



PropertyMaps.com Case Study

PropertyMaps is the only map-based real estate search on the Internet, with over 2 million online listings, that uses real Multiple Listing Service (MLS) data. MLS' are the databases that are shared by all REALTORS® from coast-to-coast. PropertyMaps enables home buyers to make informed decisions without blinders on. They show all listings from all REALTORS® combined with the most advanced interactive maps on the Internet.

Chris, how and why did PropertyMaps decide to add OpenID registration and login support?

We had two objectives: to make it easier for prospective customers to register on our website and to make return visit login faster and easier. We recognize that internet users now have tens if not hundreds of unique user names and passwords across all the websites that they use. It can be confusing and frustrating to manage that many accounts, and becomes a barrier to creating accounts at new websites. Additionally, forgotten password recovery increases our customer care support costs. With over 500 million OpenID enabled users from the likes of Yahoo, AOL, Google, and MySpace, we were anxious to welcome this community to quickly and easily register and login to our website using trusted accounts that they already had.



Chris Latko, CTO Property Maps

Did your team know how you would measure success?

We expected we'd see additional registration and login via OpenID. We view this as additive to our existing registration and login system, so any uplift would be a good thing. If it also made the experience easier for our users, that's great too.

What results did you achieve after deploying OpenID

We deployed OpenID in January of this year and saw registrations increase by 200%. Currently about 25% of our registrations occur via OpenID. As more major OpenID providers like MySpace come online, and as consumers become more familiar with OpenID, we expect to see these numbers increase as well. An example of this is when Yahoo's implementation came online in February, we saw a surge in user registrations.

Beyond faster registration and login, were there other potential benefits you were anticipating?

Again, as more OpenID providers come online and users become more familiar with OpenID, we expect that we'll be getting more relevant data from our customers more quickly. OpenID Simple Registration (SREG) and Attribute Exchange (AX) allow customers to share as much of their existing personal profile as they'd like to with us, which over time will allow us to serve them better. With other related "user-centric-identity" technologies like OAuth and Portable Contacts getting deployed, this trend will only get better for PropertyMaps and our customers.

Any surprises, maybe things you didn't expect?

OpenID is still pretty new outside the user-generated content space, so sometimes customers needed a bit of education on how to use it. We do this on our website, and we know that many of the OpenID providers and the OpenID Foundation are working on consumer education outreach programs as well, so this will be less an issue as time progresses.

What advice would you give a company implementing OpenID?

There's a lot of potential benefits to website operators and their customers in deploying OpenID. For the basic capabilities, it's pretty straightforward to deploy yourself if you have a good IT staff. If you don't have an experienced IT staff, or you want to take advantage of all the capabilities OpenID has today as well as future enhancements, you might want to work with an OpenID infrastructure deployment partner.