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## YOUR BUSINESS REAL ESTATE IMAPP PROVIDES A BETTER PICTURE OF PROPERTIES



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REAL ESTATE

Randy Bates, a sales associate with brokerage **Ivan J. Smith & Co. Inc.** in Pompano Beach, remembers how he used to do comparative market analyses for his clients. These analyses provide buyers and sellers with information on the estimated value of a house. They contain information on comparable sales in a particular neighborhood.

Bates used to pore through large plat books in local government offices and use a microfiche machine to gather the data he needed. He sometimes had to leave his office to gather the information. But now, he uses iMap software, a suite of interactive tax mapping programs available to him through the Realtor Association of Greater Fort Lauderdale.

Now, Bates can obtain all the information he needs on his computer in about 45 minutes. Before, it would take hours.

"The software is pretty powerful," he said.

Bates accesses it every day to gather information needed for new listings as well as for marketing purposes. Although he has other Multiple Listing Service software available to him through the association, Bates likes to use iMap.

"iMap brings up maps, so you can bore down even to an individual lot to get the dimensions," he said. "You can also zoom back out to see the whole subdivision." If Bates is doing research on a property, it's important to know the dimensions and what's around it, he said. He can even get an aerial photo of an individual property on iMap.

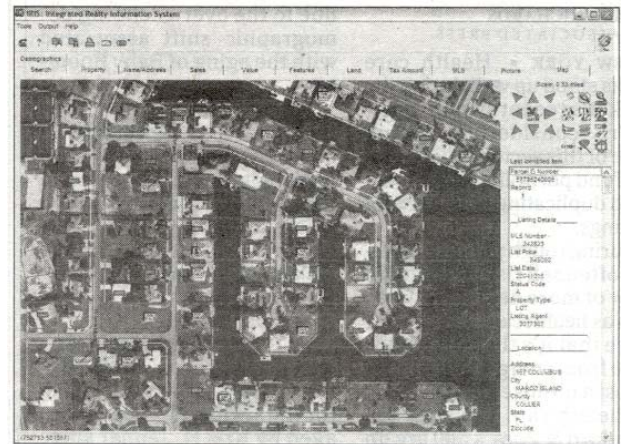
The iMap software was launched nine years ago, said Bill Rovillo, president of Clearwater-based **iMap Inc.** He said that 24 Realtor associations in Florida — comprising 70,000 agents — are using the software package, which has two main features.

First, it allows agents to find information on any property in a county simply by looking at an interactive online parcel map and clicking on a property. One click will bring up the tax records, information from the MLS database, value information, sales history, comparable sales, demographic data for the area and more.

The software also automatically gives an agent a projected sales price — taking into account all the previous sales in the area, including those sales handled by owners alone. "We have streamlined it, so you can get tax information with one click and a property evaluation with another click," Rovillo said.

For individual Realtors who want to use the software, the cost is \$100 per month. But for agents who are members of certain trade associations, there is no charge, as the association absorbs the cost, which is "a couple of dollars per month" for large accounts, according to Rovillo.

The Realtor Association of Greater Fort Lauderdale, which has more than 10,000 members, provides access to the software to its members. "We wanted to provide a bundled package to our members to help increase their efficien-



**DOWN TO DETAILS:** Tax records, MLS and demographic data and sales history are available through iMap software.

cy and profitability," said Richard W. Barkett, the association's chief executive officer. Barkett speculated that about 40 percent of the members use the program on a day-to-day basis.

The software integrates both Multiple Listing Service data and tax roll data to give real estate agents a more accurate idea of pricing and values. The Multiple Listing Service contains data only on houses that have been listed and sold by area real estate agents and brokers. It does not include information on sales that did not involve an agent. Tax roll data, however, includes all sales.

By using the iMap program, agents can save time and increase productivity, Barkett said. The association even provides iMap's premium services — such as deed and mortgage data, links to recorded documents and foreclosure information — to its members. And by using the bundled iMobile software, agents can access all data via their Internet-enabled cell phone, PDA or laptop.

"It's a pretty nice product," Bates said. "With everything digital these days, it's amazing what you can do in a very short time."

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