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Appraising Faster and Better

By Todd Rasmussen

Editor's Note: Appraiser Todd Rasmussen shows how to save 45 minutes on every appraisal (at least).

Expectations have changed considerably over the past few years. Appraisers who were considered to be the best and at the top of their game a few years ago can find themselves lost and confused in today's market. Clients want more information and they want it in less time and sometimes for less money. Learning to appraise faster and better is one way to flourish.

One of my main jobs as Regional Director of Appraisal Services at Metro-West Appraisal is to make sure our appraisers are at the forefront of the industry. We want to be proactive, not reactive. We have recently instituted a program we call *Best Appraisal Practice* (BAP). Not exactly appraiser training, it is more of a re-training process. There are lots of things an appraiser can do to speed up the appraisal process. Some of the suggestions I provide involve technology. Some are procedural. The goal is to help every appraiser save time, increase quality and become more efficient. Here are a few ideas.

Two Better than One

Every appraiser should be using dual monitors. This can save approximately 15 minutes per report. Data from public records or any other source can be cut and pasted to the report: you see the data on the left screen and just drag it into the report on the right screen. This also helps cut down on typos. I also advise our appraisers not to print out all the data they are using. Printing takes time and uses a lot of paper and ink. It

is more efficient to print the data into a PDF format and save it in a digital file. There is another 10 minutes saved.

Make sure all your camera settings are on the lower quality levels. This speeds up download time. There is another five minutes.

I also encourage our appraisers to take full advantage of the programs available that will load comparable data from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and public records into their reports automatically. These programs alone can save up to 45 minutes per report. It all adds up. I have had some of our appraisers tell me that the BAP program has help cut up to three hours off the time it takes to complete an appraisal!

Our staff appraisers at Metro-West also have a team to help communicate the status of reports to our clients and a full-time marketing team to keep appraisers busy. A two-tier review team makes sure all the reports going out are top quality and a revision team makes sure all revision requests are necessary and viable. If you are working alone, these functions are typically being fulfilled after the fact by appraisal management companies (AMCs).

The next 12–18 months will see even more amazing programs and products that will completely change the way an appraisal looks and the way a report is developed. All are time savers. If you don't learn and evolve you will become extinct.

These days time is money. Why not take advantage of the time-saving methods available. It will allow you to spend more time with family, playing golf, or as my bosses are betting, doing more quality appraisals. **WRE**

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