

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BEFORE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of

WEST PENN MULTI-LIST, INC.,

a corporation.

File No. 081-0167

AGREEMENT CONTAINING CONSENT ORDER

The Federal Trade Commission ("Commission"), having initiated an investigation of certain acts and practices of the West Penn Multi-List, Inc., ("Respondent" or "West Penn"), and it now appearing that West Penn is willing to enter into an Agreement Containing Consent Order ("Consent Agreement") to cease and desist from certain acts and practices, and providing for other relief with respect to such practices:

IT IS HEREBY AGREED by and between Respondent, by its duly authorized officers and attorneys, and counsel for the Commission that:

1. Respondent West Penn Multi-List, Inc., is a corporation of more than 6800 real estate professionals and is organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Pennsylvania, with its office and principal place of business at 8980 Perry Highway, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237.
2. Respondent admits all the jurisdictional facts set forth in the draft Complaint here attached.
3. Respondent waives:
 - (a) any further procedural steps;
 - (b) the requirement that the Commission's Decision and Order, here attached and made a part hereof, contain a statement of findings of fact and conclusions of law;
 - (c) all rights to seek judicial review or otherwise to challenge or contest the validity of the Order entered pursuant to this Consent Agreement; and
 - (d) any claim under the Equal Access to Justice Act.

4. This Consent Agreement shall not become part of the public record of the proceeding unless and until it is accepted by the Commission. If this Consent Agreement is accepted by the Commission it, together with the draft of Complaint contemplated thereby, will be placed on the public record for a period of thirty (30) days and information in respect thereto publicly released. The Commission thereafter may either withdraw its acceptance of this Consent Agreement and so notify Proposed Respondent, in which event it will take such action as it may consider appropriate, or issue and serve its Complaint (in such form as the circumstances may require) and Decision and Order, in disposition of the proceeding.

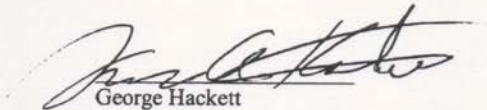
5. This Consent Agreement is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission by Proposed Respondent that the law has been violated as alleged in the draft Complaint here attached, or that the facts as alleged in the draft Complaint, other than those facts identified in Paragraph 2 above, are true.

6. This Consent Agreement contemplates that, if it is accepted by the Commission, and if such acceptance is not subsequently withdrawn by the Commission pursuant to the provisions of Commission Rule 2.34, 16 C.F.R. § 2.34 (2004), the Commission may, without further notice to Respondent, (1) issue and serve its Complaint corresponding in form and substance with the draft Complaint here attached, (2) issue and serve its Decision and Order to cease and desist in disposition of the proceeding, and (3) make information public in respect thereto. When final, the Decision and Order shall have the same force and effect and may be altered, modified or set aside in the same manner and within the same time provided by statute for other orders. The Decision and Order shall become final upon service. Delivery of the Complaint and Decision and Order to Respondent by any means specified in Commission Rule 4.4(a), 16 C.F.R. § 4.4(a) (2004), shall constitute service. Respondent waives any right it may have to any other manner of service. The Complaint may be used in construing the terms of the Decision and Order, and no agreement, understanding, representation, or interpretation not contained in the Decision and Order or the Consent Agreement may be used to vary or contradict the terms of the Decision and Order.

7. Respondent has read the draft Complaint and Decision and Order contemplated hereby. By signing this Consent Agreement, Respondent represents that the full relief contemplated by this Consent Agreement can be accomplished. Respondent understands that once the Decision and Order has been issued, it will be required to file one or more compliance reports showing that it has fully complied with the Decision and Order. Respondent agrees to comply with the terms of the Decision and Order from the date it signs this Consent Agreement. Respondent further understands that it may be liable for civil penalties in the amount provided by law for each violation of the Decision and Order after it becomes final.

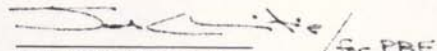
Signed this 14 day of October 2008:

West Penn Multi-List, Inc.
By:


George Hackett
President

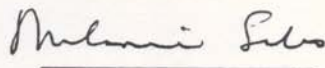
Signed this 17 day of November 2008:

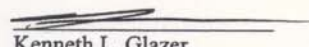
Federal Trade Commission
Bureau of Competition
By:

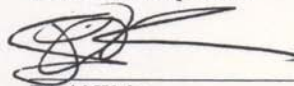

Peggy Bayer Femenella / for PBF
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Patrick J. Roach
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BEFORE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS: William E. Kovacic, Chairman
Pamela Jones Harbour
Jon Leibowitz
J. Thomas Rosch

In the Matter of
WEST PENN MULTI-LIST, INC.,
a corporation.

Docket No. C-

DECISION AND ORDER

The Federal Trade Commission ("Commission") having initiated an investigation of certain acts and practices of the West Penn Multi-List, Inc. hereinafter sometimes referred to as "Respondent" or "West Penn," and Respondent having been furnished thereafter with a copy of the draft Complaint that the Bureau of Competition presented to the Commission for its consideration and which, if issued by the Commission, would charge Respondent with violations of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. § 45; and

Respondent, its attorneys, and counsel for the Commission having thereafter executed an Agreement Containing Consent Order ("Consent Agreement"), containing an admission by Respondent of all the jurisdictional facts set forth in the aforesaid draft Complaint, a statement that the signing of the Consent Agreement is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission by Respondent that the law has been violated as alleged in such Complaint, or that the facts as alleged in such Complaint, other than jurisdictional facts, are true, and waivers and other provisions as required by the Commission's Rules; and

The Commission having thereafter considered the matter and having determined that it had reason to believe that Respondent has violated the said Act, and that a Complaint should issue stating its charges in that respect, and having accepted the executed Consent Agreement and placed such Consent Agreement on the public record for a period of thirty (30) days for the receipt and consideration of public comments, now in further conformity with the procedure described in Commission Rule 2.34, 16 C.F.R. § 2.34 (2004), the Commission hereby makes the following jurisdictional findings and issues the following Order:

1. Respondent West Penn Multi-List, Inc. is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Pennsylvania, with its office and principal place of business at 8980 Perry Highway, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237.

2. The Federal Trade Commission has jurisdiction of the subject matter of this proceeding and of the Respondent, and the proceeding is in the public interest.

ORDER

I.

IT IS ORDERED that for the purposes of this Order, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. "Respondent" or "West Penn" shall mean West Penn Multi-List Inc., its Subscribers, managers, offices, predecessors, divisions and wholly or partially owned subsidiaries, affiliates, licensees of affiliates, partnerships, and joint ventures; and all the board of directors, owners, managers, directors, officers, employees, consultants, agents, and representatives of the foregoing. The terms "subsidiary," "affiliate" and "joint venture" refer to any person in which there is partial or total ownership or control by West Penn, and is specifically meant to include West Penn MLS and/or each of the West Penn websites.
- B. The term "Subscribers" shall mean a Pennsylvania real estate broker or a certified Pennsylvania appraiser who is subscribing to the West Penn MLS.
- C. "Multiple Listing Service" or "MLS" means a cooperative venture by which real estate brokers serving a common market area submit their listings to a central service which, in turn, distributes the information for the purpose of fostering cooperation in and facilitating real estate transactions.
- D. The term "West Penn MLS" means the West Penn MLS or any other MLS owned, operated or controlled, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, by West Penn, and any of its predecessors, divisions and wholly or partially owned subsidiaries, affiliates, licensees of the affiliates, partnerships, and joint ventures, and all the directors, officers, members, participants, employees, consultants, agents, and representatives of the foregoing.
- E. "IDX" means the internet data exchange process that provides a means or mechanism for MLS listings to be integrated within a Website.

- F. "IDX Website" means a Website that is capable of integrating the IDX listing information within the Website.
- G. "Realtor.com" means the Website operated by the National Association of Realtors that allows the general public to search information concerning real estate listings downloaded from a variety of MLSs representing different geographic areas of the country, including but not limited to real estate listings from West Penn.
- H. "Approved Website" means a Website to which West Penn or West Penn MLS provides information concerning listings for publication including, but not limited to, West Penn Subscriber IDX Websites and Realtor.com.
- I. "Exclusive Right to Sell Listing" means a listing agreement under which the property owner or principal appoints a real estate broker as his or her exclusive agent for a designated period of time, to sell the property on the owner's stated terms, and agrees to pay the listing broker a commission when the property is sold, regardless of whether the buyer is found by the listing broker, the owner or another broker.
- J. "Exclusive Agency Listing" means a listing agreement under which the listing broker acts as an exclusive agent of the property owner or principal in the sale of a property, but also reserves to the property owner or principal a right to sell the property without assistance from a broker, in which case the listing broker is paid a reduced commission or no commission when the property is sold.
- K. "Services of the MLS" means the benefits and services provided by the MLS to assist West Penn Subscribers in selling, leasing and valuing property and/or brokering real estate transactions. With respect to real estate brokers or agents representing home sellers, Services of the MLS shall include, but are not limited to:
1. having the property included among the listings in the MLS in a manner so that information concerning the listing is easily accessible by cooperating brokers; and
 2. having the property publicized to the general public through any means available to the MLS, including, but not limited to, information concerning the listing being made available on Realtor.com and IDX Websites.

II.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent West Penn, its successors and assigns, and its officers, committees, agents, representatives, and employees, directly or indirectly, or through any corporation, subsidiary, division, or other device, in connection with the operation of a Multiple Listing Service or Approved Websites in or affecting commerce, as "commerce" is defined in Section 4 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. § 44, shall forthwith cease and desist from adopting or enforcing any policy, rule, practice or agreement to deny, restrict or interfere with the ability of West Penn Subscribers to enter into Exclusive Agency Listings or other lawful listing agreements with the sellers of properties, including but not limited to any policy, rule, practice or agreement to:

1. prevent West Penn Subscribers from offering or accepting Exclusive Agency Listings;
2. prevent West Penn Subscribers from cooperating with listing brokers or agents that offer or accept Exclusive Agency Listings;
3. prevent West Penn Subscribers from publishing information concerning listings offered pursuant to Exclusive Agency Listings on Approved Websites;
4. deny or restrict the Services of the MLS to Exclusive Agency Listings or other lawful listings in any way that such Services of the MLS are not denied or restricted to Exclusive Right to Sell Listings; and
5. treat Exclusive Agency Listings, or any other lawful listings, in a less advantageous manner than Exclusive Right to Sell Listings, including but not limited to, any policy, rule or practice pertaining to the transmission, downloading, or displaying of information pertaining to such listings.

Provided, however, that nothing herein shall prohibit the Respondent from adopting or enforcing any policy, rule, practice or agreement regarding subscription or participation requirements, payment of dues, administrative matters, or any other policy, rule, practice or agreement, that it can show is reasonably ancillary to the legitimate and beneficial objectives of the MLS.

III.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall cease and desist from collecting and retaining Subscriber listing agreements.

IV.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall not set the length of time for listing contracts, and will enable Subscribers and sellers to negotiate in accordance with Pennsylvania law.

V.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall, no later than thirty (30) days after the date this Order becomes final, amend its rules and regulations to conform to the provisions of this Order.

VI.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, within ninety (90) days after the date this Order becomes final, Respondent shall (1) inform each West Penn Subscriber of the amendments to its rules and regulations to conform to the provisions of this Order; and (2) provide each West Penn Subscriber with a copy of this Order. Respondent shall transmit the rule change and Order by the means it uses to communicate with its members in the ordinary course of West Penn's business, which shall include, but not be limited to: (A) sending one or more emails with one or more statements that there has been a change to the rule and an Order, along with a link to the amended rule and the Order, to each West Penn Subscriber; and (B) placing on the publicly accessible West Penn Website (www.westpennmls.com) a statement that there has been a change to the rule and an Order, along with a link to the amended rule and the Order. Respondent shall modify its Website as described above no later than five (5) business days after the date the Order becomes final, and shall display such modifications for no less than ninety (90) days from the date this Order becomes final. The Order shall remain accessible through common search terms and archives on the Website for five (5) years from the date it becomes final.

VII.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall notify the Commission at least thirty (30) days prior to any proposed change in Respondent, such as dissolution, assignment or sale resulting in the emergence of a successor corporation or any other proposed changes in the corporation which may affect compliance obligations arising out of the Order.

VIII.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Respondent shall file a written report within six (6) months of the date this Order becomes final, and annually on the anniversary date of the original report for each of the five (5) years thereafter, and at such other times as the Commission may require by written notice to Respondent, setting forth in detail the manner and form in which it has complied with this Order.

IX.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order shall terminate ten (10) years from the date the Order is issued.

By the Commission.

Donald S. Clark
Secretary

SEAL
ISSUED: