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Preserving the Goal of a Smooth Transition

Not what anyone wants to hear, but the breaking news this week is a delay for the regional MLS cutover. It is important to everyone involved that the MLS regionalization process be transparent and that everyone is kept up-to-date, so expectations are in line with the reality of the situation. So, here's the latest...

Right now, it looks like we are still several months away from seeing Lincoln and Omaha's listing information together in the Black Knight Paragon MLS System. The nearly two-month delay follows an extensive examination of both MLS system's data structure and content. The implementation team recommended the postponement to ensure a smoother transition.

According to Jessica Fox, Project Manager for Black Knight MLS Solutions, "When laying out initial merger timelines, we do not yet have access to the new data that will be imported in the merger process. Therefore, we make certain assumptions based on experience with MLS organizations of similar size regarding the number, and type, of changes that will be required. During our initial data-mapping phase, where the new incoming data was thoroughly analyzed and compared to the existing system, it was determined that additional changes would be required beyond what was originally anticipated."

The goal of the conversion team is to ensure a good experience with the final cutover. Adjusting the cutover date helps safeguard a fully functional system when the merger is complete.

"These additional changes are needed to ensure the most seamless, and complete, transition of Lincoln's listing data, as well as to improve the end user experience for existing Omaha members. Due to the nature of these changes, specifically the Residential Property Subtype revisions and Room & Unit additions, additional time is needed to implement these changes in Omaha's system prior to bringing in the Lincoln data," Fox stated.

Over 75 different technology vendors currently access MLS system information under broker supervision and an approved data use agreement. These vendors provide office and agent websites, as well as broker back-office systems. Protecting website vendors from any unnecessary downtime that blocks consumer access is a priority.

"The delayed cutover date includes additional time added to allow for software vendors to access these upfront changes in a test environment, and update their data-mapping accordingly, prior to the changes going live." Fox stressed the importance of the delay saying, "This will help ensure as little disruption as possible to member and third-party websites."

The new timeline, will result in agents having a first look at the merged data in February, with training for Lincoln area agents beginning the end of February and carrying over into March, and subject to change, the merger will be completed during March.

Check the upcoming November REview for an extended updated.