TUESDAY TECH TIPS

A weekly update of real estate related tech news and tips

Need a change?

If you are a real estate agent in the Danville, San Ramon, Alamo, Diablo and Dublin area and you'd like to work with a broker that "gets" technology, come and talk with me!

I am the manager of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Drysdale Properties offices in San Ramon and Danville. Let's explore the possibilities!

The Blog

For the past 9 years I have been publishing a weekly blog for real estate professionals. Each week I find some new app, software program or some new gadget that I think will be helpful to you in your business. Occasionally, I slip in a little sales training that I think you would useful too.

And on rare occasions I publish a rant about something that rubbed me the wrong way. Check it out:

http://www.RealtyTechBytes.com

Intelligent Route Planner & Navigator!

One of the things that I enjoy doing as a real estate agent is to tour new listings. In our area we have a tour day where the listing agents hold their new listings open as a courtesy to the real estate community. This allows agents to see the houses that are new on the market (or price reduced or back on the market) in a very efficient manner.

Efficient that is if you can plan your routing effectively. If there are more than a few houses that you want to see, it's important to plan the route so as to get to as many as possible, in the time allotted, with out criss-crossing back and forth around town!

In the old days when I was a Windows user, Microsoft had a product Called Microsoft Streets and Trips You could enter in the addresses of every house that you wanted to see and it would plot them on a map. You could then adjust the order of seeing them until you had a reasonable "great circle route" set up. Then you could print the route, with driving directions and off you'd go, print out in hand. For it's time, it was a great solution.

Today we all have smart phones with built maps and GPS and voice turn by turn guidance. The only trouble with that solution is that it doesn't really give you an optimized route. I am constantly back tracking and I find that annoying.

Here are some useful Links

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(For when I can't be there)

TopProducer Help

http://www.topproducer.com/campus/top-producer/top-producer-help

zipForms Help

https://www.youtube.com/user/zipLogix/featured

Docusign Help

https://support.docusign.com/

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So, I was in search of a good smart phone solution and I finally found one.

It's called inRoute and is available on the App Store at https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/inroute-route-planner-gps-navigator/id703796787?mt=8

There is no Android version.

The free version allows you to plot a start location and an end location and two stops (known as Waypoints). The system will default to your present location as the Start point, but you could make the first house that you want to see as your start point, and make the last house the end point. Then you could add two others as waypoints. Once you have a start point, some waypoints and an end point, you can optimize the route. On the paid versions you can then enter "Layover" times, for instance, I usually spend 10 minutes at each house, but this is not necessary. Doing so will give you a more accurate time on when you arrive at the next house, and also a more accurate total trip time. You can add in points of interest, weather and elevation too.

The app has some some upgrade purchases that you can make. You can subscribe to a monthly plan or make an outright purchase. The monthly plan allows you to have up to 100 stops in a trip. The outright purchase limits you to 25 stops per trip. Signing up for the monthly plan will give you a 7 day free trial of all of the features. As long as you cancel the subscription right after you sign up you will not be billed. You will still have your free 7 days. That will give you enough time to decide if you want to make the outright purchase or resubscribe to the monthly plan.

So, here is my opinion. This is a very handy tool that works well at a reasonable price. I'd use this to plan my open house tours as well as when I am setting up house hunting tours with my buyers. The Layover timing will allow me to let the sellers know what time I will arrive with my clients with much more accuracy than I have been able to provide in the past.

I suggest that you give it a try and see what you think!