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## Overview

This chapter explains:

- Features of various Virtual Office modules
- How to download MLS data
- Downloading concepts
- About Hillside Software

The 'PcPictures' Virtual Office is a complete suite of programs designed to give Realtors the easiest to use, most powerful software tools you need - everything from listing ..... to closing.

The system downloads MLS information into your own Windows computer and allows you to perform most MLS functions without having to be 'on-line'. In this way the Virtual Office acts as a MLS 'Front End' designed to enhance your MLS - not replace it.

The system comprises four fully integrated modules which can be installed individually or as a suite of programs working seamlessly together - providing the tools you need to succeed today.

## Program Features

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This section describes the various Virtual Office programs and their basic features. [NOTE: Not all of these modules are available for every MLS. Check with your software vendor.]

### Virtual MLS

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The Virtual MLS includes a powerful and fast database for searching & retrieval of MLS information, Visual Tours with full color photographs, Property 'Walk Throughs', Buyer Worksheets, Professional CMAs, Financial Tools, Market Statistics & Graphs, Flexible Reporting Capabilities and more. A fully customizable flyer program lets you pick from a number of professionally designed templates or allows you to create your own.

### Virtual Assistant

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Simply the best time and contact management solution ever. Fully integrated with the Virtual MLS - it searches the MLS while you sleep finding properties for your buyers and new clients for yourself. Make missed appointments, letters and calls a thing of the past. The 'To-Do' section prioritizes tasks and automatically displays them as required. Prints letters, envelopes, labels and mail merge - a library of over 300 professional real estate letters is included with the package. 'Action Plans' make it easy to keep in touch with your clients automatically. Use 'drag & drop' to call a client or write a letter - it's that easy.

## Virtual Maps

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A stunning graphical interface displays your MLS listings on a map and allows you to view your data in many new and exciting ways. Print out the map with full directions for your clients - they will be impressed.

- Use your mouse to mark an area on the map - then press SEARCH to find all properties meeting your search criteria within this region.
- Let Virtual Maps automatically plot these properties for you.
- Create Virtual Tours by clicking on each property on the map - the relevant MLS information and property photo is instantly displayed.

## Downloading Concepts

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The Virtual MLS requires that MLS data be downloaded and stored in your own computer. The system downloads MLS information and allows you to perform most MLS functions without having to be "on-line". The system is referred to as a "MLS Front End" and is designed to enhance your MLS, not replace it.

### What is downloading?

---

Most people are at least familiar with the terms "download" and "upload." What exactly do these terms mean?

Both download and upload are relative terms referring to the process of transferring data and/or program files from one computer to another. (In this case your computer and the MLS)

Downloading refers to the process of transferring data from another computer to your own. Uploading is just the opposite, transferring data from your computer to another.

When downloading or uploading data the information is transferred between computers over telephone lines. The use of a modem and a communication software package (in this case the Virtual Office) is necessary to download or upload information.

### What does Virtual MLS download?

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Virtual MLS downloads both property listing data and listing photos where available. It dials into your MLS system and transfers information from the MLS to your own computer.

Virtual MLS has its own communications software built in. This communications software uses a modem to dial, connect, search, and retrieve the listing data from your MLS system.

The ability to store MLS information locally on your computer gives you a serious competitive edge over standard MLS users.

## Installation

This chapter explains:

- The Virtual Office package contents
- Equipment required to run Virtual Office
- How to install Virtual Office
- How to start Virtual Office
- How to enter passwords

Installation & Setup of 'PcPictures' Virtual Office is a simple, step by step procedure. Just follow the instructions outlined in the chapter. If you have any questions or problems, please contact your software vendor or Hillside Software.

### The Virtual Office Package

---

Your 'Virtual Office' package should include the following:

- 1) This 'Virtual Office' User Guide.
- 2) Installation CD.
- 3) The Hillside Software, Inc. license agreement envelope and registration card. Send in the registration card to become a registered owner and receive news on upgrades and enhancements..

### Necessary Equipment

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To run 'Virtual Office' for Windows™ you will need:

- 1) An IBM PC Compatible computer, 133 Pentium or higher. We strongly recommend a 166 Pentium based or equivalent processor.
- 2) A SVGA monitor and display card capable of supporting at least 640 x 480 resolution with 256 colors.
- 3) 16 meg of RAM . We strongly recommend at 32 meg of RAM.
- 4) A minimum of 15MB of hard disk storage space for program installation. Pictures and Data will require even more disk space.
- 5) A Hayes compatible modem to connect to the MLS. A modem with a 14,400 BPS rate, 28,800 BPS is strongly recommended.

- 6) A Windows™ compatible printer.
- 7) Windows™ 95, 98 or NT4 SP3 or higher.

## **Installing Virtual Office**

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- 1) Place the first diskette, labeled "Diskette 1" in the diskette drive on your computer or insert the CD into your CD ROM drive.
- 2) Click the "Start" button and then click "Run".
- 3) If your diskette drive or CD is designated as "A" then type:  
A:SETUP
- 4) If your diskette drive or CD is designated as "D" then type:  
D:SETUP
- 5) and then click the "OK" button to continue.

The installation program should begin. Simply follow the instructions on your screen to complete the installation.

## **Installation Components**

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The installation program may prompt you to select from a list of additional components available to install. In the Virtual Office suite of programs the Virtual MLS is the main program. It must be installed for any of the additional components to function.

## **Starting Virtual Office**

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With the program successfully installed, you will see a new application folder or Program Group created on your Windows™ desktop with the title "Virtual Office" showing. To start Virtual Office, double-click on the icon or shortcut labeled 'PcPics' Virtual Office with your left mouse button.

This User Guide assumes you have a basic knowledge of Windows™ fundamentals - using the mouse or keyboard, working with Windows™ screens and so on. If you are new to Windows™ you may wish to refer to your manual or run the Windows™ Tutorial installed on the Help menu of Windows™.

## **Running Virtual MLS for the FIRST TIME**

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When the program first runs you will be prompted to select your State and Real Estate Board. Do this then click OK.

If this is the very first time you are running the program, click "OK" to continue when prompted for a password.

Virtual MLS will proceed to install various program and system files. Click "OK" to reply to each prompt. This is a one-time program installation function.

# Entering your Password

---

Upon starting Virtual MLS you are presented with the following screen:



As stated in the previous section, remember that if it is the first time you are running Virtual MLS you can simply click "OK" or press ENTER. Also note that if this is a SINGLE USER system you DO NOT have to enter a password at all. You can always click "OK" or press ENTER as a shortcut without entering a password. Only MULTI-USER or OFFICE systems ALWAYS require a password.

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## Support & Registration

This chapter explains:

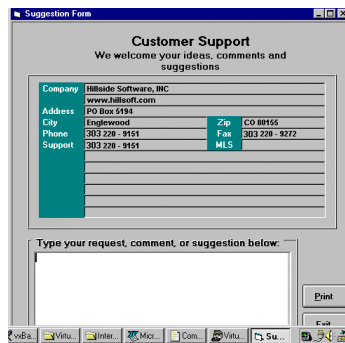
- How to contact your software vendor
- How to register Virtual Office

---

### How To Contact Us

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To contact your software vendor or Hillside software, click the menu selection "Help" and then click "Support". The following screen will appear.:



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Suggestion Form" with a "Customer Support" header. Below the header is a form with the following fields:

Company	Hillside Software, INC		
	www.hillside.com		
Address	PO Box 6194		
City	Englewood	Zip	CO 80155
Phone	303 228 - 9151	Fax	303 228 - 9272
Support	303 228 - 9151		MTS

Below the form is a text area labeled "Type your request, comment, or suggestion below:" and a "Print" button. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows icons for various applications.

The top of the Support Form contains all of the necessary contact information for either your software vendor or Hillside Software. Simply type your comments, suggestions, or questions in the box, print the form and fax it to the number provided.

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### Registering Your Software

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To register your software with your vendor or Hillside software, click the menu selection "Help" and then click "Register". The following screen will appear.:

Registration Form

Please fill out the following form. Send it to Hillside Software to receive your Registration Code. Thank You.

Name:	Virtual Office Demo	Date:	10/20/96
Company:	Office Name	Serial No.:	00000
Address:	Office Address	Amt Paid:	
City/Zip:	City/Zip		
Tel (Work):	555-1111	Tel (Home):	555-1234
Tel (Page):		Tel (Fax):	555-0000
Payment By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> M/C	Expiry Date:	
Cr Card or Check Number:			

Print Exit

The Registration Form allows you to enter all of the necessary registration information. Simply type your information in, print the form and fax it to the number provided to receive a registration code. Your software vendor may have already provided you with your registration information when you received the software. If so, you can skip this step.

## About Hillside Software

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Hillside Software has for the past five years been a leading developer of MLS management software, and has considerable expertise in developing and implementing MLS 'Front End' systems. The Virtual Office is in use in thousands of sites throughout the USA and Canada, and is the official 'Front End' for an entire country - South Africa. With the advent of the Virtual Office, Hillside is proud to be able to offer Realtors the latest state-of-the-art in Real Estate selling and marketing software tools..

## System & Agent Setup

This chapter explains:

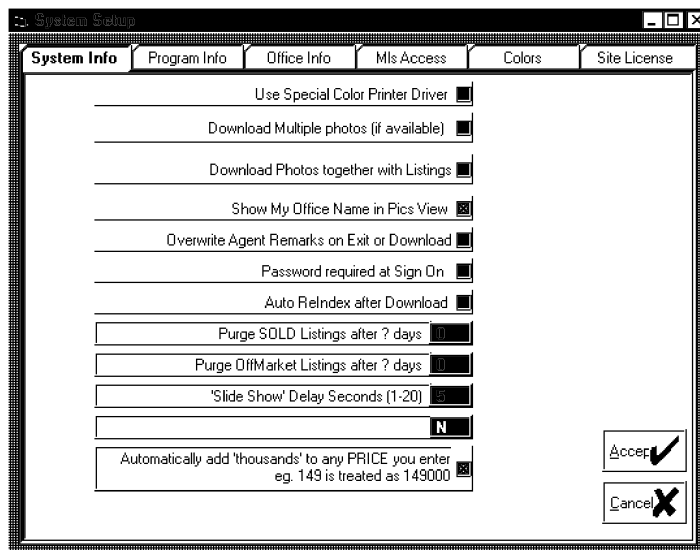
- How to configure System information
- How to configure Agent information
- How to configure the Tool Bar in Virtual Office
- How to configure the Terminal Settings in Virtual Office

Setup of Hillside Software's Virtual MLS is a simple, step by step procedure. Just follow the instructions outlined in this chapter. If you have any questions or problems, please contact your software vendor.

Before you begin to use Virtual MLS, you must prepare your system by entering the appropriate System and Agent information.

### System Setup

Upon starting Virtual MLS you are presented with the Main Menu screen. You can enter your System Setup information by clicking the Virtual MLS MENU BAR and selecting SETUP "System Info". The following screen will appear:



The System Setup screen displays a series of tabs which allow you to enter in selected information. The options available on each tab are explained below:

## SYSTEM INFO TAB

---

### Use Special Color Print Driver

If you have a COLOR printer and experience General Protection Fault errors or other printing difficulties try selecting this option. It will usually fix the problem.

### Download Multiple Photos (if available)

If your MLS provides the ability to download more than one photo per listing and you would like to have multiple photos of each property then select this option. You should check with your software vendor to see if this option is available with your MLS system.

### Download Photos together with Listings

If you wish to download listings and photos during the same download session, you would select this option. After the listings are downloaded the photos will be downloaded if they are available on MLS system. If this option is selected the program will attempt to download photos **EVERYTIME** listings are downloaded.

### Show Office Name in Pics View

If you wish to have your office name displayed below the photo in the Picture View, place an "X" in this box. Some agents prefer to not show this information.

### Overwrite Agent Remarks on EXIT or Download

Virtual MLS stores the MLS remarks and also has a section for Agent remarks (your remarks). Upon first downloading listings, the MLS and Agent Remarks are both set to the original listing agent remarks as in the MLS. Since you may wish to change these remarks, Virtual MLS allows you to edit the Agent Remarks, but not the MLS remarks. This setup option lets the system automatically restore any changes you've made to the Agent remarks in a session to their original content. This is usually used in an OFFICE environment where different agents use the system. If you have your own system then you would probably NOT want to restore the original remarks after you have gone to the trouble of changing them! BE CAREFUL with this. NOTE: Agent Remarks are not automatically updated by Virtual MLS, unless this option is checked, as any changes you have made will be overwritten by the next download!

### Password Required at Sign On

If you have an individual copy (not a SITE license or OFFICE copy) and you are the ONLY agent entered into the system, you can bypass the opening password dialog by simply pressing ENTER. You may however force the system to require a password by checking this option. NOTE: You can not select this option in a MULTI-USER or OFFICE copy of Virtual MLS which will ALWAYS require a password to know which agent is using the system.

**REMEMBER!: IF YOU SET THIS OPTION BE SURE TO KNOW YOUR PASSWORD. IF NOT YOU WILL BE LOCKED OUT OF THE PROGRAM PERMANENTLY AND WILL HAVE TO CONTACT YOUR SOFTWARE VENDOR.**

### Auto ReIndex after Download

By selecting this option the system will perform a reindex after every download from the MLS. By Re-Indexing your data, you rebuild your indexes and the information can then be accessed by Virtual MLS in the most efficient way possible. Running a re-index can never do any harm - it can only speed things up. At the time of downloading, you can opt to not do a reindex for that one download. Since reindex can take a large amount of time, you may choose to do this if you are in a hurry for the data.

### Purge SOLD Listings after ? Days

Virtual MLS will automatically delete SOLD listings older than the value entered here. Listings and their photos take up space on your hard drive. If you accumulated listings and photos endlessly, you would eventually run out of disk space. To help you manage your listings, Virtual MLS is intelligent enough to automatically delete SOLD listings and their photos once they are older than the value you set here. Note, if the value is set to 0 (zero) you will maintain all listings.

### Purge Off Market Listings after ? Days

As with SOLD Listings, Virtual MLS can automatically delete Off Market listings and their photos which are older than the value entered here. Note, if the value is set to 0 (zero) you will maintain all listings

### Slide Show Delay Seconds (1-20)

The Pictures View in Virtual MLS allows you to run a "slide show" of properties. This option allows you to set the number of seconds each property will be displayed.

### Automatically add Thousands to any price

This option allows you skip entering the extra zeros for prices. For example, if the price is \$149,000 you would only enter "149". You will not see it auto-fill the extra zeros.

## **PROGRAM INFO TAB**

---

### Data Directory

If you have installed Virtual Office on a stand-alone computer, then the appropriate path name should already exist here. You should not change these settings unless you really know what you are doing or are asked to do so by your software vendor or Hillside Software Support Staff. If you have installed Virtual Office to a Network, you may need to change these settings. Please refer to Appendix C - Network Installation.

Pics Directory See Data Directory above.

### Use NEW 32bit CMA Program

If you are running Windows 95 or greater and do not wish to use the 32bit version of the Report Menu, uncheck this box.

## **OFFICE INFO TAB**

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The next tab is "Office Info" where you should fill in your office name, address, and related information. This information will appear on your CMA's and Reports.

## **MLS ACCESS TAB**

---

### MLS Phone Number

Enter the phone number for dialing the MLS.

### FRED Phone Number

Some MLS systems or software vendors require that the FRED BBS system be used to download photos. Contact your Vendor or Real Estate Board to determine if this is necessary. If so, enter the designated phone number here.

### Dialing Prefix

If your office requires any prefix such as a 9 to obtain an outside line, enter it here.

## **COLORS TAB**

---

You have the ability to change the default background color to suit your personal taste. You can also Restore the original color defaults if necessary.

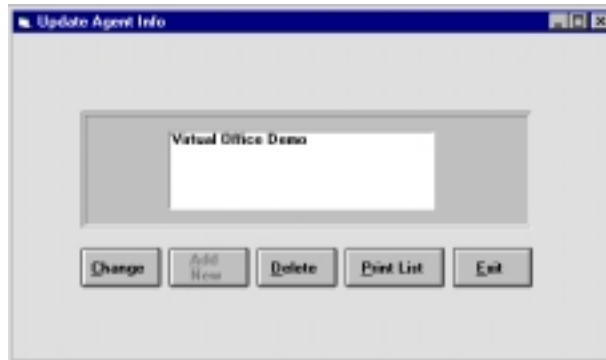
# Agent Setup

---

You enter AGENT INFORMATION by clicking the Virtual MLS MENU BAR and selecting SETUP "Agent Info". The following screen will appear:

## MULTIUSER/OFFICE SYSTEMS

---



If you own a MULTIUSER or OFFICE site license for Virtual Office and this is the FIRST TIME you are entering Agent Information, click on the "Virtual MLS Demo" entry and then click the "CHANGE" button. Now enter the appropriate information, security code and password. To enter information for more than one agent, exit out of here and return to the main menu. Then select SETUP "Agent Information" once again. This time choose 'ADD NEW' and enter the information as necessary.

**NOTE: In Multiuser or Office systems be sure to remember the password for each agent you enter. Whenever you run the Virtual MLS, the system will ask you for a password. YOU MUST KNOW THE PASSWORD TO USE THE PROGRAM.**

## AGENT SETUP SCREEN (same for multiuser & single agent copies)

---

The following is the Agent Setup screen.

**NOTE:** In order to change ANY of the information in this box you will need a NEW Security Code which you obtain from your Software Vendor. You may use the Registration Form which can be found on the Main Menu under Help | Register.

## AGENT NAME SECTION

---

Enter the appropriate information EXACTLY as provided to you by your software vendor or Hillside Software. These settings are case sensitive and even one extra space in any one of the fields will cause your Security Code to be rejected. If you have any questions regarding the settings on this tab, contact your software vendor for information. **NOTE: You CANNOT change the name or ANYTHING on this screen without a SECURITY CODE which you obtain from your Software Vendor. See the form 'REGISTER' under the HELP section on the MENU BAR of the Virtual Office main screen.**

## AGENT TELEPHONE SECTION

---

Enter the phone information here. These numbers will appear in various Flyers and CMA Reports in Virtual MLS.

## MLS ACCESS AND PHONE SECTION

---

Enter the appropriate Agent Code and Password necessary for accessing your MLS system. The password entered here is the one Virtual Office will look for when you first start up the system. **DO NOT FORGET IT!**

## Tool Bar Setup

---

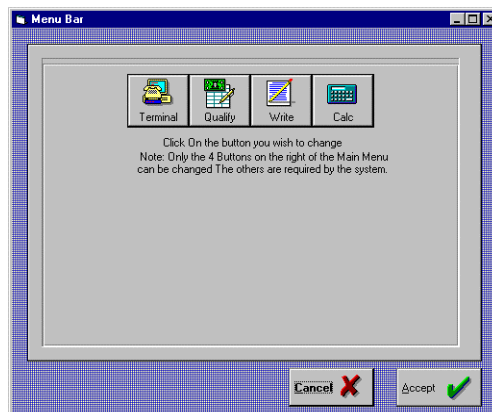
The main Tool Bar in Virtual MLS appears as below:



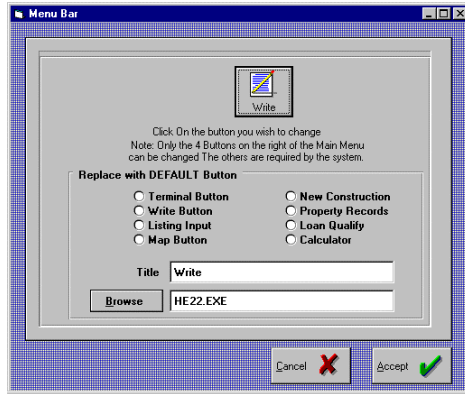
The first six buttons in the menu bar are fixed buttons. Virtual MLS allows the user to customize the last four buttons to meet your own needs.



To change a button choose SETUP from the Main Menu followed by "Menu Buttons". The following screen appears:



Click on the button you wish to change, then choose from the selections available.



To choose a program not listed, click the "Browse" button and locate the EXE file you wish to be activated by the button. The icon for any .EXE file chosen will automatically appear on the button. Do not forget to enter a TITLE for this button. Press 'ACCEPT' to complete your changes.

## Terminal Setup

---

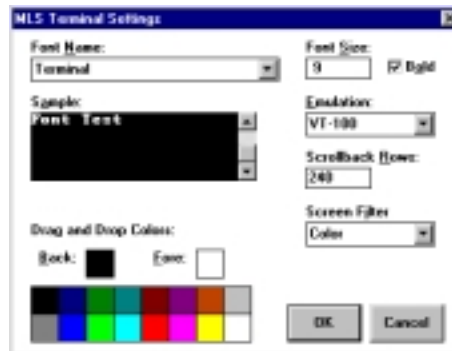
To setup your download screen you will need to select the TERMINAL button from the menu bar, or select MLS and ACCESS MLS from the Main Menu.



The FIRST TIME that TERMINAL is accessed you will be prompted with the following:

### MLS TERMINAL SETTINGS

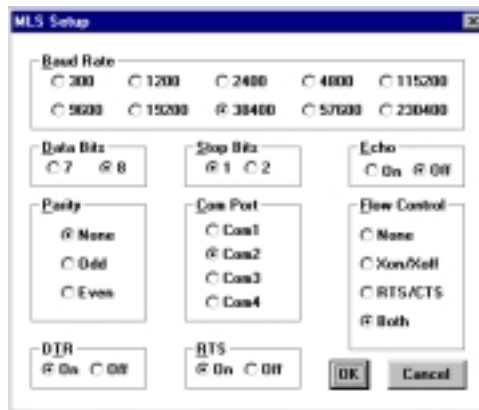
---



First you must set your desired font and color settings. The defaults are generally the most common and more than acceptable. If required make any changes and then click the "OK" button. First time users should not change this screen.

## MLS PORT SETUP

---



### Modem Baud Rate

If your baud rate is not listed then select the next highest rate.

### COM Port

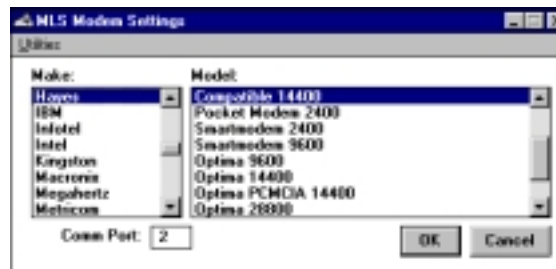
Select the Communications Port which your modem is configured to use. Most modems use COM 2.

### Flow Control

Select the option "BOTH"

## MLS MODEM SETTINGS

---



Finally you need to select the Make and Model of your modem. If you are not sure of this information or cannot find a close match in the list provided use choose MAKE:HAYES MODEL:Compatible 9600.

If you cannot find the Make and Model of your modem listed and you are familiar with modem communications, there is a "Utilities" menu selection available. These menu options allow you to ADD, EDIT, or DELETE a Modem and Initialization String. This is for advanced users only!

---

## MLS Access & Downloading

This chapter explains:

- How to use Virtual Office as a terminal
- How to use Virtual Office to download MLS information

'PcPictures' Virtual MLS allows you to download MLS information into your computer where it is permanently stored until you delete it. In this way you can access previously stored MLS Information without having to dial in. There are two ways to obtain MLS Listing Data - Terminal Mode and Download Mode. Terminal Mode allows you to interact with the MLS system directly while Download Mode is scripted and passes all the necessary information back and forth for you.

To access the MLS, select MLS from the Main Menu. You may also press the button 'TERMINAL'. The MLS communications screen will appear, with the following options:

### Terminal Mode

---

With Terminal Mode you can use your computer to access the MLS as a TERMINAL and work on-line. This is the same as sitting at a MLS terminal at any Real Estate office. Note that 'Terminal Mode' is not available for all MLS systems.

### Download Mode

---

With Download Mode you can use your computer to download MLS information automatically. Virtual MLS will pass all necessary commands to your MLS to process and complete your search. You can even schedule a download to take place in the middle of the night!

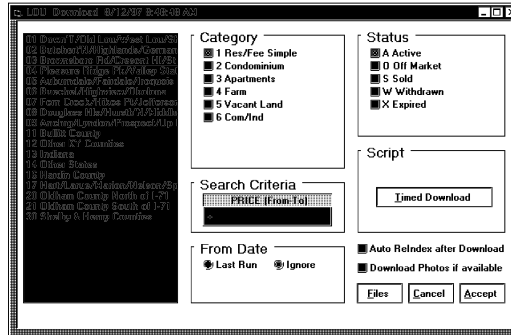
### STARTING THE DOWNLOAD PROGRAM

---

Click on the "MLS Download" button in the tool bar at the bottom of the screen.



A screen similar to the following one will appear:



NOTE: This screen will differ depending upon your MLS System. The general specifications of this screen will remain the same regardless of which MLS System you use.

## PROPERTY TYPE or CATEGORY

Select one or more Property Types or Categories to be downloaded. Examples are Residential, Condominiums, Rentals, etc... NOTE: The Property Types will vary depending upon the MLS System your copy of Virtual Office is configured for.

## STATUS

Select one or more Status selections to be downloaded. Examples are Active, Pending, Sold, etc... NOTE: The Status selections may vary depending upon the MLS System your copy of Virtual Office is configured for.

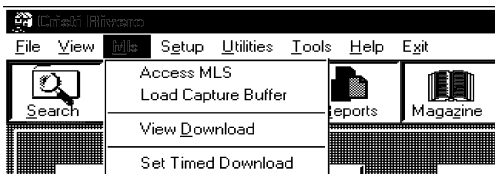
## SEARCH CRITERIA

### PRICE

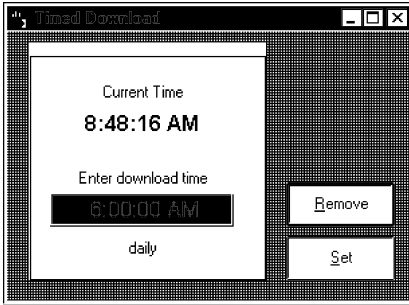
Select the price range to be downloaded. For example type 200000- 400000 for listings between two hundred and four hundred thousand dollars.

## TIMED DOWNLOAD

If you would like to setup your computer to download listings at the same time each day, you would select the TIMED DOWNLOAD option. The next step is from the main screen select "MLS" and then "Set Timed Download" (see graphic below)



Once you have completed your selection the following screen will appear. This is where you will select the time of day you would like your downloads to be performed each day. After you have set the time select the "Set" option to activate. NOTE: To run a scheduled download you must leave your computer turned on with Virtual Office running.



## **FROM DATE**

---

### LAST RUN

Select this option if you would like to download only the new listings or the listings that have changed (i.e. status or price change) since the last time you did a download.

### IGNORE

If this option is selected you will download all the listing in the MLS that meet your selected criteria, regardless of last time you did a download.

## **When a Download is Completed**

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Once the download is complete the information is stored temporarily in a file called the CAPTURE BUFFER. The CAPTURE BUFFER is automatically LOADED at the end of each successful download. This will add any new listings and update existing information.

## **PRINTING A DOWNLOAD SUMMARY**

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You can print a summary of the most recent download by selecting "MLS " from the Main Menu and then selecting "View Download". This is similar to a 'HOTSHEET'.

## Searching

This chapter explains:

- How to enter search parameters
- How to apply your search to local data or download MLS information 'On Demand'.

Use the SEARCH option to search through listings which are stored in your computer and to subsequently create a LIST of records which meet your selection requirements. This selected LIST of properties can be further modified or reduced in the LIST VIEW screen in Virtual MLS. On certain MLS systems you can also call the MLS, download these listings, hang-up and proceed to work off-line. We refer to this as 'On Demand' or 'On the Fly' downloading as opposed to your regular distributed database download.

### Entering Your Search Parameters

To enter the SEARCH area, click the "SEARCH" button located in the tool bar on the main screen. The following SEARCH PROPERTIES screen will appear:



Select your search criteria from the items in the column on the left by clicking on the item with your mouse. Scroll down the list to see more Search Items.

**NOTE:** The box below the Search Items column allows you to quickly locate a search field without having to scroll up or down. For example, if you were interested in the criteria "STYLE" simply click in this box and type "S" to get a list of all items starting with 'S'. Then type 't'. The system will show all items starting with 'St'. In this way you can quickly find a word in your search criteria list. This feature is commonly referred to as an "incremental search". Once you have found the required field press ENTER or double click the selection with your mouse.

**SPEED NOTE:** The 5 or so items above the line in the Search Items column are what we call 'Indexed Fields'. By including at least one of these (for example STATUS or PRICE) you will CONSIDERABLY speed up your search. The effects can be quite dramatic - when using an indexed field, no search should

take longer than a few seconds!

## **SHOWING FIELD OPTIONS**

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Depending on the search item you select, a list of valid options will appear in the middle column on the screen. A numeric choice such as PRICE or BEDS will present you with a FROM and TO box. Some search fields require multiple response choices. For example a VIEW field may have options such as Bay View, Ocean View, Golf Course View, and so on. Whenever you select an option from the Search Items list the possible responses are displayed in the "Select From" area in the top middle portion of the screen. You can then make your selections and click the "OK" button to accept them. Your selected criteria will appear under the "Selected Items" list on the right hand side of your screen.

**NOTE:** Whenever you select a NUMERIC field such as BEDS or PRICE you will be presented with a FROM and TO box. To enter something like '3 OR MORE', type the 3 in the FROM box followed by a '+' sign. At any time you can also enter a '-' minus sign to quickly move from the FROM to the TO box, or you can use your TAB key or mouse. Note that you can click on the 'TO' button between the FROM and TO boxes. By clicking on this button repeatedly you cycle between 'TO', 'OR MORE' and 'OR LESS'.

**NOTE:** The right hand column on the screen shows "Selected Items" for your current search selection. To quickly recall any one of the items to make any changes just double click this item in the list.

## **CLEARING THE SEARCH**

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The system will always present the MOST RECENT search that was entered. To CLEAR this SEARCH and start fresh, click on the "CLEAR SEARCH" button.

## **ERASING A LINE**

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Use your mouse to select items from the "Selected Items" list and then click the "ERASE LINE" button to remove it from the list.

## **SAVING SEARCH CRITERIA**

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At any time you can recall a previously saved search or save the current search. To do this select "File" (at the top) then "Saved Searches".

## **MAP - REVERSE SEARCHING**

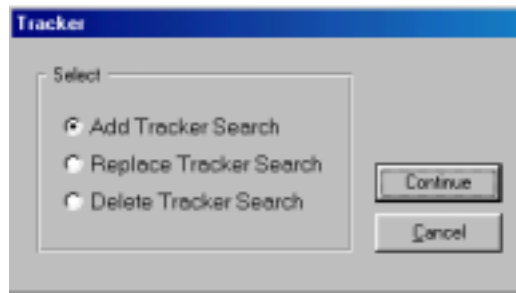
---

If you have the 'Virtual Map' module installed, you can click on the 'MAP' button to call up a map of the area. Use your mouse to define the region you wish to search, then exit and return to the SEARCH Screen. The program will search within the region you have defined.

## **CLIENT TRACKER**

---

Use this to save your search criteria for any client you have saved in your Virtual Assistant database for later searching.



### **Add Tracker Search**

This option allows you to find a client that were previously entered into our Virtual Assistant module and save the defined criteria for that client.

### **Replace Tracker Search**

This option allows you to replace previously saved criteria with the current criteria.

### **Delete Tracker Search**

This allows you to delete previously saved search criteria.

For more information, see the chapter on "Client Tracker".

## **Applying Your Search**

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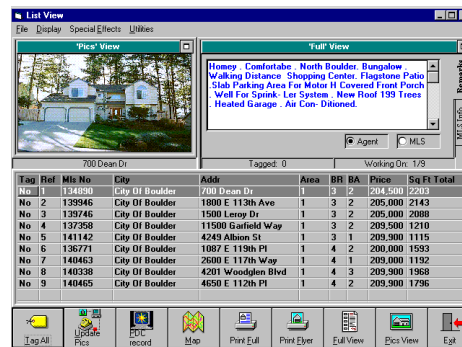
Once you have entered your search requirements you are ready to proceed with the SEARCH. To apply your search criteria to the information stored locally on your computer, simply click the "SEARCH" button. To call the MLS and download these listings, click on 'DOWNLOAD'. (Note this is only available on certain MLS systems.) Either way the listings found will appear in your 'LIST VIEW'. See the next chapter on 'List View'.

## List View

This chapter explains:

- How to scroll through property listings in List View
- How to tag and untag property listings in List View
- How to download and update pictures in List View
- How to view and optionally edit Agent/MLS remarks in List View
- How to customize the display to meet your own specific requirements.
- How to save and recall property lists.

Once you have created a LIST of properties by running a SEARCH, use the LIST VIEW to view them. The list view screen appears as seen below:



## Scrolling Through the List of Properties

On the bottom half of the screen 'List View' will display a list of selected properties. Details for the highlighted property will appear on the top part of the screen, with the photo on the left and the Remarks/MLS information on the right. You may move up and down through this list by using the UP & DOWN arrow keys or by using your mouse to CLICK on each line as required. Clicking on each line displays the property photo, remarks and MLS information.

**NOTE:** Below the listings is a button called 'PICS VIEW'. Click on this button to bring up the 'PICTURES View' of the property. Also below the listings is a button called 'FULL VIEW'. Click on this button to display the 'FULL VIEW' showing the full MLS Info Screen. Use these 'VIEW' buttons while working through the list whenever you quickly need to display more information about the property. **You may also quickly call up these views by clicking on the title bar above the photo or remarks window respectively.**

## Tagging Properties

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As you work through the list you may decide to keep certain properties in the list and to drop others. In order to do this you need to 'TAG' the properties you want to keep. To TAG a property proceed as follows: First you need to be on the line you wish to tag. Click on this line if you have not done so already. Now click once more on this line to tag it. You may also press the space bar. Notice the TAG column (usually the first column on the left now says YES for tagged.)

You can also 'UNTAG' the property by repeating the same action. In this way you can very quickly 'TAG' and 'UNTAG' properties.

'PcPictures' Virtual MLS starts with NO PROPERTIES tagged and expects you to TAG the ones you want. However you may prefer to press 'TAG ALL' which will automatically tag ALL properties in the list. You can then UNTAG the ones you DON'T want. If you change your mind press 'UNTAG ALL' to revert back to having none tagged.

The program displays a box showing the number of properties tagged at any time, as well as your position in the list e.g. Working On 1/217 means you are on record 1 out of a total of 217.



**NOTE: If you do not tag any properties then the system will treat them as ALL TAGGED.**

## Downloading Pictures

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To download pictures of selected properties, in List View click the "Update Pics" button and a list of all properties WITHOUT PHOTOS will appear. (The system is smart enough not to download a picture if you already have one!). You may select specific listings or ALL. Now press the "Call MLS" button and the system will automatically dial the MLS and download the photos for you.

## Turning Pictures On And Off

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While working through the List View you may wish to TURN OFF the picture display in order to SPEED UP your work. At any time you can turn it back on again. Simply click the MENU BAR selection DISPLAY and then click PICTURES ON or PICTURES OFF.

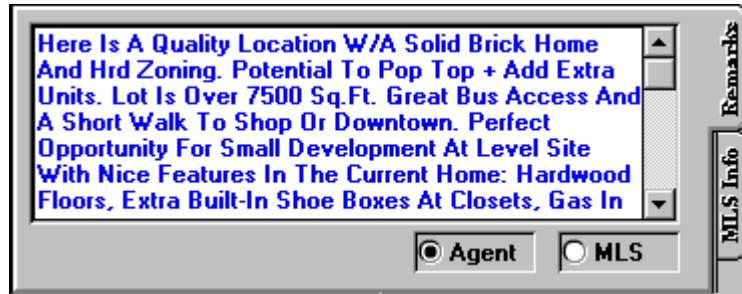
## Saving & Recalling Lists

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Click FILE on the MENU BAR followed by SAVED LISTS.

## Viewing MLS Info / Remarks

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The Virtual MLS allows you to view either the REMARKS or some basic MLS Information. Click on the appropriate TAB on the right hand side of the screen to select the view you require..

## Editing Agent Remarks

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'PcPictures' Virtual MLS keeps two sets of remarks - the original MLS remarks and your own edited version. The system allows you to edit the original REMARKS entered by the listing agent into the MLS. Your clients may prefer to see your own description of the property as opposed to those of the listing agent. Also you may wish to impress your clients with your market knowledge. Your edited remarks will appear on all reports and printouts. Use these buttons to switch between the original MLS remarks and your edited version.

**Note:** You cannot edit the MLS remarks - only the AGENT remarks! When you change remarks you are NOT changing the original listing information in the MLS.

## Defining MLS Info - Dropdowns

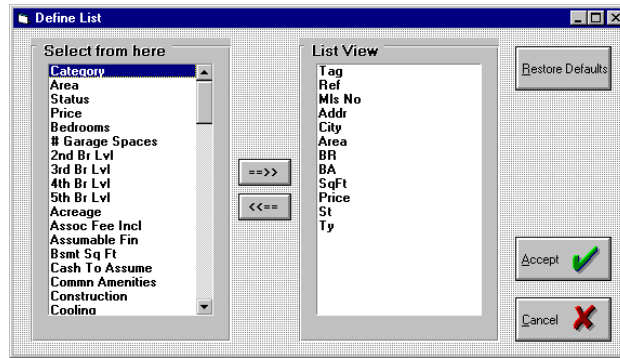
---

You can tell the system exactly what information to show under the MLS INFO Tab by proceeding as follows:

Click on the MLS INFO tab on the top right hand side of the screen. Next to each field between the label and the text is a "..." button. Click on this button to display a list of the fields available in your system. Select the field you require - then press 'Ok'. Note that you can also change the label by selecting it and typing whatever you require.

## Defining Your Columns

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This feature allows you to define exactly what information will appear in the columns in list view. To define this list to meet your requirements, select UTILITIES from the MENU BAR, and then choose DEFINE LIST. Here you move columns to and from the "Select from here" column to the "List View" column. Click the "Accept" button when you are done. At any time you can click the "Restore Defaults" button to return to Virtual MLS' default settings.

## Changing The Width And Position Of Each Column

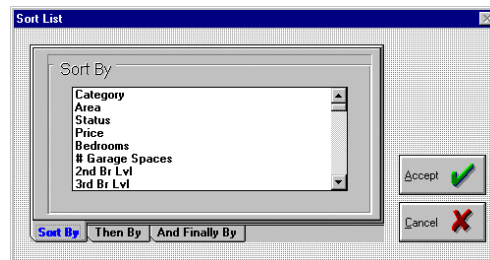
---

From the List View, you can change the position of a column by clicking on its heading and dragging it to the left or right. You can change the size of each column by positioning your mouse on the vertical line between each column and moving it left or right.

## Changing The Order Of The Properties In The List

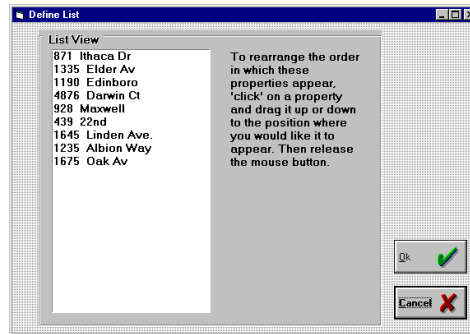
---

### SORT LIST



This feature allows you to sort the property listings in your LIST VIEW in any order that you wish. You have the option to sort on up to three categories.

## ARRANGE LIST

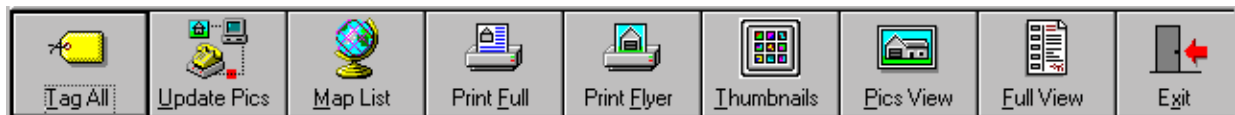


This feature allows you to place the properties in any order you desire. It may be necessary to place the properties in your List View in an order based on your recommendation to a client or the order in which to intend to visit these properties. In this case the "Sort List" feature would not help. By using "Arrange List" you can simply click on each property and drag it up or down into place in your list.

## Exiting List View - Reduce List

After tagging your listings, press EXIT and a prompt will appear giving you a total number of listings tagged versus the number found. You will then have the option to REDUCE the list. If you choose to reduce the list all of the untagged listings from your current LIST VIEW. Otherwise you can choose to leave the List exactly as it is so you can come back to it at a later time.

## List View Command Buttons



- Tag All/None:** Use this option to tag/untag all listings in the List View at once.
- Update Pics:** Press this button to download missing photos from the MLS for listings in your current List View.
- Tax Record:** Press this button to call up the Public Data Tax Record (if available.)
- Map View:** Press this button to call up the Mapping module of Virtual MLS. Mapping may or may not be available in conjunction with your MLS System or Real Estate Board.
- Print Full:** Press this button to Print a Full Listing giving full details of the property. Choosing "Client Handout" does not show certain confidential information to the client. (i.e. Listing Company, Comm. splits, etc...)
- Print Flyer:** Use this to display the FLYER Screen.

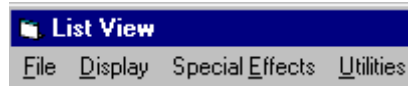
Full view: Use this to display the FULL VIEW Screen. You can view all relevant MLS property information and remarks from this screen..

Pics View: Use this to display the PICTURES VIEW Screen.

Exit: Press this button to EXIT the program and return to the MENU.

## List View Menu Commands

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### File

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Saved Lists: Use this option to call up or save your property lists.

Exit: Use this option to exit Virtual MLS.

### Display

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Pictures On: Select this option to display photos in List View.

Pictures Off: Select this option to not display photos in List View. This will speed up performance.

### Special Effects

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This option allows you to configure the segue between listing photos in List View and Pictures View, as well as during a slideshow presentation. Experiment with these settings to find one that best suits you.

### Utilities

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These are fully discussed earlier in this chapter.

## Picture View

This chapter explains:

- How to scroll through property listings in Picture View
- How to play a slideshow in Picture View
- How to tag property listings in Picture View
- How to zoom in or out on property photos
- How to EXPORT photos for use with other programs

To select PICTURE VIEW, from the LIST VIEW click on the PICS VIEW button located in the tool bar, or click on the TITLE BAR above the picture (or double click on the picture itself)



### Picture View Command Buttons

- Prev:** Press this button to move back one record.
- Next:** Press this button to move forward one record.
- More:** If a listing has more than one photo associated with it, such as interior photos, click this button to scroll through them.
- Tag:** Use this option to tag/untag a listing.

**Zoom Area:** The "Zoom Area" button allows you to magnify an area of the current photo. Simply move the mouse over the top left portion of the area you wish to magnify. Click and while holding the left mouse button drag the mouse to draw a rectangle the size you desire. Release the left mouse button and the selected area will enlarge.

**Zoom Out:** The "Zoom Out" button allows you to return the current photo to full view.

**Slide Show:** Click this to activate a slideshow of the selected properties. Click on STOP to quit the slide show.

**Export:** Press this button to export this photo for use with other applications such as a word processor.

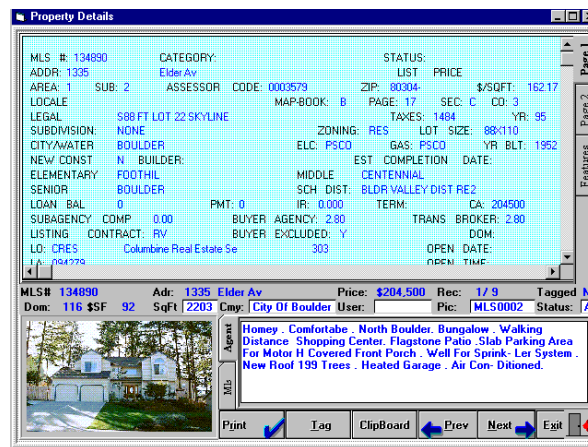
**Exit:** Exit Full view and return to List View.

## Full View

This chapter explains:

- How to scroll through property listings in Full view
- How to tag property listings in Full view

To select FULL VIEW and view complete MLS information on a particular listing, click on the 'Full View' button in the bottom right hand corner of the tool bar on the LIST VIEW screen. The following screen will appear:



Note that you can use this screen to edit AGENT Remarks. (You cannot change the MLS remarks.) Also notice the white boxes with information just above the Remarks. These are fields you can change. For example if the 'Square Feet' field is wrong or missing you can fix it here. There is also a field called 'USER'. Here you can enter your own USER Reference up to 8 characters long. You can quickly recall a listing based on this reference by using the Virtual Office 'QUICK FIND'. (Note that for this to work you need to run a REINDEX whenever you make any changes here.)

## Full View Command Buttons



**Print:** Use this option to print the full listing information for the property listed.

**Tag:** Use this option to tag a listing.

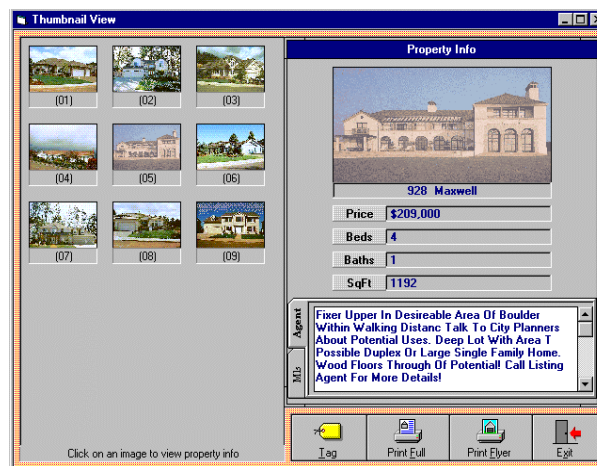
- ClipBoard:** Press this button to export all form data to the Windows Clipboard for pasting into external applications, such as a word processor.
- Prev:** Press this button to move back one record.
- Next:** Press this button to move forward one record.
- Exit:** Exit Full view and return to List View.

## Thumbnail View

This chapter explains:

- How to scroll through property listings in Thumbnail View
- How to tag property listings in Thumbnail View

To select THUMBNAIL VIEW and see at a glance all the listings you have selected, click on the menu selection "VIEW" and then click "THUMBNAILS". The following screen will appear:



Note that Thumbnail View presents you with 'Drop Down' buttons (similar to the ones described earlier in 'List View') which enable you to customize the screen to meet the requirements of each client!

## Thumbnail View Command Buttons



**Tag:** Use this option to tag/untag a listing.

- Print Full:** Use this option to print the full listing information for the property currently being viewed.
- Print Flyer:** Use this option to print a flyer for the property currently being viewed.
- Exit:** Exit Full view and return to List View.

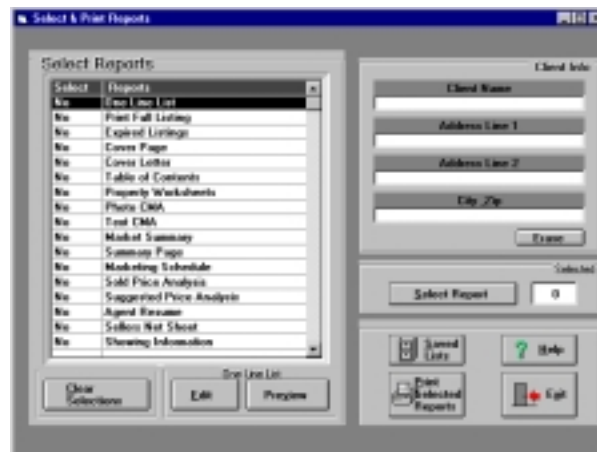
## CMA & Reports

This chapter explains:

- How to edit, preview, and print CMAs & Reports

### CMA & REPORT SECTION FOR THE 16 BIT VERSION

With the REPORTS option you can print a complete presentation package around the listings that you have tagged. You may select which reports to print by tagging the reports and then pressing "PRINT SELECTED REPORTS". Or you may preview each report and print them one at a time.



### Report Options

Most reports can be 'Previewed' prior to printing, while others require you to 'Edit' them before printing. The required editing is to ensure that necessary client information is entered appropriately on the report. The following table notes which reports are editable and which reports are previewable.

Report	Edit	Preview
One Line Listing		X
Print Full Listing		
Expired Listings		X
Cover Page		
Cover Letter	X	X
Table of Contents	X	X
Property Worksheets		

Photo CMA	X	
Text CMA	X	X
Market Summary		X
Suggested Price Analysis	X	X
Summary Page	X	X
Agent Resume	X	X
Sellers Net Sheet	X	X
Showing Information		X
Market Share by Agent		X
Market Share by Office		X
Open House Register		X
Front Desk Report		X
Marketing Schedule	X	X
Sold Price Analysis		X

## Selecting Reports

---

There are two ways to select reports. The first is to TAG the reports you require and then press PRINT SELECTED REPORTS. If you have already read the chapter on LIST VIEW then you know how to Tag and Untag items. The second way to print reports is to PREVIEW them and Print them one at a time.

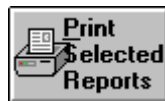
NOTE: Some reports require information from you before they can be printed. See the section EDITING Reports on how to do this.

You may also CLEAR your Report Selections and start again at any time.

## Printing Reports

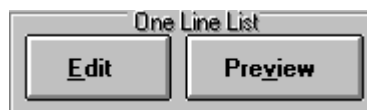
---

Tag the reports you want and then press PRINT SELECTED REPORTS.



## Previewing Reports

---



To PREVIEW a report, click on the report you require and its name will appear above the PREVIEW and EDIT Buttons. Press PREVIEW. 'PcPictures' Virtual MLS allows you to preview most (but not all) reports.

## Editing Reports

---

While some reports such as One Line List do not require any information from you (except perhaps for a heading), others such as a Seller's Net Sheet or an Agent Resume require some input. To enter this information:

Select the report you require by clicking on it in the list

Press the EDIT button. Depending on the report you have selected, you will be prompted for the necessary information.

At the very minimum each report will give you an opportunity to enter a Report Heading. For other reports the information required may be quite extensive. Once you have EDITED the report, use either of the two methods discussed earlier to print it.

## Entering Client Information

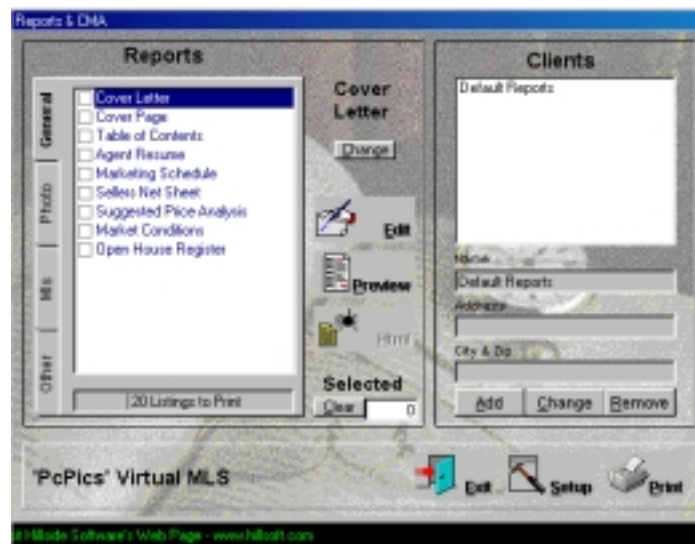
---

Enter the Name & Address of your client for this information to appear on the report.



## CMA & REPORT SECTION FOR THE 32 BIT VERSION

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With the REPORTS option you can print a complete presentation package around the listings that you have tagged. You may select which reports to print by tagging the reports and then pressing "PRINT SELECTED REPORTS". Or you may preview each report and print them one at a time.

## Report Options

---

All reports can be 'Previewed' prior to printing, while others require you to 'Edit' them before printing. If the reports require editing the "Edit" button will be activated, otherwise the button is grayed out

## Selecting Reports

---

There are two ways to select reports. The first is to TAG the reports you require and then press PRINT. If you have already read the chapter on LIST VIEW then you know how to Tag and Untag items. The second way to print reports is to PREVIEW them and Print them one at a time

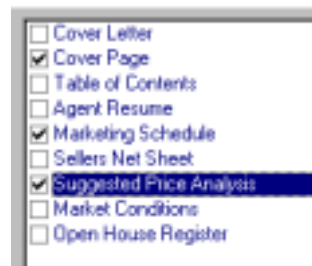
NOTE: Some reports require information from you before they can be printed. See the section EDITING Reports on how to do this.

You may also CLEAR your Report Selections and start again at any time.

## Printing Reports

---

Check the reports you want and then press PRINT



## Previewing Reports

---

To PREVIEW a report, click on the report you require and then Press PREVIEW. 'PcPictures' Virtual MLS allows you to preview all reports.

## Editing Reports

---

While some reports such as One Line List do not require any information from you (except perhaps for a heading), others such as a Seller's Net Sheet or an Agent Resume require some input. To enter this information:

Select the report you require by clicking on it in the list

Press the EDIT button. Depending on the report you have selected, you will be prompted for the necessary information.

## Entering Client Information

---

Enter the Name & Address of your client for this information to appear on the report

**Clients**

Default Reports  
Rick Jones

Name  
Rick Jones

Address  
123 Main Street

City & Zip  
Englewood, CO 11111

**Add**

You can add client information and save it for later use. Click on ADD then fill in the information.

**Change**

Change existing client information. Click on the client name then CHANGE.

**Remove**

Delete client information from your saved list. Click on the client name then DELETE.

This chapter explains:

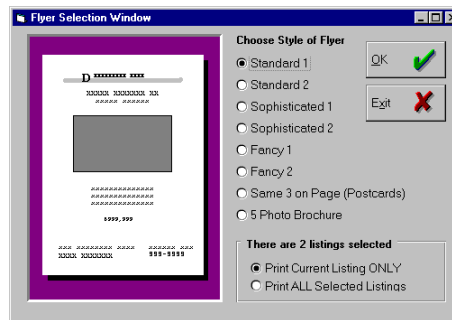
- ❑ How to edit, preview, and print Flyers

Flyers can be printed and accessed from many different screens in the Virtual MLS, including the List View, Full View, Pics View, Thumbnail View and others. On those screens you will find a button called "Print Flyer" that looks like this:



## Selecting Flyers

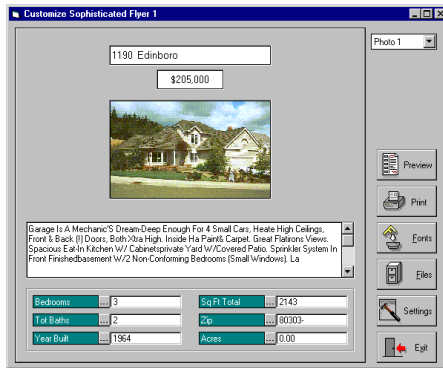
Upon clicking the "Print Flyer" button, the following screen appears:



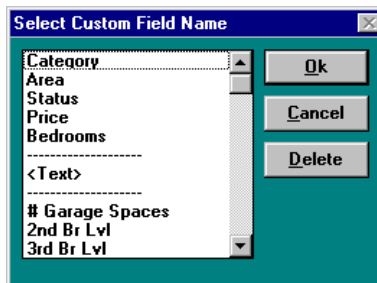
There are eight professionally designed templates to choose from. Simply click on the template you wish to use and then click the "OK" button to continue. NOTE: Since you enter the Flyers program from List View, Pics View or Full View" you have the option of printing flyers for "ALL" properties in your List View or just the current property, that is the property that was selected prior to clicking the "Print Flyer" button.

## Editing Flyers

Upon clicking the "OK" button, a screen similar to the flyer you have chosen will appear:.



Virtual MLS allows you to edit any information that will appear on the flyer. You can change the following: (1) The contents of any of the white boxes. Simply click on the appropriate box and edit accordingly. (2) Labels. To change any of the labels (the green fields), click on the label and make your changes. For example you can change "Baths" to read "Bathrooms". (3) "Drop Downs" (similar to those in 'List View' and 'Thumbnail View') You can change an entire field - for example to show 'Lot Size' instead of 'School District'. To do so, click on the button between the label and the text (it is labeled "..."). This brings up the following screen:



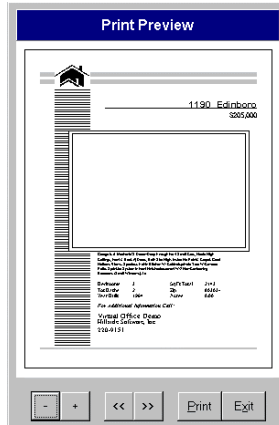
The dialog box allows you to choose from almost all the fields available in the MLS. This is a handy feature when preparing a flyer for a client who is primarily interested in school districts, for example. Simply edit the data fields on your flyers to display elementary, middle, and high schools for each listing.

Virtual MLS Flyers also allows you to select any font installed on your computer so that flyers can be tailored with a personal touch as well!

## Previewing, Printing, & E-Mailing Flyers

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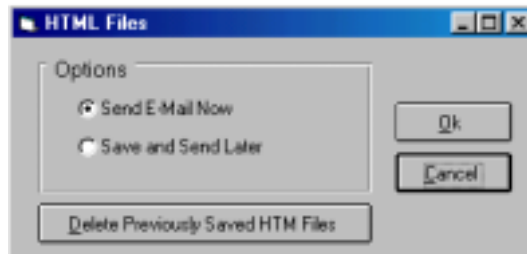
Virtual MLS allows you to preview your flyers on your screen before printing them. This is a handy feature that allows you to check for errors and make any changes before printing. Click on the "Preview" button and you will see the following:



You can view different flyers as well as zoom in and out.

Click on Print to print a flyer.

Click on HTML to save flyer in HTML format to e-mail to a client or load to a web page.



By selecting Send E-Mail Now you will get the option to attach all files, choose which files you want to include in the attachment, or attach no files. Make your selection and click "Next" you then have the option to use Virtual Office Mail (requires the Virtual Assistant module) or to use another e-mail program. Make your selection and click "Next". A self-extracting file titled "Clickme.exe" will be created containing all the HTML files. If you use Virtual Office Mail the program will be launched and the Clickme.exe attachment will automatically be attached. If you are using another e-mail program you will need to launch it and manually attached the Clickme.exe file. Once you have sent the e-mail to your client they can view the file by double clicking on the Clickme.exe attachment. When the file is double clicked on it will automatically self-extract and launch the client's browser where the files can be viewed.

By selecting the Save and Send Later option, all the supporting files are saved in HTML format. To create the self extracting attachment (Clickme.exe) you would need to click on the VO Mail from the main screen of Virtual Office.

For more information on VO Mail, see the chapter "VO Mail".

## Creating A Magazine

This chapter explains:

- ❑ How to create a magazine with the Virtual MLS

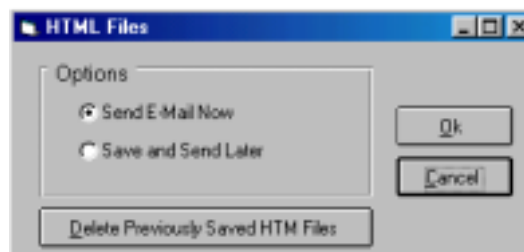
From the main screen click on the Magazine button.

Create a magazine by clicking on an address and dragging it over to one of the six boxes on the template. The magazine will print with the remarks and optionally the address (if there is space). Return to your 'List View' or 'Pics View' if you wish to change the remarks.



Click on Print to print the magazine (with or without addresses) you have constructed.

Click on HTML to save the magazine in HTML format to e-mail to a client or load to a web page.



By selecting Send E-Mail Now you will get the option to attach all files, choose which files you want to include in the attachment, or attach no files. Make your selection and click "Next" you then have the option to use Virtual Office Mail (requires the Virtual Assistant module) or to use another e-mail program.

Make your selection and click "Next". A self-extracting file titled "Clickme.exe" will be created containing all the HTML files. If you use Virtual Office Mail the program will be launched and the Clickme.exe attachment will automatically be attached. If you are using another e-mail program you will need to launch it and manually attach the Clickme.exe file. Once you have sent the e-mail to your client they can view the file by double clicking on the Clickme.exe attachment. When the file is double clicked on it will automatically self-extract and launch the client's browser where the files can be viewed.

By selecting the Save and Send Later option, all the supporting files are saved in HTML format. To create the self extracting attachment (Clickme.exe) you would need to click on the VO Mail from the main screen of Virtual Office.

For more information on VO Mail, see the chapter "VO Mail".

# Chapter 14

## Quick Find

This chapter explains:

- ❑ How to search for individual property listings in Virtual MLS, and optionally add them to your LIST.

At any time you can quickly find a specific property using the Virtual MLS Quick Find button. Use QUICK FIND to search for one specific property as opposed to SEARCH which will create a LIST of properties which meet your search parameters. QUICK FIND can optionally ADD a single property to your current LIST of properties.

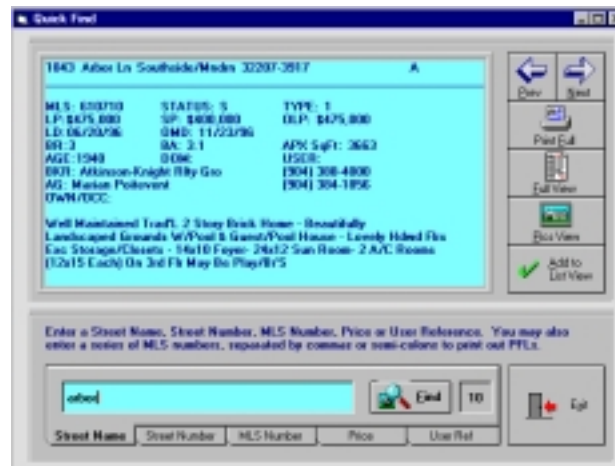
### Using Quick Find

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Start QUICK FIND by clicking the QUICK FIND button in the Virtual MLS main toolbar. The QUICK FIND button is second from the left and appears as below:



The QUICK FIND screen appears as below:



You can search by Street Name, Street Number, List Price, User Reference, or MLS Number. Enter the keyword you wish to find, select the appropriate TAB, and press FIND.

### Moving Around In Quick Find

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Use the PREVIOUS and NEXT buttons to continue searching. Press the 'ADD TO LIST VIEW' button to accept this property and ADD IT to the end of your current LIST of properties.

## Utilities

This chapter explains:

- How to perform system database maintenance
- How to delete listings and/or photos
- How to run a Version Control Check
- How to load your own property or personal photos

Virtual MLS provides a number of Utility Programs for maintaining your system and database. The Utilities are available from the Virtual MLS main MENU BAR across the top of the main screen. Click the "Utilities" menu selection and then choose from the list that appears.

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### Database Re-Index

We strongly recommend that you Re-Index your data on a regular basis. Over time the information becomes disorganized and can affect the performance of Virtual MLS. By Re-Indexing your data, you rebuild your indexes and the information can then be accessed by Virtual MLS in the most efficient way possible. Running a re-index can never do any harm - it can only speed things up. Do it frequently.

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### Delete Records

The various "Delete" options are explained below:

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#### Delete 'From List View'

This option will delete ALL records in your currently selected LIST. NOTE: Be careful with this! The most common use is for deleting groups of records, such as all records in the same area or zip code.

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#### Delete Off Market Listings

This option will delete ALL Off Market listings (i.e. All non-active listings which are older than 180 days.) You will be prompted for the number of days back.

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#### Delete Duplicate Listings

This option will delete any DUPLICATE listings (i.e. listings with the SAME MLS number) which may appear in your database. Note that it is highly unlikely to find duplicates - the only way this can occur is from a 'disk full' error or a corrupted index. This is the main reason you should run 'REINDEX' frequently.

## Delete Invalid Listings

---

This option will delete any INVALID listings in your database. Invalid listings are unlikely and are usually caused by a bad modem connection while downloading. The system checks obvious fields such as dates to determine whether a record is invalid or not. If you find any invalid listings you should re download the problem listings.

## Delete Selected Photos

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This option will delete ALL PHOTOS for the records in your currently selected LIST. The actual records are NOT deleted - just the photos.

## Delete Orphan Pictures

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Use this option to delete ORPHAN pictures (i.e. pictures which no longer have an associated MLS listing in your local database). Running any of the previous delete options could leave you with ORPHAN pictures.

## Delete Entire Database

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This does EXACTLY what it says. BE CAREFUL!!!

**NOTE:** After you have run any of the above DELETE options you MUST REINDEX your database to rebuild indexes and reclaim unused disk space.

## System Maintenance

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We strongly recommend that you perform the utility options discussed above followed by a Re-Index at least once a week.

## Version Control Check

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If you load a number of different Windows applications on your computer you may end up with different versions of commonly used files. In some cases this could lead to serious problems, with the various applications acting in unexpected ways. Run this Version Control check to obtain a list of any conflicting files. (Don't delete any files - back them up or rename them.) You should only keep the MOST UP TO DATE versions of these files. NOTE: ALL VBX and DLL files should be in the \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory. DO NOT place these files in your \WINDOWS directory.

## Listings Count

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Use this option to give you an analysis of the number of listings in your database broken down by category and area.

## Load MLS Photos from Disk

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Use this option to copy property photos from a floppy disk.

## **Load Agent Photo from Disk**

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Use this option to import your agent picture from a floppy disk.

Virtual Office Multiuser Version users must be sure to SIGN ON with the CORRECT PASSWORD. Then select the required picture from the diskette. Virtual Office will copy this file into the correct directory for you

## **Import MLS Photos**

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Use this option to import any property photos which you have already saved on disk. These could be from a digital camera or scanner.

## **Backup & Restore Data**

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Use this option to Backup (and if necessary restore) your MLS data. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of regular backups.

*"One good backup is worth more than 1,000 tears" - Anon*

## Virtual Maps (VMAPS)

This chapter explains:

- How to geocode listings
- How to search using a map
- How to plot properties from List View

Hillside's graphical interface displays your MLS listings on a map and allows you to view your data in many new and exciting ways.

**SEARCH:** Use your mouse to draw an area on the map - then let the system find all properties meeting your search criteria within this region.

**PLOT:** Virtual Maps will automatically plot these properties for you. You can create Virtual Tours by clicking on each property on the map - the relevant MLS information and property photo will instantly be displayed.

**NOTE:** VMAPS is not available for all parts of the USA. If the system is not on your 'Virtual Office' CD-Rom please consult your local software representative regarding availability in your area.

### Installing VMAPS

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When you run Virtual Office for the very first time the system will prompt you for the name of your local MLS. If VMAPS is available in your area the system will automatically copy the files from the CD to your Hard Disk. This may take a few minutes as some of these mapping files are quite large. VMAPS requires anything from an additional 20 to 40Mb of hard disk space depending on the size of your MLS. If you ALREADY have Virtual Office installed and you now wish to add VMAPS select 'System Setup' from the Menu Bar and choose the 'Program Info' tab. Click on VMAPS and the system will ask you to insert your Virtual Office CD-Rom disk. The required VMAPS files will then be copied to your Hard Disk. You are now ready to run VMAPS.

Before you can use the VMAPS program successfully it is essential that you GEOCODE your properties. **VMAPS WILL NOT SEARCH OR PLOT PROPERTIES UNLESS THEY HAVE BEEN GEOCODED!** Geocoding is the process whereby properties are plotted on the map and the resulting Latitude and Longitude coordinates are saved in your properties database along with all the other MLS information. Just as you cannot search properties by Price (for example) unless the Price has been correctly entered, you cannot search or plot properties by Latitude or Longitude unless this information has been entered and saved in your database. The good news is that it is a simple process to GeoCode your listings.

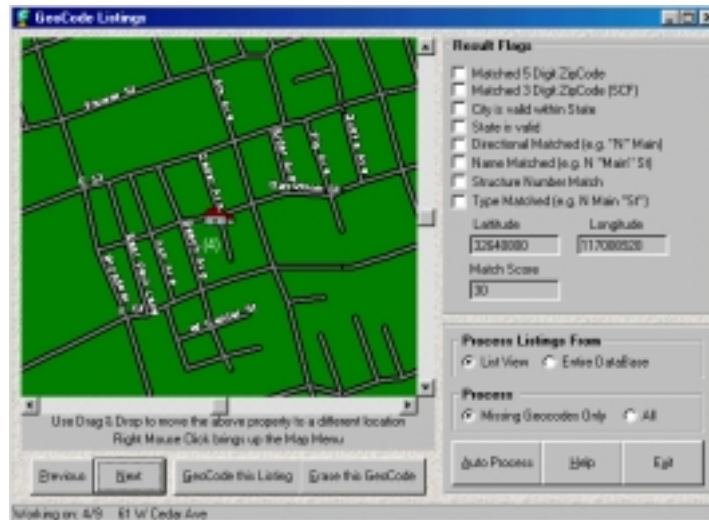
Also keep in mind that Geocoding is NOT an exact science. There are a number of reasons why a property could end up in the wrong place or not appear on the map at all.

For example if the Listing Agent enters the address incorrectly (123 Elm Way instead of 123 Elm Street) or even misspells the street name you will have a problem. You can also find similar problems with the map data itself - street names and places on the map may be misspelled or be totally incorrect. Finally keep in mind that digital maps are not as up to date as their hard copy versions. New streets and subdivisions may not be available on a digital map system.

## GeoCoding

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To GeoCode your listings, select GEOCODE from the options under MLS on the Virtual Office Main Menu Bar. The system will display the geocoding screen. It is a simple process to geocode listings - however you need to make two choices. The first is whether to proceed automatically (Press 'Auto Process') or to geocode each listing one at a time (by pressing 'Previous' and 'Next'). The second is whether you wish to process ALL the listings in your database as opposed to just the listings in your current 'List View'.



The very first time you run VMAPS you should geocode your entire database. Be warned that this is a relatively slow process and may take some time. From then on you only need to geocode the properties in your current 'List View'. Remember that whenever you download new properties these automatically appear in your 'List View'. If you are using VMAPS you should always run GEOCODE after each download. Alternatively you can run GEOCODE 'on demand' whenever you have a List View and you intend to plot these properties.

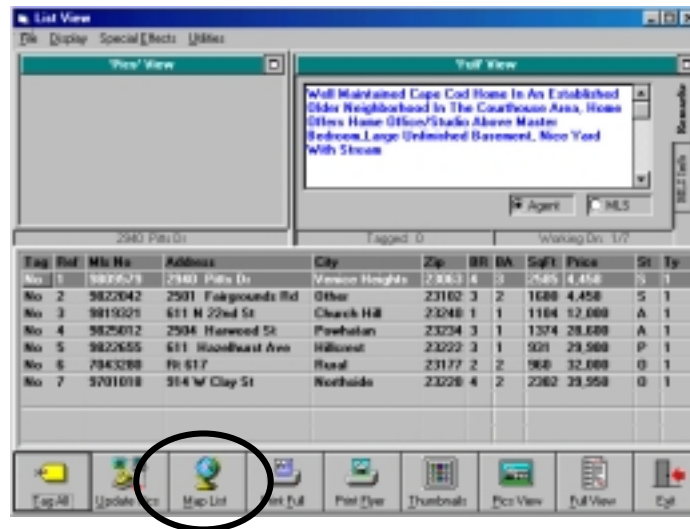
The easiest way to geocode is to press 'Auto Process'. The system will read each listing in either your entire database or your List View (depending on your selection) and attempt to geocode the property. Whenever a successful match occurs the system will save the Latitude and Longitude in your database. This is the quickest and easiest way to geocode properties. The other way is to proceed manually by pressing the 'Previous' or 'Next' buttons. The advantage of doing it this way is that you have more control over exactly where on the map the properties appear. You can use the drag and drop feature to move properties which are incorrectly plotted on the map.

Final thoughts on Geocoding. You have learnt so far that geocoding is NOT an exact science and that some properties will geocode better than others. VMAPS will attempt to match the street name, direction, postfix and suffix, the house number, the zip and so on. After each geocode VMAPS returns a SCORE which is a number between 0 and 125 giving you an idea of how good the match was. Anything over 75 is usually pretty good, although this varies in different regions around the USA. Anything less than say 20 you probably want to reject outright. Whenever you select 'Auto Process' the system will prompt you for a number (between 0 and 100). Any 'Match Scores' which are less than this number will be skipped by the geocode program and will be ignored by the Search and/or Plotting options of VMAPS. You may wish to

experiment with the default value of 20 by setting it higher or lower. For example in your area 20 may in fact return some pretty good matches whereas say at 10 the results start to look flaky. In this case choose 10. Or the exact opposite may be true - you may have to select a number as high as say 50 to weed out the flaky geocoded properties. Setting this value to 0 (zero) will geocode EVERY property no matter how good or bad the resulting geocode score looks. Properties which fail the GeoCode are usually plotted in the middle of the zipcode. This may degrade the quality of your results. Think long and hard before you do this.

## Plotting Properties

Once you have your properties (or at least most of them) successfully geocoded plotting them on the map is really easy. Make sure that you have the properties you intend to plot in your 'List View'. Then press the 'Map List' button.



VMAPS will display a map and automatically plot these properties for you. Now you can 'Tour' each listing by clicking on each house icon. The MLS information for that property together with a photo (if it is available) will appear. Note that the Match Score appears in parenthesis after the address. Properties with a low score you may wish to geocode again. You can either fix the address (see Tips & Tricks) or use the GeoCode drag & drop feature to reposition this property.



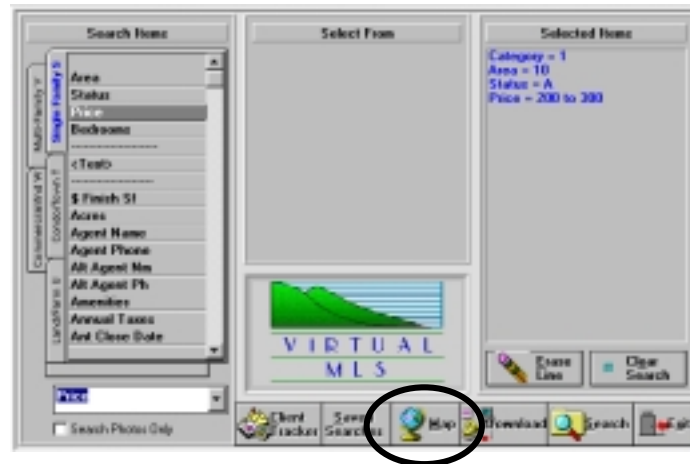
Also notice the List of Properties below the map. These are the same properties from your 'List View'.

Click on any property in this list and VMAPS will redraw the map with this property in the center. Items in this list box which start with an asterisk DO NOT appear on the map - they have not been geocoded. Finally notice the horizontal splitter bar between the map and the list box. With your mouse you can move this bar up or down and in this way display more or less of either the map or list box.

## Search using a map

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To include a map in your SEARCH proceed as follows. From the VIRTUAL OFFICE 'SEARCH SCREEN' click on the MAP SEARCH Button.



. VMAPS will present a map of the USA. Use your left mouse button to zoom in on the area you wish to search. (The entire USA map appears only once - from then on VMAPS remembers the county you last searched) Once you have zoomed in close enough to the area you intend to search click on the 'DEFINE' button. Now using your left mouse button draw a rectangle on the screen enclosing the area you wish to search. When you release the mouse button VMAPS will draw a box showing you the area you have selected. Repeat this process until you are satisfied with your selection. Now press 'Exit' and VMAPS will return you to the SEARCH SCREEN. Notice that VMAPS has automatically added the Latitude and Longitude to your Search Parameters. Enter any additional search criteria such as Price exactly as you usually do. Then press 'Search Local' to run the Search.

**Very important note:** For the Map SEARCH to work you need to REINDEX your database after you GEOCODE properties. You do NOT have to do this if you only use the MAP PLOT feature.

## Tips and Tricks

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1. Pressing your Right Mouse Button while anywhere on the map displays a map popup menu.
2. If you cannot get an address to geocode properly it may be because the information entered by the listing agent is wrong. YOU CAN CHANGE THIS ADDRESS. Return to the Virtual Office FULL VIEW. Notice the address in a white box on the lower part of the screen. Go ahead and change it. Now return to the Geocode option of VMAPS and try geocoding this property again.
3. To get a list of all properties which do not have geocodes proceed as follows: From the Virtual Office Search Screen search for all listings in the area which have a Latitude or Longitude of zero. Select either Lat or Long but do not select both. You now need to search from 0 to 1. You will then get a list of all properties which do not have geocodes.

## Client Tracker

This chapter explains:

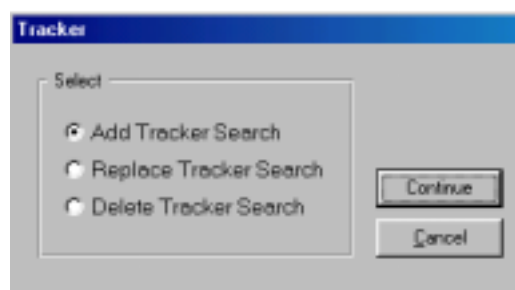
- How save a client search
- How to search for a client
- How to print / e-mail search results

The 'Client Tracker' option allows you to save client searches and automatically match these against recently downloaded listings. The system gives you the option of printing letters notifying clients of these matches or you can automatically create e-mail messages to be sent to these clients.

**NOTE:** This feature requires Virtual Assisatnt.

Using Tracker is a two step process.

**Step 1:** is to save the search associated with the client. To do this first make sure that your client's information is entered into Virtual Assistant. Be sure to include the e-mail address if you intend to use this feature. From the Virtual MLS Search screen select the 'Tracker' button. This will allow you to link the current search with a client in your Virtual Assistant database.



### Add Tracker Search

This option allows you to save the current search and associate it with a client. Whenever you add a new search Tracker needs to know which client to link to. Use the Find button to find the client either by first name or last. Once you have done this accept the record and return to your Virtual MLS Main Menu.

### Replace Tracker Search

This option allows you to replace previously saved search criteria with the current search.

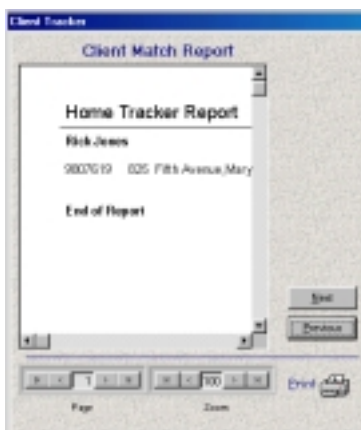
### Delete Tracker Search

This allows you to delete previously saved Tracker Search.

**Step 2:** To process these matches against recently downloaded MLS listings, select the TRACKER option from your Main Menu. You will be presented with 3 screens:



Screen 1: Tracker presents a list showing each saved search as well as the date of the last run. You can select individual clients or just use the default which is ALL. You can reset the 'Date of Last Run' by double clicking on a Client Name in the list and then entering the new date. Press 'Next' to continue, and the system will start the matching process.



Screen 2: This gives you a summary of the results of your search. You can print this report if you wish to do so.



Screen 3: This screen lists all clients with successful matches as well as the number of matching records. Here you are presented with 3 options: (1) Print Letters. (2) Prepare E-Mail. (3) Create a List View. If you select the last option and return to the 'Virtual MLS' List View these properties will now be in your list. Use this option if you intend to process these matching properties manually – i.e. print reports or flyers. Screen 3 also gives you the option to edit the letter which your clients receive.

Note: 'Prepare E-Mail' does not actually send these e-mail messages. To send these use the 'Tracker' button on the 'VOMail' program Menu.

Finally when you exit the program you will be given the option to reset the 'date of last run' for these clients. Press 'Ok' unless you want these same properties to show up again next time you run this program.

## VO Mail

This chapter explains:

- How to create a "CLICKME" file to email
- How to send Email

One of the most exciting features of Virtual MLS is the ability to create HTML flyers and reports which you can either upload to your Web Site or e-mail to clients. Reports and flyers which support this feature will display a button marked HTML. Whenever you select this button you have two options. The first is to e-mail the document you are working on right now. The second is to save this document and send it together with other saved documents later. Please note that all these HTML documents are kept in your default HTML folder. If you are going to create and save a number of documents for a specific client, be sure to CLEAR this folder of any previous documents before you start.

When you run the VOMAIL program it combines all the documents in your HTML folder into a single file called CLICKME.EXE. The VOMAIL program will automatically attach this file to your e-mail message. If you are not using VOMAIL and are using some other program such as America OnLine be sure to attach this CLICKME.EXE file yourself.

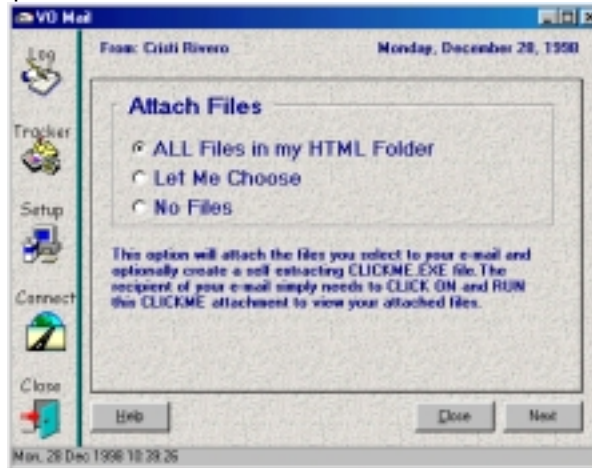
When your client receives the e-mail all they need to do is 'Click On' and 'Run' this CLICKME file. CLICKME will automatically launch their Web Browser and present a Table of Contents with all the documents you have just sent. Using their Web Browser clients can easily select documents from the 'Table of Contents' and view them.

# VOMAIL WIZARD

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VOMail presents you with a Wizard which steps you through the e-mail process.

Select one of the following options:

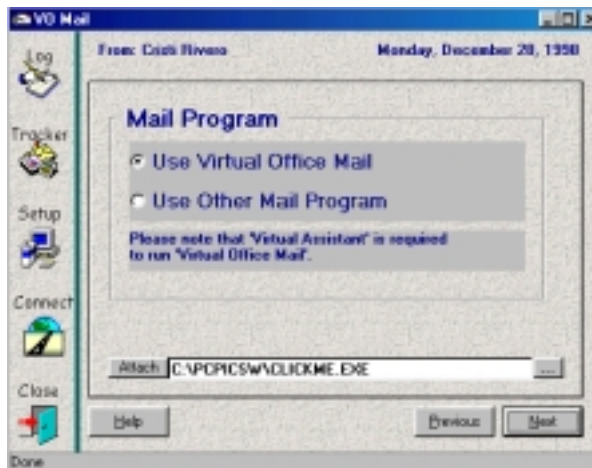


**All Files in my HTML folder:** If you used 'Virtual Office' to create HTML flyers and reports then they will be stored in your default HTML folder. If this is the case then select this option. The system will create a self extracting file called CLICKME.EXE containing the files to be sent to your client. It is called 'Self Extracting' because all your client needs to do is double click on this file, and it will automatically extract all the files and launch your client's Web Browser.

**Let me choose:** If you are using VOMail to send and attach any other files then select this option.

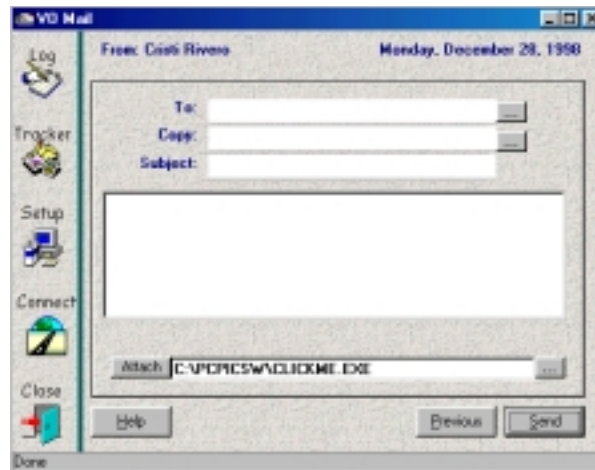
**No Files:** If you are using VOMail to send e-mail only without any attachments then select this option.

Press 'Next' to continue.



Select whether you wish to use 'Virtual Office Mail' or some other Mail Program. 'Virtual Office Mail' makes your life a lot easier as it automatically attaches this CLICKME.EXE file to your e-mail. However to use this you need to have Hillside Software's Virtual Assistant program installed. (If you do not have Virtual Assistant' please contact Hillside Software or your local Software Representative.) You also need an e-mail account with an Internet ISP that allows use of third party email programs. If you do not have Virtual Assistant installed or you are using some other e-mail service (like AOL or HOTMAIL) then select 'Other Mail Program' and be sure to attach this CLICKME.EXE file to the e-mail yourself. Refer to that program's relevant documentation to see how to attach files. Press 'Next' to continue.

If you are using some other Mail Program then VOMail will terminate at this point. If not you will be presented with the VOMail send mail screen. All you need to do now is fill out this screen and press 'Send'. Your e-mail message together with the CLICKME.EXE attachment will be sent to your client.



You can press the ellipse [...] button next to 'To' and 'Copy'. This will present you with a list of all clients in 'Virtual Assistant' who have an e-mail address. You can pick from the list instead of manually typing in the e-mail address.

**NOTE:** In 'Virtual Assistant' you can easily create a 'Mail List' which you can use to send e-mail to a whole group of people at once. For example you can create a mail list of local brokers and automatically e-mail them a flyer whenever you sign up a new listing. To do this proceed as follows: In Virtual Assistant perform a SEARCH to select the clients who will be included in this mail list. (Refer to the Virtual Assistant documentation if you need more information on how to do this.) Then select the MAIL option from the menu bar and choose 'Mail List'. Choose a name for the list and exit Virtual Assistant. In VOMail whenever you click on the ellipse [...] this mail list will be one of your options.

## VOMail OPTIONS

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**LOG:** VOMail keeps a log of all successfully sent e-mail messages. Use this option to view the log and delete it whenever it gets full.

**TRACKER:** The Virtual Assistant program has a feature called 'Client Tracker' which lets you send e-mail messages to clients whose search criteria match those of newly downloaded listings. Use the 'Tracker' option in Virtual Assistant to automatically search and create these e-mail messages. Then press the 'Tracker' button here to actually go ahead and send them.

**SETUP:** In order to use VOMail you need to tell the system about yourself and the e-mail server which you are using. Be sure to complete the information on this screen before attempting to send any e-mail.

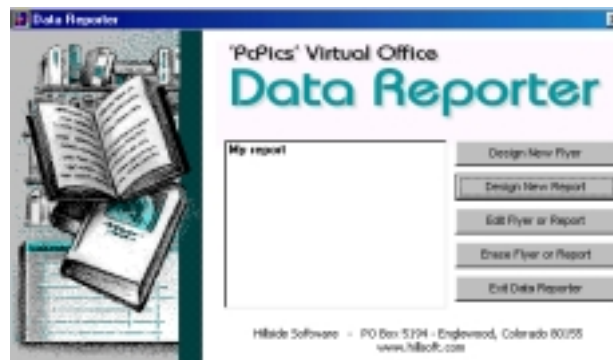
## Data Reporter

This chapter explains:

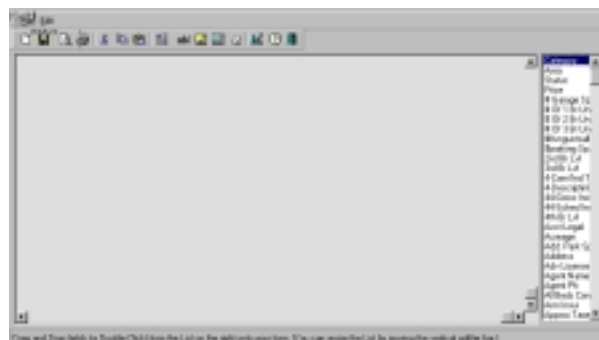
- ❑ How to create and edit your own report templates

The Virtual Office comes with numerous professionally designed flyers and reports. Use the Virtual Office 'Data Reporter' to create, modify and save your own flyers and reports. Run the 'Data Reporter' and select flyers (usually one listing per page) or reports (as many listings as will fit on the page, each on their own line.) Whichever option you choose the system will present you with a workspace and a list of available features on the right hand side. Just drag and drop the features you require (or double click) onto the workspace. (Notice that there is a 'splitter bar' separating the workspace from the features list. Use your mouse to resize your workspace by moving this 'splitter bar' to the left or right). Use the toolbar buttons on the top of the screen to save and preview your work. Additional toolbar buttons on the Flyer Screen let you add Photos, Images and Text to your report. Note that all flyers and reports created with the 'Data Reporter' also appear on the 'OTHER' tab in the Reports & CMA module.

When you launch the Data Reporter you have five options:



**Design New Flyer** – By selecting this you can create a one-page flyer for each listing in the List View.

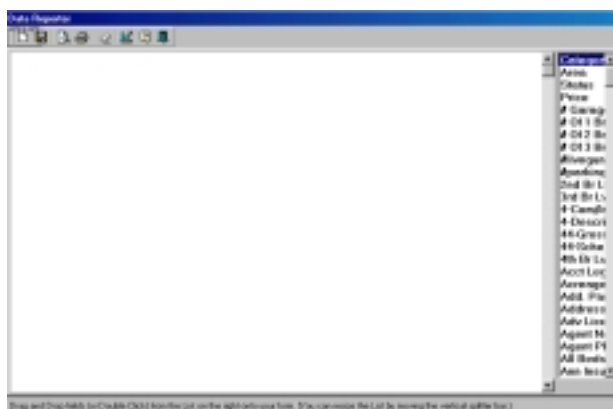


When first launched you have a blank workspace with the MLS fields on the right side. Construct your flyer by dragging and dropping the desired MLS fields from the section on the right side into the blank workspace. You can position the fields on the page as desired.

To label each field click on the “abj” icon on the icon bar, type in the desired label, click on OK and drag the label to the desired position.

To save the flyer as a template for later use click on “File” and then “Save”. You can recall the template by selecting “Reports” from the main screen of Virtual MLS and then select the tab titled “Other”.

**Design New Report** – By selecting this you can create a one line list/report using the listing in the List View.



When first launched you have a blank workspace with the MLS fields on the right side as you do with the Design New Flyer option as described above. Construct your report by dragging and dropping the desired MLS fields from the section on the right side into the blank workspace to create columns.

To save the report as a template for later use click on “File” and then “Save”. You can recall the template by selecting “Reports” from the main screen of Virtual MLS and then select the tab titled “Other”.

**Edit Flyer/Report** – This option allows you to edit a previously saved Flyer or Report. Select the Flyer/Report you would like to edit from the section on the left side and click on this icon.

**Erase Flyer/Report** - This option allows you to erase a previously saved Flyer or Report. Select the Flyer/Report you would like to erase from the section on the left side and click on this icon.

**Exit Data Reporter** – Click on this to exit the Data Reporter program.

# A

## Tool & Menu Bar Summary

This section details the tool bar and menu bar on the main Virtual Office screen.

### Tool Bar

There are ten buttons in the main Virtual Office tool bar. As described in Chapter Four, the first six are required by Virtual Office and always remain the same. The last four are customizable and can be changed to meet the users needs. This Appendix will detail the default values for those buttons. For information on customizing those buttons, please refer to Chapter Four - System and Agent Setup, the section titled "Menu Bar Setup".



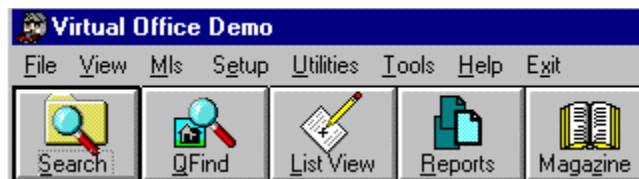
- Search: Use this option to Search your local listings database. Depending on which MLS system your Virtual MLS is configured for, this search can also be applied to your download from the MLS.
- QFind: Use this option to perform a Quick Find. This allows you to quickly search your local listing database for a single property. See Chapter Twelve for more information.
- List View: Press this button to open the List View screen. See Chapter Seven for more information.
- Reports: Press this button to open the Report module of Virtual MLS. See Chapter Ten for more information.
- Magazine: Press this button to open and create a Magazine printout for your property listings. See Chapter Eleven for more information.
- Data Rep: Press this button to create customized reports and save them for later use..
- Terminal: Press this button to access the MLS system either in Terminal mode or in Download Mode. See Chapter Five for more information.
- Qualify: Press this button to access the Buyer Pre-Qualification module of Virtual MLS.
- Write: Press this button to access the word processing module included with Virtual MLS. This Write program is a standard word processor with similar features to Microsoft Windows Write™ program and Windows '95™ Word Pad.

Calc: Press this button to access the Microsoft Windows™ Calculator.

## Menu Bar

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The main Menu Bar located on the main Virtual MLS screen can be found just above the Tool Bar. The Menu Bar performs many of the same tasks as the Tool Bar does and much more. Below are descriptions of the menu commands and the options available from each.



### File

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Printer Setup: Use this option to configure your Printer from within the Virtual MLS.  
Export Listings: Use this option to export listings from your "List View" to a separate file on your hard disk.  
Exit: Use this option to exit Virtual MLS.

### View

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List View: Select this option to open the List View screen. See Chapter Seven for more information.  
Full view: Select this option to open the Full View screen. See Chapter Nine for more information.  
Pics View: Select this option to open the Pics View screen. See Chapter Eight for more information.  
Thumbnails: Select this option to view 15 photos per page with MLS information

### MLS

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Access MLS: Select this option to access the MLS system either in Terminal mode or in Download Mode. See Chapter Five for more information.  
Load Capture Buffer: Select this option load or re-load the capture buffer containing your latest download information.  
View Download: Select this option to view the capture buffer file containing your latest download information.  
Set Timed Download: Use this to select a time that Virtual Office will automatically dial the MLS and update your database with any new listings or changes to existing listings since the last time you have downloaded.

## Setup

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- Agent Info: Select this option to access the Agent Setup information for Virtual MLS. See Chapter Four for more information.
- System Info: Select this option to access the System Setup information for Virtual MLS. See Chapter Four for more information.
- Menu Buttons: Select this option to access the Menu Button Setup information for Virtual MLS. See Chapter Four for more information.

## Utilities

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- ReIndex: Select this option to re-indexing your data and rebuild your indexes. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Delete: Select this option to delete various types of listings from your local listings database. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Version Control Check: Select this option to determine whether any incompatible system files exist on your computer. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Listings Count: Select this option to determine the total number of listings in your local listing database. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Load MLS Photos from disk: Select this option to load MLS photos scanned onto a diskette into Virtual MLS. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Load Agent Photo from disk: Select this option to load an agent photo from a diskette into Virtual MLS. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Import user's MLS Photos: Select this option to replace a listings MLS photo on your local system with a new photo. See Chapter Thirteen for more information.
- Backup Data: Select this option to perform a Backup on your Virtual MLS local listings database.
- Restore Data: Select this option to perform a Restore of your backed up Virtual MLS local listings database file.

## Tools

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- Loan Analysis: Select this option to access the Loan Analysis module in Virtual MLS.
- Buyer Pre-Qualify: Select this option to access the Buyer Pre-Qualification module in Virtual MLS.
- Write: Select this option to access the Write word processor module in Virtual MLS.

## Help

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- Contents: Select this option to access the Virtual MLS On Line Help File.
- Search For Help On: Select this option to search for a particular item in the Virtual MLS On Line Help File.

- Using Help: Select this option to access basic Windows™ information on using On Line Help Files.
- Support: Select this option to access an information screen that provides you all Support contact information for your local MLS system, software vendor, or Hillside Software.
- Registration Form: Select this option to access an information screen that allows you to enter information for registration of Virtual MLS.
- About: Select this option to view information about Hillside Software's Virtual Office.

## **Exit**

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This menu selection simply exits Virtual MLS.

# B

## Database Maintenance

We strongly recommend that you Re-Index your data on a regular basis. Over time the information becomes disorganized and can affect the performance of Virtual MLS. By Re-Indexing your data, you rebuild your indexes and the information can then be accessed by Virtual MLS in the most efficient way possible. Running a re-index can never do any harm - it can only speed things up. Do it frequently.

To Re-Index your data, click the menu selection "Utilities" and then click "Reindex".

# C

## Network Installation

The Virtual MLS can be installed to run on a Local Area Network such as Novell or Windows 95. To do so, first complete the steps outlined in the "Installing Virtual Office" section of Chapter 2 - Installation & Setup.

We suggest that a copy of the Virtual MLS be installed on each workstation (usually on Drive C) with access to the network. You must also install a copy on the network drive, although you only need to keep the DATA and PHOTOS on your network drive.

Once you have installed Virtual MLS on each workstation, select SYSTEM SETUP and PROGRAM INFO and tell the system where to find the DATA and PHOTOS. If your network drive is F for example, your entries here will look something like the following:

Data Directory:           F:\PCPICSW\DATA    and  
Photo Directory:         F:\PCPICSW\VGA.

If at any time you wish to work locally and not on the network, just change the F back to a C.

# D

## How do I...?

**Q:** How do I delete properties and/or photos from my database?

**A:** To delete records from your database, click the menu selection "Utilities" and then click "Delete". You will be given the option to delete certain types of records or all records. Select the type of record you wish to delete and click the "OK" button. Simply repeat this process as necessary.

**Q:** How do I move data from the Virtual MLS located on our network to a copy of Virtual MLS on a local stand alone PC?

**A:** Data can be copied from Virtual MLS on a Network and moved to a local PC, however it is all or nothing. There is no way to move selected or individual records from one to the other. Simply copy the contents of the PCPICSW\DATA directory from one machine to another for a mirror copy. To just copy the most recently downloaded information, copy the file CAPTURE.BUF in the PCPICSW directory to the PCPICSW directory on another PC. Then from the Virtual MLS main screen, click the menu selection "MLS" and then click "LOAD CAPTURE BUFFER".

# E

## Troubleshooting

**Q:** I received a VXBASE error while in Virtual MLS. What happened?

**A:** This is often caused by information messed up on your hard disk. To fix things you should try the following: Exit out of the program and close all other programs you may have running. Then run the Windows Utility SCANDISK. Fix any problems reported by SCANDISK. Restart Virtual MLS and run a REINDEX. This last step is VERY IMPORTANT! Once you have done the above the VXBASE error should be corrected.

**Q:** What do I do if I receive General Protection Fault error messages while **printing to a color printer**?

**A:** From the main Virtual MLS screen, click the menu selection "Setup" and then click "System Info". On the tab marked "System Info", select the first option "Use Special Color Print Driver". Simply click on it to mark it with an "X"..

**Q:** What do I do if I receive an "INVALID FILE FORMAT" while using the Virtual MLS?

**A:** The best thing to do is open Virtual MLS, select the menu selection "Utilities" and then click "Version Control Check". This will check your PC's system files with those required by the Virtual MLS. Any incompatible files should be replaced. See the UTILITIES section earlier regarding Version Control Check.

**Q:** Does the List View mode for PcPictures Virtual MLS have a limit to the number of records it can hold?

**A:** The answer is yes. You are allowed a maximum of 3,000 listings in List View mode.

**Q:** What do I do if I receive strange error messages like "PATH/FILE ACCESS ERROR" while using the Virtual MLS?

**A:** Database maintenance is a necessary part of using Virtual MLS. Refer to APPENDIX D - DATABASE MAINTENANCE for details.