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L I V E S O F R E A L E S T A T E

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## Masters of the Web


AS TECHNOLOGY PROPELS THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY FORWARD, A SAVVY FEW ARE MANAGING TO STAY AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Strange Bedfellows

RESPECTFUL RIVALRY BRINGS OUT THE BEST AMONG FRIENDS



# LENNOX SCOTT: THE VISIONARY

 For someone who doesn't consider himself a "tech guy," Lennox Scott certainly has dreamed up his share of online real estate toys.

There is Neighborhood Wizard, an interactive mapping device employing Microsoft Virtual Earth, which allows users to draw up their own home-search boundaries. Before that, there was Property Tracker, which alerts clients via e-mail about just-listed homes. And before that, his company – John L. Scott Real Estate – was the one of the first in the nation to use video home tours and to put all of their inventory and accompanying photos on the Internet.

Yet this is a guy who still uses a Day-Timer for both scribbling down daily notes and minding his weekly calendar. How do both worlds – the pencil-driven and the data-driven – live inside the brain of one man?

"I don't know how all the equipment works behind the infrastructure or anything like that, but I know the concepts, the marketing philosophies and the psychological applications. That's what I bring forward," says Scott, chairman and CEO since 2002. Prior to that time, he served as company president since 1980.

"We strategize. We look out ahead,

look at the possibility of where the Internet is going," he says. "We're already thinking of the applications, and we're just waiting for the technology."

So, yes there is his keen vision, his talent for peering ahead to the possibilities beyond the clutter and bustle of today's world, but there is also his gift for recognizing the potential in the moment. Case in point: the day his colleague, a man who later would become the company's webmaster, tipped him off about a looming technology revolution. Scott was walking through an office hallway, headed to another meeting, when the colleague approached with an anxious look and a futuristic message.

"Lennox, there's something I want to show you. It's called the Internet," he said, briefly detailing the mesh of public networks.

"You mean everybody in the world can see our inventory on a computer?" Scott responded.

"Yes," the colleague said.

"Go," Scott ordered.

That conversation took place in 1994 and lasted two minutes. Two months later, JohnLScott.com was up and running.

"My definition of leadership is being responsible for the conversation and keeping the conversation alive," Scott says. "It doesn't mean you have to know everything or be able to do everything. It's about moving the conversation forward."

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But if collaboration feeds the innovation, good people fuel those vital chats. So Scott has equipped his company with an array of technology buffs, like Pat Giles, the new vice president of marketing. Giles is a rare commodity in real estate, working now on the third Web site of her career. After growing up on a family ranch on Hawaii's Big Island, she ran a computer-training company in Honolulu, served as a marketing director at PalmSource in Silicon Valley and later headed e-strategies at a real estate company back in Hawaii.

"I went from cow chips to microchips to paint chips," Giles jokes of her career path. Ultimately, however, she was drawn to the Bellevue, Wash.-based company by the blue chip advances imagined and installed by Scott.

"He uses technology but he's not a nerd at all," Giles says. "He is somebody who can see around the corner and see the technology that can help get us there. He is," she adds, "truly a visionary."

