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What is one of the only things you can not get a comprehensive list of online?

July 28, 2009 - Spotlights

Come on - you are in the business if you are reading this! You know.

A list of the kind of commercial property you are looking for! You need to call five colleagues, read 5 publications, and search on 10 sites at least. Good luck with Google! Your company site, your association sites, seven real estate listing services...what it's 6:30?! And you have been searching all week long. And spent hundreds of dollars. OK so on your way home you nearly cause accidents as you note the numbers on signs that you swear were not online. Then tonight, instead of that mystery novel, you scan the New England Real Estate Journal, BBJ, B&T, the Globe and your town papers.

Call 5 friends...

Steve Koss of my company, Re/Max Landmark is into CoStar today. Trying to figure out the deals and if it might be worth the high costs for the agents in his group. "The search parameters are great! I can find comparable properties and get the contact information for the owners." OK, I'll call the rep again.

* Cathy Minnerly now NAI-Hunneman is a great go to person. Called her to find dispatch offices and parking for 250 vans in Boston. How about the former Stop & Shop Distribution Center? So we meet there with my client, The Ride for the MBTA. (This is of course after I spend thousands of dollars on comps, searches and solds.) Not listed - the building we spot! Not even part of Campanelli's plan to develop this property. A small office and 10 big drive-in bays and "oh my" - a wash facility! Plenty of parking and permits for our use! When buildout would take too long - we were able to use temporary space across the parking lot.

* Trish Schiappelli, commercial loan officer, Sovereign Bank (with whom I have developed & conducted commercial property seminars) introduced me to her client to look at a Boston city block. We are now marketing a 30,000 s/f, 2-story parking/mini-storage pod facility (cap rate of >10% anyone?) and eight, 1,250 s/f combinable new retail windowfronts, "The Shops at Livingstone Square!"

* Dick Laham, Atlantic Realty and compare notes on resources. He is active with the Realtor's RCA and keeps me up-to-date. We are both RECS and I keep him up with digital online communities.

* Joe Roche is a creative real estate investor in Braintree who introduced me to Tom Weitbrecht greatestauctioneer.com, "It is a buyer's market. Auctions make the market transparent!" Who wants to sell quickly? An auction can make sense for those with low or no mortgage obligations and could use a tax deduction in addition to the auction income. Would you believe that 50% of all properties are sold at auction?

And check 10 sites, 5 publications and join 4 organizations...

Many properties are not marketed at all. Maybe there is a sign but more often, no-one is working on

making a sale. Besides good luck, you need hours and hours (or a market research hound like me). I subscribe to many publications, associations, sites and services, and use them for marketing as well as search. Then there are the niche sites and publications for particular interests! Properties are not online in one place and analytics are not easy when they are not directly comparable.

It will make life so much easier if we can use the efficiencies of the Internet! Market research is absolutely necessary in this changeable marketplace. I dream of the day when commercial properties will join the rest of the world online and I can depend on my peeps for comprehensive information!

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