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To Technology Infinity and Beyond

In today's world, technological advances are helping every industry create new efficiencies. The advent of the internet, email and remote working has seen many industries adapt their day to day approach as a result, and the surveying sector is no exception.

If we look back 25 years at how a survey or mortgage valuation instruction was handled, it was a very different process to what you are familiar with now.

The work wasn't allocated automatically through panel managers as it is today. Previously, surveyors received manual instructions from a lender via phone or fax. They would then travel to the property and manually write-up the report using a site notes template or would dictate the report over an audio tape.

Once completed, they would then jump back in the car to the office where they would telephone a number of estate agents in the area to receive comparable property values. Using this data, the report would be typed up, signed-off and returned to the lender, via the post, for use.

This was not only extremely time consuming, but labour intensive, open to inputting errors due to the duplication of effort and even liable to fraud, should any unscrupulous individual wish to manually alter the contents of the report before it was returned to the lender.

As the use of PCs became mainstream, we created a technology hub that enabled instructions to be sent and returned automatically, either directly or via panel managers. The take-up of laptops and mobile computers meant surveyors could start completing reports using site note templates on the move. This then advanced to PDAs and tablet PCs, making mobile working more convenient, less cumbersome and much quicker.

The 'doorstep sign-off' had become a reality, meaning more instructions could be completed each day due to the efficiencies mobile working had created.

Not to mention the role Automated Valuation Models and online property comparable services have since played. Plus, the introduction of electronic sign off and feeds that put completed reports directly into the lender's mortgage processing system has helped reduce potential fraud risks, by removing the ability to manually alter completed valuations.

This is just the tip of the 'technology iceberg' as to how it supports surveyors each day. Over the coming weeks, we will be providing an update on what advances are happening in this space and look forward to giving you an insight into what lies ahead.

One thing for sure is that technology has the capacity to dramatically streamline many tasks. And what does this mean to you? Improved efficiencies + more instructions = more revenue.

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