



# BUYING A HOUSE ON THE INTERNET

BY KRIS GRANT

**I**F YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT buying or selling a home, a good place to start may just be your home computer.

You can view homes in any community you wish online, 24 hours a day and not feel pressured by a real estate agent.

And, more importantly, by buying a property online, you can now earn a rebate on your purchase of up to 1.5% of the purchase price. That amounts up to \$6,000 for a \$400,000 home; and up to \$15,000 for a \$1,000,000 home.

Seller's can now list their house for as low as 4% vs. the standard 6% commission. Houserebate.com, located on the Internet at [www.houserebate.com](http://www.houserebate.com) is a San Diego-based company that offers complete services for both buyers and sellers.

Here's how the service works:

*For homebuyers:*

Houserebate.com allows potential buyers to scan properties online, and follow-up with drive-bys of the properties that are of most interest without the presence of a real estate agent.

Homebuyers can specify the city, zip code, price range, number of bedrooms and baths in the house and square footage of lot. After the buyer submits a request, they can view a list of homes online with complete information, including address and photographs that meet their criteria. Prior to touring proper-

ties, clients can pre-qualify for loans directly on the web site.

If clients have further interest in the property after their exterior tour, houserebate.com will then arrange for a tour of the property directly by one of their real estate agents. The agent is then responsible for presenting any offers and following up on all accepted offers through close of escrow.

"From the tour stage forward, the client receives all the benefits and services of a traditional brick-and-mortar real estate company," explains houserebate.com agent Jenna Materasso.

*For home sellers:*

Home sellers can also save with houserebate.com. Traditionally, a 6% commission is split between houserebate.com, the listing broker, and the selling broker. Under the 4.5% full-service program, houserebate.com, the "listing" agent, receives only 1.5%, while the buyer's agent still receives the standard 3%.

Limited service is available for sellers

that want to help participate in the selling process, for example, holding their own open houses.

Each listing will have a 360-degree virtual tour provided by iPIX. The agent representing the buyer always gets their traditional 3% share while houserebate.com is taking the reduction.

*Additional site features:*

Houserebate.com's site also features a Mortgage Center, Insurance Center and the Moving and Resource Center, offering information on community schools, neighborhood, crime, a glossary of real estate terminology in layman's terms, and tips on preparing your home for sale.

Mark Rosenberg recently purchased a townhouse in Encinitas through houserebate.com.

"Houserebate.com's rebate policy was just the thing we needed to help us get settled. We used the money for closing costs and furniture that we probably would have put off purchasing had we not had the rebate," Rosenberg said. "I would not hesitate to recommend houserebate.com to anyone buying a new home."

In addition to its Internet address, houserebate.com maintains an office at 4445 Eastgate Mall, 2nd floor, in San Diego and covers the entire county. The company also offers a toll-free number at (888) 836-5675. □

