



# A new way to hunt for homes. Industry data now available through your REALTOR®.

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TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO SUN

August 14, 2009

Torontonians' passion for property has been re-ignited.

Nearly 10,000 Greater Toronto Area homeowners made the decision to move to their next residence in July, which represents a record for that month. Specifically, 9,967 homes changed hands, an increase of 28 per cent from July 2008.

After making a decision to move, many of these buyers likely began a preliminary search for their next home by using the Canadian Real Estate Association's public website REALTOR.ca.

Unlike the Multiple Listing Service®, which is a sophisticated computer database of sold, expired and active listings accessed only by REALTORS®, CREA's REALTOR.ca website advertises general information about resale homes available on the market.

With respect to newly built homes, an equivalent marketing vehicle doesn't exist, prompting some buyers to approach their search of this segment of the market by compiling newspaper clippings, website addresses and trade magazine advertisements. Searching for a new home using this strategy though means that many options are left unidentified.

Fortunately, there is a simple and comprehensive alternative to searching for newly constructed homes. Greater Toronto REALTORS® have access to a database of new home listings through RealNet Canada Inc. Founded in 1995, RealNet provides coverage in both the commercial real estate investment and residential development markets.

In the Greater Toronto Area, RealNet reports on 99 per cent of all developments greater than 15 units in size. Its database includes more than 35,000 current records, which are updated on a monthly basis.

This means that regardless of whether you're looking for a detached home in the suburbs, a high rise condo unit in the city, or anything in between, your REALTOR® can provide you with complete details on all of your new home construction options.

Like a typical MLS® inquiry, a search of the RealNet database can be conducted by housing type, location and price range. Once you have refined your criteria, even more information can be found like builder names, number of bedrooms, lot sizes and quantity of available units. You'll be able to learn about condo fees, occupancy dates, and the availability of parking and storage lockers as well.

Even if you already have a specific development in mind, your REALTOR's® access to RealNet information can help you measure your preferred builder's value proposition by offering a broader perspective of all available options. It will also help you to carefully weigh your decision with respect to choosing new versus resale housing.

As well, REALTORS® can obtain detailed statistical reports on the new home market through RealNet. Key information is highlighted including the number of product offerings, the previous month's sales, remaining inventory, average size, average price and average 12-month absorption by housing type.

Regardless of whether you're searching for a home with the latest design features or old-world charm, be sure to identify all of your options by talking to a REALTOR®. They can advise you on government programs for homebuyers, provide information on local amenities and negotiate a solid agreement on your behalf.

For more information about buying or selling a home, updates on the market and neighbourhood profiles visit [www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com](http://www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com).

*Tom Lebour is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 28,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.*