



Unlocking Doors to Homeownership:

How FMLS brokers and agents connect clients to affordable financing with Down Payment Resource





First Multiple Listing Service (FMLS) turns more homeownership dreams into reality by enhancing their property listing data with Down Payment Resource.

Georgia Real Estate Starts Here
firstmls.com



First in Georgia Real Estate

First Multiple Listing Service (FMLS) was founded in 1957 by eight brokers who wanted to share real estate listings and connect buyers and sellers. Today, FMLS is the fourth largest MLS in the US. As Georgia's largest MLS, it serves over 57,000 members and has extensive MLS partnerships across Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Tennessee, Costa Rica, Mexico, and much of Central America.



Opportunity Knocked

When it comes to supporting brokers and agents with tools that provide a market edge, FMLS has always been ahead of the curve.

Back in 2013, former FMLS Director and former CEO Cantey Davis got wind of a tech firm that was helping housing professionals connect homebuyers with homebuyer assistance. As chance would have it, that firm, Down Payment Resource (DPR), was headed by Rob Chrane, who before becoming a mortgage banker was a REALTOR® and friendly competitor of Davis and several FMLS board members.

Having recalled Chrane's professionalism and passion for serving homebuyers, FMLS was keen to learn how DPR could help its members support homeownership for more home shoppers. After demoing the platform, FMLS was impressed with what it saw and brought on DPR as a free member benefit in April 2013.

The Solution Was Clear



“As the first MLS in the state of Georgia, FMLS has always been ahead of the pack,” explains Jeremy Crawford, current president and CEO of FMLS. “We’re broker owned, which allows us to be agile and adopt innovative tools before they gain broad traction in the industry. Down Payment Resource perfectly matched our pace of innovation and developed a custom data-sharing process all our own.”

DPR’s award-winning technology helps housing professionals connect homebuyers to the homebuyer assistance they need. DPR keeps tabs on the 2,300-plus homebuyer assistance programs in the U.S., with always up-to-date information on program funding status, eligibility rules, benefits and more. DPR is integrated with FMLS’ listing management platform, Matrix, which enables agents to conduct searches for homebuyer assistance-eligible properties in addition to flagging homebuyer assistance-eligible listings.

Additionally, FMLS offers agents Down Payment Connect, a lead-generation landing page that engages visitors to search for homebuyer assistance programs in their market that they may be eligible for. The mobile-friendly webpage enables housing professionals to differentiate themselves as experts on in-demand affordability programs while building a strong lead pipeline with prospect contact information that includes desired neighborhood, purchase price and income.

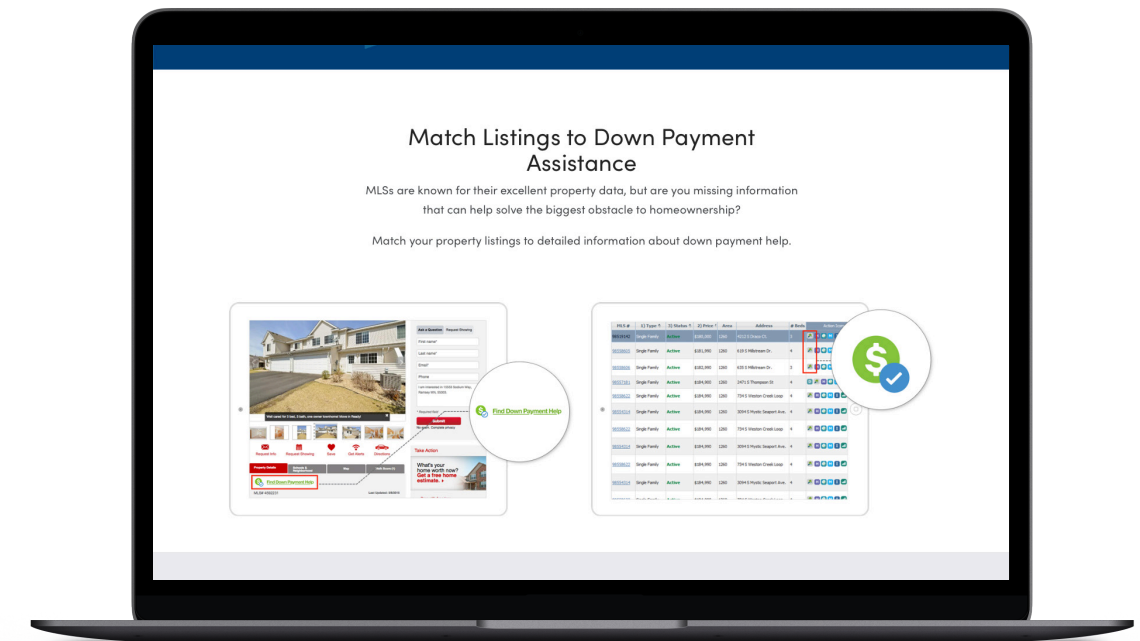
“FMLS is only successful when our agents are successful, and agents are most successful when they have the information necessary to help their clients achieve homeownership,” says Crawford. “DPR helps make that possible.”



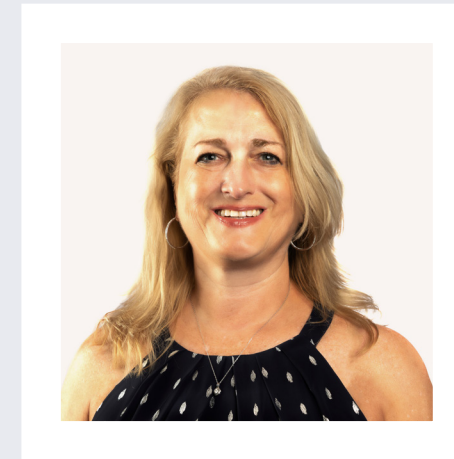
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Jeremy Crawford

President and CEO,
First Multiple Listing Service



DOWN PAYMENT RESOURCE'S AWARD-WINNING TECHNOLOGY HELPS HOUSING PROFESSIONALS CONNECT HOMEBUYERS TO THE HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE THEY NEED.



DPR HAS HELPED US COMBAT MANY
COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DPA,
SUCH AS PROGRAMS ONLY BEING AVAILABLE
FOR LOW-COST HOMES.

Marsha Buice

Chief Operating Officer,
First Multiple Listing Service

Results That Speak for Themselves

After a decade of working with DPR, FMLS has watched it grow into the industry's most comprehensive source for down payment assistance (DPA) and homebuyer assistance insights. Thanks to DPR's ever-expanding datasets and seamless integration capabilities, FMLS has achieved the following positive results:

INSTANT ACCESS TO LOCAL HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Via an integration with FMLS' MLS software, Matrix, DPR flags assistance-eligible listings, bringing users' awareness to affordable financing opportunities as they search for their clients' dream homes.

With just a few clicks, real estate professionals can share listings and associated homebuyer assistance programs that may make homeownership more affordable. Consumers can also search more broadly for eligible assistance programs, empowering them to make more informed homebuying decisions.

As FMLS user Sid Lightford of Berkshire Hathaway attests, "In the past, I would have to call the lender to ask about a specific property or use a map to determine what homes may qualify for homebuyer assistance. Clicking on the FMLS listing and seeing exactly what programs a home could qualify for helps me tremendously. I save time and can more easily help my buyers save money."

SUPPORT FOR TARGETED MARKETS

DPR has been especially handy for helping agents and brokers develop specialties in specific areas of homebuying, such as selling to active and former military members or first-time homebuyers for whom hundreds of targeted DPA programs are available nationwide. This allows them to tailor their services to meet each client's unique needs and stand out as a subject-matter expert in their markets.

FMLS COO Marsha Buice explains, "We recently partnered with Gulf Coast MLS in Mobile, AL as well as Middle Georgia MLS in Macon, Georgia, where there is a significant veteran population. DPR was a huge help in developing DPA trainings focusing on programs for veterans and military service members in Macon. We've received excellent feedback from that region already. It's gratifying to see this tool we've used for such a long time get strong recognition each time we bring it to another market."

CUSTOM INTEGRATIONS AND ENHANCEMENTS

Unlike technology vendors that disappear post-implementation, DPR has remained invested in FMLS' success for the past ten years. From day one, the organization collaborated closely with FMLS to tailor data connections to the listing service's existing systems. Once activated, DPR checks in regularly to ensure the integrations continue to run smoothly. The team also shares information about new enhancements and assistance program trends that could offer even greater value to FMLS members.

DPR is on deck to support more upcoming FMLS integrations in the coming months that will make education and collaboration even easier for both real estate professionals and consumers.

“The personalized, face-to-face support we have received from Down Payment Resource’s team over the past decade has ushered in new service opportunities for FMLS,” says Crawford. “The future addition of DPA tools to our One Home Matrix platform and Remine collaboration tool will unlock even more opportunities for our members to leverage DPA in their businesses. We are also in the early stages of developing a consumer-facing MLS site, and a DPR integration is at the top of our wish list for that project.”

With a strong understanding of the impact of DPA on the homebuying process, FMLS members help clients build lives and equity in homes of their own. FMLS believes in DPR so strongly that its employees use it in their personal home search process.

Buice concludes: “I have a son who will be graduating in a year. Like many first-time homebuyers, he won’t have a clue about the affordability offerings available to him until a housing professional points them out. Down Payment Resource puts this information in the palms of FMLS members’ hands, ensuring they’re well-educated and prepared to share what they’ve learned with first-time homebuyers like my son.”

ONGOING TRAINING

FMLS also partners with DPR on in-depth trainings, webinars and continuing education courses. By offering personalized affordable housing education to members in new markets and having additional resources available on-demand, FMLS helps real estate professionals overcome the most common misconceptions about DPA challenges and requirements.

“DPR has helped us combat many common misperceptions about DPA, such as programs only being available for low-cost homes,” says Buice. “That’s what makes it such a great resource for new real estate professionals in the industry. It helps them build their DPA expertise and get a footing in their unique markets.”

KILLER CONVERSION RATES

Down Payment Connect, a white-labeled lead-generation landing page that invites home shoppers to search for their homebuyer assistance program eligibility, has proven to be a potent lead generation tool for FMLS users. The page garners an impressive 8% click-to-lead conversion rate, well above what HubSpot cites as the “good” conversion rate range of 2%-5%.



About Down Payment Resource

Down Payment Resource is an award-winning technology provider helping the housing industry connect homebuyers with the homebuyer assistance they need. With tool sets tailored for real estate agents, multiple listing services and mortgage lenders, DPR's technology empowers housing professionals to make affordable home financing opportunities more accessible while growing business and forging referral partnerships. The only organization to track the details of every U.S. homebuyer assistance program, DPR frequently lends its expertise to nonprofits, housing finance agencies, policymakers, government-sponsored enterprises, think tanks and trade organizations seeking to improve housing affordability. Its technology is used by five of the top 10 retail mortgage lenders by volume, three of the four largest real estate listing websites and 500,000 real estate agents. For more information, visit DownPaymentResource.com.



Let's get started.

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