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News Release

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LSTAR is first in North America to tackle identity fraud with voice biometrics

The London St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR) is the first real estate board in North America to integrate a security system that uses voice recognition to protect its MLS® data. Not only does voice recognition allow clients to counter identity fraud, but it also helps identify the fraudulent parties involved, acting as a deterrent from fraudulent practices.

In a pre-emptive strike against identity theft, real estate boards are looking for technology that is both affordable and easy to use. Our voice is as trustworthy and unique as a digital fingerprint. Not only is this technology used as a way to identify ourselves, our voice also offers the possibility of a superior degree of security. Voice authentication cannot be shared, borrowed, or reproduced, and all users need is their voice and a telephone.

This technology relies on the fact that vocal characteristics, like fingerprints, are unique to each person. When a member attempts to access the MLS®, the Doorman™ verifies their identity by authenticating their voice combined with their MLS® access code and password. After analyzing other security options, LSTAR opted for a natural, non-intrusive technology - voice biometrics.

“We selected Touchbase Doorman to protect our MLS system because it offered the most convenience for our members,” says Joe Hough, President of LSTAR. “While almost invisible to those disciplined users, Doorman targets the suspicious logins. We are excited to provide our members with a practical security solution using Doorman’s proven voice recognition technology.”

And Alain Brunel, Touchbase Real Estate Vice-President, says the timing is perfect for LSTAR’s members to take a proactive stance on identity fraud.

“According to statistics from the Canadian Anti-fraud Call Center, identity theft increased from \$19 million to \$23 million dollars in 2008,” says Brunel. “Especially with the economic situation, it is urgent to protect non-public data. The use of our voice offers very efficient, convenient protection, and we are very happy that LSTAR has opted to use our intelligent voice recognition system for their security. Voice biometrics are affordable and easy to use.”

The London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® is a professional organization committed to serving the real estate needs of the community and to providing its Members with the services and education required to promote excellence, knowledge and a high standard of ethics and business practices. The Association's jurisdiction includes Middlesex and Elgin Counties, home to nearly 500,000 residents. The Multiple Listing Service® is a cooperative marketing system used only by Canada's real estate boards and associations to ensure maximum exposure of properties for sale. All of LSTAR's listings may be found on the public website at www.REALTOR.ca.

Touchbase is a web-based multi-solution system for the real estate industry. Each month, Touchbase manages close to 1,5 million communications among close to 80,000 agents from 40 real estate boards.

A leader in collaborative communications, Touchbase supports a real estate boards' primary goal: collaboration amongst members. Especially developed for the real estate industry, Touchbase now offers a series of complementary solutions, allowing real estate professionals to seize any and all business opportunities. Touchbase is the ONLY communication suite to offer tools for every level (agent, broker, administrative staff) of office staff, as well as for the real estate board itself.