

# Army Housing OneStop™ a Quantum Leap Forward

*Centralized Web site will help soldiers obtain housing information from anywhere in the world.*

BY WENDY L. McINTOSH

**W**hat if, from one source, soldiers and their family members could:

- ◆ See pictures and floor plans of typical family housing for any Army installation in the world?

- ◆ Check their position on any Army housing waiting list in the world?

- ◆ Get information about how to submit housing service orders or how to check the status of existing work orders, no matter where they were stationed?

- ◆ Have access to every page of web-based housing information and online services available for every Army installation in the world?

- ◆ Save hours of time finding answers to questions on their own because all of the information they need was available in a user-friendly, customer-focused, familiar, and consistent format?

- ◆ Access this worldwide information not only via the Internet, but also via the Internet kiosks already in operation at many Army installations throughout the United States and overseas?

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By the end of this calendar year, the answer to each of those questions will be: "They can!" Army Housing has launched an initiative to provide soldiers and their families with a world class system for obtaining housing information. A new Army Housing OneStop™ web site will consolidate the best features of PCSHouse Express, live data from HOMES, Web pages from installation and/or RCI Partner Web sites, and con-

tent from existing customer service kiosks, then deliver it in a uniform, easy-to-navigate, user-friendly format.

In February 2003, DynaTouch of San Antonio, Texas, was awarded a contract to implement Army Housing OneStop. DynaTouch has more than a decade of experience enhancing the availability of military housing information through its customer service kiosk contracts with individual installations throughout the Department of Defense. DynaTouch will leverage its experience and the information already developed to provide the format, navigation methodology, and much of the content for Army Housing OneStop.

"Leverage" is the key term. All existing Web-based housing content will be integrated. Redundancies will be eliminated. Voids will be filled in. Investments already made will be utilized. The "best of the best" Web pages will become templates for new content.

"Although the framework is Army-wide, content control will stay with the local housing office—which is very important," said Peter Gentieu, Chief of Army Housing Information Technology. The overall strategy for the OneStop is to integrate existing content rather than copy or move it. Aside from cost control, local procedures for updating content will remain unchanged. "The exceptions are the housing floor plans and photos, which need to be moved into the HQ database and managed centrally with new Web-based tools provided by DynaTouch," said Mr. Gentieu. "There are

many long-term advantages of a centrally-managed floor plan and photo database."

The first phase of the new site was released in April and is being previewed by local Housing Office administrators through the end of May, after which time it will be made available to customers. DynaTouch is in the process of developing new content to be added in specified phases, consisting primarily of additional floor plans and photo tours.

"While improving our operations through privatization, it's important that we maintain an 'Army of One' image from the customer's perspective," said George McKimmie, Chief of Army Housing. "Army Housing OneStop will help us accomplish this objective during a very vital transition period."

"Army Housing OneStop represents a quantum leap forward in housing information services for our soldiers and their families," said John Nerger, Director, Facilities and Housing. "Our goal is to make it much easier to find comprehensive Army Housing and related information from a single site for whatever locations they are assigned to or are considering for assignment. Additionally, we want to leverage the investments made in existing Web sites by expanding the customer base reaching that information." ■

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*Wendy L. McIntosh is a Housing Management Analyst, HQDA, Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, Housing Division, Washington, D.C.*