

# Vanguard Appraisals, Inc.

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Excellence achieved through people, products, and service. <sup>TM</sup>

Special 2007 User Group Edition

Fall 2007



## Special points of interest:

- A new pen based listing form
- Two Leaders Join Forces
- Last Chance for Savings
- CAMAvision 12 870 Days
- Version 5.75 Personal Property
- Should I upgrade to Vista
- Technology Partners
- New Employee

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## News

**For friends of  
Vanguard**

## Vanguard Celebrates 40 Years By: Brad Miller

In 2008 Vanguard will be celebrating its 40th birthday. Over the years we have seen many changes in both the appraisal and computer industry. Back when I first started at Vanguard in 1989 we had only 3 computers in the entire company. Today we could not do our jobs without one. Starting as an appraisal company and then migrating to the computer industry gave Vanguard an edge over other companies doing Computer Aided Mass Appraisal (CAMA). We are one of the few companies that actually use the software we sell. So, while companies were just making "promises" of what they could do, we were actually delivering. Today Vanguard is in 180 jurisdictions across the Midwest, selling and servicing each client one at a time.

So what lies ahead for the future? While I cannot tell you about all the research and development that is going on at Vanguard, I can tell you that we are planning the 1<sup>st</sup> release of the Income Module in 2008. There are also plans for a new pen base listing form that captures data directly from the form (even the owners signature.) This information can then be imported directly into CAMAvision, eliminating

the extra steps of data entry. This technology uses a relatively inexpensive pen (see image) and special paper, not a laptop, to do all the work.

Furthermore, we have no intention on diminishing the quality of service we provide today. As a client, many of you already know that we take pride in servicing your needs. Whether it's taking technical support calls, making the numerous software enhancements, updating the software for the new appraisal manual, holding a user group meeting, or just answering a question - we are always eager to help. After all, it's our service that separates us from our competition.



**VANGUARD** Looks to the Future

## 2007 Super User Awards

This award is presented to jurisdictions every year that stand out above all the rest. Their suggestions and working knowledge of the software are beyond our expectations.

City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
Lincoln County, Missouri  
Chariton County, Missouri  
Blue Earth County, Minnesota

## Query Wizard Modulus By: Patrick Sullivan

Sometimes, in the Query Wizard, you need to get a set of values based on them being divisible by another number. For example, you might need to find all the land entries where the front foot was divisible by 25. If you knew all the possible values you could enter them in a where clause, one by one - 25, 50, 75, 100, 125, etc, but that becomes impractical when you have a very large number of possible values.

The MOD (modulus) operator is the easy way to do it. Recall that when dividing, you're always left with a remainder – 10 divided by 4 is 2 with a remainder of 2. If you divide one number by a larger number, such as 10 divided by 11, you end up with only a remainder. Ten divided by 11 is zero with a remainder of 10. In most cases you want the decimal fraction, and in that case 10 divided by 4 is 2.5. In both cases the part after the 2 shows you whether or not the number was evenly divisible, because there will only be a remainder, or decimal part, when the number doesn't evenly divide. If you divide 10 by 5, for instance, you have 2 with a remainder of zero. That's where this MOD operator comes in. To use it you reference the field and the denominator (number you're dividing by) inside parentheses, just like any other field. For example, if we're working with acres and enter:

MOD(ACRES, 25)

We will get back the remainder of dividing every acres field by 25. So, if the acres values are 10, 100, 60, 50, 125, and 33, our query would return 10, 0, 10, 0, 0, and 8. Pretty nifty, but what if you don't care to see those that are not evenly divisible by 25? In that case, you'd use the MOD operator as part of the WHERE clause, such as:

WHERE MOD(ACRES, 25) = 0

Within Query Wizard, to get these to show up as part of the SQL and be savable, you need to use the custom expressions field. Double click on any unused column in the values grid to bring up the Value Editor dialog box and click on the tab labeled "Expression". Yay! You get to express yourself! Click on the table whose field you want to do the MOD on, then double click the field to add it to the box below. Once there, go ahead and add the MOD text like in our first example. Click the OK button and preview the query. You should see a column in the results called "Custom" which has your MOD results. If you just want to enter it as part of a where clause, as in our second example, just double click on one of the filter boxes on a field you've already added on the values grid. This brings up the Value Editor dialog as well. Click on the "Expression" tab and repeat the process, but this time add your qualifier. Don't type in the word "WHERE" here, just enter the = sign and the value so the expression would look something like:

MOD(ACRES, 25) = 0

Go ahead and click OK, then preview the query results. You should see the output limited by your where clause. In our example above, we would only see the rows where the ACRES value was 100, 50, and 125. Nifty!

### Iowa Department of Revenue

The Assessor Education Advisory Committee met on Sept 25, 2007 and Vanguard's request for continuing education credits were approved. The following are the credit hours.

Year End Routine Workshop on June 6, 2007 was approved for  
8 hours of non-tested credits

Iowa User Group Meeting November 7—8th, 2007 was  
approved for 7 hours non-tested credits

### Continuing Education for Minnesota

There are continuing education forms available at registration. See Kara for a form, fill it out, then we will gather them to have them submitted to the State Board of Assessor's. We are looking at Six (6) Hours for Tuesday October 23rd and Three (3) Hours for Wednesday October 24th.

### Congratulations Lori Knox

**MAAO 2002-2007 member in good standing**





### Number Changes for VCS Field Staff

Scott Johnson Cell Phone Only (641) 340-3305  
 Terri Scheuermann Cell Phone Only (515) 370-0904  
 Mike Weeks Cell Phone Only (815) 757-1449  
 Donnie Campbell Business Office and Fax (605) 221-6145



Daylight Saving Time starts  
 November 4th  
 Fall back One hour

## CAMAvision 12 – 870 Days and Counting By Nick Klein

It doesn't seem that long ago that I was writing an article about the first 60 days of CAMA-X. Since that time we have sent out updates at least once per year. More if there were state specific requirements. I never did get around to having a "first 100 days" status report, but now is a good time to discuss what will soon be the end for a part of CAMAvision. 870 is a good age to start thinking about retirement.

### GOTCHA!

What I mean is the end for the Manual 1999 version CAMAvision. Even now work is being done on a new 2008 Iowa Pricing Manual. We are already planning the changes for CAMAvision and yes, we are contemplating some sort of conversion/upgrade for the current systems.

"But Nick..." you say, "we just finished getting all our values in, settled into CAMA-X, and now you're going to change again? I don't want to learn new menus and commands – again!" Rest assured the plan is to let users ease into this new incarnation of the pricing manual. And the program as you know it today will not change *that* much. But that doesn't mean we won't innovate the program in other ways.

As you will see at the 2007 User Group Meetings, we take all your ideas and suggestions and turn what we can into reality. CAMAvision truly is what it is thanks to you, the users, and your feedback. Sketch has several new features that you'll get to see this fall. A table driven IA Exemption Module has been released; and let's not forget enhancements to commercial data entry. We came real close with a single "Dan Button" feature in the Remote Technical Support. Now connecting to clients and providing support has never been easier.

2008 will see the appearance of new manual pricing, as mentioned above, and it will see a new Income Module. Pen based data collection of some sort is planned, and you should see a sneak peek of that too, at the User Group Meetings.

So maybe now is *not* a time to retire. 870 days young – we're nearly through the "terrible" two's and just getting started! See you at the 2007 User Groups!

## V5.75 Personal Property - By Brad Miller

Wow, what a year it has been for enhancements to the personal property program. Fifty-nine total changes were made in 2007, of which twenty-two of them were taken directly from client requests. There is nothing more satisfying than hearing a client say, "That was my suggestion." After all, it's your suggestions that make our products better and better. Furthermore, there is already 8+ user suggestions planned for Version 6.00 in January with the new 2008 Value Guide.

### Top 10 Version 5.x Enhancements

- 1) Import Module - Enters tax information directly from Incode/CMS and Mailing corrections directly from EJ Rice Company.
- 2) My Schedule - Allows clients to schedule when they want to do things.
- 3) Split-screen viewer for reporting forms.
- 4) Faster Processing option and Windows Vista tested.
- 5) New System logs tracking.
- 6) Network Messenger - Shows who is doing what in the system in real time.
- 7) Personal Property Backup Program - Quickly saves your personal property database and system files.
- 8) Reports - Show Zero Item Value and Zero Value Accounts.
- 9) Multiple application Instances - Allows 3 versions of the program to run at the same time.
- 10) Query Wizard help is now available.

# Two Leaders in the Industry Join Forces for Website Hosting

## Vanguard and Sidwell

Not all GIS websites are  
created equal.

	Sidwell/ Vanguard Sites	Other Vendor's Sites
Fully integrated GIS & CAMA data, backed by 60+ years combined experience.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property Record Card view/print capability.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to all your CAMA data - not just part of it.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property tax estimator.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guaranteed seamless software updates - at no extra charge.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Built using the most current GIS web publication techniques.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***Make sure your website vendor  
measures up.***



Web Hosting Services from Sidwell

and Vanguard Appraisals:

***Working Together to Serve You Better.***



GIS web hosting from  
Vanguard and Sidwell  
gives you CAMA data  
from a CAMA  
specialist, and GIS data  
from a GIS specialist

...in short, the best of  
both worlds.

Anything else just  
won't measure up.

For more  
information contact:

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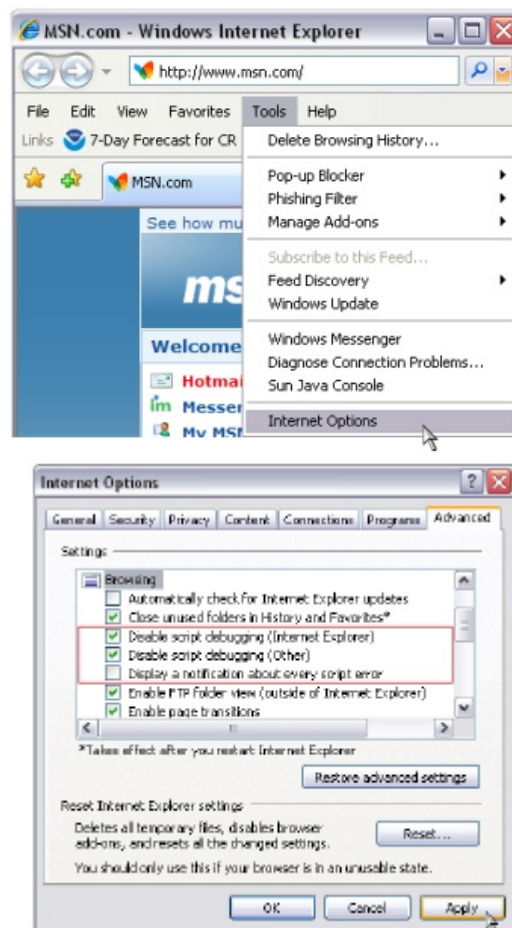


## Disabling Script Debugging By Virginia Molina-Steen

The main CAMAvision screen utilizes the Microsoft® Internet Explorer® web browser engine as its means for displaying startup information to the user. After a Windows® update some users have encountered an issue where an HTML script debugger has been installed. Programs that utilize Internet Explorer®, like CAMAvision, may receive a “script debugging” error message when the debugger is active. To disable script debugging follow these steps:

- \* Make sure that CAMAvision is NOT running.
- \* Open Internet Explorer® and select Internet Options from the Tools menu.
- \* Select the Advanced tab to disable all script debugging. Check the boxes to “Disable Script Debugging”, and uncheck (if necessary) the “Display a notification” option.
- \* Press either Apply or OK to apply the changes and close the Internet Options screen. Close Internet Explorer®.

**CAMAvision could now be opened.**



## Last Chance for Savings

Many clients have already taken advantage of our  
2007 User Group Meeting Sales Events.

Don't be left out.!

These specials expire December 31st, 2007.

Call your local VCS Field representative or Kara Leyse at the Vanguard home office (800) 736-8625 before it's too late.



**5% or 10% off website service agreements**

**25% off Archive Modules**

**\$100 off an additional workstation license (limit of 3)**

**\$150 off an additional Remote license (limit of 3)**

**\$1,000 off website license**

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We're on the web...  
camavision.com

## Windows Vista

### Ask Dan

**Q:** Dan, should I upgrade my computer to Vista and is it compatible with CAMAvision?

**DAN:** I'm not a big fan of upgrading an existing computer to run Vista. By the time you install additional RAM, a newer video card, and buy one of the 5 different versions of Vista, well, you might as well buy a new computer that's certified to be Vista ready. Not to mention you'll have a warranty on the hardware.

If you live on the bleeding edge of technology or you've already bought a new computer with Vista installed, don't worry. CAMAvision works fine on Microsoft Vista. Our research and testing of Vista revealed a couple

things. You'll want plenty of RAM. I'd probably get 2GB if it's in your budget, and the other is.....wait. What I mean is, unless you have a reason for upgrading or moving to Vista, wait until it's proven itself. Microsoft just announced they're releasing service pack 1 in the first quarter of 2008.

I'd suggest by this time next year they'll have all the kinks worked out. You'll also want to check your digital cameras, scanners, and printers to be sure you have Vista compatible drivers.

Since 1968, Vanguard Appraisals has been at the forefront of the mass appraisal industry. Our trained staff includes specialists in field data collection, appraisal review, pricing, mass appraisal project management, court preparation and testimony, data entry, software engineering, technical support and training.

Our Flagship **CAMAvision** product has been developed specifically to operate in the assessor's environment. Vanguard is a full service company. We provide a wide range of appraisal products and services for assessors, we also see all the projects through completion. Customer satisfaction is our main goal.

## 2007 Technology Partners of the Year

In today's extremely fast moving environment, companies need allies who are focused on mutual goals and direction. This award is presented to a few companies each year which we feel has demonstrated how working together can make a large difference in the assessment community.

Congratulations to Midland GIS for GIS Integration and Incode for Tax Administration Integration



## New Employee Profile

Dean Wixo joined the Vanguard team on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 after working the past 3 1/2 years as a Territory Manager for a sporting goods manufacturers rep agency covering ND, SD, MN, and WI. Dean has worked in sales and sales management for the past 15 years. He will be covering North Dakota as a CAMA Specialist.

Dean has 4 children, LeAnn(23), Sarah(15), Hailey(12) and Braeton(8). He spends most of his spare time being a sports dad coaching Hailey's basketball team or traveling to Sarah & Hailey's volleyball tournaments or sitting in the stands at any local park watching Braeton play baseball or football. Then in Dean's free time he enjoys playing softball & golfing. His other interests include music and spending time with family and friends.

