

2007
MLS TECHNOLOGY
SURVEY



Center for REALTOR® Technology
National Association of REALTORS®

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Authors	3
Introduction	3
Methodology	3
Executive Summary	4
Survey	
Profile.....	5
Business Practices.....	8
Consolidation.....	14
Public Website.....	19
RETS.....	27
Security.....	36
Two-factor Identification.....	41
Data Integration.....	44

Author

This survey and report were authored by the **Center for REALTOR® Technology's** Communications Associate, Ericka Luba. Ericka's background includes an emphasis in Computing and Analytical Research obtained while attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

NAR's Center for REALTOR® Technology was established to provide technology leadership, guidance, and assistance for NAR members; CRT makes available informed industry insight, research, and open-source applications through its mission of implementation, advocacy and information. Information about CRT is available at <http://www.realtor.org/crt>.

Ericka Luba
eluba@realtors.org

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to better understand MLS technology trends. CRT distributed an online survey asking REALTORS® and those affiliated with a MLS about their usage and opinions on such topics as general business practices, MLS consolidation, RETS, security, data integration, etc. Through this report CRT hopes to gain a better understanding of NAR members' opinions and needs as well as to help the general public understand the opinions and needs of our members.

Please direct any questions or comments about the survey to:

Keith Garner
Managing Director, CRT
kgarner@realtors.org

Ericka Luba
Communications Associate, CRT
eluba@realtors.org

Methodology

The 2007 REALTOR® MLS Technology Survey was conducted from March 7, 2007 to March 21, 2007. CRT distributed a survey link via email to more than 25,000 NAR members, including agents and brokers, and 1,308 MLS executives which generated 576 usable responses. The survey results have a margin of error of plus or minus 4.08%.

Method of Solicitation: Email

Demographic Selection Criteria: NAR member with a valid email address

Solicitations: 26,000+

Responses: 576

Executive Summary

Key topic areas that were looked at in the 2007 REALTOR® MLS Technology Survey include: business practices, consolidation, public websites, RETS, security, two-factor identification, and data integration.

Thirty-four percent of members think that the ideal size for a consolidated MLS is a statewide. This is different from the majority, 53%, of those affiliated with a MLS thinking the ideal size is by market areas or metropolitan statistical area (MSA).

A majority, 56%, of those affiliated with a MLS state that their MLS provides a public website where consumers may access listings. Of those that have a public website provided by their MLS 43% support lead generation and of those that support lead generation 66% of the leads/registration information goes to the listing agent and 34% to the listing broker.

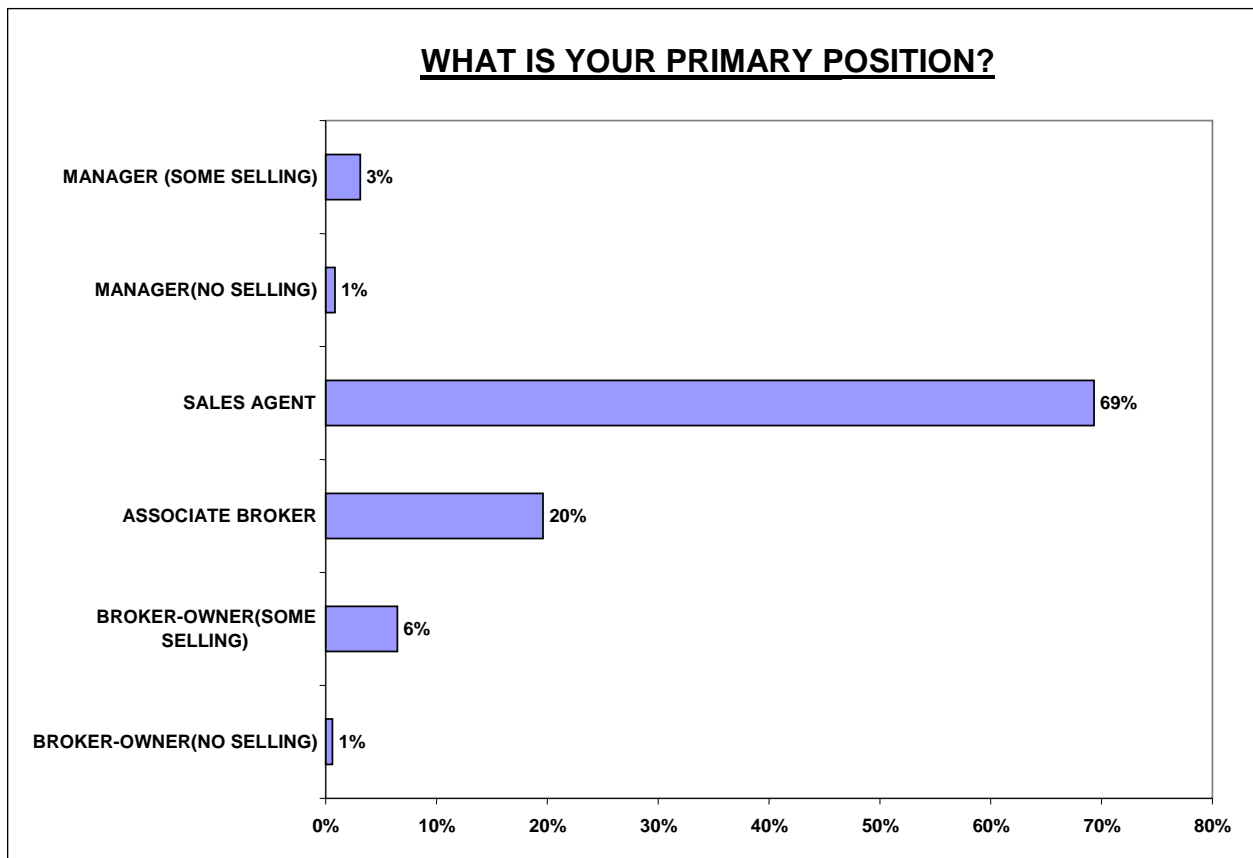
There is a belief with both members and those affiliated with a MLS that a MLS public site competes with a broker or agent site, with 56% believing such. There is a drop to 33% believing such when just those affiliated with a MLS are looked at.

Of those affiliated with a MLS, fifteen percent are very satisfied with the RETS interface, while 39% are somewhat satisfied, and fourteen percent are not satisfied. 28% of this group have no current RETS 2.0 plans, while thirteen percent have plans to install RETS 2.0 “sometime” within the next eighteen months. A vast majority of this group, 66% of respondents, are not clear of the direction RETS is moving in but 33% responded that RETS is moving in the right direction.

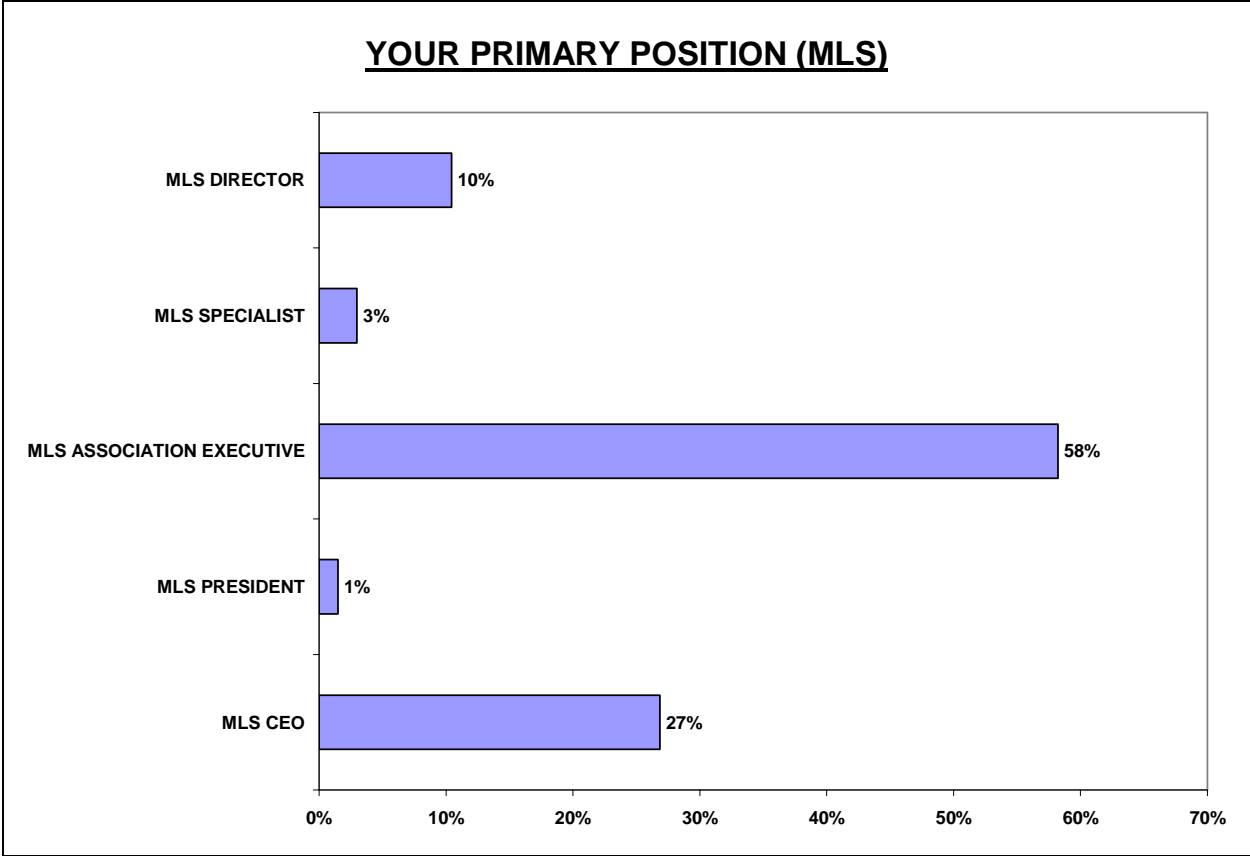
Members would like the following additional data included in their listings if offered by the MLS; 37% responded sold data, 34% responded photos, 34% tax info, 30% responded amenities, and 23% address.

Profile

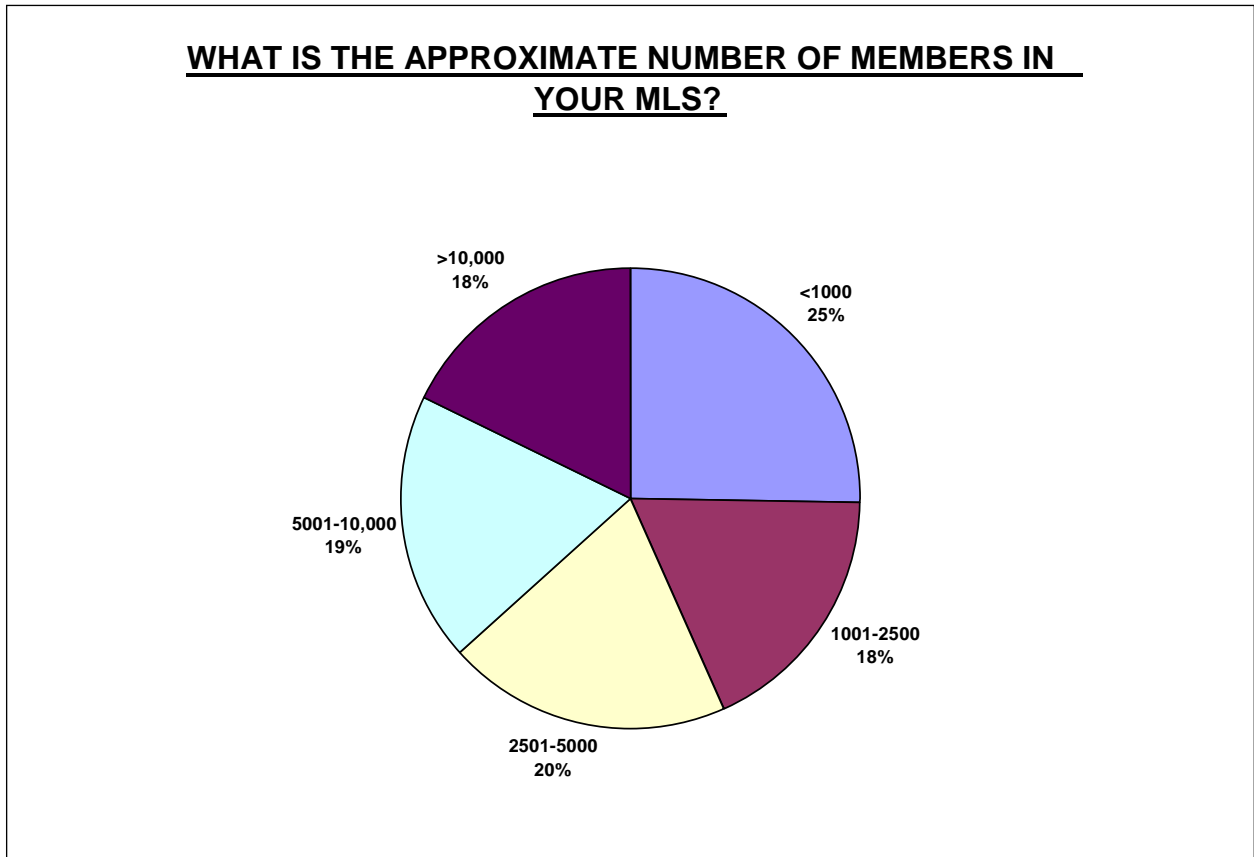
We asked each Realtor® member who was questioned, “What is your primary position?” We included in our survey the members whose roles are broker-owner (no selling), broker-owner (some selling), associate broker, sales agent, manager (no selling), and manager (some selling). There are three broker-owners (no selling), 31 broker-owners (some selling), 94 associate brokers, 332 sales agents, four managers (no selling), and fifteen managers (some selling) represented. For clarification purposes this group of respondents will be referred to as **members** throughout the report.



Also included were respondents whose primary position was affiliated with a MLS. There are seven MLS Directors, two MLS Specialists, 39 MLS Association Executives, one MLS President, and eighteen MLS CEOs. For clarification purposes this group will be referred to as **those affiliated with a MLS** through out the rest of the report.



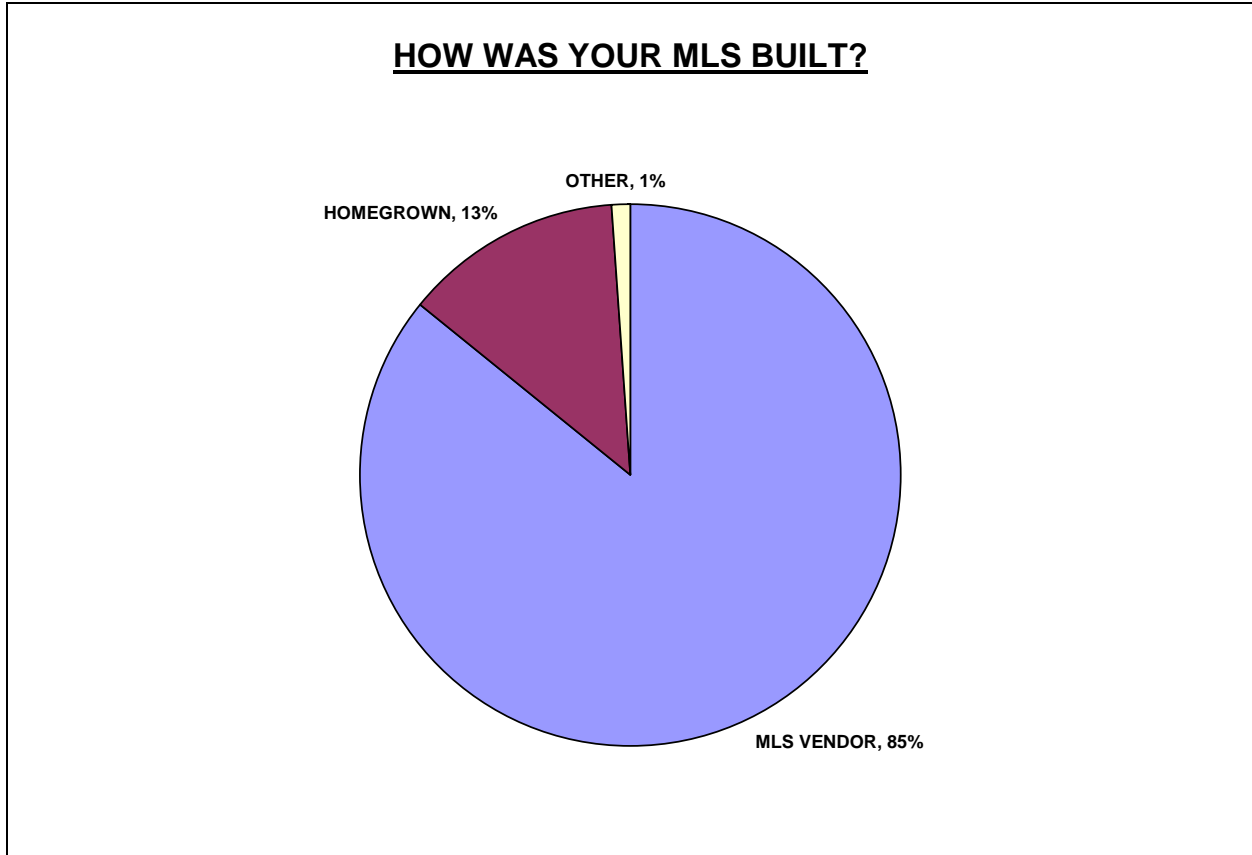
Full ranges of different size MLSs are represented of members and those affiliated with a MLS. 103 respondents are working with an MLS that has fewer than 1000 members. There are 73 respondents whose MLS consists of 1001-2500 members, 81 respondents whose MLS consists of 2501-5000, 77 respondents whose MLS consists of 5001-10,000 members, and 72 respondents whose MLS consists of over 10,000 members.



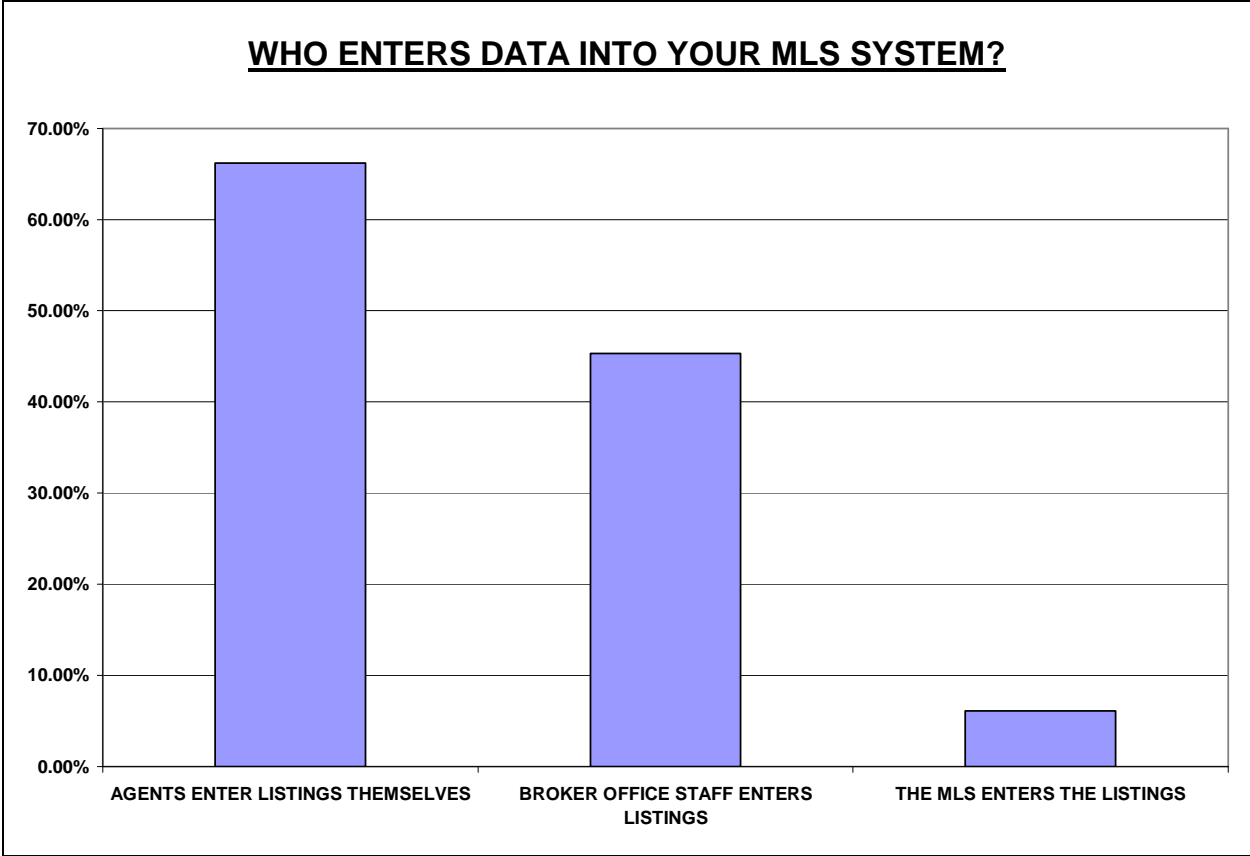
* Those respondents who stated "don't know" are not included in the above figure

BUSINESS PRACTICES

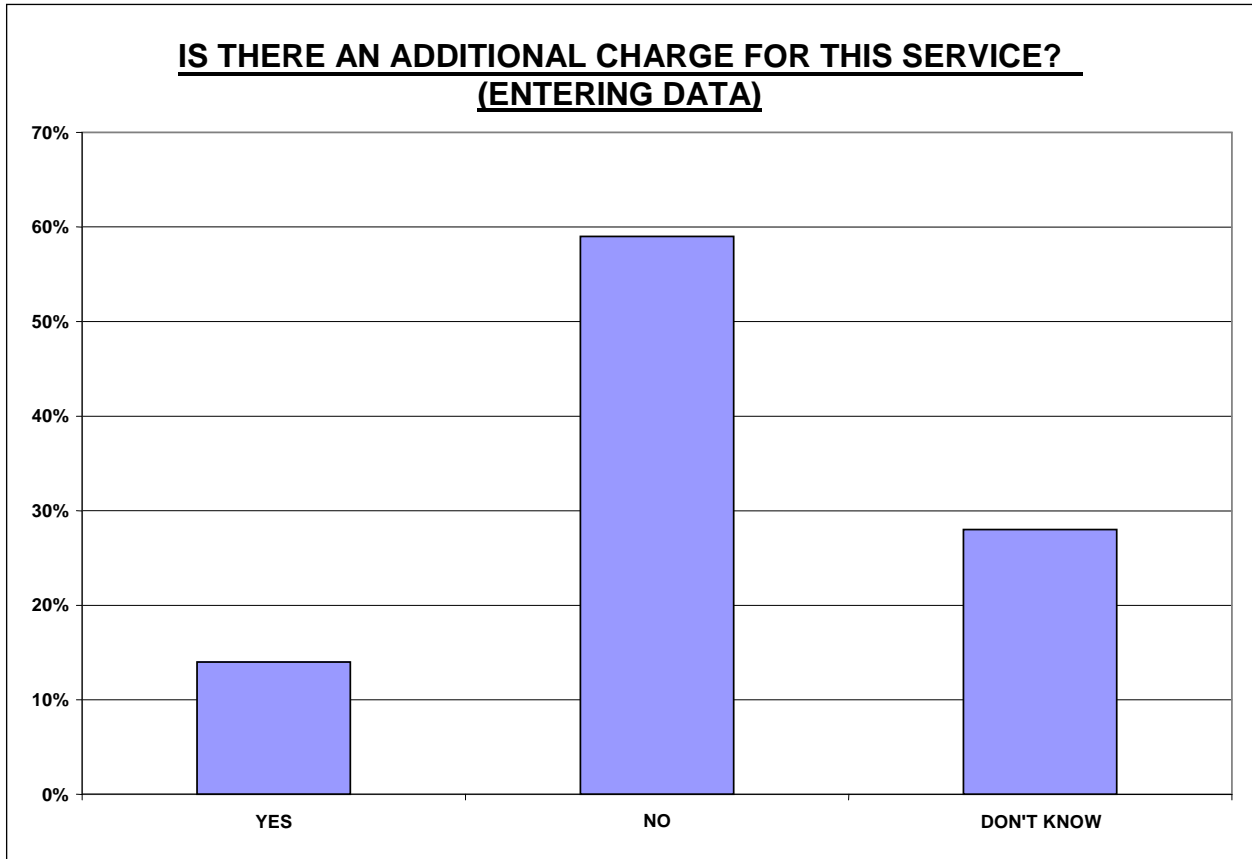
Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “How was your MLS built?” The vast majority, 57 responded a MLS vendor. Nine stated that theirs’ is homegrown.



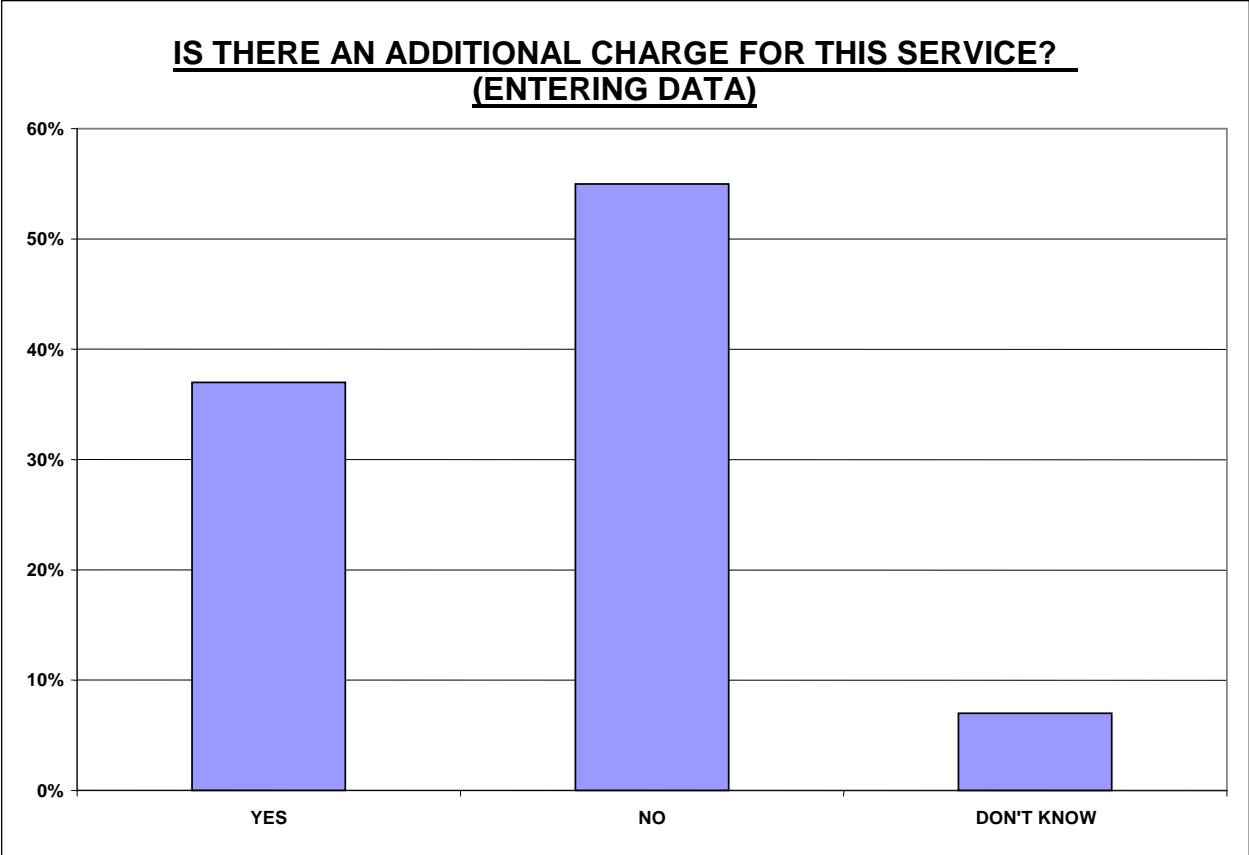
Members were asked, “Who enters data into your MLS system?” They were able to make multiple choices and 66% stated that agents enter listings themselves, 45% have broker office staff enter listings, and six percent stated the MLS enter the listings.



Members and those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Is there an additional charge for this service?” Fourteen percent of members responded yes and 37% percent of those affiliated with a MLS responded yes. The variance in percentage could be explained by the “don’t know” responses. 28 % of members stated that they didn’t know, whereas seven percent of those affiliated with the MLS responded don’t know.

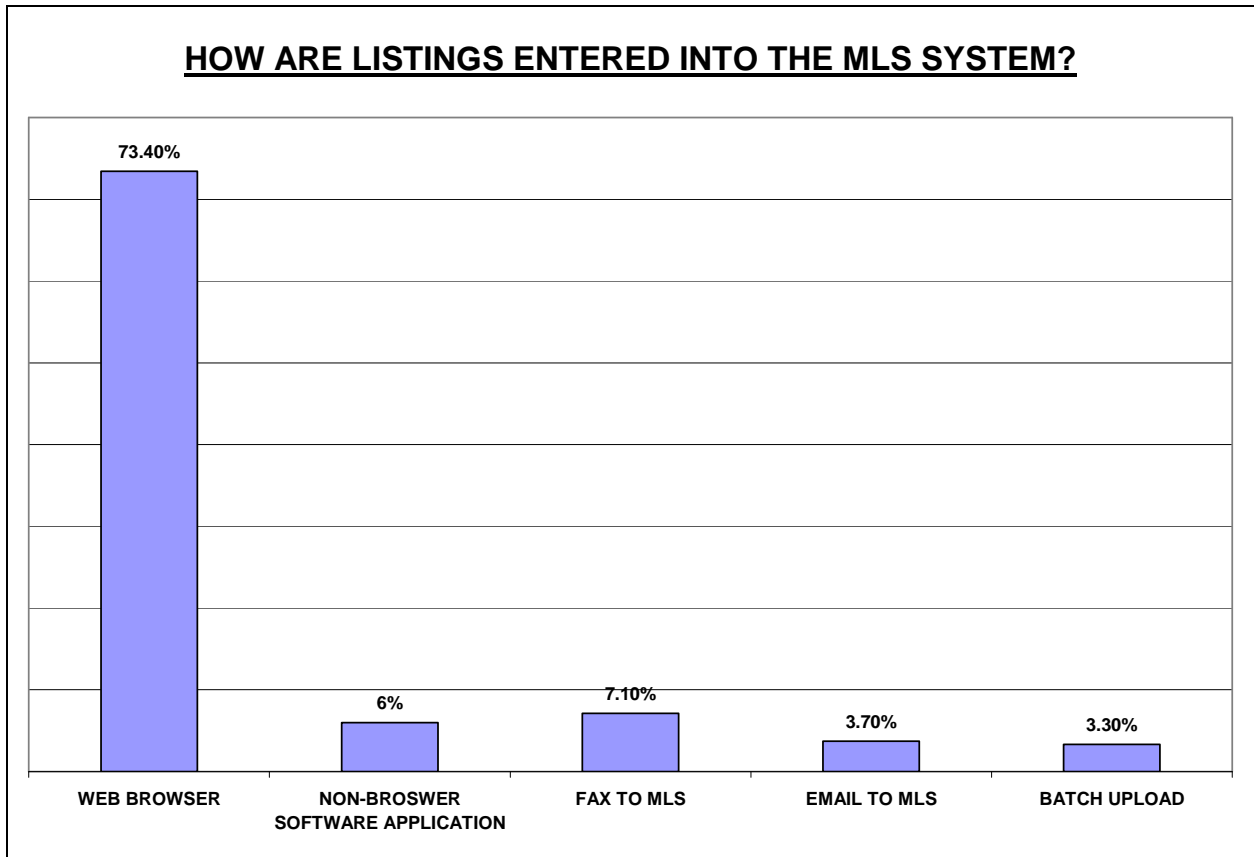


*Members

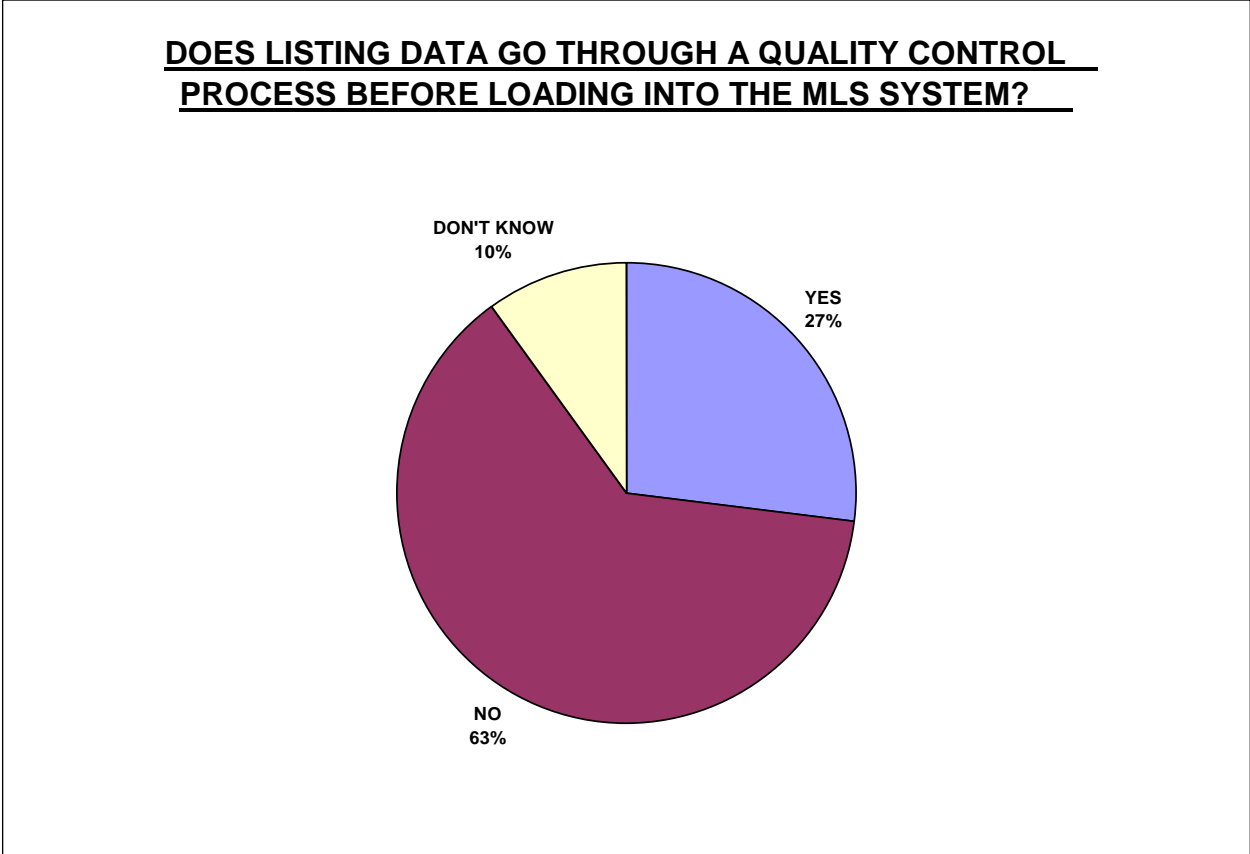


*Those affiliated with a MLS

Members and those affiliated with a MLS were asked “How are listings entered in the MLS system?” A vast majority, 73.4%, responded that a web browser entered listings into the MLS system.

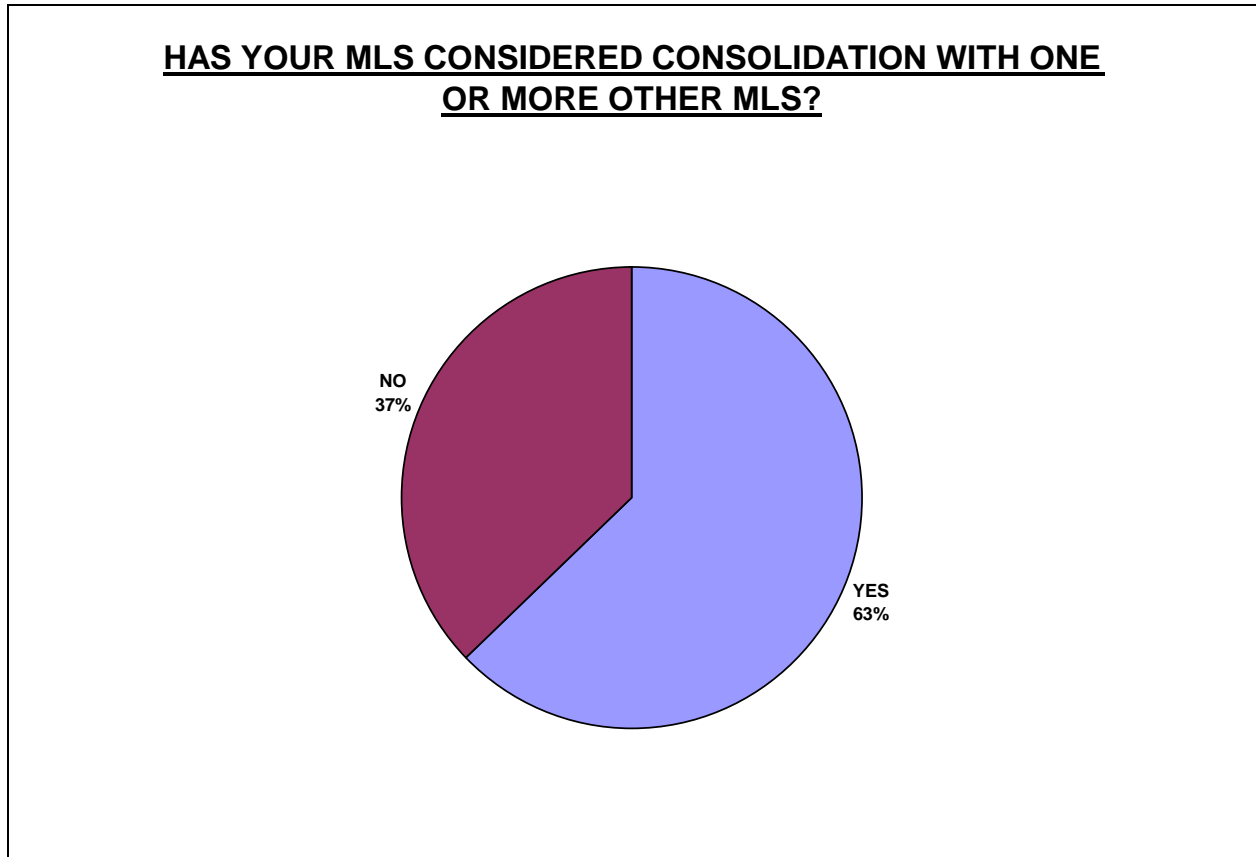


Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Does listing data go through a quality control process before loading into the MLS system?” A majority, 63% responded no.

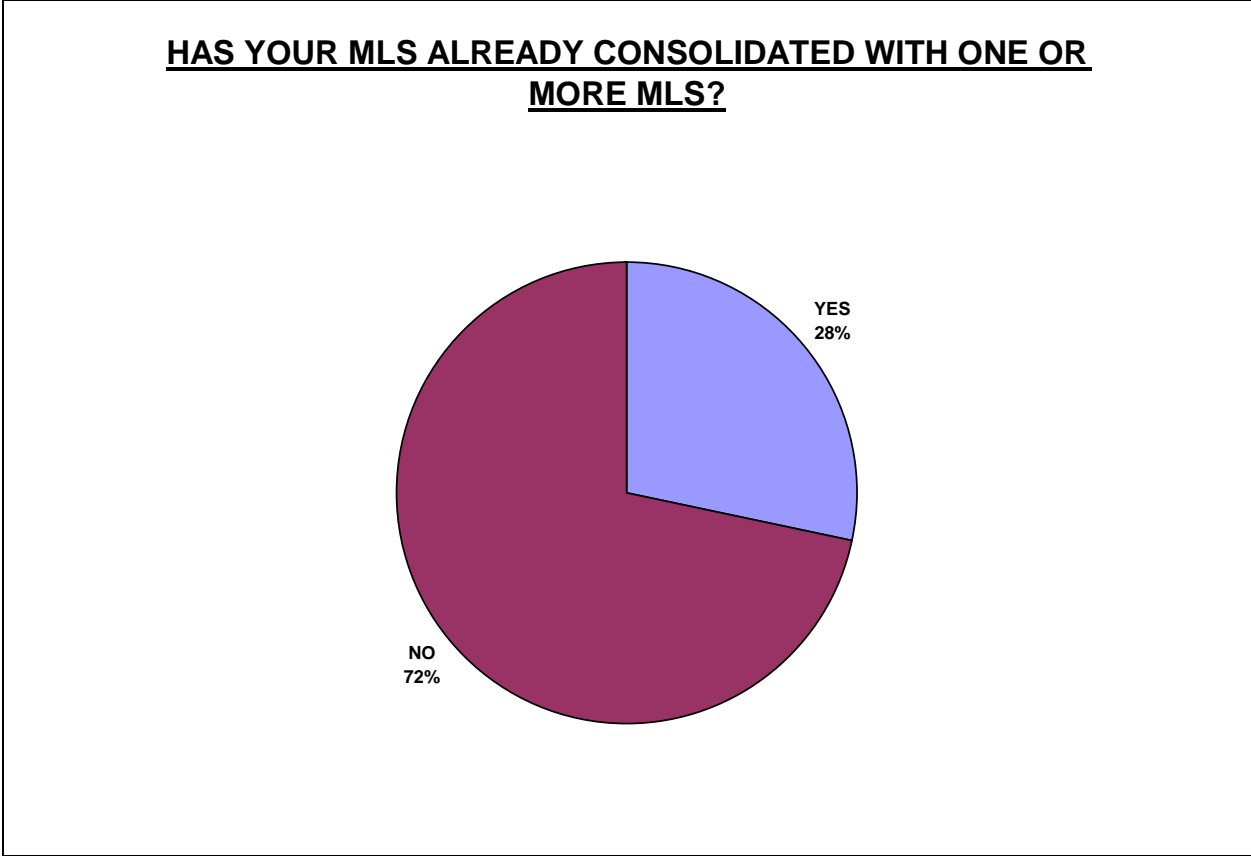


Consolidation

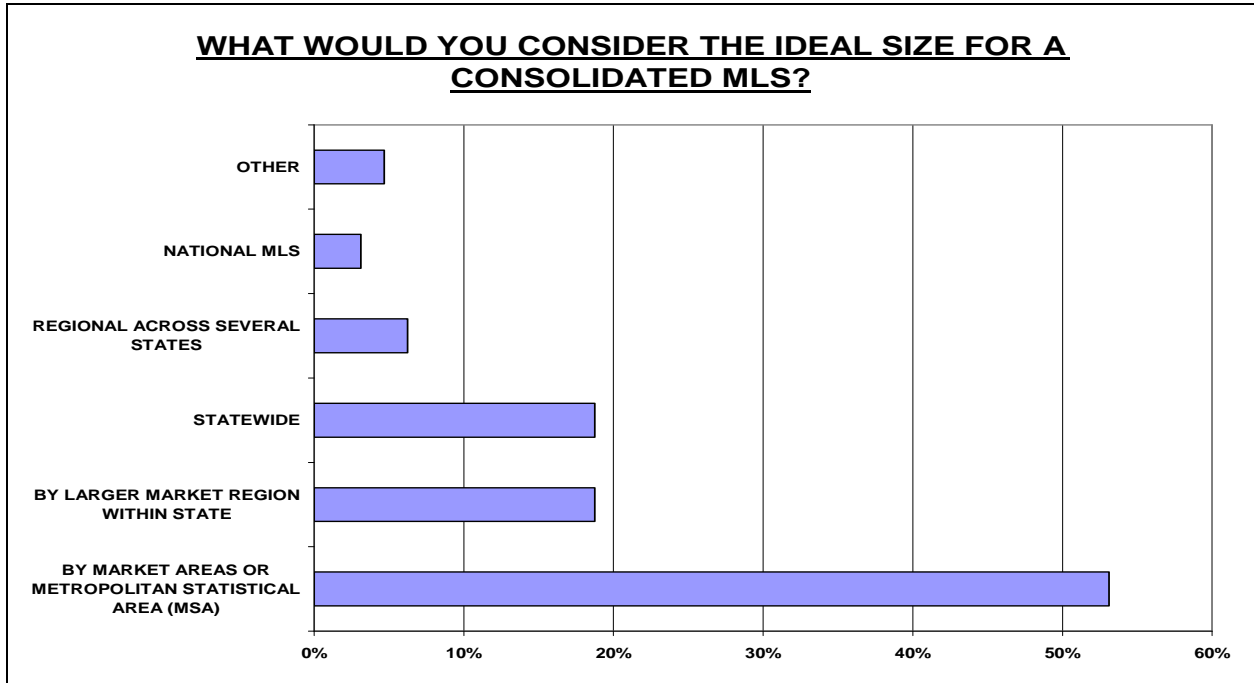
Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Has your MLS considered consolidation with one or more other MLS?” and 63% responded “yes.”



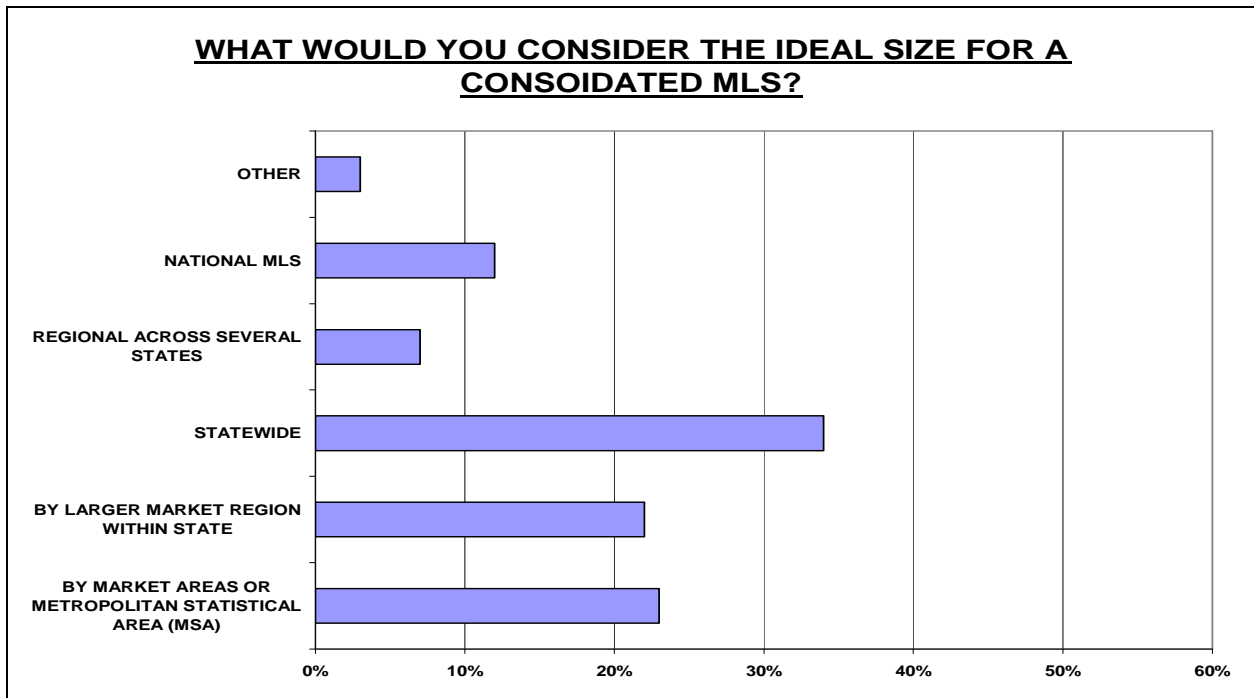
Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Has your MLS already consolidated with one or more other MLS?” and 72% responded “no.”



Members and those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “What would you consider the ideal size for a consolidated MLS?” Members most popular choice, with 34% responding, is “statewide.” Those affiliated with a MLS’s most popular choice, with 53% responding, is, “by market areas or metropolitan statistical area (MSA).”

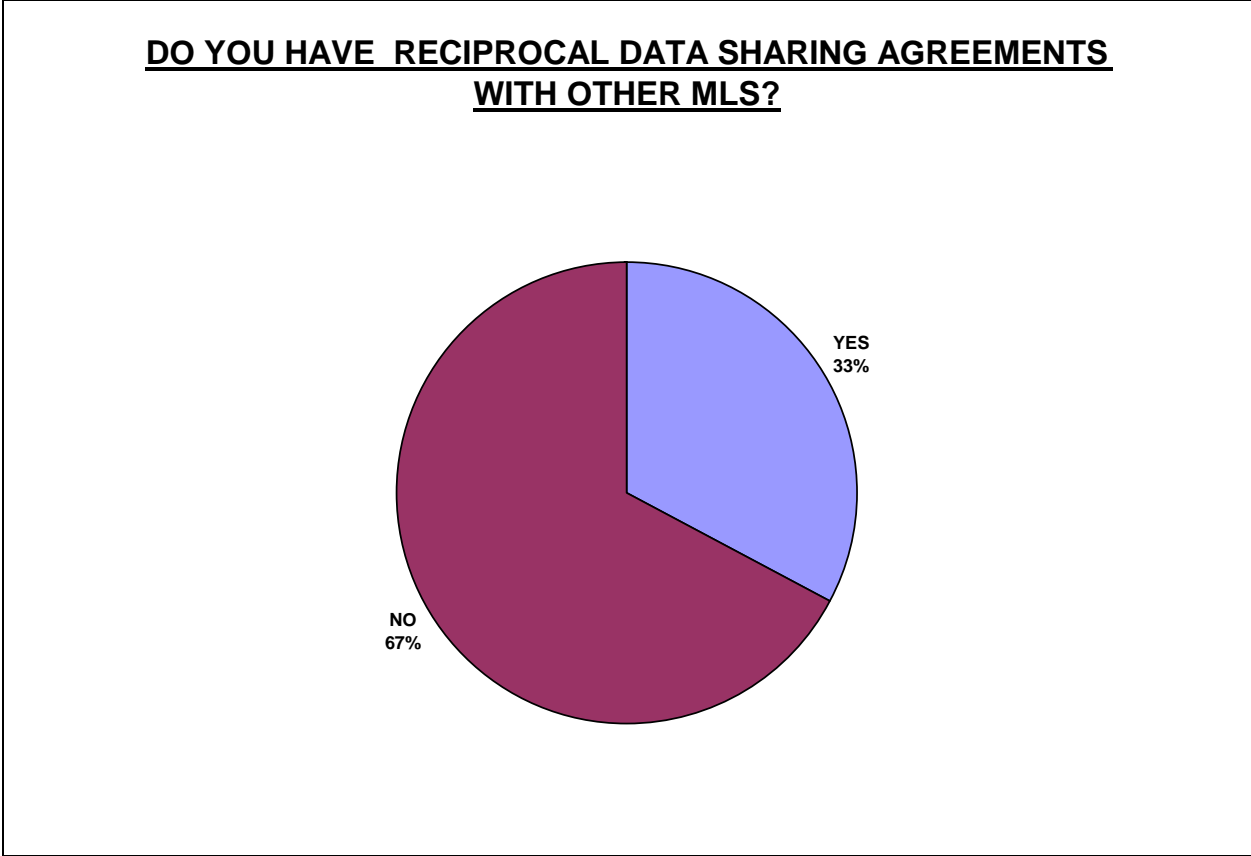


*Those affiliated with a MLS

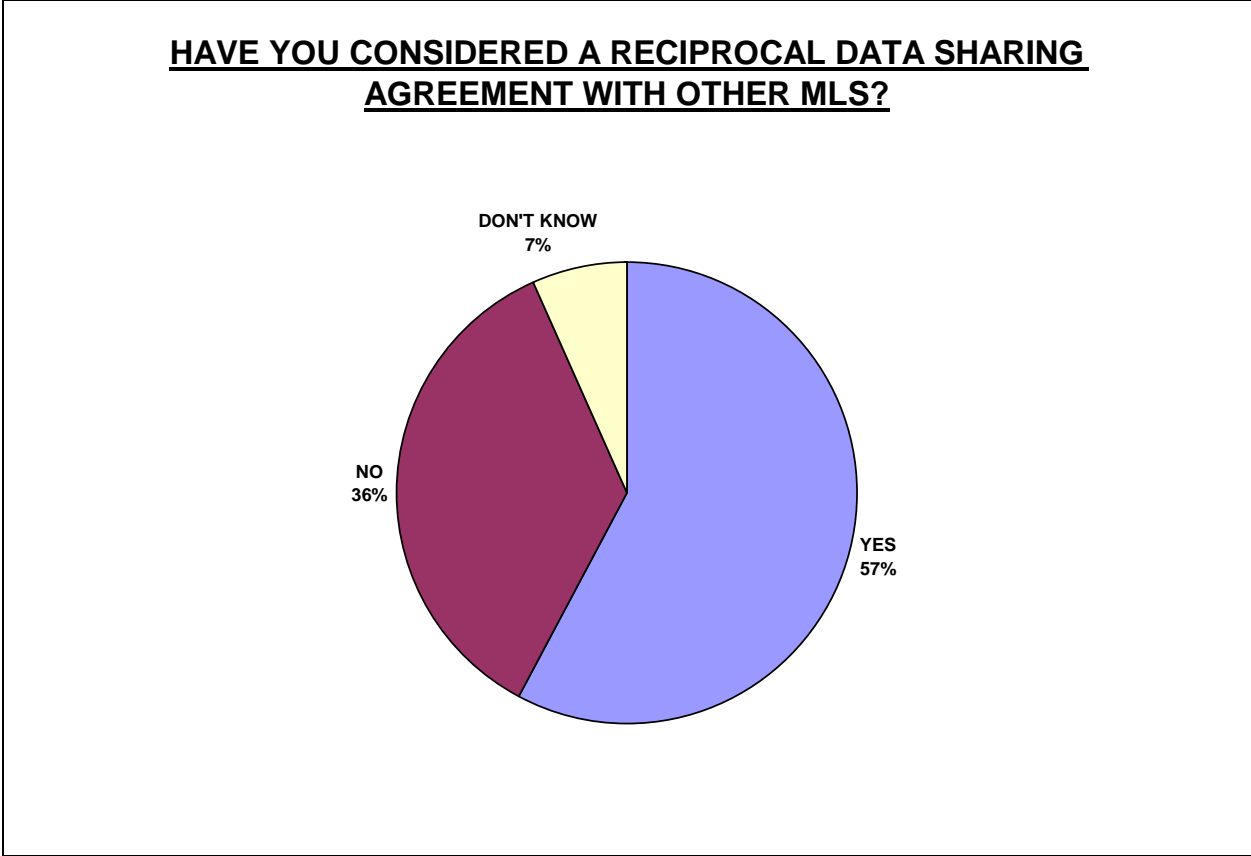


*Members

Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “ Do you have reciprocal data sharing agreements with other MLS?” 33% responded yes, while 67% responded no.

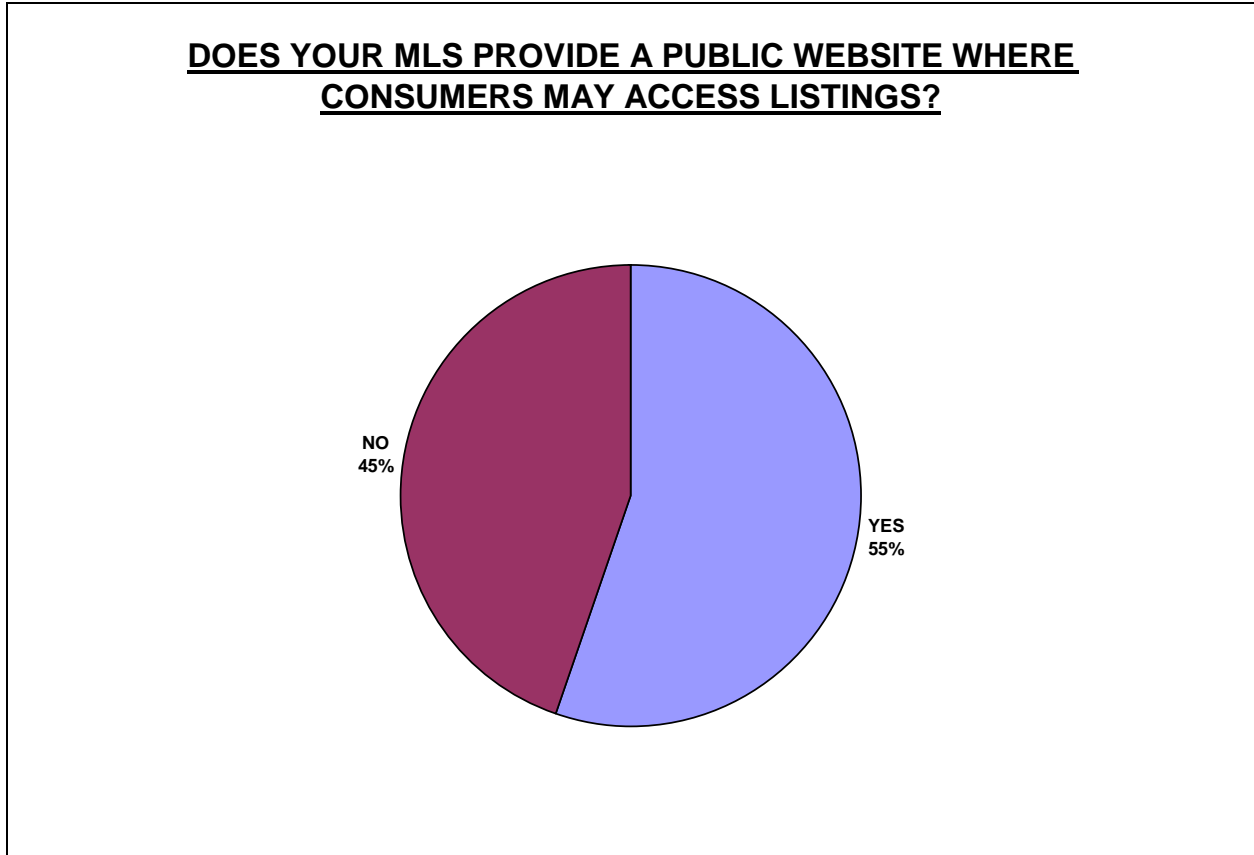


Of those affiliated with a MLS and do not have a reciprocal data sharing agreement with other MLS, 57% have considered a reciprocal data sharing agreement with other MLS.

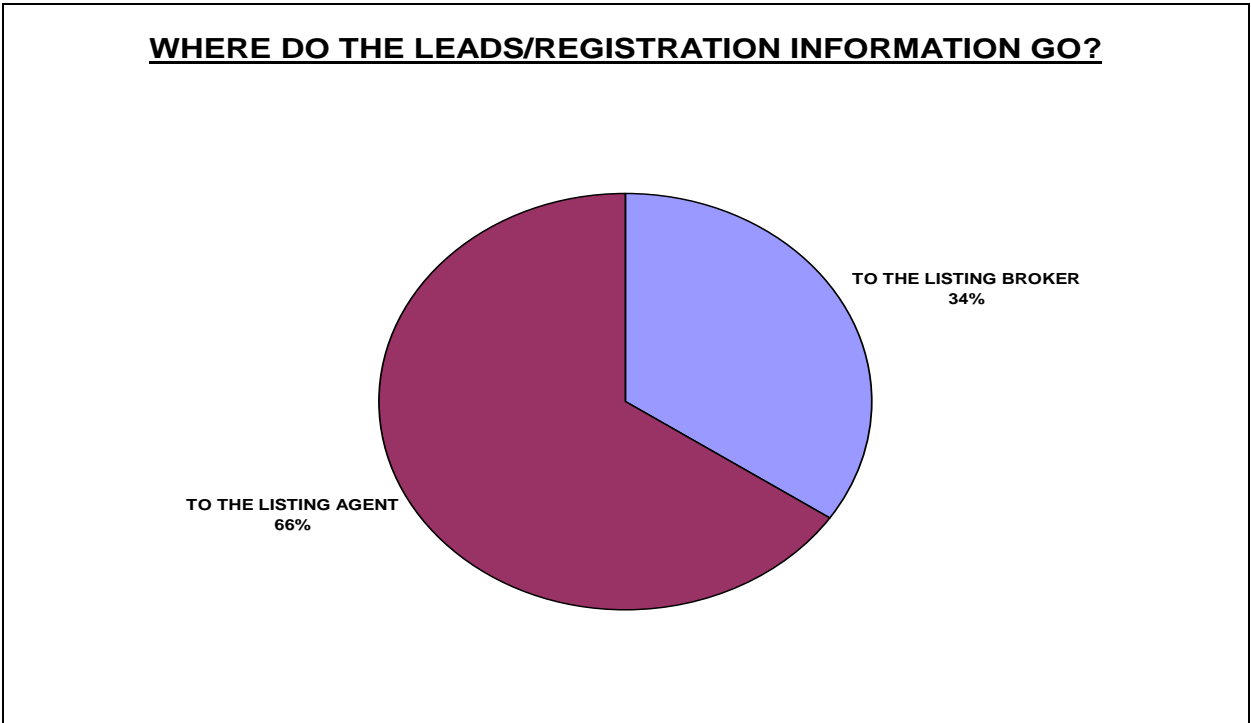
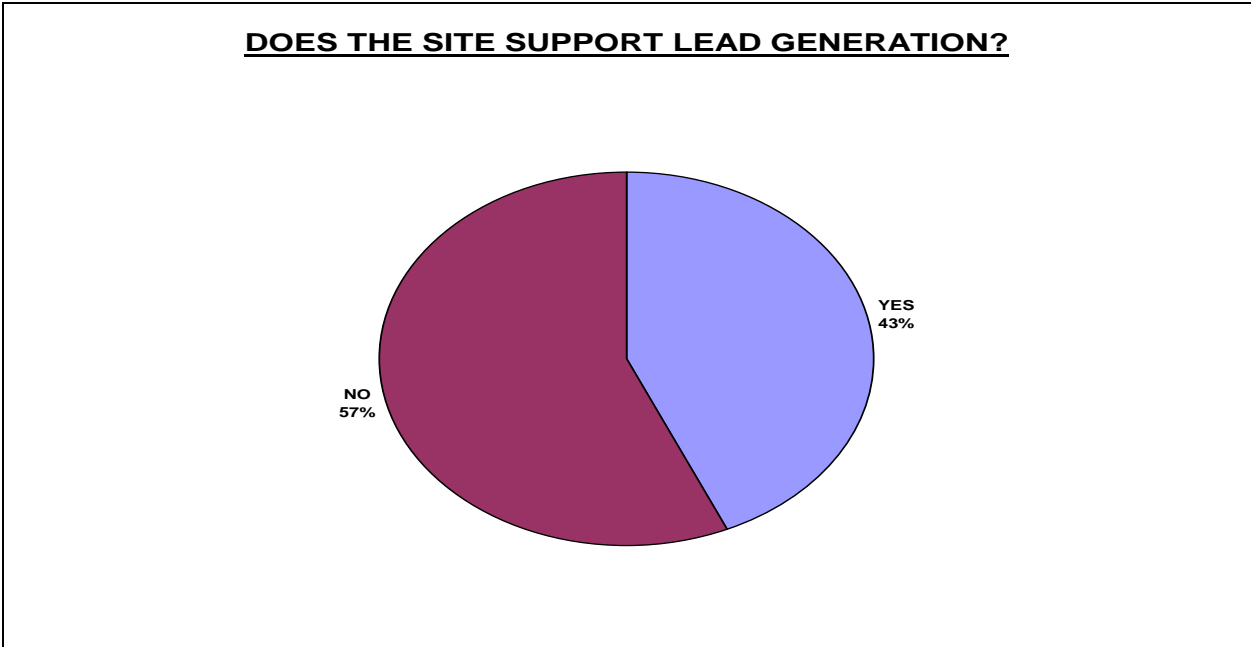


Public Website

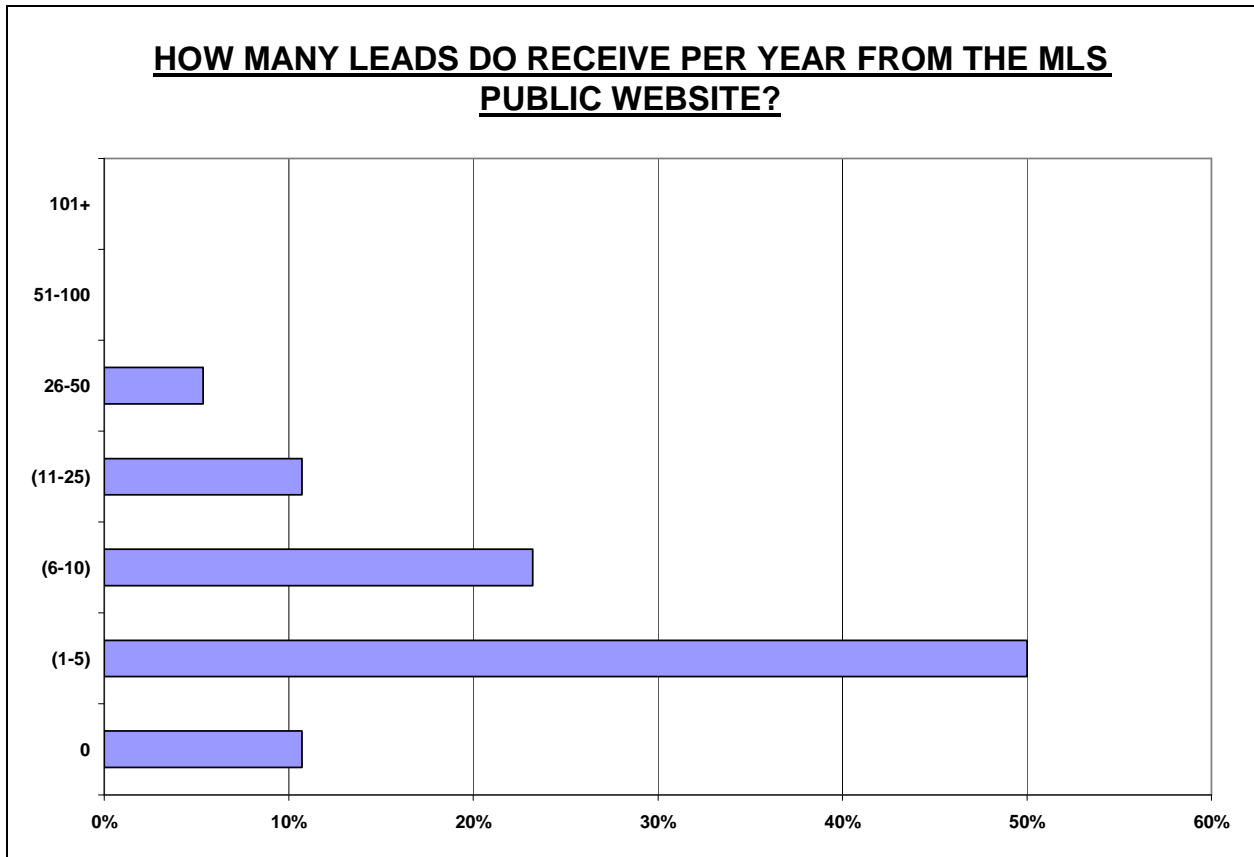
Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Does your MLS provide a public website where consumers may access listings?” and a majority, 56%, responded yes.



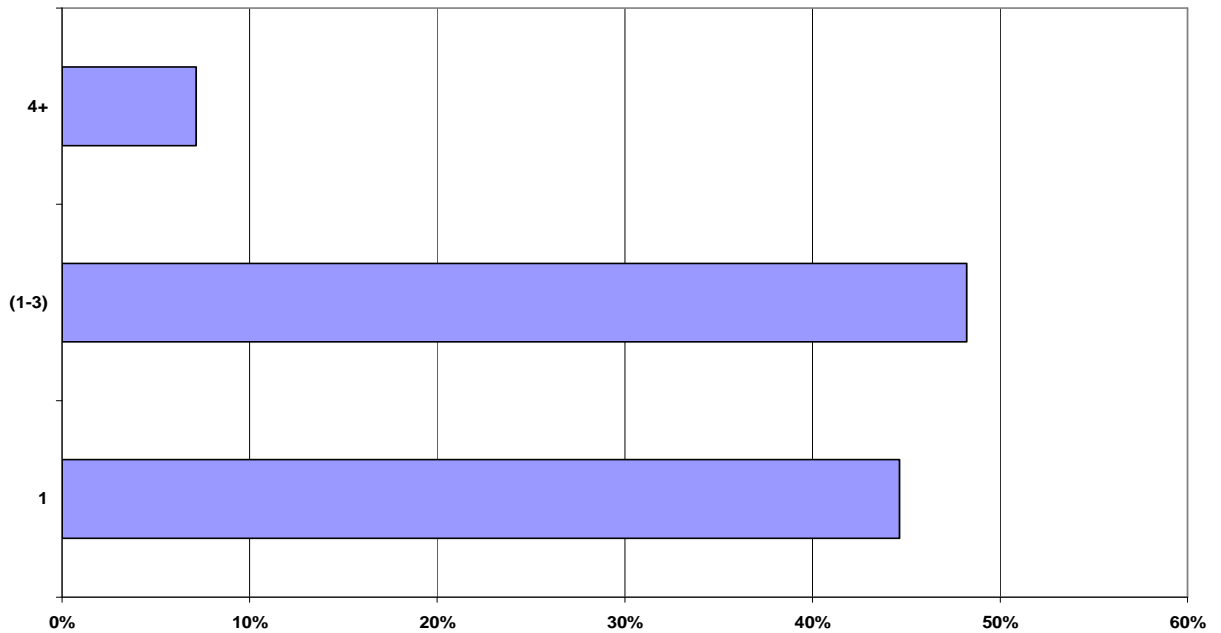
Of those that have a public website provided by their MLS 43% support lead generation and of those that support lead generation 66% of the leads/registration information goes to the listing agent and 34% to the listing broker.



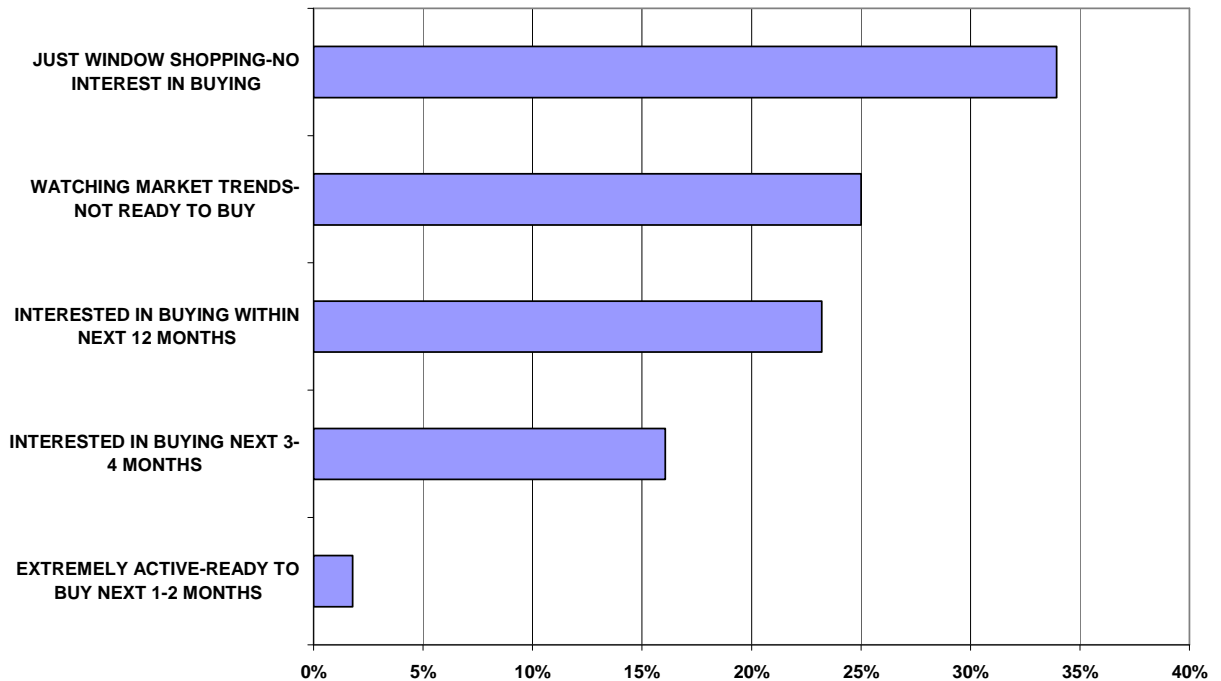
Of those members that receive leads from the public website the majority, 50%, receive between one to five leads per year. 23% receive six to ten leads and eleven percent receive between 11 to 25 leads per year. These same members were asked, “How many sales resulted from these leads per year?” and 93% responded that the leads received resulted in one to three sales. They were also asked, “How would you characterize the nature of the leads received, on average?” The majority, 34% responded “just window shopping-no interest in buying,” 25% responded “watching market trends-not ready to buy,” 23% responded “interested in buying within 12 months,” and sixteen percent responded “interested in buying next three to four months.”



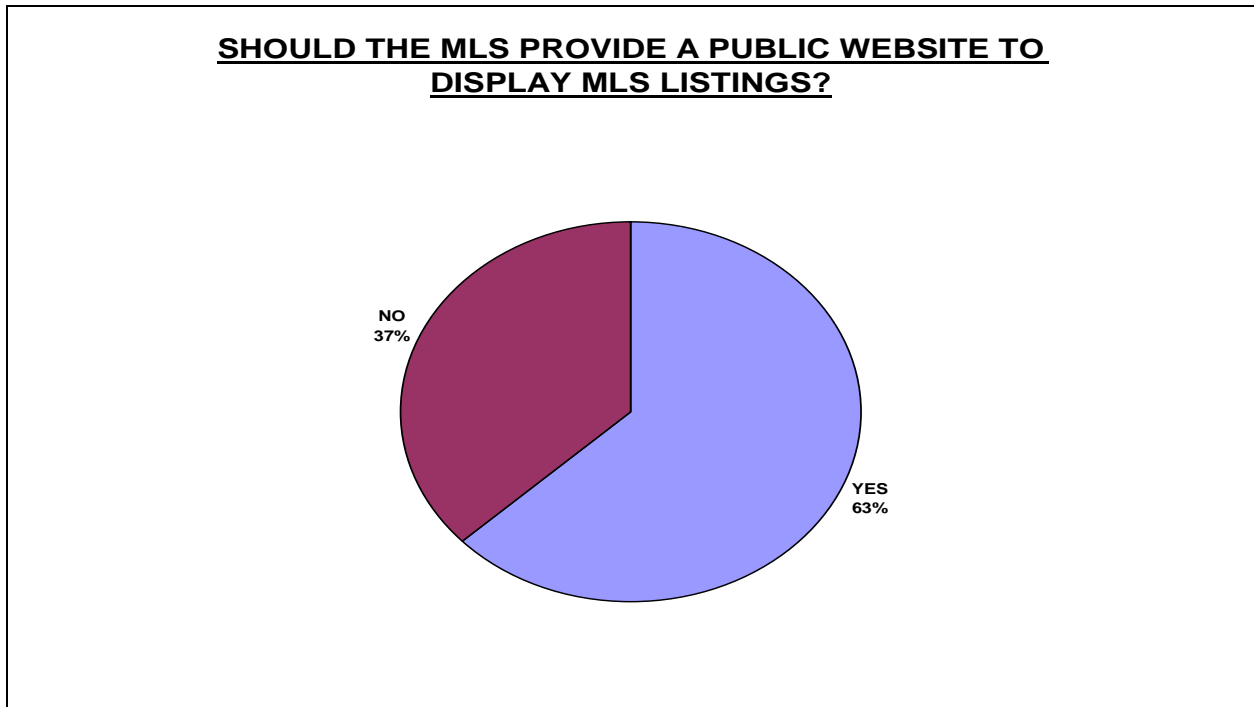
HOW MANY SALES RESULTED FROM THESE LEADS PER YEAR?



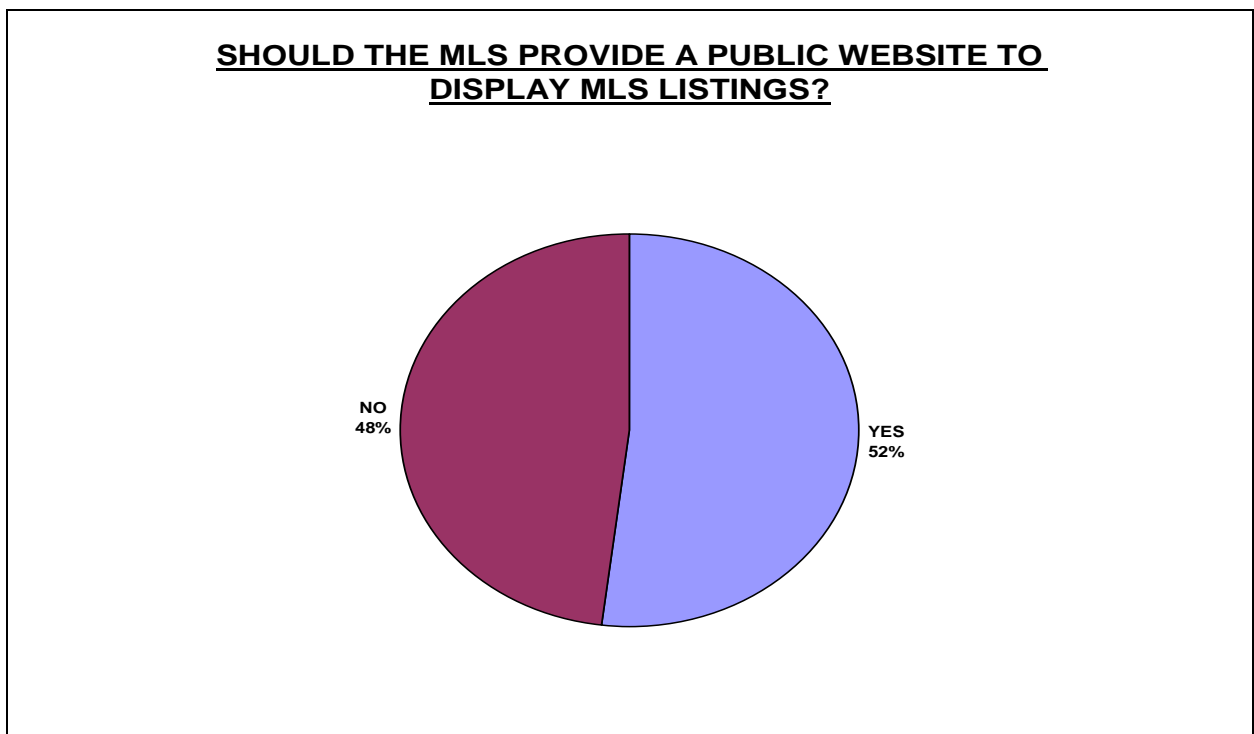
HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE NATURE OF THE LEADS RECEIVED, ON AVERAGE?



Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Should the MLS provide a public website to display MLS listings?” and a majority, 63%, responded yes. When just members were asked this question, a slight majority, 52% responded yes.

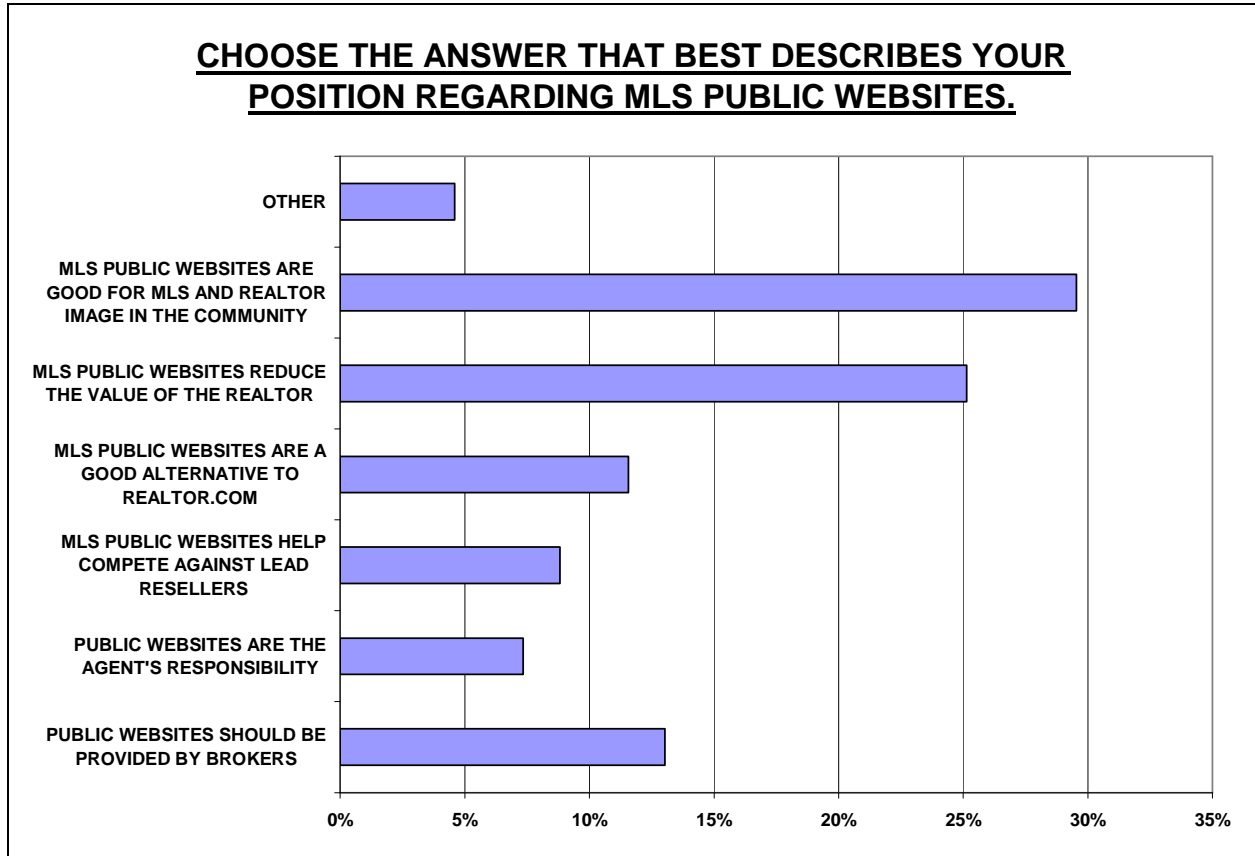


*Those affiliated with a MLS

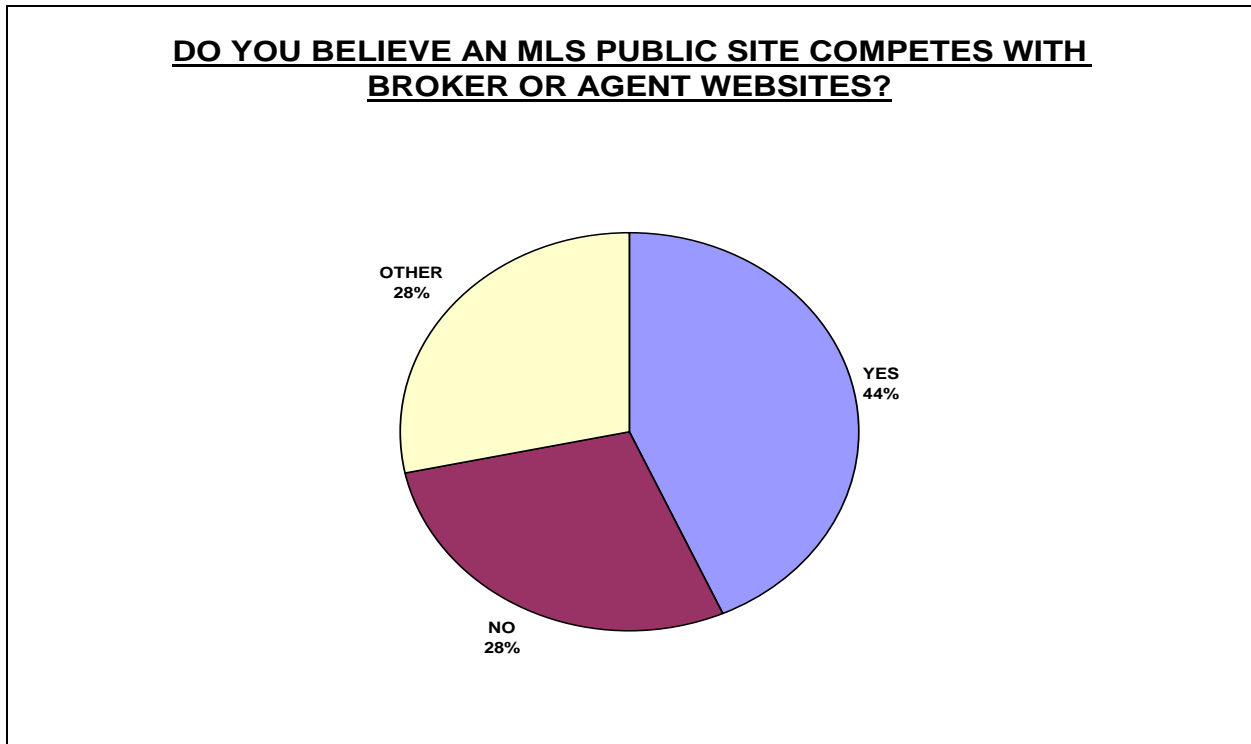


* Members

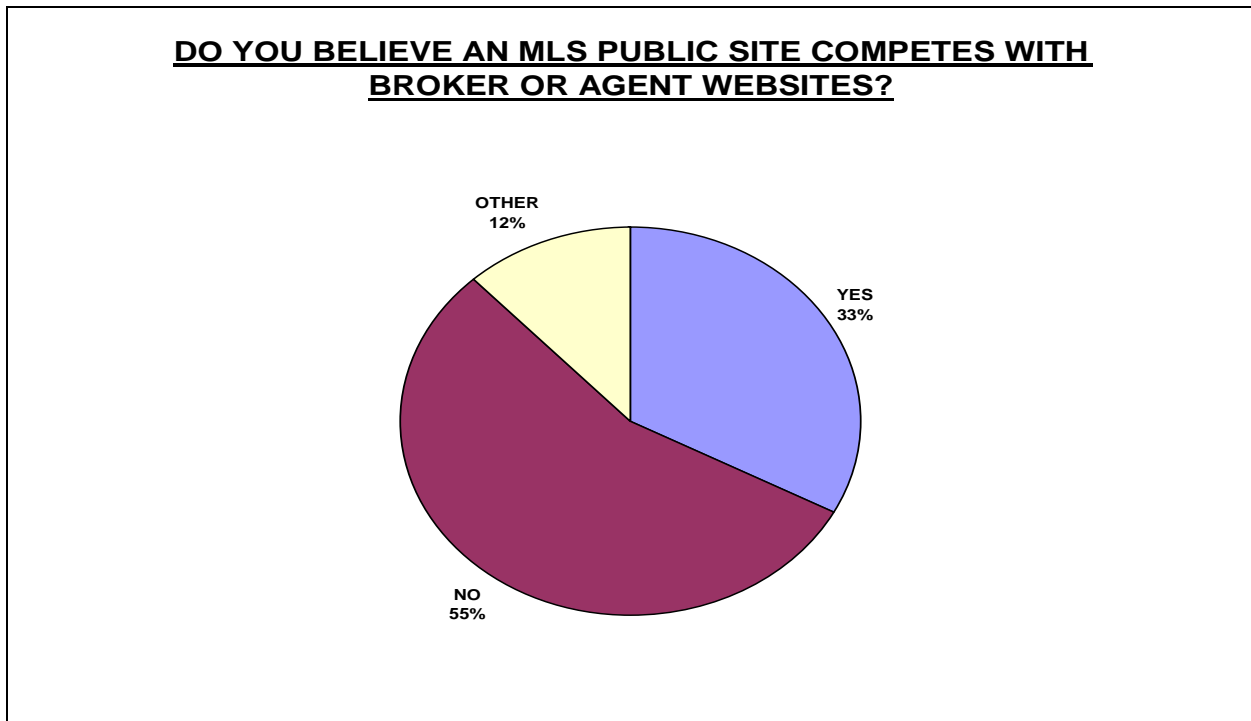
30% of members and those affiliated with a MLS responded “MLS public websites are good for MLS and REALTOR image in the community” when asked, “Choose the answer that best describes your position regarding MLS public websites?” while 25% responded “MLS public websites reduce the value of the REALTOR.”



When members were asked, “Do you believe an MLS public site competes with broker or agent websites?” 44% of respondents answered “yes.” When just those affiliated with a MLS were asked, 33% respondents answered “yes.”



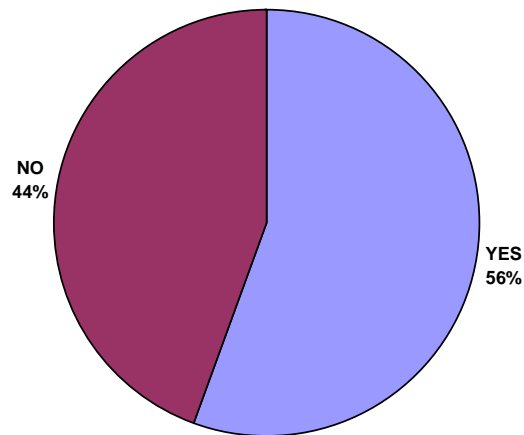
*Members



*Those affiliated with a MLS

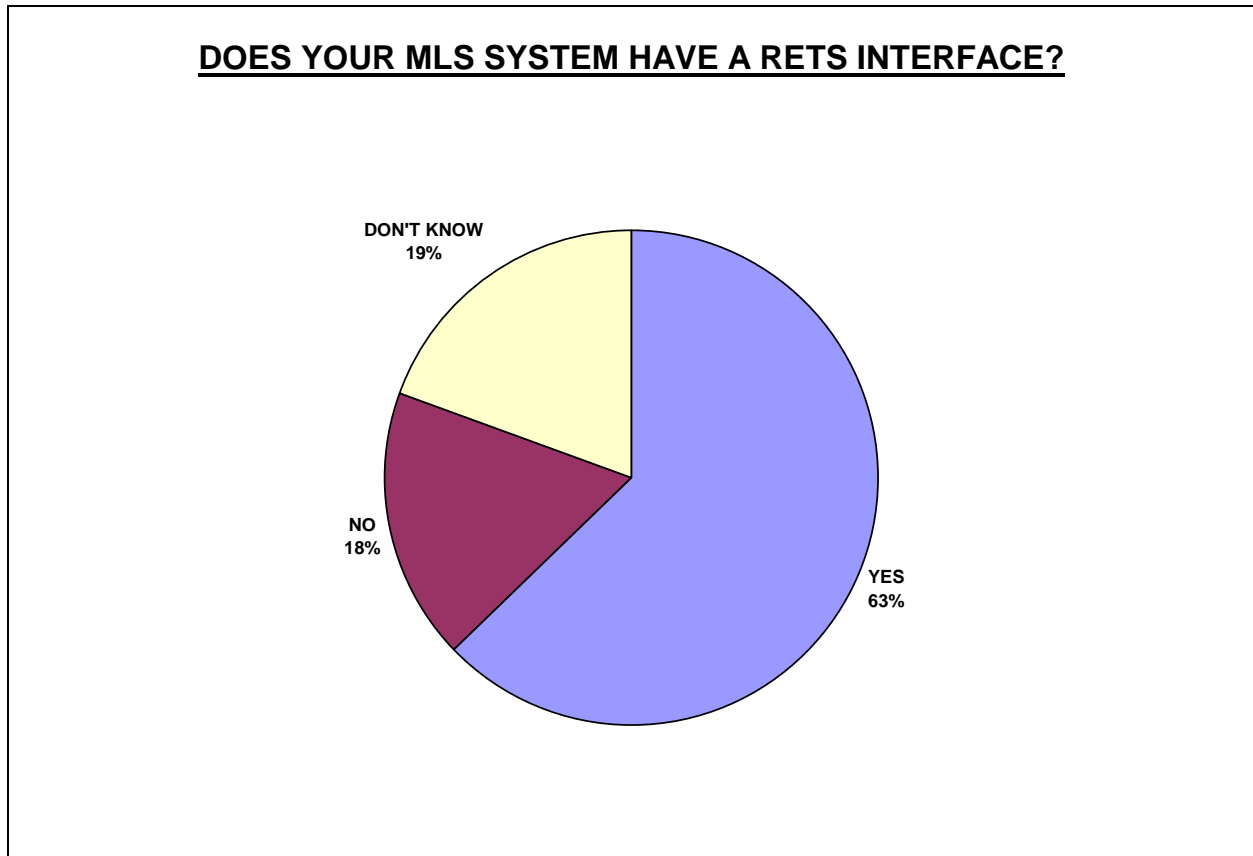
56% percent of those who are affiliated with a MLS responded yes when asked, “Does your MLS provide an “auto-search” capability to consumers so they can receive automatic updates on listings that fit their search criteria?”

DOES YOUR MLS PROVIDE AN "AUTO-SEARCH" CAPABILITY TO CONSUMERS SO THEY CAN RECEIVE AUTOMATIC UPDATES ON LISTINGS THAT FIT THEIR SEARCH CRITERIA?



RETS

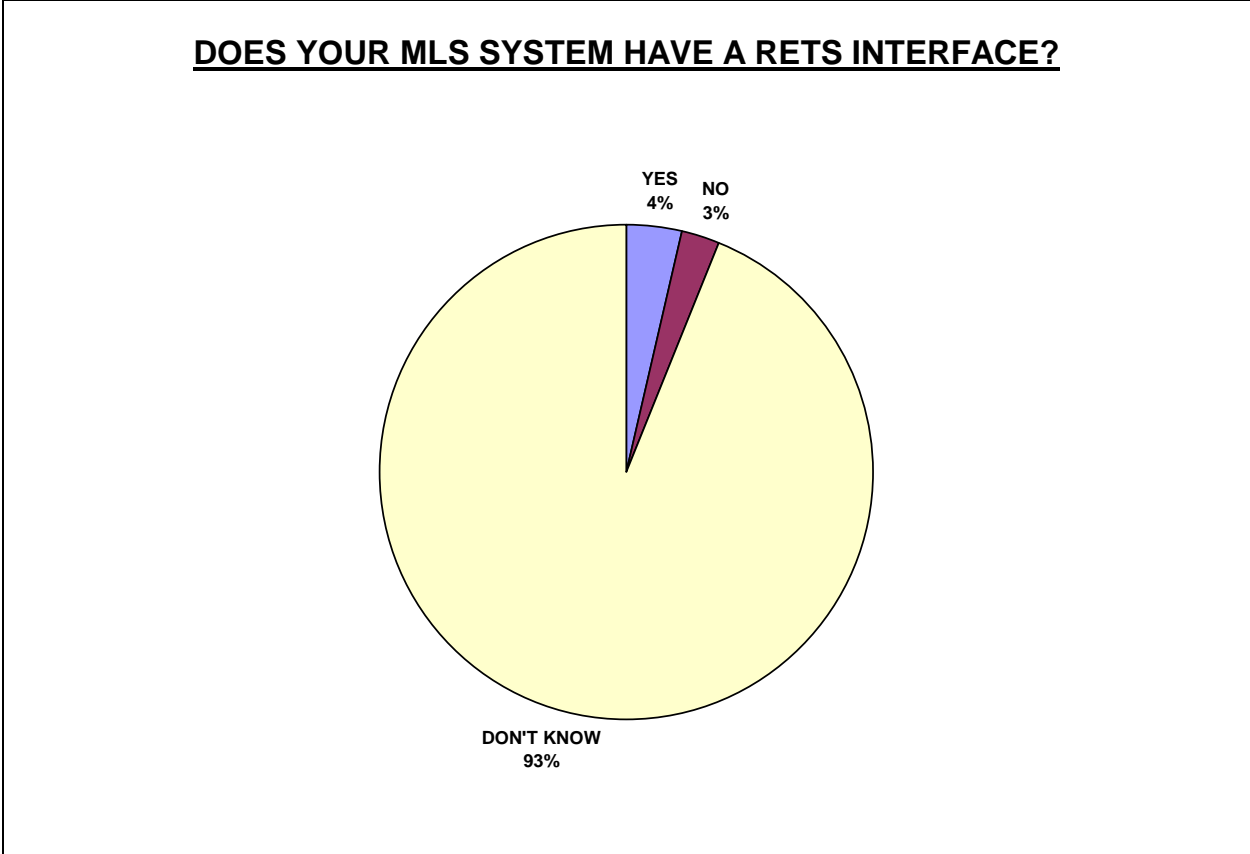
63% of those affiliated with a MLS responded that their MLS system has a RETS interface. Nineteen percent responded that they don't know. In 2006¹, 54% of those affiliated with a MLS responded that their MLS system has a RETS interface.



*Those affiliated with a MLS

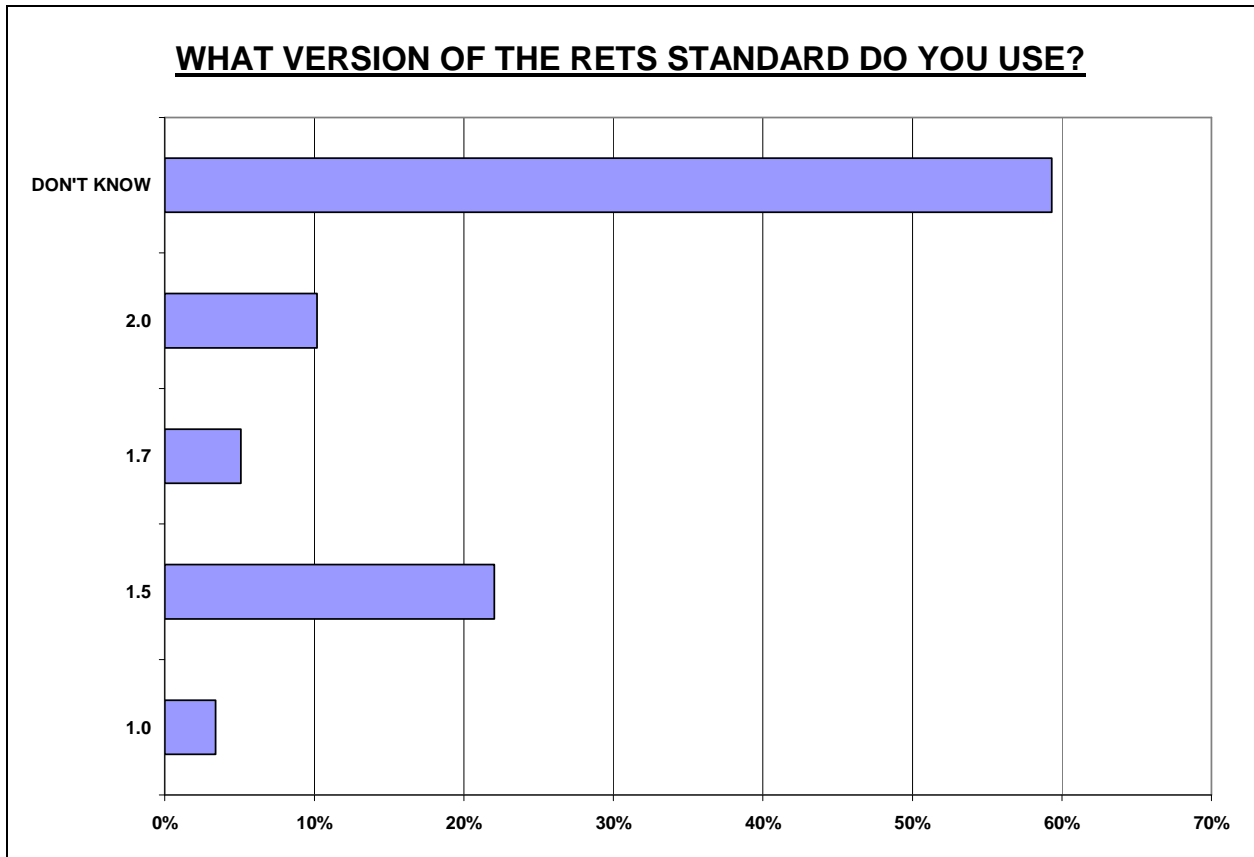
¹[http://www.realtor.org/CRTWeb.nsf/files/2006_MLS_Tech_Survey_final.pdf/\\$FILE/2006_MLS_Tech_Survey_final.pdf](http://www.realtor.org/CRTWeb.nsf/files/2006_MLS_Tech_Survey_final.pdf/$FILE/2006_MLS_Tech_Survey_final.pdf)

On the other hand, when members were asked, “Does your MLS system have a RETS interface?” 93% responded that they don’t know.

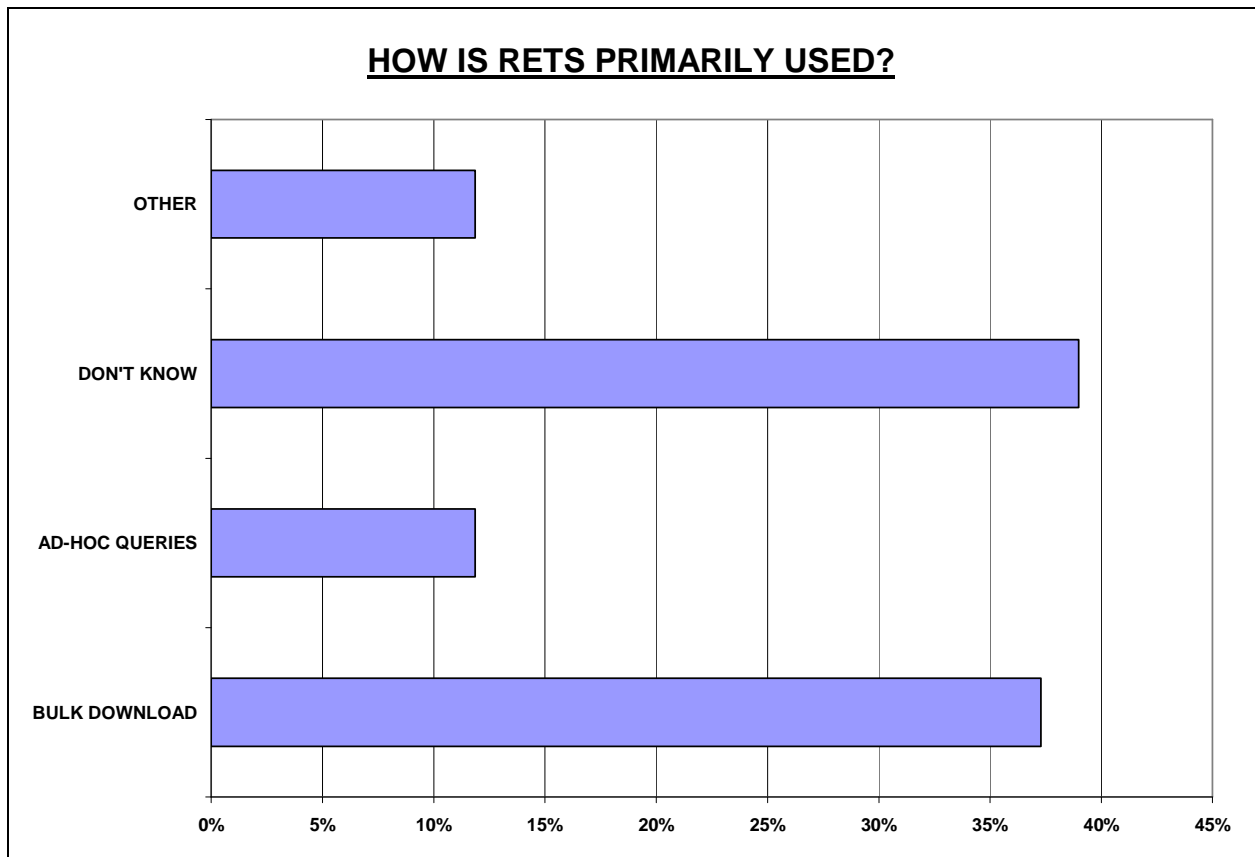


*Members

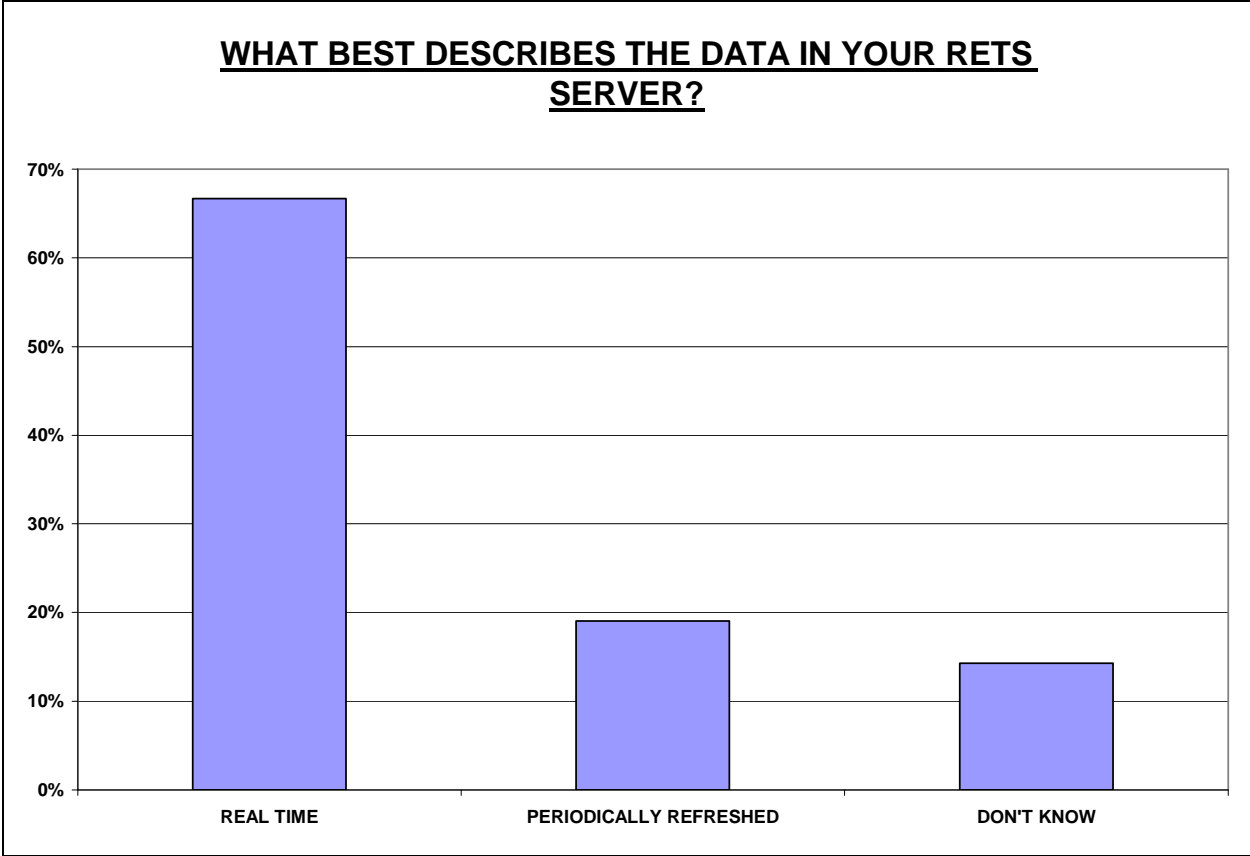
The most popular version of the RETS standard used, asked to those who answered, “yes,” when asked, “Does your MLS system have a RETS interface?” is Version 1.5. Yet 59% responded that they don’t know which version is used.



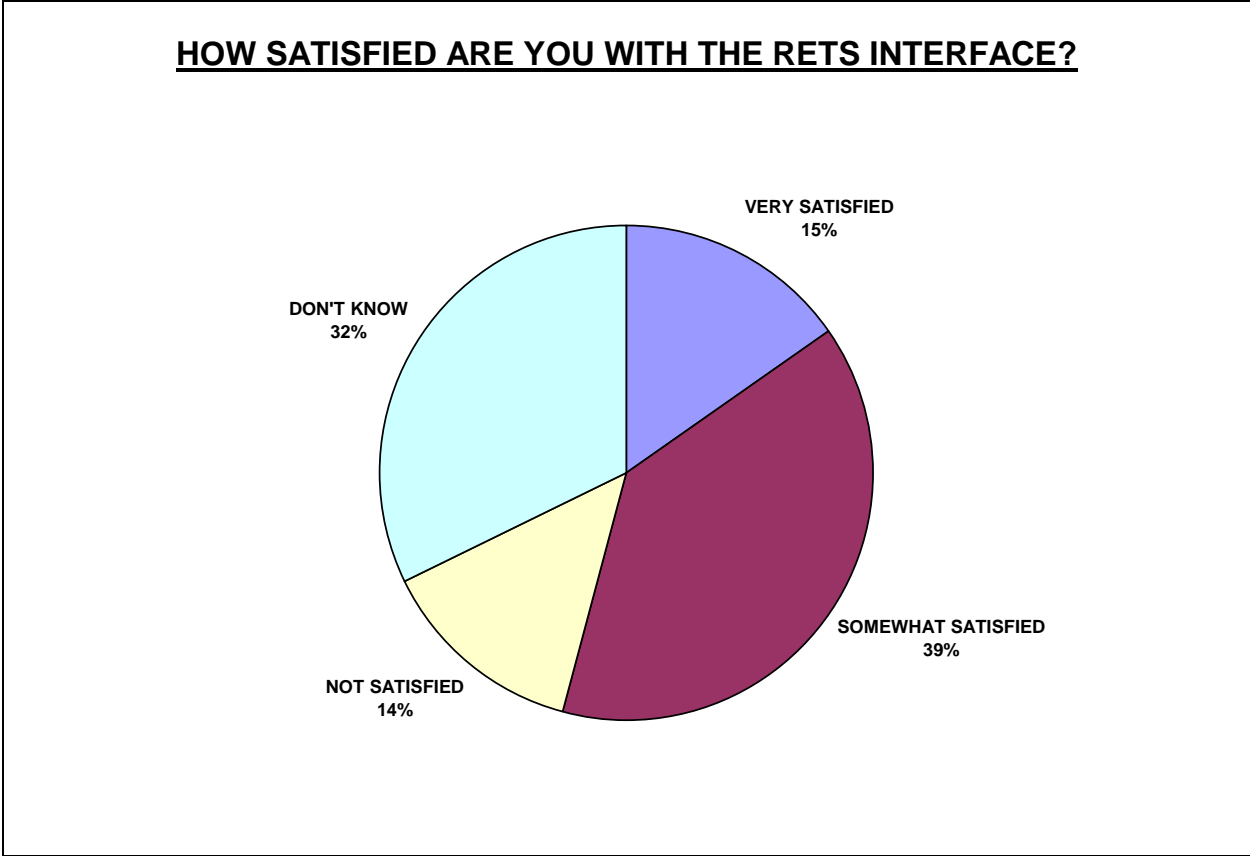
When those who answered, “yes,” when asked, “Does your MLS system have a RETS interface?” were asked, “How is RETS primarily used?” respondents answered 37% “bulk download” and 12% “ad-hoc queries.”



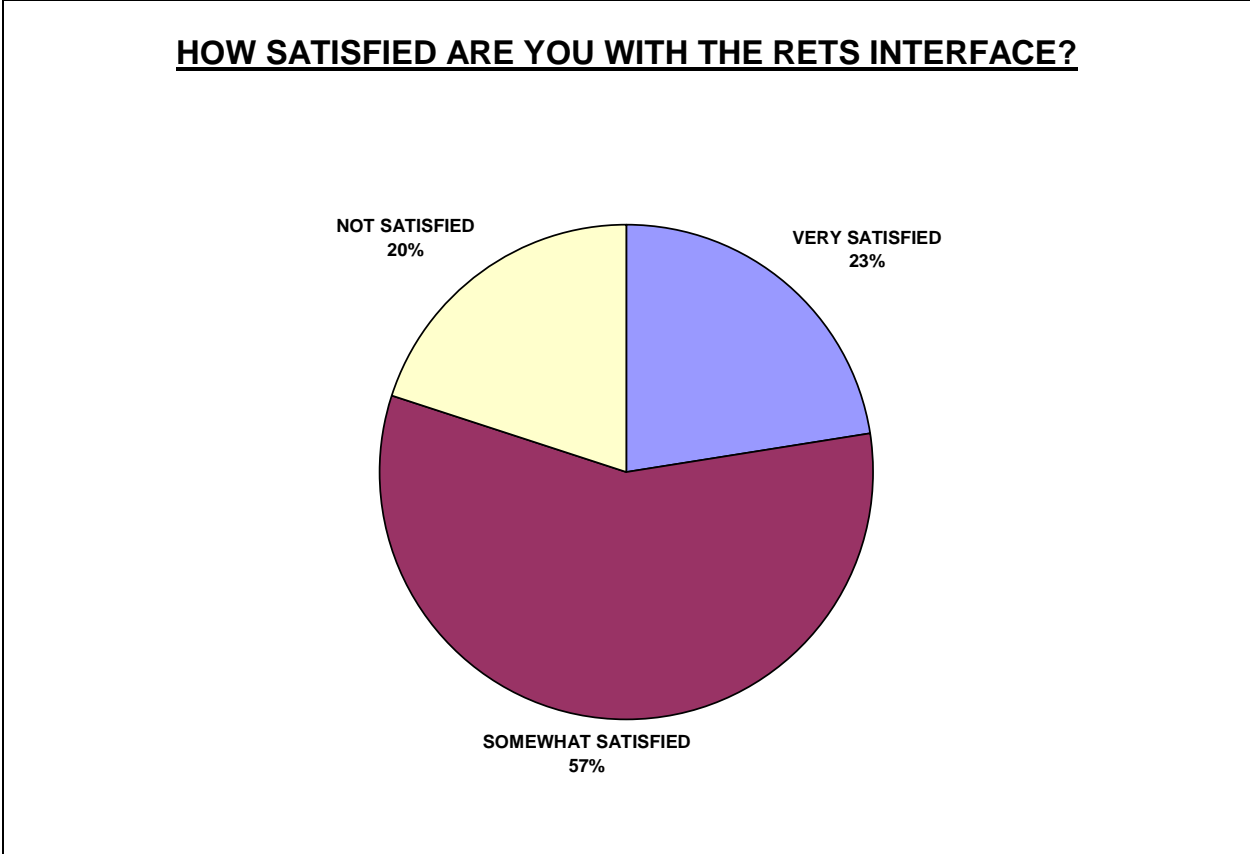
When those who answered, “yes,” when asked, “Does your MLS system have a RETS interface?” were asked, “What describes the data in your RETS server?” respondents answered 67% “real time” and 19% “periodically refreshed.”



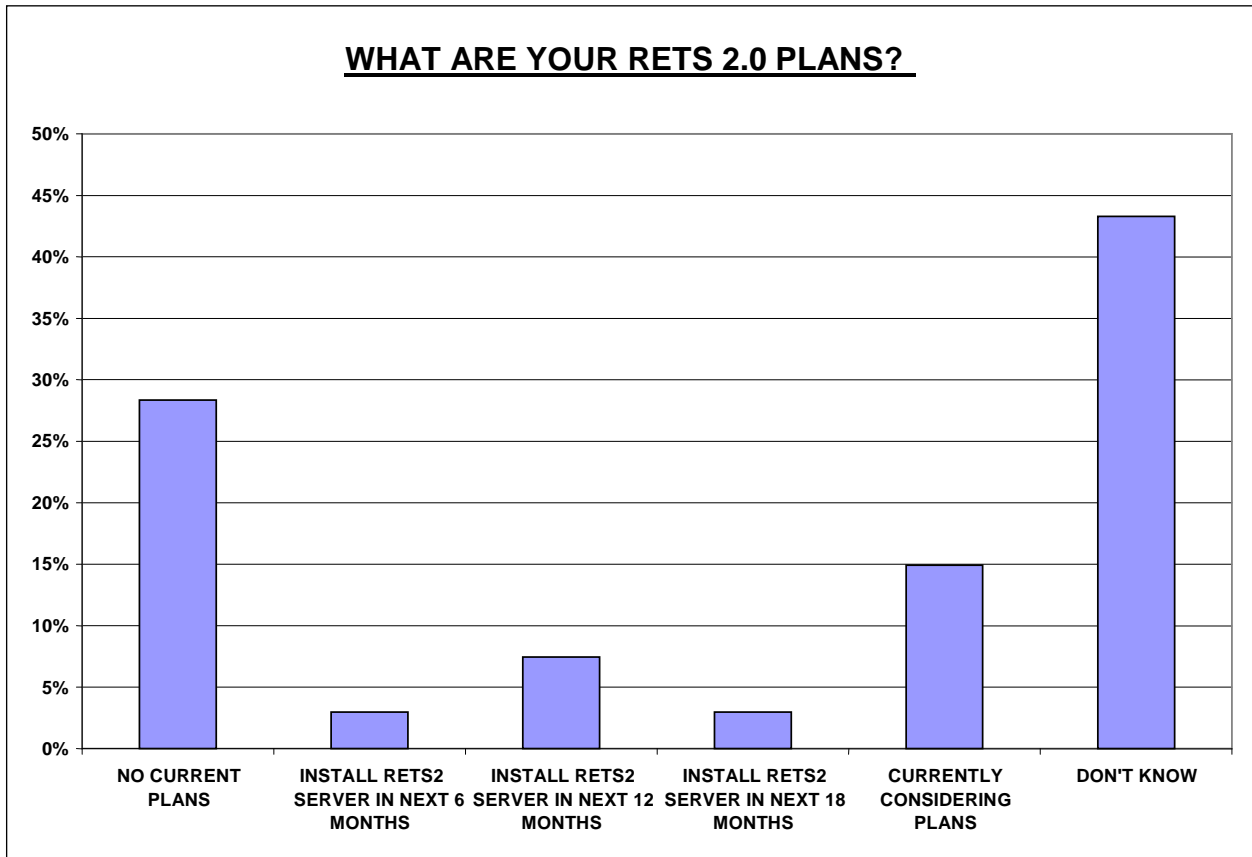
Of those affiliated with a MLS, fifteen percent are very satisfied with the RETS interface, while 39% are somewhat satisfied, and fourteen percent are not satisfied. 32% of those affiliated with a MLS don't know if they are satisfied.



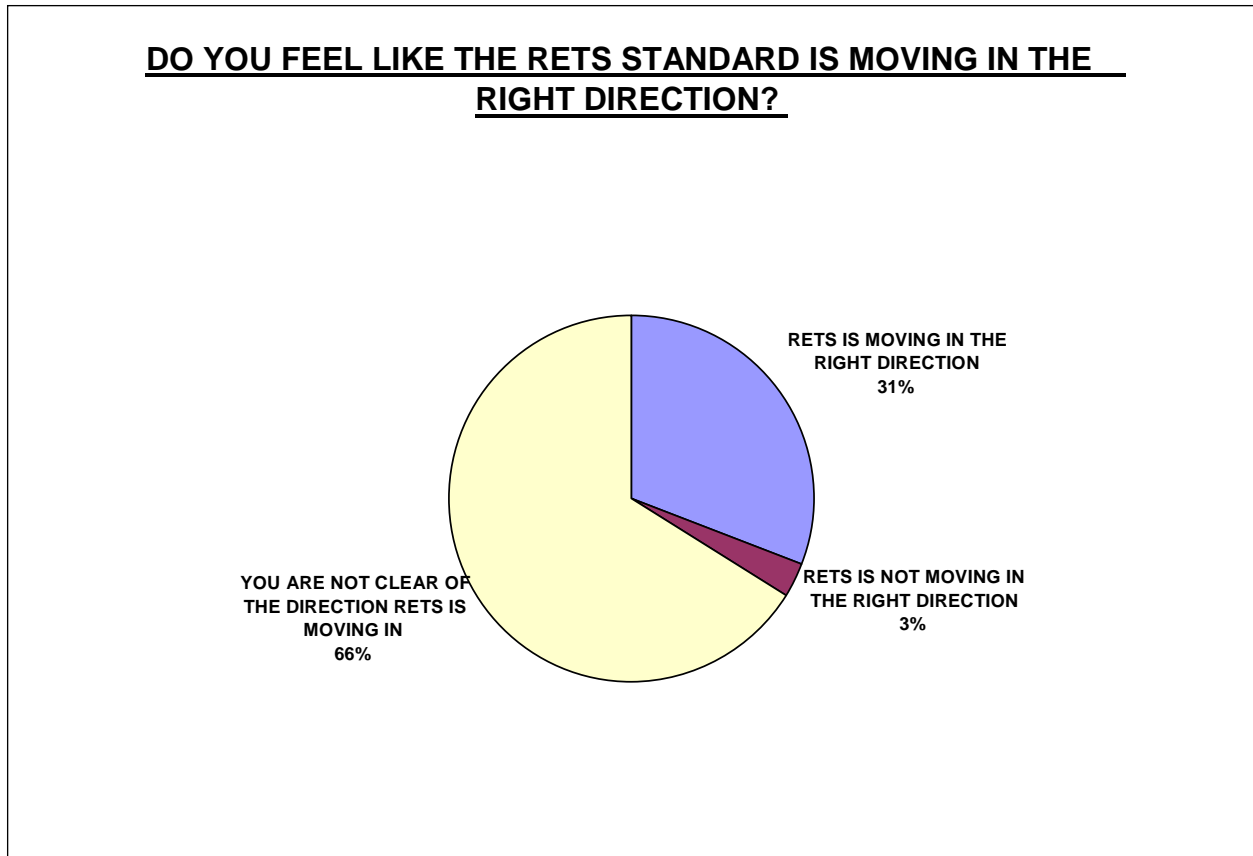
When “Don’t know” is not factored into the comparison, 57% are somewhat satisfied with the RETS interface.



Of those affiliated with a MLS, 28% have no current RETS 2.0 plans, and thirteen percent have plans to install RETS 2.0 “sometime” within the next eighteen months. 43% don’t know their plans.

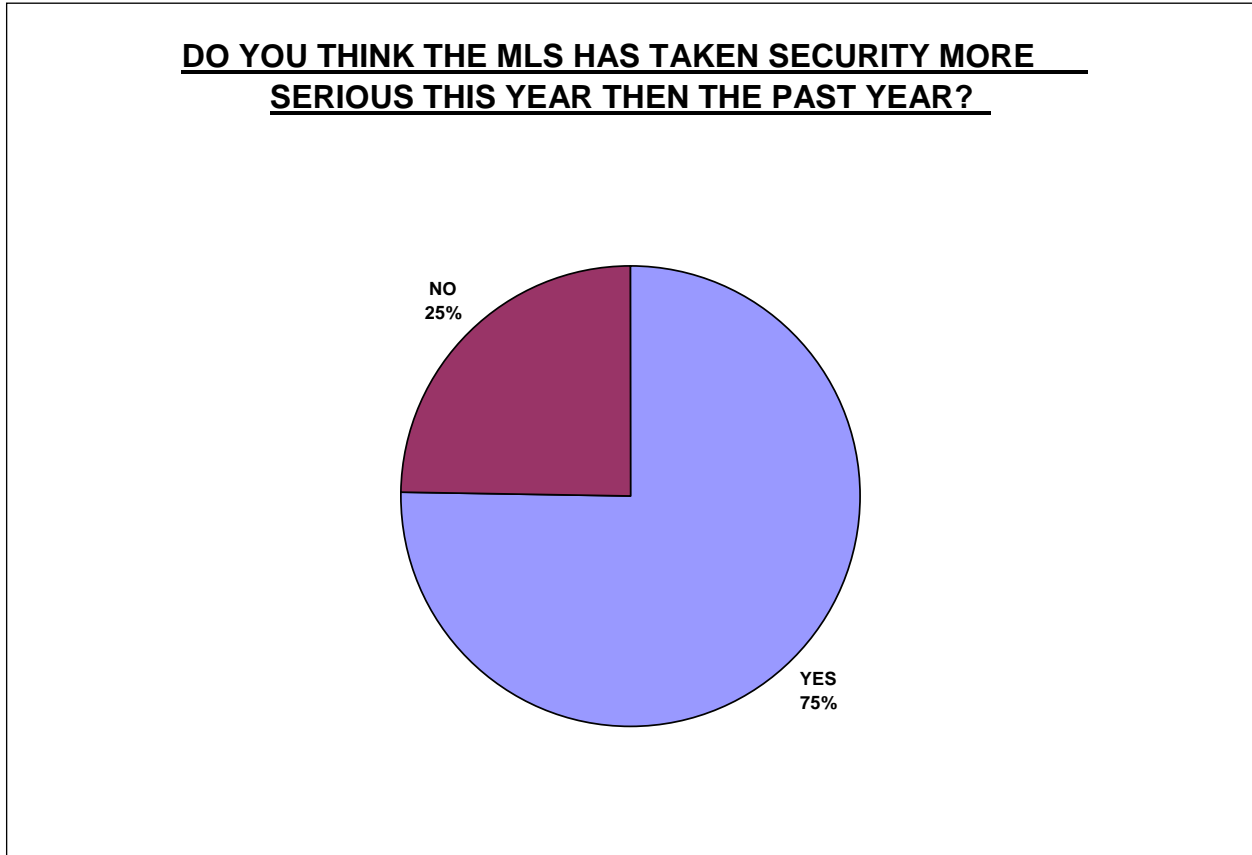


Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Do you feel like the RETS standard is moving in the right direction?” 66% of respondents are not clear of the direction RETS is moving in. 33% responded that RETS is moving in the right direction and three percent responded that RETS is not moving in the right direction.

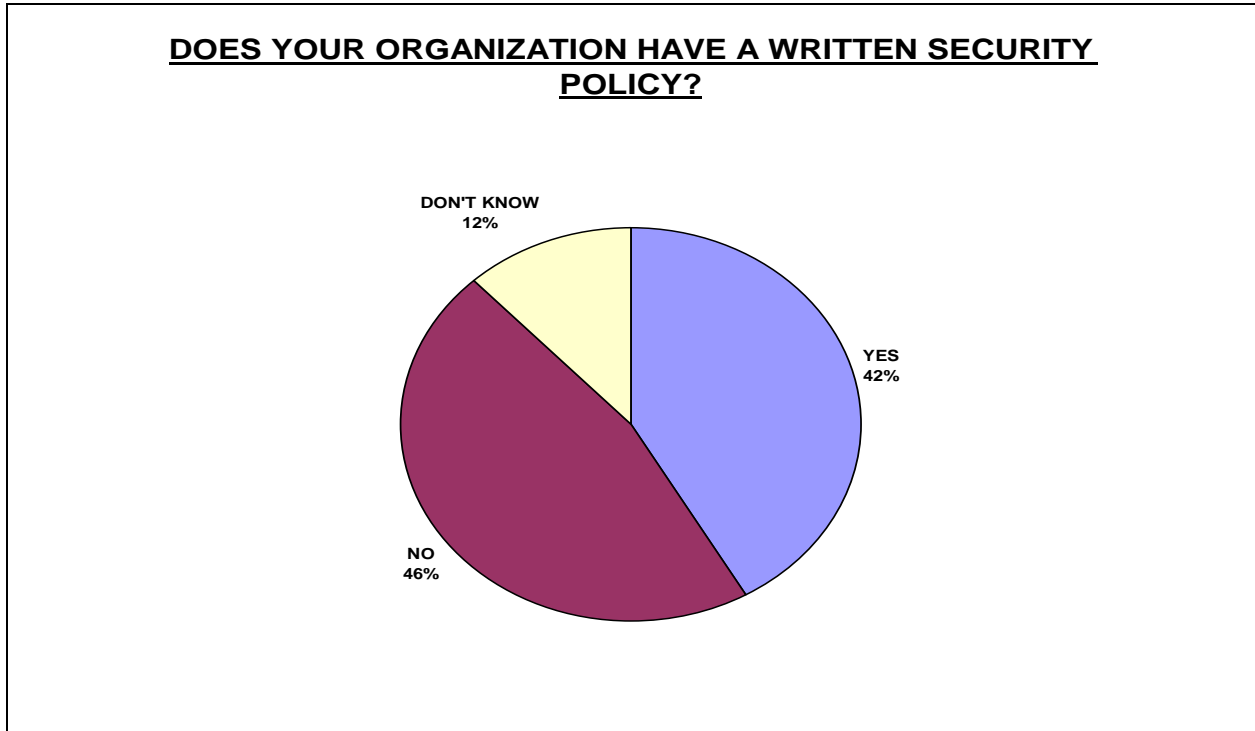


Security

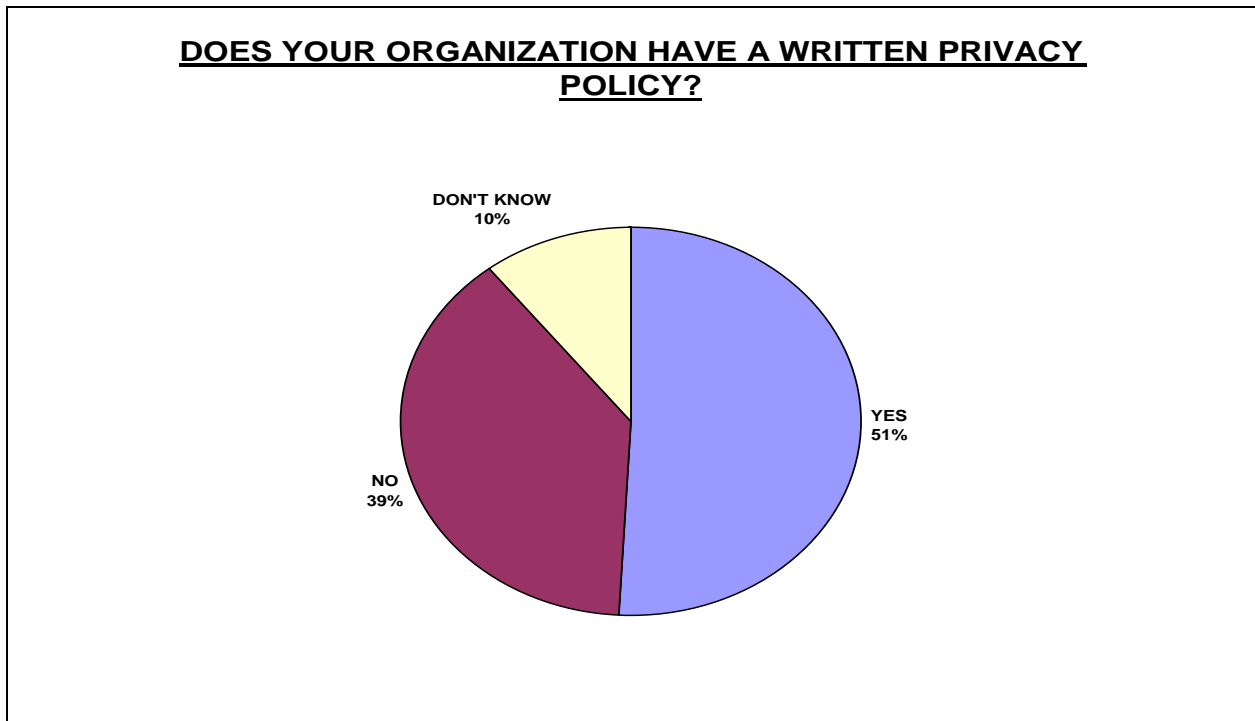
A majority of the members that responded stated “yes” when asked, “Do you think the MLS has taken security more serious this year then the past year?”



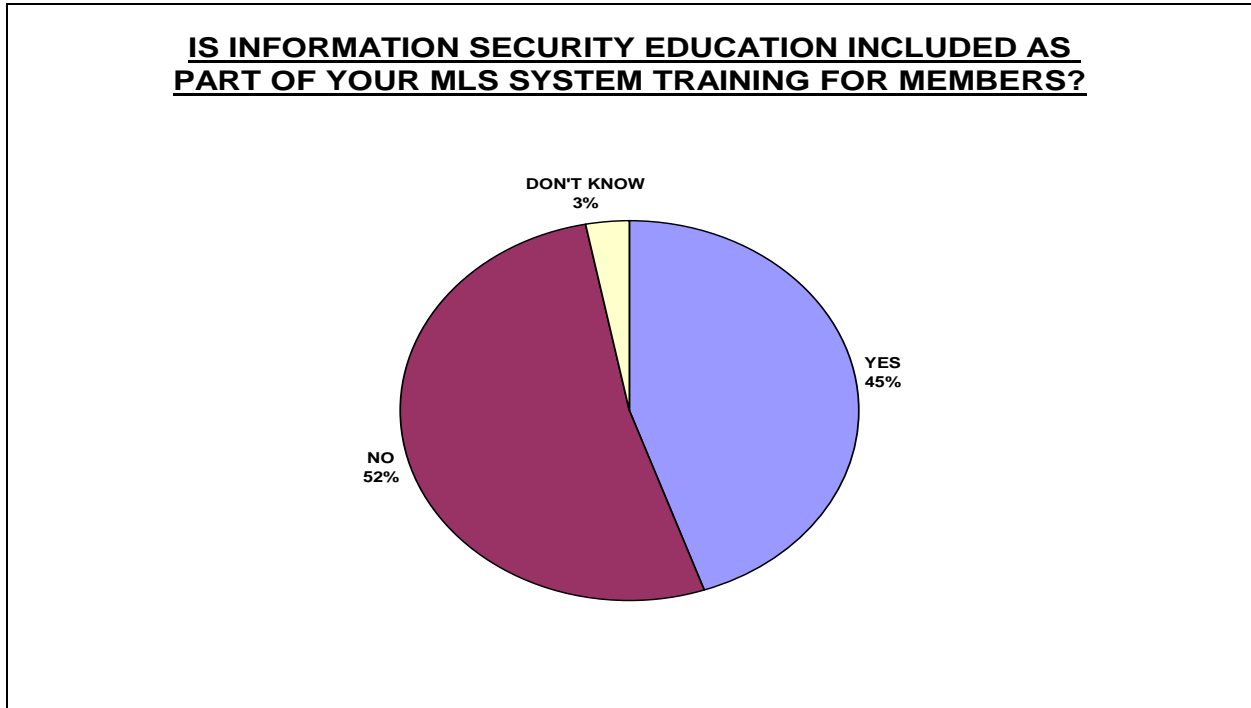
When those that are affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Does your organization have a written security policy?” 42% responded yes and 46% responded no.



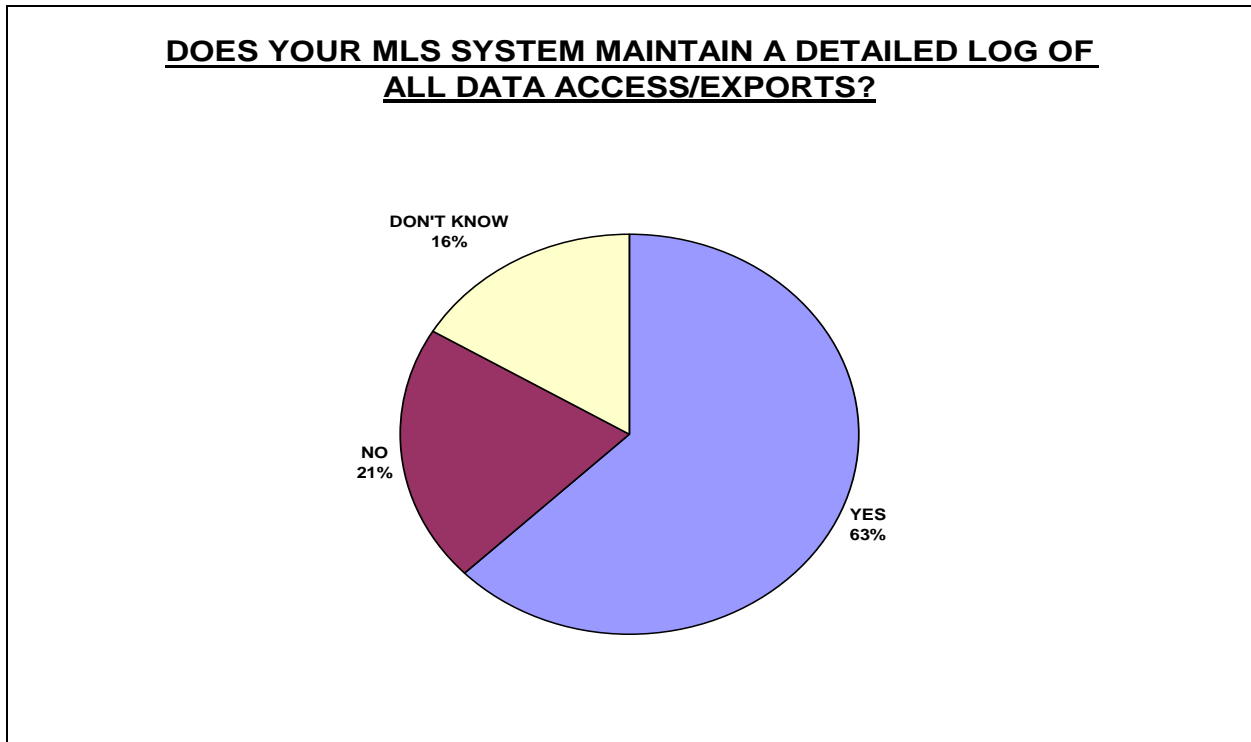
Those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Does your organization have a written privacy policy?” 51% responded yes and 39% responded no.



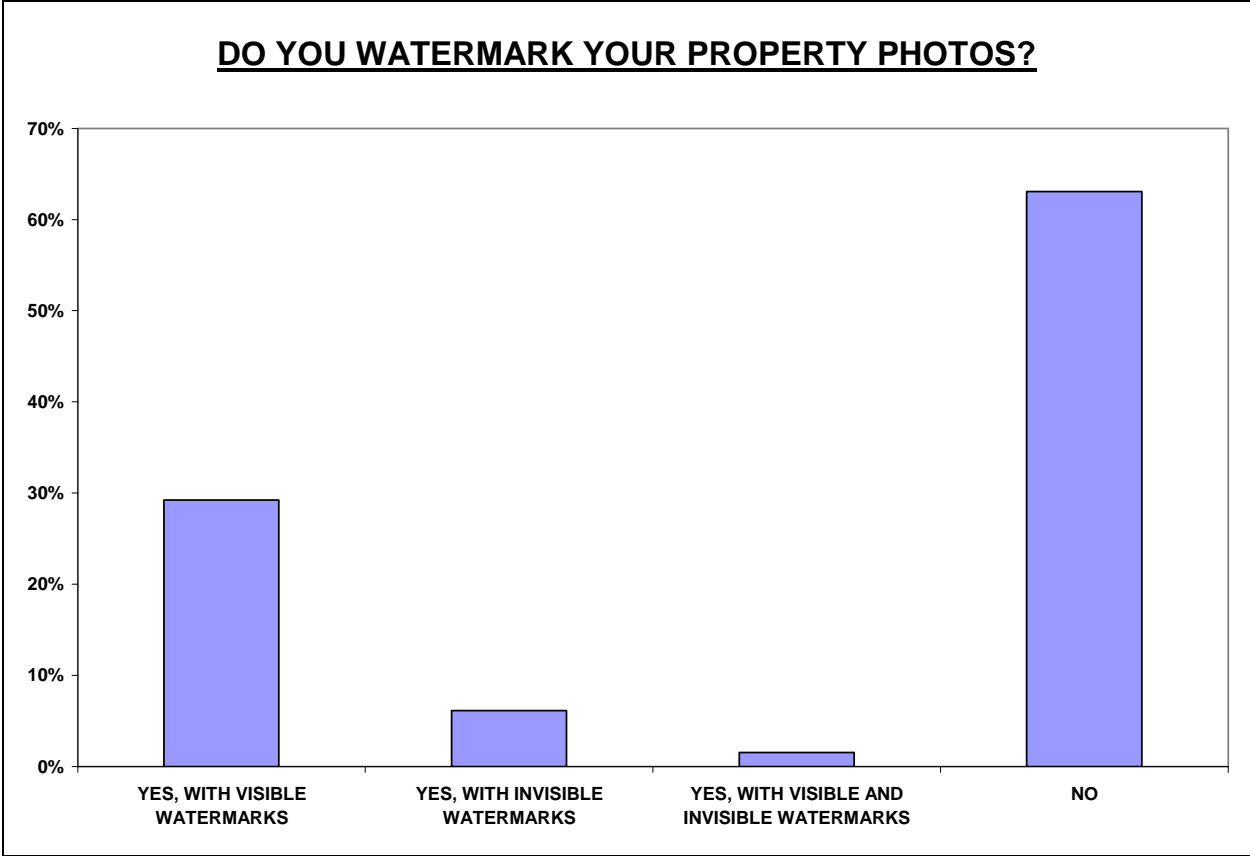
A slim majority, 52%, of those affiliated with a MLS responded no when asked, “Is information security education included as part of your MLS system training for members?”



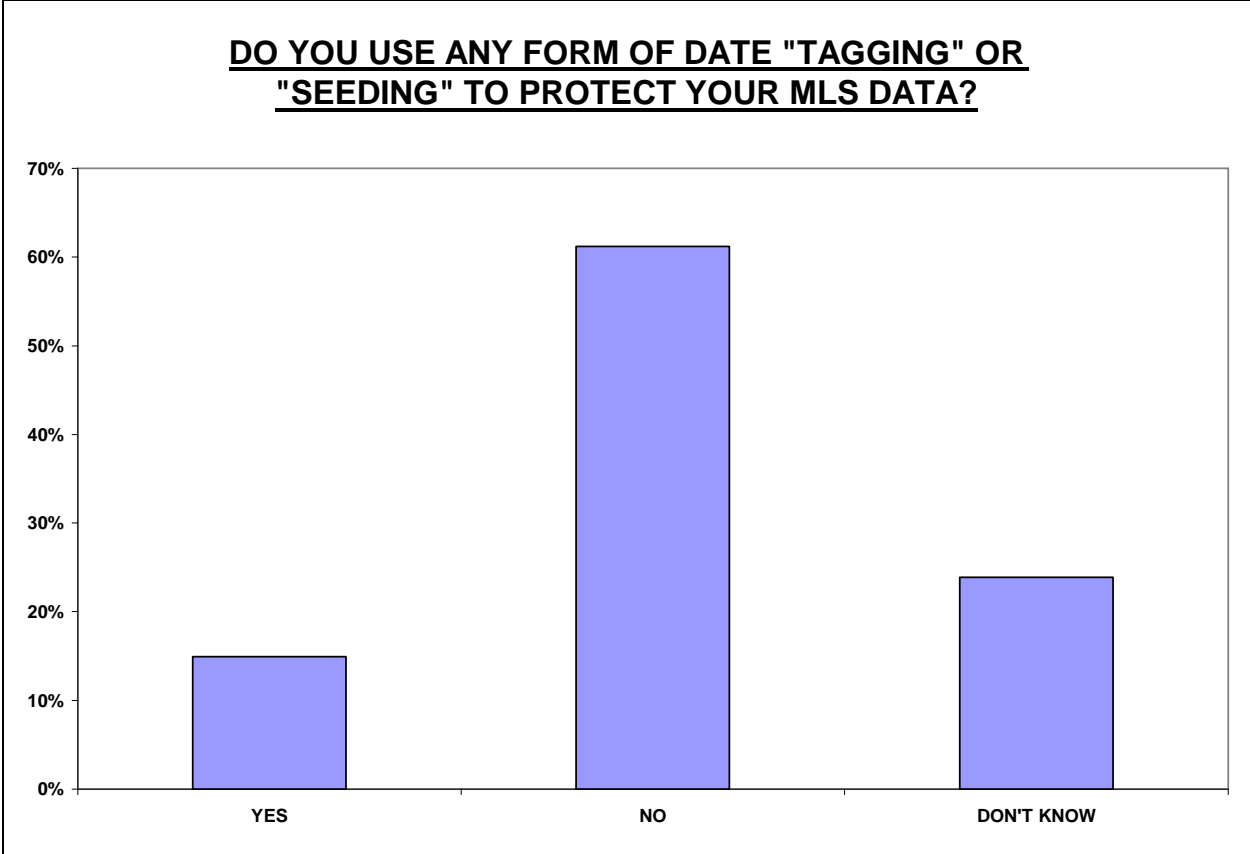
63% of those that are affiliated with a MLS responded yes when asked, “Does your MLS system maintain a detailed log of all data access/exports?”



When those that are affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Do you watermark your property photos?” 37% responded yes: 29% with visible watermarks, six percent with invisible watermarks, and two percent with visible and invisible watermarks; and 63% responded no.

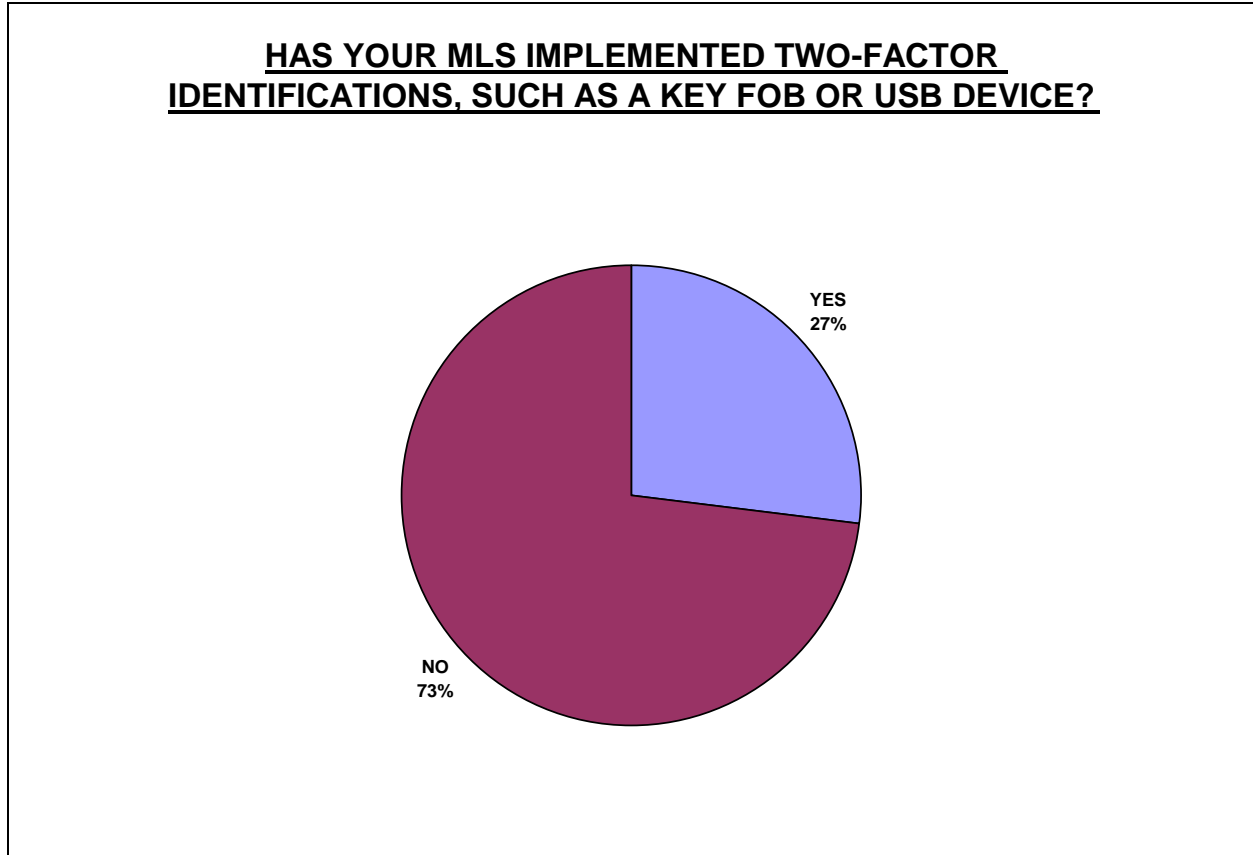


A vast majority, 61%, of those affiliated with a MLS responded no when asked, “Do you use any form of date “tagging” or “seeding” to protect your MLS data?”

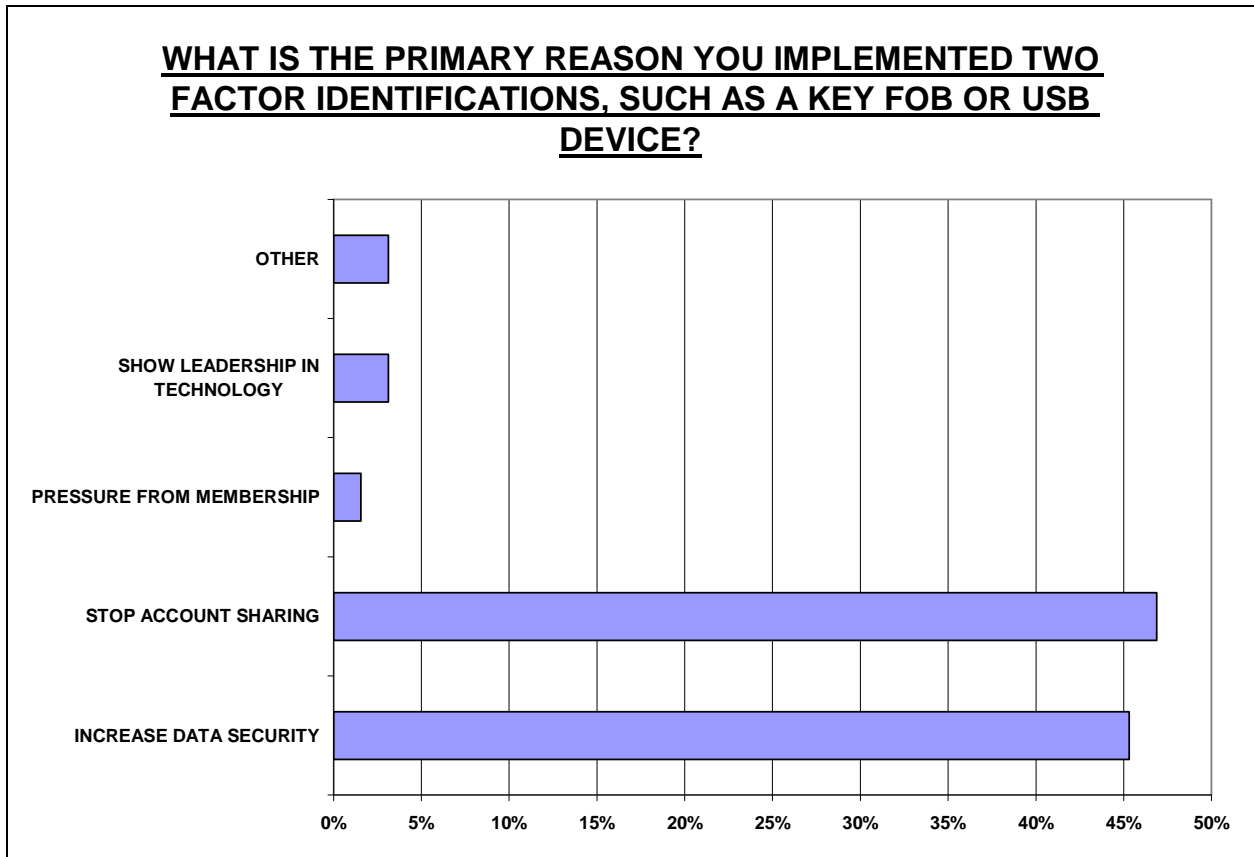


Two-Factor Identifications

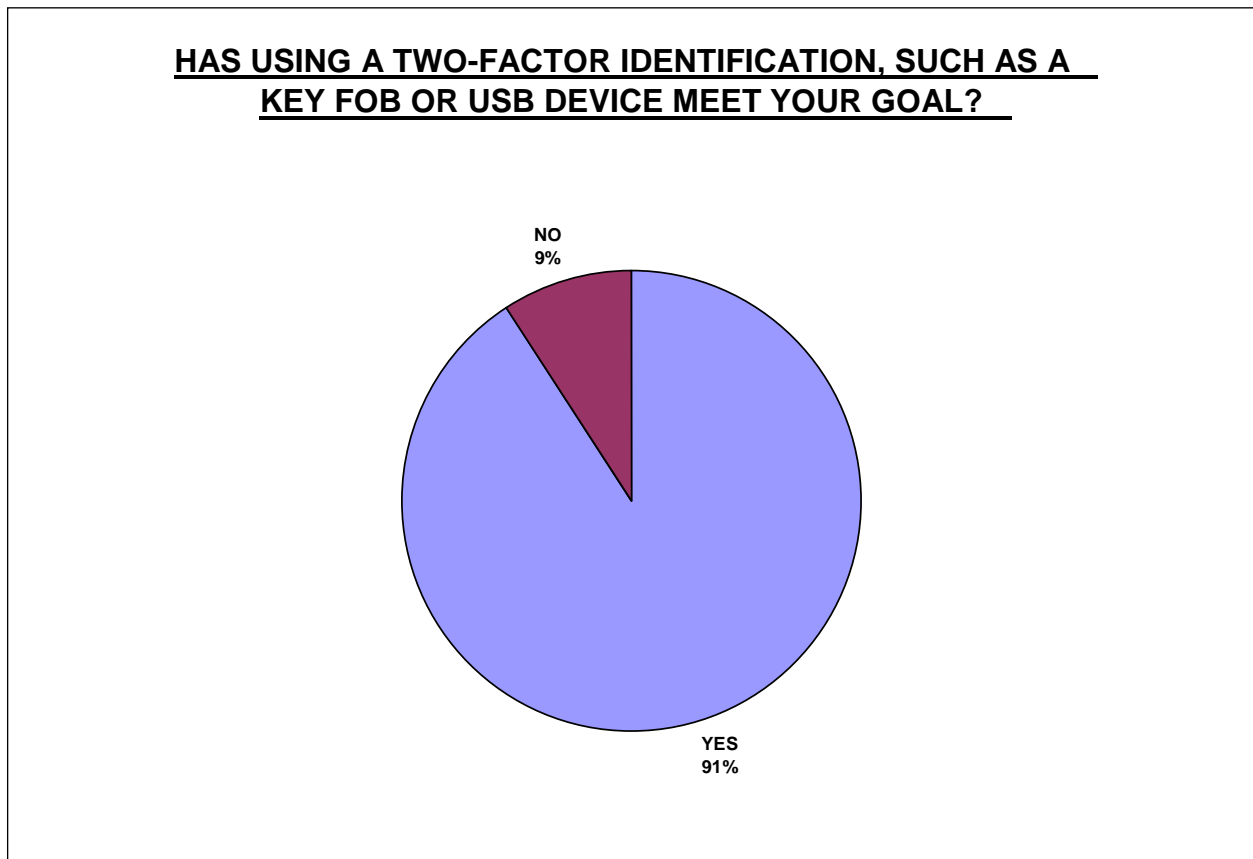
Of both members and those affiliated with a MLS, 73% responded no when asked, “Has your MLS implemented two-factor identifications, such as a key fob or USB device?”



Of those that responded “yes” the primary reason a two-factor identification, such as a key fob or USB device was implemented was to “stop account sharing” stated by 47% and to “increase data security” stated by 45%.

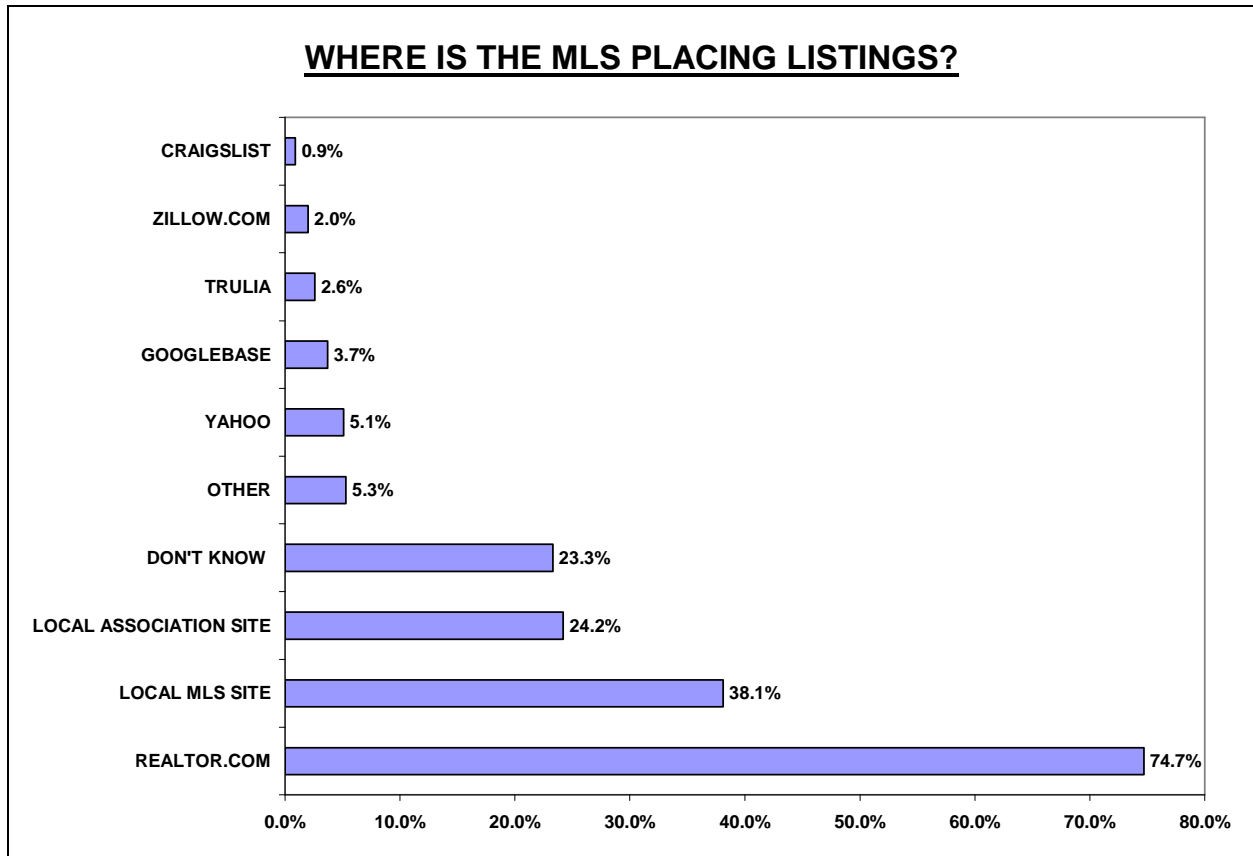


When those who have implemented a two-factor identifications, such as a key fob or USB device were asked, “Has using a two-factor identification, such as a key fob or USB device meet your goal?” 91% responded yes.

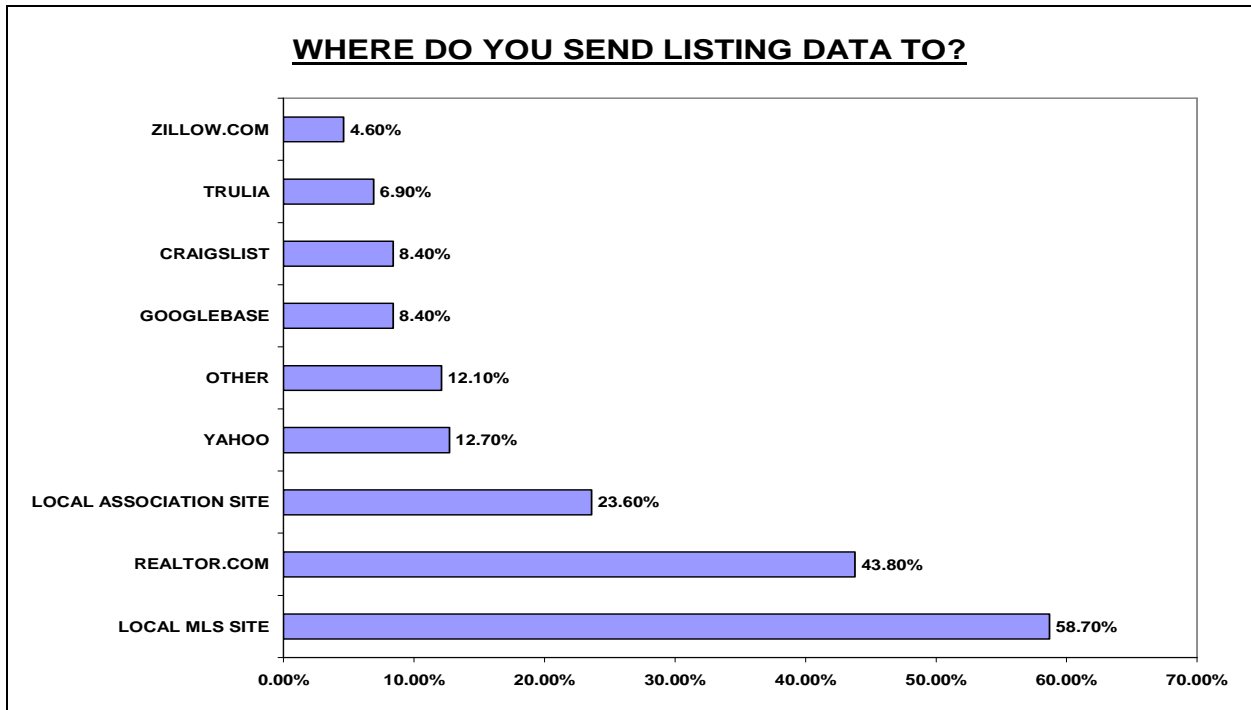


Data Integration

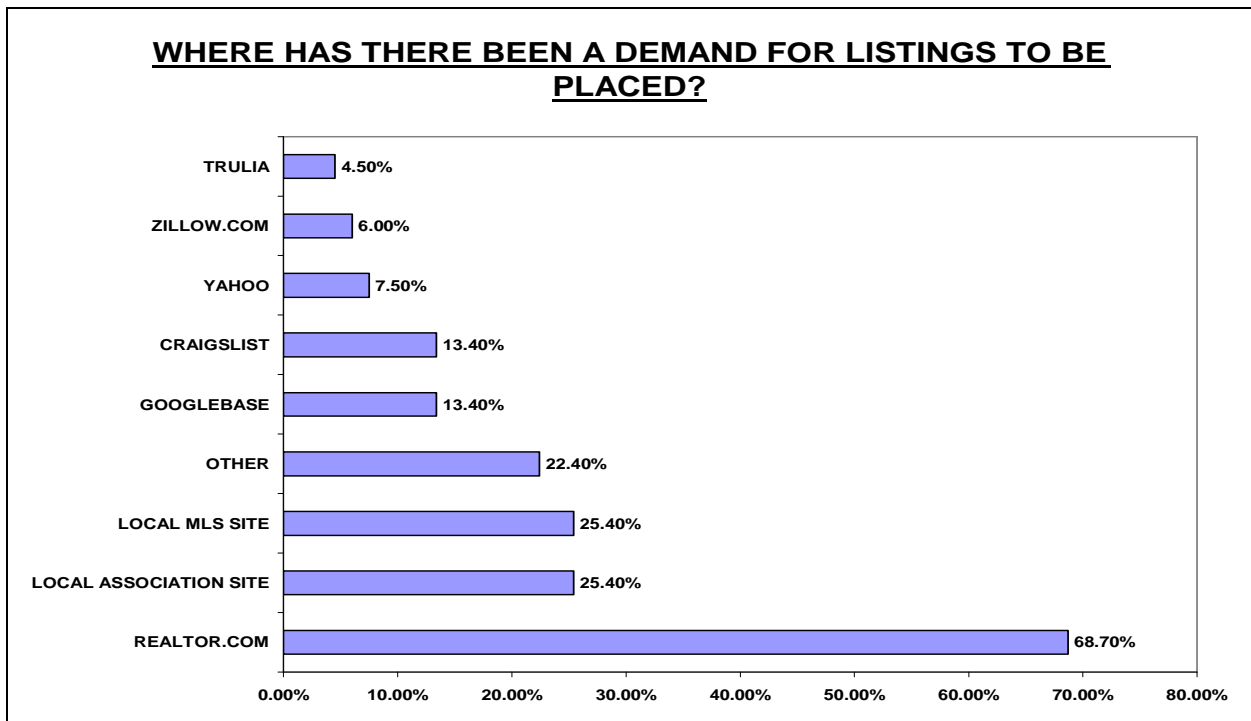
When both members and those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Where is the MLS placing listings?” they were able to make multiple choices. The vast majority, 74.7%, responded realtor.com.



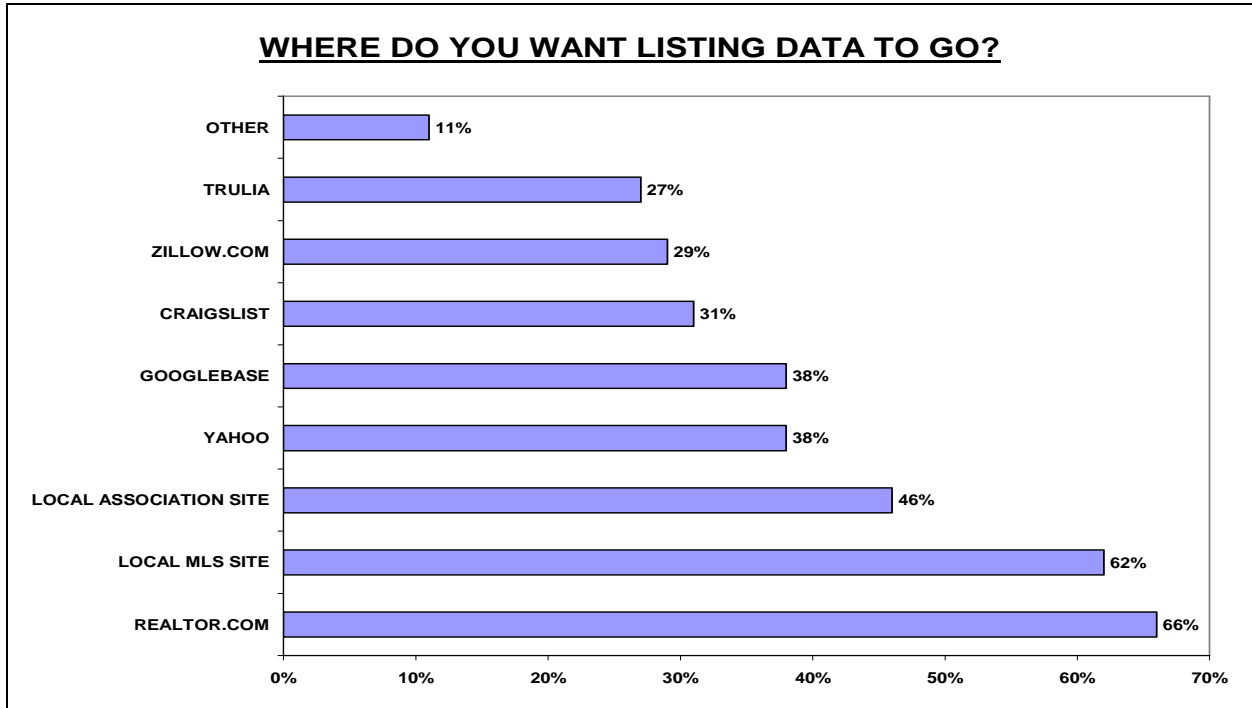
When members were asked, “Where do you send listing data to?” and were able to make multiple choices 58.7% responded “local MLS site.”



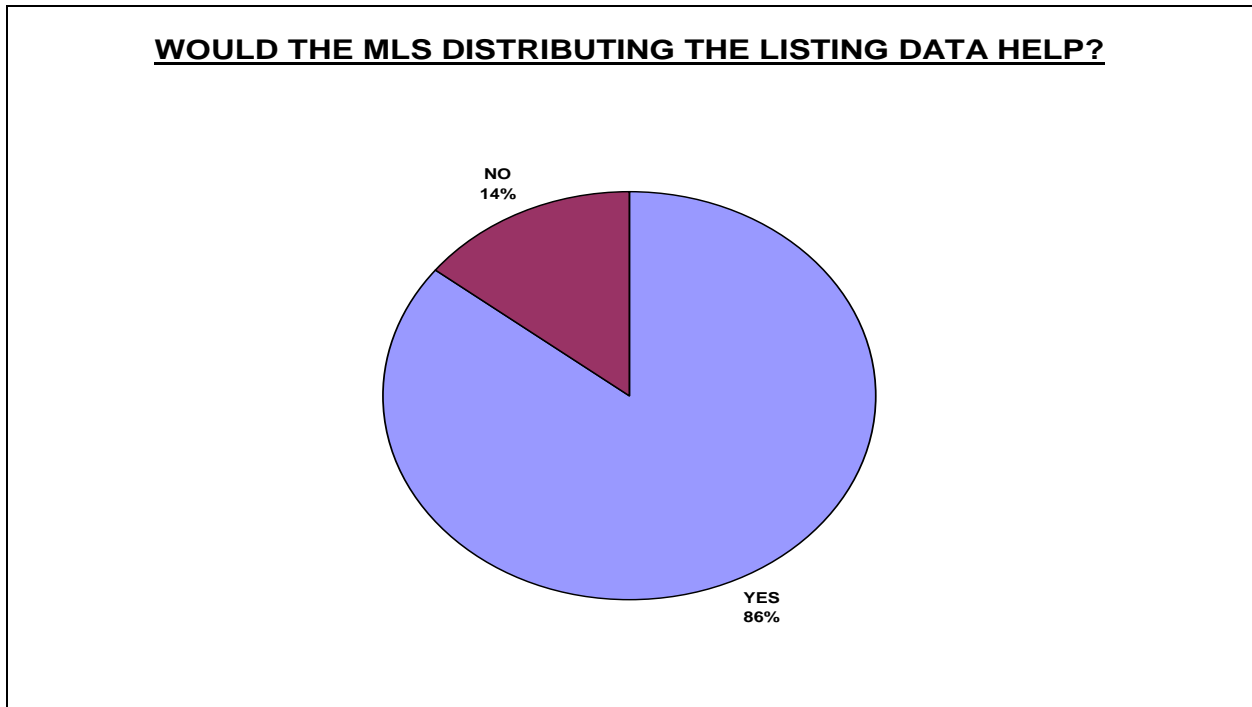
When those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “Where has there been a demand for listings to be placed?” and were able to make multiple choices 68.7% responded “realtor.com.”



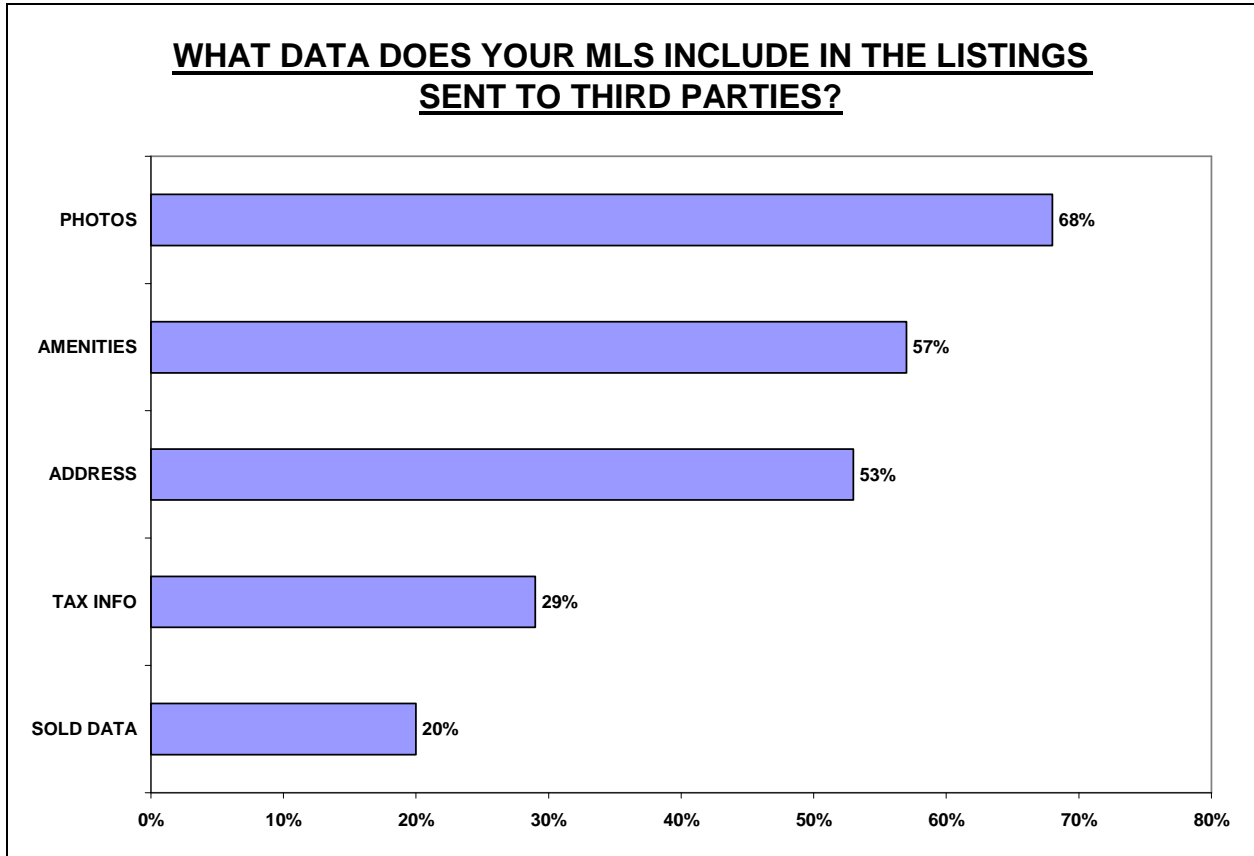
When members were asked, “Where do you want listing data to go?” and were able to make multiple listing choices 66% responded “realtor.com.”



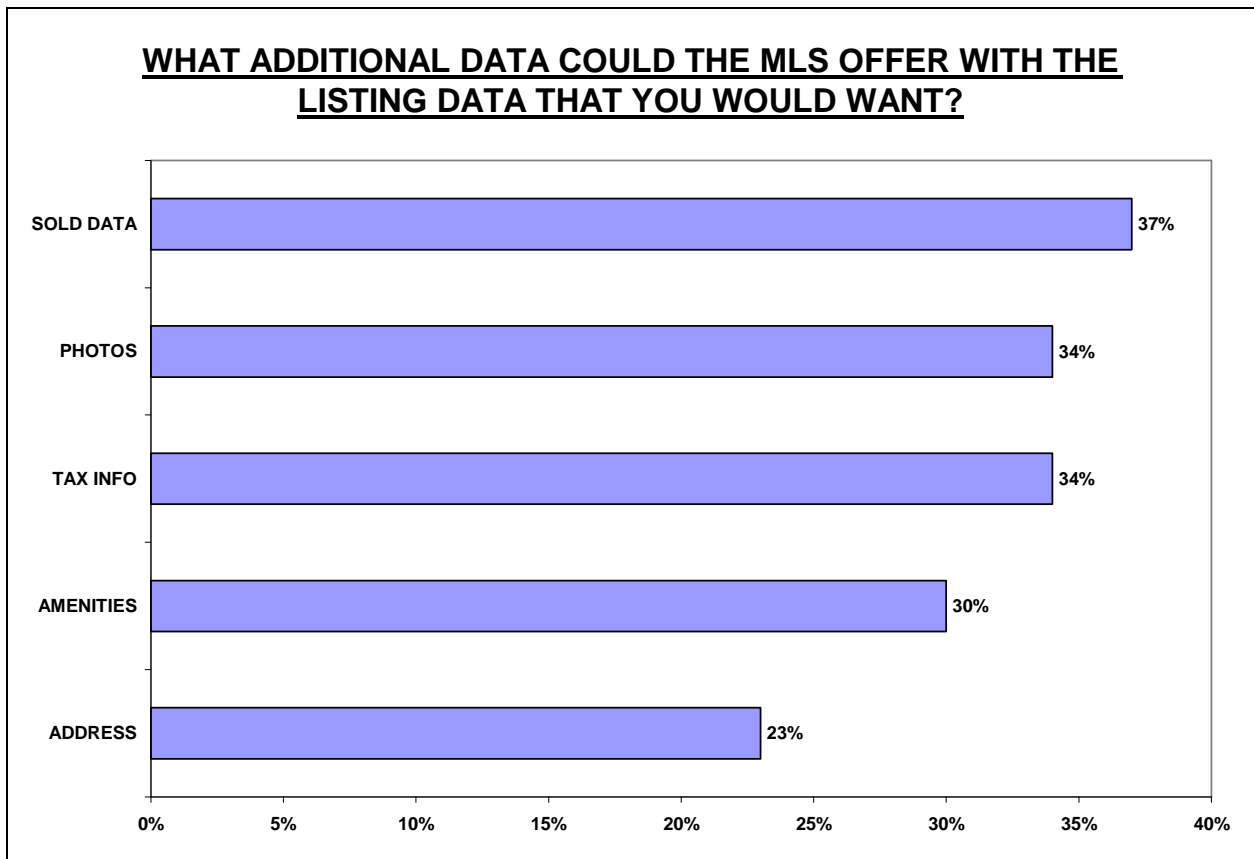
A large majority, 86%, of members responded yes when asked, “Would the MLS distributing the listing data help?”



When both members and those affiliated with a MLS were asked, “What data does your MLS include in the listings sent to third parties?” and were able to make multiple choices, 68% responded photos, 57% responded amenities, 53% responded address, 29% responded tax info, and 20% responded sold data.



When members were asked, “What additional data could the MLS offer with the listing data that you would want?” and could make multiple choices 37% responded sold data, 34% responded photos, 34% tax info, 30% responded amenities, and 23% address.



**CHECK THE FOLLOWING AREAS WHERE DATA IS
INTEGRATED ON YOUR MLS SYSTEM.**

