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General Description and Workflow

This is a website via which property owners (seller) can advertise their property. The user can register and then post an unlimited number of properties to the website. Please note that the registration process requires confirmation of the seller's email address.

While the postings are online the user can amend the posting details or delete any of the postings. At the same time each visit to a posting is recorded and every communication between a potential buyer and seller is also recorded (simply in terms of counting. Eg. property A has been seen X times and its owners has been contacted via the contact-form on the page Y times).

When each posting is ready to expire a notification is sent to the seller to let them know that their advert is expiring. The seller can then login to the website and renew their postings. If a posting is not renewed, it is deleted from the system along with the photos and any other details that relate to it.

Each posting/renewal is done on the following basis:

Prices

	FREE	X euros	Y euros	Z Euros
Is Published	Immediately	Immediately	Immediately	Immediately
Credits Required	0 (FREE)	1	1.5	2
Live for	2 Weeks (14 days)	1 Month (30 days)	3 Months (90 days)	1 Year (365 days)
Can Renew	NO	YES	YES	YES
Can Edit/Delete	YES	YES	YES	YES
Photos	1	7	7	7
Panorama Floor Plans LocationMap	NO	NO	NO	YES

Notes:

- 1 Credit = X Euros
- VAT applies to payments from the UK Only.
- X/Y/Z denote numbers...

Payments are to be done via PayPal, Cheque or via Bank Transfer.

In the case of Paypal, the payment will be collected straight away. But in the case of Cheque or Bank Transfer, once the payment has been received, the Site Administrator

will enter the Credits into the account of the Seller. (eg. The Seller has written on the cheque his Account Login Details and Type of Advert he wants to pay for). After payment completion (either via Paypal or Cheque/BankTransfer), the system will issue an email invoice which will be emailed to the Seller as well as the Site Administrator. The Invoice No. Will start from #1. ie. The first payment on the site generates an invoice with Invoice No#1. The second payment on the site issues an invoicer with InvoiceNo. #2. ...and so on.

Payment adds a certain number of Credits to the Sellers account. The Seller can then use those Credits to advertise his property. In some cases a Seller may wish to advertise more than one properties, which means they wish to buy more than 2 credits at a time (eg. 10 credits). In such cases, payment should be taken and the relevant points should be added to the account. The points will then be deducted as the Seller start posting property ads on the website.

However, the above apply more to the individual Seller. In the case of some estate Agents, the agent may wish to pay a fixed annual fee and submit an unlimited number of postings during that time, via the web service directly or via their Seller account on the website. With that in mind, the above pricing structure changes to:

	FREE	X Euros Per Property	Y Euros Per Property	Z Euros Per Property	R Euros One-off fee for Unlimited Postings for a year
Is Published	Immediately	Immediately	Immediately	Immediately	Immediately
Credits Required per posting	0 (FREE)	1	1.5	2	0 (FREE)
Live for	2 Weeks	1 Month	3 Months	1 Year	1 Year
Can Renew	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Can Edit/Delete	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Photos	1	7	7	7	7
Panorama Floor Plans LocationMap	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES

Please note that for Estate Agents, their account should “expire” (ie. Convert into an ‘Individual’ SellerType with Credit 0) one year after its creation. Before the account “expires”, a notification should be sent to the Seller with SellerType “EstateAgent”.

Note: Initially the posting properties on the website will be free for a year.

Database & Conceptual Model

The following information/fields are needed for each property posting (the following is a mix of database and conceptual models). The list is not definitive but merely an indication of the expected information that need to be shown or stored.

Property Adverts

1. Property Information

- a. Location Information *
 - i. Country
 - ii. Region (County / Province / Island)
 - iii. City/Town
 - iv. Area
- b. Property Specification
 - i. Property Type*
 1. Land
 2. Business Property
 3. House
 4. Flat
 5. Villa-Cottage
 6. Condo
 - ii. Price (applies to: all) *
 - iii. Sq.m. (applies to: all)
 - iv. No. of Main Rooms (applies to: all)
 - v. Bathrooms (applies to: house, flat, villa-cottage, condo)
 - vi. Pictures (max of 7). (310x206 pixels)
 - vii. Thumbnails (search results page) (135x90 pixels)
 - viii. Description (1000 characters) *
 - ix. Panorama
 - x. Floor Plans (800x600 pixels)
 - xi. Map (Google) based on the [Area, City, Region, Country]

2. Advert Details *

- a. Posting Date
- b. Expiry Date
- c. NoOfViews
- d. NoOfEnquiries
- e. Visible (yes/no)

Sellers

Personal Information

- a. Title *
- b. Full Name *
- c. Company Name (optional)
- d. Address
- e. Tel.No. *
- f. Mobile
- g. Fax No.
- h. Email * (will function as a username)
- i. Password
- j. SellerType *
- k. ExpiryDate (for the case where SellerType is “Agent” this could be set to a specific date)
- l. Do you wish to receive emails (updates, promotions, advertising, etc) by us? (Y/N) *
- m. Where did you hear about us? *

Payments

1. DateTime *
2. Amount *
3. PaymentMethod *
4. PaymentResult (Success/Failure) *
5. SellerID (basically something to identify the seller with) *

* => Denotes compulsory information

Application Settings

1. VAT Rate
2. Credit Price (eg. 1 credit = 60 euros)
3. Credit cost per posting (eg. 2 credits for 365 days, 1 credit for 90 days)
4. Make Advertising Free (Y/N) (ie. Credit cost per posting is 0 for all the durations defined in (3)). Maybe set this up as a table which the Site Administrator can edit?

Lookup Data

Advert Types

5. Free
6. Monthly (1 credit)
7. Quarterly (1.5 credits)
8. Annual (2 credits)

Property Types

1. Land
2. Business Property
3. House
4. Flat
5. Villa-Cottage
6. Condo

Seller Types

1. Individual
2. EstateAgent

Please note that for Estate Agents, their account should “expire” (ie. Convert into an ‘Individual’ SellerType with Credit 0) one year after its creation. Before the account “expires”, a notification should be sent to the Seller with SellerType “EstateAgent”.

WhereDidYouHearAboutUs

1. Search Engines
2. Flyer
3. Other

PaymentMethods

1. Online (Paypal)
2. Cheque
3. Bank Transfer

General Comments

The following guidelines should be followed for the development of the website:

1. Posting/editing/deleting for the seller should be done via the use of a web-service.
2. The programming style should be as SIMPLE as possible and should use DataReaders as much as possible, since there is no need to writing data except where we update the counters for how many time a property has been viewed and how many times its owner has been contacted by a Seller via the website.
3. When images are uploaded they should be renamed as follows: [propertyID]_[photoNo].jpg eg. 2987_1.jpg
4. Image dimensions should be checked when users upload them.
5. Thumbnails should be auto-generated.
6. Seller's contact details should not be visible anywhere on the website. When a potential Buyer fills-in the contact form, an email is sent to the Seller of this property, and a copy is CCed to the Site Administrator. The Subject of this email should be: Property Enquiry: [PropertyID]
7. All searching and parameters should be done via the QueryString, to allow users to copy-paste a URL to another person if they wanted to. Same applies to paging through search results. With that in mind, I could suggest the following articles for reading:
 - a. <http://www.4guysfromrolla.com/webtech/042606-1.shtml>
 - b. <http://aspnet.4guysfromrolla.com/articles/031506-1.aspx>
 - c. <http://weblogs.asp.net/scottgu/archive/2006/01/01/434314.aspx>
8. The homepage of the website should be cached for 24 hours on the server.
9. The website will need to be integrated with an OpenAds system (<http://www.openads.org/>)
10. During the search, the various dropdown (eg. Country, Region, City, etc) should update based on the selection of the user. Those dropdowns should only contain Countries, Regions, etc which have properties posted in them.
11. The META Tags of the search-results page (ie. The page showing all the details about a property) should be as follows:
 - a. Title: [Country], [Region], [City], [Area] Properties [(list of property types from the relevant lookup table)]
 - b. Description: Properties [(list of property types from the relevant lookup table)] in [Area], [City], [Region], [Country]
 - c. Keywords: [Area], [City], [Region], [Country], [(list of property types from the relevant lookup table)], sell, sales

Actors

Seller

The Seller can:

- Register his details
- Edit registration details
- Delete registration/account (ie. Disable account. Not actually delete.)
- Create / Edit / Delete / Renew a property posting
- Preview Posting, prior to submission.
- Upgrade to an Unlimited Properties account (ie. SellerType = EstateAgent)

Please note that posting/editing/deleting for the seller should be done via the use of a web-service.

Buyer

- Contact property owner (respond to property posting)
- Print the property posting
- (Simple) Search for property by:
 - o Country
 - o Region
 - o City
 - o Area
 - o Price
 - o Property Type
- (Advanced) Search for property by:
 - o Country
 - o Region
 - o City
 - o Area
 - o Price
 - o Property Type
 - Land
 - Sq.m
 - Business Property
 - Sq.m
 - Rooms
 - House
 - Sq.m.
 - No. of Main Rooms
 - Bathrooms
 - Flat
 - Sq.m.
 - No. of Main Rooms
 - Bathrooms

- Villa-Cottage
 - Sq.m.
 - No. of Main Rooms
 - Bathrooms
- Condo
 - Sq.m.
 - No. of Main Rooms
 - Bathrooms

Search results are sorted by “NoOfViews ASC” but the Buyer should also be able to sort the search results by PRICE ASC/DESC, MainRooms ASC/DESC. The number of properties per page should be 20.

Site Administrator

- View, Edit, and Delete Seller’s information
- View, Edit, and Delete Postings
- Email all registered users
- Add Credits to a Seller’s account
- Issue/Send/Print Invoice

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User Interface issues

A website template will be provided. However further guidelines are provided:

The search results page:

1. (the content) should be along the lines of:
<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/buy/cambridgeshire/cambridge>
2. I like the "paging" (page: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7) at the bottom of <http://www.rightmove.co.uk/rent/north-london/bowes-park> or it could be like the paging at the top of http://www.hotproperty.co.uk/sales/property_search/postcode/rg1.htm
3. I like that each row in the content (ie. each property details box) is highlighted when the mouse goes within that area:
http://www.hotproperty.co.uk/sales/property_search/postcode/rg1.htm

The property-details page:

1. The general layout of the content could be along the lines of: http://www.visit-greekislands.com/accommodation_details.asp?BusinessID=231 with the difference that below the large photo we should have 2 rows of 3-small-images (1 + 2*3 = total of 7). When the user hovers over the small images, the large one will change to show that image. On mouse-out the original image will be shown.