Listing Bits: Making house hunting mobile

By 2009, mobile users could do a lot with smartphone apps — get directions, listen to music, take pictures, play games, even film a video. Aaron Kardell thought that you ought to be able to add “look for a house” to the growing list of applications.

He founded HomeSpotter with the intention of doing just that.

https://www.inman.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Listing-Bits-EP020.mp3

Kardell grew up in rural Nebraska in a family of entrepreneurs. He started writing software programs in high school and went on to earn a bachelor’s in computer science at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota.

He originated several businesses, including Altona Ed, an ed tech student information system that was acquired by Pearson School Systems in 2004.

Kardell’s first experience with location-based iPhone applications came along in 2009 when he created iGarageSale. Very shortly thereafter, a broker contacted Kardell about building an app to complement the firm’s successful lead generating website.

Kardell retained intellectual property rights, and Mobile Realty Apps was born.

How agents dominate with multichannel content marketing

Win listings and overwhelm competition by mastering the art of social media, direct mail and email
READ MORE

The company rebranded as HomeSpotter in 2015, and today they have offerings for MLSs, brokers and agents.

On this episode, Kardell joins Greg Robertson live from CMLS in Austin to discuss HomeSpotter's business model, the latest capabilities around mobile listing input and HomeSpotter's recent launch of Boost, an automated digital marketing system with trackable ROI.

What's discussed:

- Kardell's entrepreneurial family
- How Kardell developed an interest in writing software programs
- The genesis of HomeSpotter
    - Created iGarageSale app
    - Realtor asked to build app as consultant
    - Retained intellectual property rights
- The tactical mistakes HomeSpotter made early on
- Why Kardell chose to take the native mobile route
- How Kardell built a business in the 99-cent app store world
    - Relied on SaaS model
    - White label broker offering
- HomeSpotter's service offerings
    - White label platform for brokers
    - MLS member access on-the-go
    - Boost (automated digital marketing with trackable ROI)
- How high agent adoption in MLS markets led to the introduction of additional products
- The new capabilities around mobile listing input
    - Ability to edit listings (corrections, status changes)
    - Update photo support capabilities
- How Kardell funded HomeSpotter
    - Personal capital sustained first three years

    - Angel investors in Minneapolis and St. Paul
- The particulars of HomeSpotter's newest offering, Boost
    - Automated system
    - For agents, teams, brokers
    - Creates Facebook and Instagram ads for each new listing
    - Targets prospective buyers and seller
    - Helps average agent be more effective with marketing
- Robertson's hesitance to get into the "advertising business"
- Why agents are willing to spend more for advertising than tools
- The scalability of an app like Boost
- How HomeSpotter is upselling current subscribers to try Boost
    - Partnering with brokers, franchises, MLSs
    - Email agent when listing added
    - Brokers pay for initial week in some cases
- How Kardell's team generates ideas for new products
- Cloud CMA's deal with Tom Ferry
- The pros and cons of a pay-per-listing pricing model
- The difference between HomeSpotter's free and premium versions for MLS

Learn more about HomeSpotter*, or connect with Aaron Kardell on* LinkedIn*.*

Source: click here