

## On Becoming an e-Agent-Listing Photos Part IV

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By Jo Becker, GRI, BA

I would like to dovetail this article with last month's by discussing listing photos on RMLSWEB.com. While the site is relatively new, it has long been RMLS' policy to accept as many as eight pictures per listing.

When you submit your photos to RMLS, you can—in fact you're required to—indicate the order in which you want them to appear. The photo you select to be first—often a front exterior shot—will also appear automatically on REALTOR.com. (Note that it takes REALTOR.com a couple days to upload new information and especially photos to their site from the RMLS data.) All eight photos will be available to those surfing the public site, RMLS.com, with the photo you choose as number one appearing first. And of course, your fellow Realtors® and their clients will be able to see any photos you submit when they access the member-only site RMLSWEB.com and forward your listing to their clients for review.

If you're not familiar with working with images on a computer, submitting photos to RMLS does take several steps, the particulars of which will depend on whether you are using a standard camera and scanner or digital camera, and what software you have available on your computer to manipulate them. It isn't reasonable to go into the particulars for each camera, scanner, and image manipulation program here, but assuming you can get beyond all that with or without assistance the rest is quite easy!

With the pictures of your new listing on your computer, your first order of business is to pick what you think are the best eight. As you choose, place them in order in your mind. RMLS asks that you rename each picture file with the MLS number and an ordering scheme that looks like this: 123456-1, 123456-2, 123456-3, and so on.

You will need to be sure that the image size is 640x480 pixels, and for use on the internet you needed worry about a resolution higher than 72 to 96 pixels per inch. Okay, I know I got real technical there for a moment, but don't worry. RMLS' tech support is great at walking callers through questions like this. If you call with your pictures already on your computer, they should be able to help you determine if each picture is the right size.

Speaking of "the right size," have you noticed some pictures on RMLS look *s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d* out of shape? This is because the photo wasn't sized to 640x480 pixels. When RMLS uploaded those pictures to their system, it stretched to fit them into a preset format. The effect can be quite warped, so do learn about sizing your pictures and be sure to do so before submitting them.

You should also know that RMLS' preset format doesn't accept "tall" photos very well. You want to be sure to take pictures in which the top and bottom are longer than the sides. I know this can be difficult in small rooms such as bathrooms and in other incidences. In these situations, you ought to try cropping the photo down to size to avoid that warping effect. Again, the particular steps for cropping will depend on the software you're using. If you need help, ask!

When you are done choosing, sizing, naming your picture files, you have just one more step to go. Open your e-mail program, create a new message, and attached each picture file to it. Address the message to [photos@rmls.com](mailto:photos@rmls.com) and hit "send." That's it! You did it!

One last word on photos—With image manipulation software, you have the ability to add text to your listings. You can talk up the property's features shown in the pictures you submit. You may not want to do this with all eight pictures and I would suggest not getting too fancy with scripted fonts and such, but a brief note on chosen photos can do a lot to sell the property! Please note that it is against RMLS policy to include any contact information, including your web address, on the pictures.

Call RMLS if you need more information on these regulations and assistance with image manipulation and submission. If all of this seems too overwhelming, ask for help, but keep trying! Before long you will get the hang of it. In the meantime, *hang it there!*



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