instead use textboxes to input their search information if they so choose.
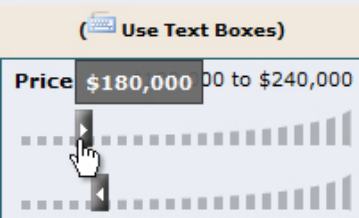
Auto-Complete Locations

While other IDX providers use clunky drop down menus and large multi-select boxes to let visitors select the cities, we implemented a location search box that will instantly show the matching cities, communities, tracts, neighborhoods, and zip codes as soon as a visitor begins to type. Visitors can then continue typing while looking at the suggestions, or they can use their mouse or keyboard to select one of the locations in the auto-complete box. This approach allows visitors to find properties in certain areas very quickly.

Search Within Map Area

It's often more convenient to search for properties within a map area instead of searching within the confines of a certain city, neighborhood, or other location. With dsSearchAgent, visitors can create their search criteria and then

place a check in the checkbox to search only within their current map view. Visitors can also search within certain parts of cities, tracts, neighborhoods, communities, or zips by specifying that criteria in addition to this option. Using this feature is especially helpful with larger cities, cities with differing tax rates, or when visitors want to search for properties close to a certain school or employer.

City Markers

Utilizing advanced mathematics and the standard property data that every MLS provides us with, we are able to calculate the centers and general bounds of each city. Using this data, dsSearchAgent intelligently places a certain number of city
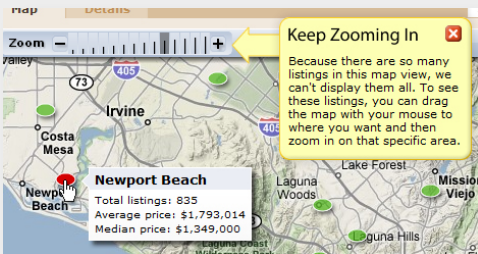
markers on the map at the center of each city. When the visitor hovers over one of these markers, the city name will appear along with the total number of listings for that city, the median home price, and the mean home price. Upon clicking on one of the markers, the visitor's map is instantly changed to focus on that city.

Viewing Results

Mapped Results

Once the number of properties that match the search criteria (if any) is low enough and the visitor has zoomed in enough, the properties will be placed on the map for visitors to either hover over for a quick preview or click on to take them to the full details page. The color and style of each property's marker indicates whether they have clicked on it visited before (dark green), whether the agent or office holds the listing (red or dark red), whether they have added
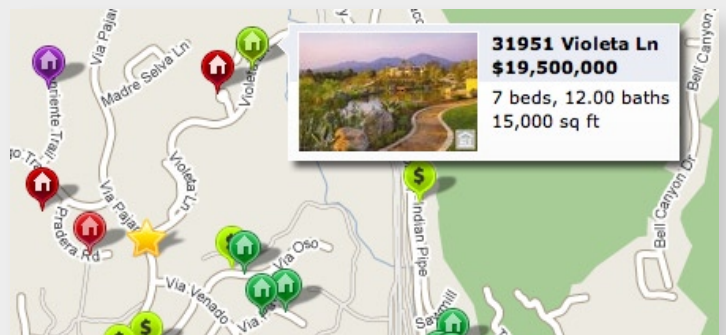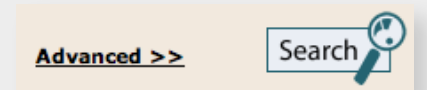
"Quick Find" Search Box

Sometimes visitors just want to quickly jump to a particular city or zip code within the map, or they already know the MLS number of a listing that they liked before. Using the "quick find" search box at the top-right of the map, a visitor can simply start typing the name of a city or zip code or the start of an MLS number, find what they are looking for in the auto complete drop down box, and hit enter. Without leaving the page, the visitors map will instantly zoom into the desired city or zip; if they entered an MLS number, the property will be instantly loaded in the "Details" tab.
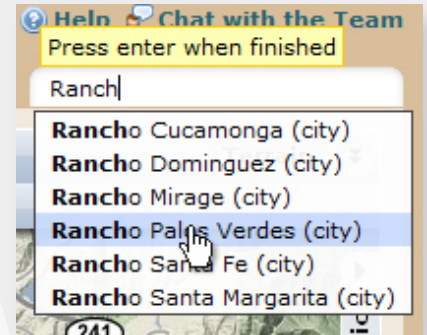
Advanced Search

In an effort to curb the clutter that practically defines every other IDX solution, dsSearchAgent presents each visitor with a very clean-looking interface that highlights the search options that are most often used and hides the others. To access the more advanced options, a visitor only needs to click on the "Advanced>>" link. In the advanced search panel, visitors will find the ability to search for properties by days on market, year built, and MLS number, as well as be able to choose what property types they are looking for and what features are important to them.

the listing to their favorites (a star), whether the property was recently sold (dollar sign), or whether it is the currently selected property (purple). A full legend and help system is available to describe how the map works and what the different markers mean.

Returned Results

After a visitor specifies the criteria they are looking for in a home and clicks the "Search" button, they are, instantly, taken to the results of their search on the results tab. The results are cleanly laid out with each listing displaying a thumbnail photo and the property's primary information. Viewing the next page of results is quick and easy; clicking on the "Next" or "Previous" links makes the results smoothly scroll to the desired page.

Instant Sorting

Once a search has been performed and the results displayed, the visitor can quickly change the ordering of their results. By changing the "Sort by" drop down box, they can reorder the properties so that those with the largest lots are first, the newest properties come first, the most recently updated properties come first, or any number of additional sort options. Sorting, similar to everything else, is performed in real-time and is completed instantly.

Email Updates

On every search that a visitor makes, they are given the option to subscribe to daily or weekly email updates for that search. Each email is richly formatted and contains extensive details about each property that matched their search. Clicking on any of the properties in the email will bring the visitor back to the branded dsSearchAgent page where they can view even more details.

RSS Feeds

Unlike any other IDX solution on the market, dsSearchAgent allows visitors to create their own RSS feeds for any search they perform. Similar to email updates, an RSS feed can provide visitors with updates on a particular search or on a particular property. However, the benefit of using an RSS feeds over receiving email updates is that RSS feeds allow visitors to receive the updates on their own time instead of sending them emails that they may be more likely to delete.
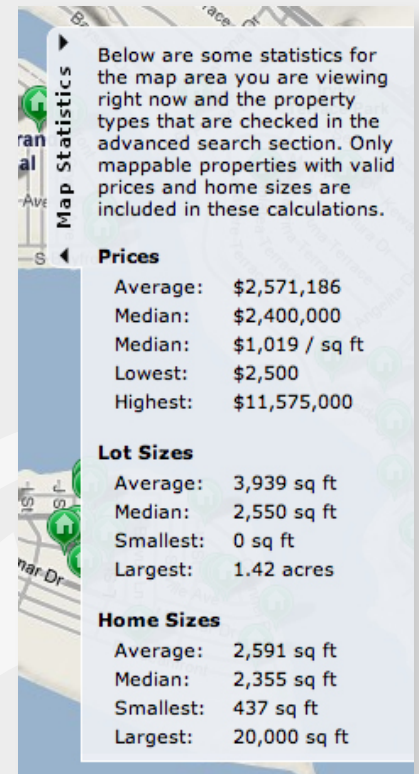
Map Statistics

Another first for the industry is dsSearchAgent's slide-out map statistics panel. Once the page loads, and whenever the map is dragged, zoomed, or otherwise changed, property statistics for the new map view and selected property types are automatically loaded in the background. Once loaded, a quick mouse-over on the "Map Statistics" tab on the right side of the map will reveal the median, mean, high, and low property prices for that area. It will also show the price-per-square-foot as well as matching statistics for the lot sizes and home sizes for that area.

Map Statistics

Below are some statistics for the map area you are viewing right now and the property types that are checked in the advanced search section. Only mappable properties with valid prices and home sizes are included in these calculations.

Prices
Average:	$2,571,186
Median:	$2,400,000
Median:	$1,019 / sq ft
Lowest:	$2,500
Highest:	$11,575,000

Lot Sizes
Average:	3,939 sq ft
Median:	2,550 sq ft
Smallest:	0 sq ft
Largest:	1.42 acres

Home Sizes
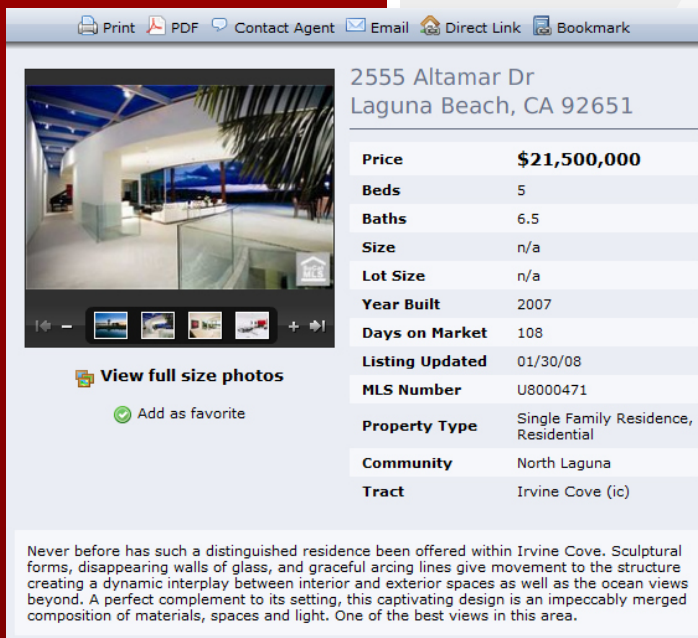|	
Average:	2,591 sq ft
Median:	2,355 sq ft
Smallest:	437 sq ft
Largest:	20,000 sq ft

Property Details

General Info and Photo Slideshow

For every property that has more than one photo, a Flash® photo slideshow is displayed. The speed and transition at which photos are shown is perfect for visitors, and its automatic play and pause functionality allows them to effortlessly view all of the photos without touching anything. Additionally, visitors can click the "View Full Size Photos" link to view the original photos provided by the MLS.

All of the standard property information is well organized and easily available as soon as a property is loaded. Not only can visitors quickly find what they are looking for, but they can also print the listing (along with a small map), view a PDF for the listing, contact the agent about the listing, share the property with a friend via email, and bookmark the property in their browser's favorites. They can also view any virtual tours available for the property or add the property to their dsSearchAgent favorites.

Print | PDF | Contact Agent | Email | Direct Link | Bookmark

2555 Altamar Dr
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

|	
Price	$21,500,000
Beds	5
Baths	6.5
Size	n/a
Lot Size	n/a
Year Built	2007
Days on Market	108
Listing Updated	01/30/08
MLS Number	U8000471
Property Type	Single Family Residence, Residential
Community	North Laguna
Tract	Irvine Cove (ic)

View full size photos

Add as favorite

Never before has such a distinguished residence been offered within Irvine Cove. Sculptural forms, disappearing walls of glass, and graceful arcing lines give movement to the structure creating a dynamic interplay between interior and exterior spaces as well as the ocean views beyond. A perfect complement to its setting, this captivating design is an impeccably merged composition of materials, spaces and light. One of the best views in this area.

Mini-Map with Local Place Finder

The mini-map module and local place finder provides powerful functionality for your visitors to keep them engaged. The map allows visitors to explore the property in more detail without flipping back to the map tab or losing their search, and the local place finder allows them to find places to eat, parks to explore, places to meet friends, and anything else that would be useful to locate.

Google Street View

Google's Street View technology gives your visitors a chance to explore the neighborhood surrounding the listing without ever leaving their chair. By clicking and dragging on the initial picture, they can zoom, pan, and move the street view imagery to get a comprehensive understanding of the surrounding neighborhood on their own time.
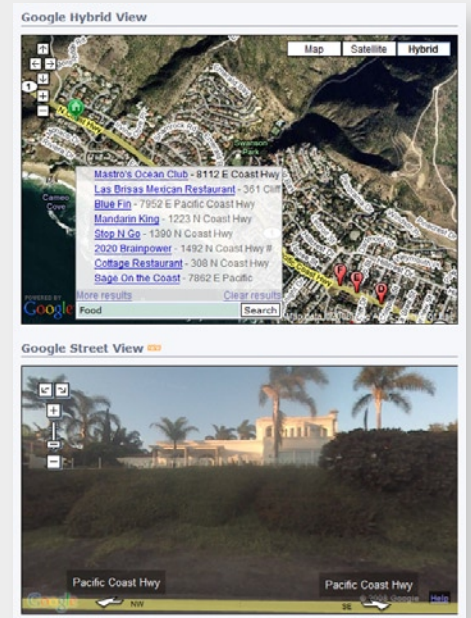
Mortgage Calculator

The mortgage calculator is automatically set up for each property to calculate a mortgage payment based on a 20% down payment and a fixed mortgage rate that is easily adjustable in the admin area. The calculator itself works instantly, meaning that visitors don't have to wait even a little bit before they find the result.

Zillow® Zestimates

When the data is available, the Zillow panel built into each property displays the Zestimate®, value range, 30 day change, and the data-last-updated date for each property. Additionally, visitors are shown an appealing chart that details the changes in that property's Zestimate over the past year. Visitors are also given a link that opens in a new window to Zillow's information about the property. Like any of the other details panels, this panel can easily be turned on or off by the agent, broker, or MLS executive.

School and Community Info

With relevant community information being so important to prospective buyers, school and community information is paramount to the sale of any property. dsSearchAgent satisfies this need by providing a wealth of information on the local schools, demographics, crime, housing stats, family facts, education, economy, health, climate, and even local stores and restaurants. Visitors get everything they need to know from a single spot.

Contact Form

The contact form built into each property details helps convert the visitors into leads. In just a few quick seconds and without leaving the page, the visitor can put in their email address and any other information they wish and instantly let the agent know that they are interested in a particular property. Once the submission is complete (less than a second), they are notified that an agent will get back to them; they can then continue uninterrupted with their search.

dsAgentChat Instant Messaging

Our proprietary dsAgentChat instant messaging technology is fully integrated into our IDX solution, allowing web site visitors to easily chat via instant message directly with an agent. For added flexibility, the agent can either use the admin area of their web site, a desktop client application, or even their cell phone to chat with their visitors. dsAgentChat can also be configured to distribute incoming chat requests in round-robin fashion among a group of agents in an office.
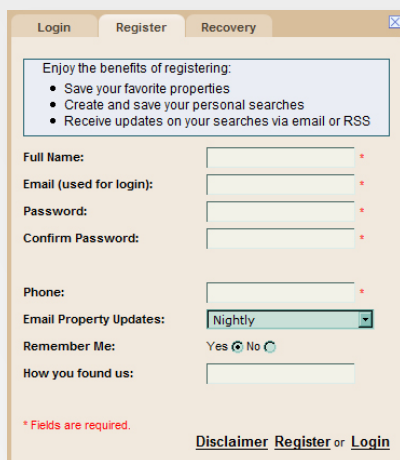
Visitor Registration

Registration Dialog

Like everything else in dsSearchAgent, visitor registration is instant and doesn't require them to leave the page, their search, or the property they are viewing. The instant an unregistered visitor tries to access a registered-users-only feature (adding property favorites, viewing RSS feeds, setting up email updates, and viewing saved or previous searches), the screen is dimmed and they are presented with a few very simple options. They can either use an account they created earlier to login, or they can sign up for a new account. Either option is almost effortless, and once they have signed-in or registered, the screen is returned to normal and they can continue to perform searches and view property details without missing a beat.

Encouraging or Requiring Registration

With dsSearchAgent, agents or brokers have a multitude of options when it comes to capturing a visitors' information through registration.

By default, all visitors can use dsSearchAgent completely unhindered and register only when they want to use any of the registered-users-only features. Throughout their experience, unregistered users are presented with "sticky notes" at strategic times that point out all of the benefits they get from registering. While some users will still continue to use the system and skip registration, most users actually do register to take advantage of these features. Quite often, agents and brokers find that these users are better quality leads and are much less likely to give false information than those who are forced to register.

If an agent of broker does want to force registration, they have a number of options. One option is to force visitors to register after performing a specified number of searches. A second option is to force them to register after viewing the details on a specified number of properties. Another option is to allow them to search but force them to register before viewing the full details of a property. The final option is to force them to register as soon as they try to search.

Saved Searches

Every search a registered visitor makes is automatically saved in their saved searches history. At any time, that visitor can choose to name the last search they made so that they can quickly find it later.

If a registered visitor wants to view either their saved searches or just their search history, they can click on the "Searches" link at the top of the map. Without leaving the page, they will be presented with a tabbed box that they can use to explore their searches. Clicking on any of the searches will return the screen to normal and show the visitor the results of that search.
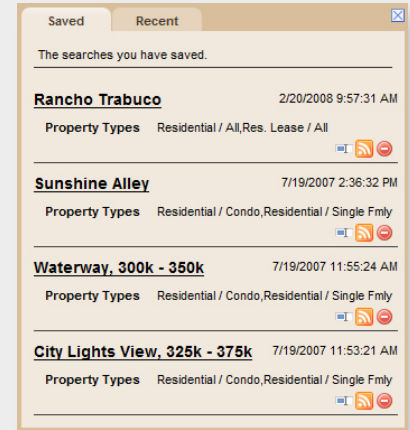
Favorite Properties

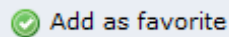Throughout a registered visitor's experience, they are given the option to add different properties into their collection of favorites. A single click on one of the "Add to Favorites" links will instantly mark the property as a favorite and change the link to make them aware of this. The entire process occurs seamlessly without losing their place.

If a visitor would like to view their favorites, they can easily click on the "Favorites" link just above the map. Doing so will immediately plot all of their favorites on the map and show them more information about each of their favorites in the results tab.

Control Panel

Dashboard

dsSearchAgent is just as easy to use and powerful for the agents and brokers who use it as it is for its visitors. Each agent and / or broker is given a unique login and password that they can use to access the dashboard in the Diverse Solutions' control panel.

From the dashboard, the agent or broker can choose to go to any the different areas that make up their admin area.

Help videos are integrated throughout the system, and support requests and feature suggestions are encouraged through the feedback form placed within the dashboard. Finally, a live news feed highlighting the enhancements we make and features we continue to add to dsSearchAgent is displayed to ensure that our clients know that their Diverse Solutions' technology will never grow stale.

Contact Management

We know that creating and maintaining relationships with your clients is what an IDX solution is really all about, so we spent a great deal of time creating a content management system (CMS) that allows you to quickly and effectively manage your connections with those clients. The contact manager can be used for everything from viewing what each client was searching for and the properties they marked as their favorites to managing every bit and type of correspondence one would have with the potential or current client.

Clients can be grouped, tagged, assigned by brokers, "starred" for future reference, edited, and assigned to different statuses (active, inactive, etc). Client-specific files can be uploaded, downloaded, and shared amongst agents and brokers within the office. Each client's contact information can be edited or supplemented in almost every way possible. Finally, personal notes can be taken on each contact in order to keep track of things which might otherwise get lost in the mix.


Custom Links and RSS Feeds

An IDX solution by itself isn't nearly as good as when it's complimented by a web site or a blog. To get the most out of dsSearchAgent, the Control Panel allows agents and / or brokers to create custom links using specific, predefined search criteria that they can then use on their blog, on their web site, or in any of their marketing materials. Using the link builder, it's easy to create a search that, say, only finds townhouses within a certain map area and within a certain price range. Along similar lines, it's also very simple to create a custom RSS feed that just shows the listings of a particular agent or office that can then be consumed on any web site or blog.

Usage Statistics

In order to help keep agents and brokers aware of who is using their dsSearchAgent IDX solution, the Control Panel slices up visitor statistics in a number of different ways. First, the number of visitors for each day in the desired month is charted on a graph. The aggregate number of map searches, property detail views, regular searches, and RSS feed hits is then
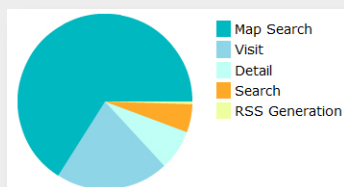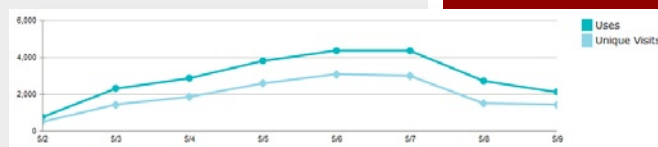
plotted on top of the visitor data; doing this gives the agent or broker an accurate representation of how many people are visiting their IDX versus how heavy their clients are actually using their IDX. Finally, the usage data is broken down into a pie chart so that the agent / broker can get a feel for exactly how their IDX solution is used by their client.

Web Site Modules

The dsSearchAgent web site modules allow agents and brokers to place slimmed-down IDX search modules directly into any web site they want. Each module is connected to a search link that is created in the admin area, and each link will function off of the continually-updated MLS data. Links can be set up to show anything and everything, from homes built after a certain year within a certain price range to homes listed only by a particular agent or broker office. Any time a web site visitor clicks on any of the properties, the full dsSearchAgent IDX is brought up, and the property they clicked on is immediately loaded.
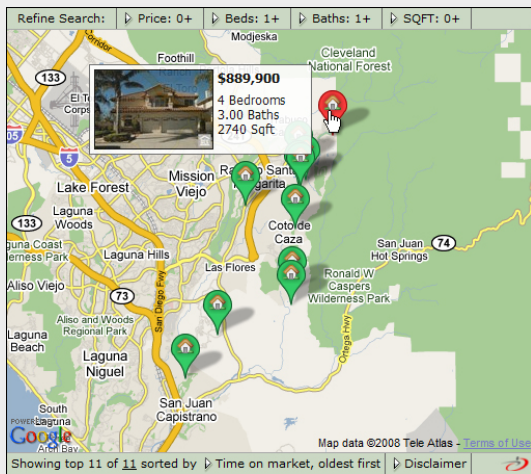
The **"Slideshow" module** can easily be used to display the main picture and the primary info of all of the properties that the link's search returns in a slideshow-like fashion. The slideshow is in auto-play mode when it loads, but visitors can easily pause and resume the slideshow as they wish. They can also flip through the properties using the next and previous icons as they wish.

The **"Map" module** can be used to place all of the properties that the link's search returns onto a map. Up to 25 of the results that match the link that was set up will be displayed. Hovering over the properties will bring up a small box that will show some quick information about the property. When a visitor clicks on any of the properties, the fully-features dsSearchAgent IDX solution will open up in a new window and will instantly load that property.
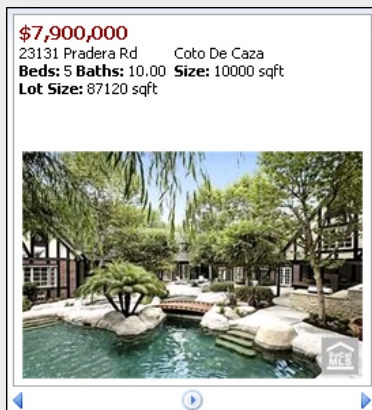
The **"Map Search" module** is a scaled-down version of the full IDX search and allows visitors to search for properties in a more condensed fashion. Visitors will be able to search for properties by price, beds, baths, and size (sq ft), and the top 25 properties that were found will be displayed on the map. When a visitor hovers over a property, some quick stats are displayed along with a picture. If a visitor wishes to see different properties according to a custom sort order, they can easily change it. Finally, visitors can click on the link showing the total number of results displayed to go to the main IDX.

Re-Map Listings

We know that the placement of the markers on the map are important to the usefulness of our dsSearchAgent IDX solution, so we allow agents and brokers to move the property markers on the map for each of their own listings if they so desire by simply dragging and dropping the markers in the "My Listings" area.

Customization Options

The client facing portion of dsSearchAgent can be customized for the agent or broker in almost every way imaginable. Among the over one hundred different customization options, agents and brokers can change all of the header information, configure dsAgentChat instant messaging, change how the sliders work, choose whether to use text boxes by default, switch the default map starting point, zoom level, and map type, and set up integration with Google Analytics and Top Producer.

The display of sold listings can be turned on or off, agent and office IDs can be entered so that the listings owned by those agents and offices will show up as a different color when searching, the default sort type can be customized, and the different property details modules can be turned on or off. Furthermore, the point at which visitors have to register can be chosen and the welcome and property result emails can be customized.

Finally, agents and brokers can choose one of the pre-made color schemes -- choices include "Oceanside," "Muted Vintage," and "Western Saloon" among many others -- or create their own completely custom color scheme so that their dsSearchAgent IDX solution matches their web site perfectly.

Conclusion

Built with the continuous input of many agents and power brokers from around the country, Diverse Solutions' dsSearchAgent IDX program is distinctive in far more ways than any IDX program before it. It exudes professionalism on many levels and excels at the ultimate goal of pleasing web site visitors and converting them into lifetime clients. It is intuitive and simple enough for novices, yet powerful enough for even the most advanced and demanding users. With so much to offer, and with the knowledge that dsSearchAgent brings with it over two decades of combined software engineering experience, you'll see why it's different the moment you start using it.

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