



# TowerMLS

## The free wireless infrastructure database

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Kari joined Mobilitie after a successful career with Fox Broadcasting Company. Kari is responsible for the development and execution of the firm's marketing and communication strategy. Kari brings an entirely new perspective to the infrastructure space furthering Mobilitie's mission to think, act and communicate differently with the marketplace.

Prior to joining Mobilitie, Kari was the Director of Affiliate Relations and Sports, responsible for the distribution of FOX Sports programming to over 200 FOX Affiliates. As the Production Manager at Fox Sports, Kari coordinated all aspects of production for FOX Sports and FSN promotional programming. Kari's background in the entertainment and athletics industries has provided her with a keen understanding of positioning high-profile companies in the marketplace. Kari is a graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles, where she earned her Bachelors of Arts degree in Sociology, and an MBA from Pepperdine University - Graziadio School of Business and Management.

The wireless industry is moving away from a walled-garden approach in how it delivers mobile content, realizing that an open approach to offering content drives data consumption much faster than a closed approach. The next step in this evolution is for the tower industry to adopt a similar approach in developing a free, open database of tower sites, where companies can search for available towers.

Borrowing a concept developed by realtors, who use a Multiple Listing Service (MLS) directory to search a large database of homes for sale in an area, TowerMLS (towermls.com) is a searchable database of towers available for collocation. Wireless carriers, site development firms, tower companies, collocation customers, and engineering firms can use this multi-purpose database to find tower options that best suit their needs.

Today, companies looking for tower collocation options must spend a lot of time searching disparate databases for information to help them form their tower decisions. Each carrier, each site manager, and each site development firm duplicates efforts in their tower searches, often spending extra financial resources to gain the information. Meanwhile, each telecommunications infrastructure owner has its own inventory of sites. But these "exclusive listings," whether controlled by the tower owner or a third party, preclude competitors from accessing the information, or they otherwise control the access to that information. In nearly all cases, the company searching for the information must pay a fee to access it.

With the advent of the Internet, this "pay to play" model is past its prime. And yet, free databases, like the one managed by the Federal Communications Commission, is difficult to extract data and many towers are not required to be listed in the FCC database.

### **Carriers Gain Speed to Market**

With the arrival of multimedia streaming applications and social-networking growth, today's wireless users increasingly want to be able to take photos and post them online, watch video and connect with their friends and colleagues wirelessly. This surge in wireless data use is forcing wireless carriers to optimize their existing networks and build out their new spectrum as quickly and efficiently as possible. TowerMLS can aid that deployment by becoming the go-to repository for siting options. Imagine not having to cobble together a number of siting options from a variety of sources,

and wondering whether the information is still accurate. TowerMLS can get rid of that headache and give wireless operators a speed-to-market advantage.

### The Wikipedia model

The TowerMLS effort will allow the industry to align together to build one comprehensive, searchable database, and keep that information up to date on a voluntary basis, much like people keep Wikipedia relevant. Everyone who uses the database will be able to reap its benefits.

A Web-based application gives professionals a variety of tools to expand the marketing and sales potential of their tower assets by enabling interested parties to search thousands of listings in one database. All of the features increase traffic to the infrastructure and site, and promote lead generation for potential collocation tenants.

Similar to real estate MLS, the tower database creates more demand for the properties included in the directory because people know they exist. Indeed, being placed in the tower directory exposes the site to a larger pool of prospective collocations. The higher the demand, the quicker the site will be collocated and the site owner can begin to realize revenue from the asset.

### The Volunteer Component

However, in order for a tower MLS to succeed, volunteers must actively participate in the database to keep it comprehensive, reliable and accurate. The TowerMLS database must be developed and maintained in a spirit of cooperation by a community of people and companies with mutual respect, keeping in mind that the collective good benefits the entire infrastructure ecosystem, as well as each participant in the database.

Members do not need special qualifications to contribute, nor do members need to pay a fee of any kind. Like Wikipedia, the database will work best if any member can add information, update statuses, cross reference the integrity of site data, report duplications, make additions, add themselves as service providers, run reports, and analyze information.

### Summary

An open database of searchable tower options is an idea whose time has come. Such a directory streamlines the tower collocation process for everyone with a stake in the wireless infrastructure ecosystem. Using volunteers to update and maintain the database keeps it affordable and relevant for everyone involved, saving tower-sector professionals time and financial resources.

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