

Fraser Valley Real Estate Board

Real estate board speeds delivery of professional-quality listings and sales contracts and reduces administrative time using Adobe Acrobat software and Adobe PDF

PROFILE

- A local, not-for-profit agency serving the needs of real estate agents in British Columbia
- Employees: 40
- Headquarters: Surrey, British Columbia, Canada
- www.fvreb.bc.ca

BENEFITS SUMMARY

- WebForms, Acrobat, and Adobe PDF reduce administrative time and costs by tens of thousands of dollars annually.
- Real estate sales close faster because of WebForms and forms in Adobe PDF, an important factor in an active market.
- Adobe PDF files retain the exact formatting of the paper real estate documents, a must for legally binding contracts.
- The ease of using Adobe PDF allows agents to use the WebForms system without training.
- The auto-fill features of Adobe PDF files save agents time in filling out forms and reduce errors from manual data entry.
- Realtors can better manage information by searching for and reviewing past contracts in an Adobe PDF-based archive.
- Acrobat allows real estate boards to secure key areas of contracts so they cannot be edited.

Helping buyers find their ideal homes requires extensive research by Realtors, a bit of luck, and in the end, a lot of paperwork for everyone.

From the contracts to list properties to disclosure statements from sellers, real estate agents rely on dozens of forms daily. For Realtors in British Columbia and across Canada, the task of accessing and completing forms for commercial and residential transactions is now easier, thanks to the Fraser Valley Real Estate Board (FVREB) and its use of Adobe Acrobat software and Adobe PDF (Portable Document Format).

Part of the FVREB's service to the industry is ensuring that the more than 5,000 agents in British Columbia have easy access to current real estate forms and avoid the delays and mistakes resulting from the use of outdated forms. To that end, the FVREB developed WebForms, a system that distributes professional-quality real estate documents online in Adobe PDF and automates the process of completing them.

"WebForms minimizes the use of outdated contracts, reduces administrative time and costs by tens of thousands of dollars annually, and accelerates paperwork processing in the fast-paced, competitive real estate industry," says Ken MacKenzie, chief executive officer of the FVREB.

From beginning to end, a typical real estate transaction in Canada requires a minimum of ten forms. Due to the FVREB's success in British Columbia, the agency is developing a WebForms solution for the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) that will eventually serve more than 70,000 agents nationwide. Already, the FVREB has placed more than 300 real estate forms in

Adobe PDF in its online database. The high-quality forms are easy to read and can be completed online in minutes.

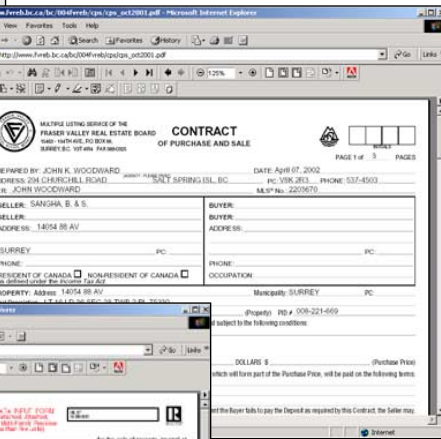
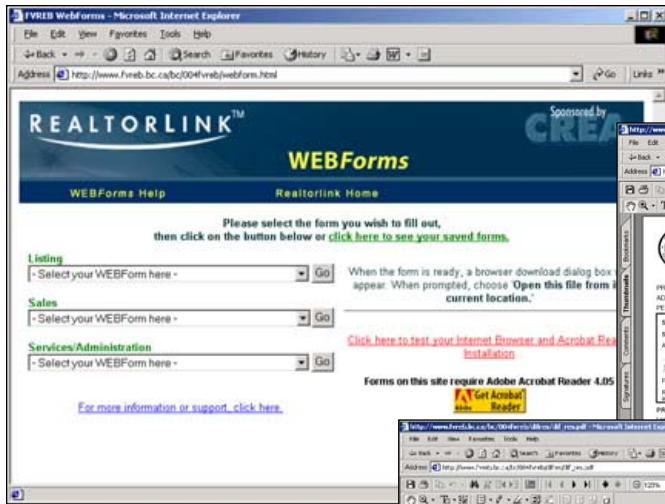
Closing deals digitally

The FVREB creates forms using Adobe PageMaker software and converts them to Adobe PDF for posting on WebForms. When real estate agents want sales contracts or other forms, they log on to WebForms, open the correct form in Adobe PDF, and enter the MLS® (Multiple Listing Service) property identification numbers. The FVREB's database system automatically fills in information such as agent name, property address, and tax identification number, saving the agent time and eliminating errors that can occur with manual data entry. Forms not requiring signatures can be submitted electronically to the FVREB for processing. The FVREB is looking at using digital signature features in Acrobat in the future to enable all forms to be signed online.

To further automate paperwork processing, Realtors who collaborate on forms can fill in their specific areas and then e-mail a link to the form on the FVREB Web site to other agents for completion. When finalized, the forms are stored in Adobe PDF on the FVREB server and provide an archive that lets agents review contracts from past deals electronically.

Huge convenience factor

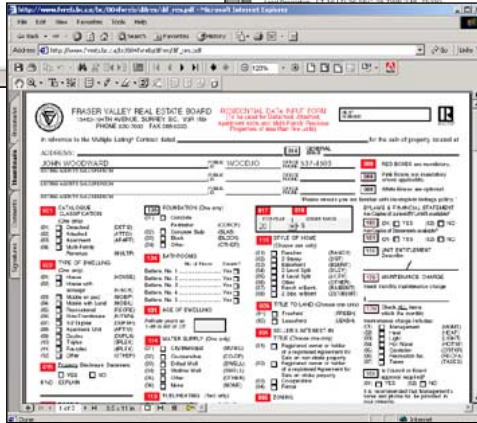
Real estate agents across Canada are enthusiastically adopting the WebForms system for several reasons. Adobe PDF files retain the exact



The FVREB developed WebForms, a system that distributes professional-quality real estate forms and documents online in Adobe PDF and automates their completion. The system has reduced administrative time and costs by tens of thousands of dollars annually and enabled real estate sales to close faster.

“The convenience and ease of use of Acrobat and Adobe PDF have made WebForms a successful application. Every month, thousands of real estate forms are completed quickly and accurately.”

*Ernie Vance
IT manager
Fraser Valley Real Estate Board*



formatting of the paper documents, a must for legally binding contracts. And because of the ease of using Acrobat and Adobe PDF, no training is required for agents to use WebForms. With Adobe Acrobat Reader® software, agents can access up-to-date forms regardless of their computer platforms or software applications. By accessing the most current forms, Realtors never miss time-sensitive legal updates. Realtors also save time because they can quickly customize documents online by selecting certain clauses, without having to type them out. Ernie Vance, IT manager for the FVREB, describes the convenience factor of WebForms as “huge” because Realtors no longer have to carry around briefcases full of forms. They can access the forms in Adobe PDF over the Internet and have printer-quality forms right on their desktops. Forms are made more interactive with the JavaScript support in Adobe Acrobat for form-field validation and automatic fill-in.

“Acrobat allows us to make forms more intelligent,” explains Vance. “For example, we can edit numbers to ensure that they have the appropriate dollar signs and commas, and also automatically enter a spelled-out version of the number. The result is fewer errors and even faster processing of real estate forms.”

A bargain for real estate boards, agents

Requiring only a minimal investment by real estate boards, the WebForms system using Adobe Acrobat results in substantially lower administrative and document storage costs. In addition, real estate boards secure files so viewers can enter information into form fields, but are prevented from altering key areas of online contracts. When documents need to be updated, the FVREB can easily edit the original form in PageMaker and convert it to Adobe PDF for posting on WebForms, ensuring timely updates of materials.

The ultimate beneficiaries of WebForms are Realtors who can dramatically improve their businesses and buyers who enjoy faster, more efficient services. Says Vance, “The convenience and ease of use of Acrobat and Adobe PDF have made WebForms a successful application. Every month, thousands of real estate forms are completed quickly and accurately.”

TOOLBOX

- Adobe Acrobat
- Adobe PageMaker
- Red Hat® Linux®

Intel® Pentium® based 800MHz PC with 256MB of RAM and 40GB disk drive
Apache Web Server

