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## Power Tools on Technology

October 3, 2005

### Listen up for a cutting-edge way to promote your listings

REALTORS® looking for a new way to promote their listings should check out the latest "it" application of the moment: podcasting. The latest issue of Florida REALTOR® profiles Miami Beach sales associate Zahara Mossman, who [uses podcasts to spread the word](#) about properties for sale. The audio descriptions of listings appear to be attracting attention from potential buyers, who download her podcasts at a rate of 50 per day. "It's costing me a pretty penny, but in the long run I know it will be worth it — it already is. I'm getting referrals like you wouldn't believe; it's incredible," says Mossman.

September 30, 2005

### Internet helps promote competition, GAO finds

A report released this week by the U.S. General Accounting Office finds that [the Internet helps promote competitiveness in the real estate industry](#). "The Internet has changed the way consumers look for real estate and has facilitated the creation and expansion of alternatives to traditional brokers," the report says. Consumers have greater access to real estate information online, and alternative Internet-based brokerages have expanded consumers' options when buying and selling real estate. Several factors may limit real estate on the Internet, according to the GAO, such as restrictions on listing data and continued friction between traditional and discount brokerages. Despite the wealth of information on the Internet, the GAO believes real estate professionals won't be displaced by technology anytime soon: "Unlike transactions that can now be completed entirely on the Internet — such as purchasing airline tickets or trading securities — real estate transactions are likely to continue to involve at least some in-person services for the foreseeable future."

September 26, 2005

### Google, please find my car keys

If you tend to misplace your keys and other items now and then (and who doesn't?), you might be interested in the ["search engine for things"](#) envisioned by Institute for the Future's Alex Pang. RFID tags would be embedded onto common objects and could be tracked via GPS technology. Public scanners could read the RFID tags and make them searchable on the Web, so that finding a lost cellphone could just be a matter of entering a serial number into Google. If this all seems far-fetched, well... it is. "[S]uch services will appear in the distant future, if ever, experts say," reports the San Francisco Chronicle. But a few online services and gadgets are available that help make finding lost objects a little easier, and RFID kits may be available in the near future.

September 20, 2005

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### More in the Web



### Not better than the real thing, but just as effective

Virtual tours are gaining in popularity as a way to market properties. 42% of REALTORS® now offer virtual tours of listings on their websites, according to [NAR's latest Member Profile](#). Much of the credit goes to the [growing sophistication of virtual tour technology](#). "The amount of control you can have with virtual tours, now, with panning left and right and up and down – it's just amazing," the Center for REALTOR® Technology's Mark Lesswing said in the *Virginian-Pilot* this week. While they're no substitute for a real walk-through, virtual tours give shoppers a better view of a property than a few photos and the MLS listing description can provide. "Sometimes looks can be a little deceiving, but sometimes it's incredibly accurate," says Virginia Beach agent Laura Henry.

September 19, 2005

### Telecommuters wanted for long-term assignment

If you're a telecommuter looking for a place with wide-open spaces and great views, and have a particular fondness for the color red, [4Frontiers](#) has a deal for you. The Florida-based company [hopes to build a human settlement on Mars](#) within the next 20 years. The project has a few hurdles to overcome, including raising \$25 million to get started. "It's a question of when," co-founder Bruce Mackenzie told *Wired News*. "I really hope we get started before we have an economic decline that delays it. I'd really hate to have something like the Great Depression, or the Dark Ages that lasted several hundred years, delay getting into space."

September 15, 2005


### Psychologist, strategist, uber-salesperson

Do tech-savvy consumers make for tech-savvy real estate professionals? An article in the *Detroit Free Press* argues that Internet searches and greater access to MLS data are giving consumers more power in the real estate transaction than ever before, "and [have forced the real estate industry to become more tech savvy](#)." Brokers and agents who have met the challenge are finding that technology has given them an edge over the competition. Because more consumers are using technology to their advantage, the article says, "the role of the agent is changing from the keeper of the data to a strategist, psychologist and even more of an uber salesperson."

>> [See earlier posts](#)

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