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Excellence achieved through people, products, and service. ™

Web Clients-New Easy Sales Update in CAMA 13

News
For friends of
Vanguard

By: Andy Colson

Updating names and sales to your website wasn't the simplest method in the past but that's changed in Camavision 13 (and up).

The good news is you have two databases, working and certified. This allows you to keep your Certified or frozen file frozen and your Working file working.

The not so good news is your website needs some info (like values) from Certified and some info (like sales) from Working.

In the past you would do a batch Certify of names and sales and then do sales updates from the Certified database. Well no more! In CAMA 13 and up we have several new features you'll be happy to see:

* You may do Full updates from Certified, then turn around and do Sales updates from working. No batch certify operations needed.

* New Private Flag from within VCS allows you to maintain your private/hidden parcels. A simple Sales Update will update this info on the website. So if you need a name to disappear from the

website, Log in to Working and then from the Status and Legal tab set the Privacy Status to "All Names". Next, do a Sales Update from the Working database. Done!

* New batch operation for scheduling automated updates. Yep, drop some command line options into the Windows Scheduler and you can schedule a sales update to run whenever you like, such as, once a week or once a day. It won't hurt the program to run while people are in the program. NOTE: Please schedule it during the working day. If I need to take the computer down for maintenance I'll do it after hours or on weekends.

If you need a hand in setting up any of these operations, call 319-286-6451 or email support@camavision.com.

Actually, just for fun, you can email "Patrick the new guy" at patricka@camavision.com. Patrick inherited the project from me and added most of these new features. He'd love to hear all your questions and comments, but don't tell him I told you.

Thanks for letting us handle your website needs.

VCS Scanner For Personal Property

By: Patrick Alexander

Do you have stacks of documents littering your office just waiting to be scanned and imported, but your current scanning process is like taking a long walk down a dark alley after midnight? Or are you still waiting for the right time to start your scanning initiative? Well, Vanguard has the perfect solution called the VCS Scanner.

VCS Scanner provides everything you need in a simple easy to use package.

All functions, such as numbering a batch, switching from scanning on one side to both sides, and changing the paper size between letter and legal are all on the main screen. VCS Scanner also supports scanning barcodes for naming documents to be imported later. Do you have documents without barcodes on them? No worries, you can easily associate them with an account after being scanned. Just click a button and the data entry of the account is under way. From documents to letters to

pictures, VCS Scanner can handle them all and provides just the functionality you need. Scanning is no longer something to be feared but a walk through a field of wild flowers with the sun softly warming your face. So start smelling the flowers and contact your CAMA Specialist for a demonstration today.

VCS Personal Property

By: Brad Miller

VCS Personal Property V7 is nearing completion and should be released by the end of February, excluding any unforeseen issues in the Value Guide. Many of the enhancements were taken directly from the previous User Meeting held in Boonville Missouri this fall. As always, clients made their requests and the Vanguard staff has worked hard fulfilling them.

V7 Enhancements will include but not limited to:

1) A new table driven method to price mobile homes, so you don't have to re-price them individually each year.

2) Added the ability to round trended values in the My Guide and VCS pricing tables.

3) The ability to print multiple reporting forms for the same owner when the number of items exceeds the printed area on a preprinted reporting form.

4) Four new enhancements have been added to the VCS Export routine, which help track down issues before the information is sent to the collector or printing company.

5) A new module called Address Warehouse, which was designed to help manage all your address needs.

A big change we are working on for the summer release is the ability to have a "Certified" database that you can create just before BOE. This "Certified" will be a snapshot of your current database which will have all the same functionality as your current

"Live" database. You will be able to run all the exact same reports and browse accounts. This new feature will allow you to go back in time to view what was on an account before BOE. To help save storage space the "Certified" database will automatically be removed when BOE is completed.

As always, we value your suggestions, so if you have any feature requests please email them directly to brad@camavision.com.

We appreciate all of our clients and enjoy speaking to each of you throughout the year.

May the coming year be as kind to you as you have been to us through the years.

Happy Holidays

from the Vanguard

Technical Support Staff

Don't Forget Your Land

By: Mike Weeks

"Accurate land values are crucial to an effective assessment system." This is the first sentence in Chapter 7 *Land Valuation* in our handy dandy red *Property Appraisal and Assessment Administration* books. And we all know how true it is. Joe, Bob and Rich, (we're on a first name basis) the editors/authors of this book go on to explain "Wars have been waged over land, and the rights to the ownership of land are embedded in the laws of all free nations and defended by their courts." "Land is the source of all our wealth." As well as Highest and Best Use, Supply and Demand, Surplus Productivity, etc. and etc… I know, in the past, I've tried to push a grade, condition, map area factor or manual level because I just couldn't reach the value of that property but never once considered my land value. As you finalize your values for 2009 now is the perfect time to take a look at your land.

But how does one effectively and accurately value land using VCS? Easy! You should already have, PDF's and Map Areas determined in your jurisdiction, first step… Done. Using VCS Sales Ratio we can sort or Stratify by PDF, Map Area, Subdivision and NUT Code. After performing a Get Sales, we

can then Time Adjust, if you need to use sales from previous years, and then Prepare your sales. After preparing your sales and clicking next you should receive a list of Reports. The very last two reports will assist you in your land valuation, Vacant Lot and Land Ratio (Residual).

When using the Vacant Lot report you will be asked for an Adjustment Factor. As explained in VCS this is the percentage that a current vacant lot sale must be increased to reflect a sales price with improvements. This factor may vary between jurisdictions and possibly even map areas or classes, for example Res or Rural Res. Whatever obsolescence you apply to a vacant lot, I would use that figure. After running your query, clicking Report then Preview you will receive your Vacant Lot Report. This report gives us a lot of good information including an Indicated Unit Price. After further analysis you determine your land values are approximately 5% too low. Or all Front Foot priced land at R-320 need to go to R-325. Now what?

In the Batch Process portion of VCS, you can choose Update Land. Using this tool you can factor your land in any PDF/Map Area by the Land Basis type. You simply select Front Foot for a basis, enter the

current rate of R-320 and the new rate of R-325. Be sure to use your **TEST** only option and review the report given before making your actual changes. Also, be cognizant of the rates you're changing. **If you start with the lower numbers, R-320, and move all to R-325, then all R-325 to R-330 so on and so on, you will end up with all Land Values at the highest rate you chose, for example R-1000.** (A restore would be needed at that point.) Start with your higher land rates and work your way down.

What if you don't have many or any vacant lot sales? Using the Land Ratio (Residual) report, aka Abstraction Method, you can determine a vacant lot value. First you must enter the residual percentage. To figure, use this formula: *Sale Price - Improvement Value = Land Value* on sales in an established neighborhood. Find the average, enter that percentage in CAMAvision and run your report. After doing your analysis and determining your changes go back into Batch and Update Land.

Updating land might take some time but it could mean the difference between an equalization order or not. As well as knowledge that your values are fair and equitable.

Testimonial

Adding Website Mapping to the CAMA WebLink Button—Updated!

By: Nick Klein

A really cool feature in Parcel Maintenance is the ability to hook in an external program or a website URL for quick reference. Using data from currently loaded parcel, the Web Link command can be used to reference parcel data, a report archive, GIS mapping software, or even tax data.
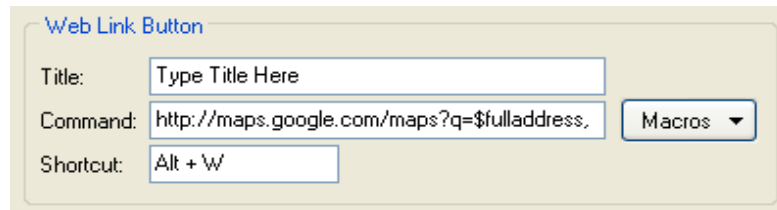

Figure 1: Web Link Button configuration in the System-wide Preferences

But did you know that it is possible to configure the Web Link button to use address mapping web sites like Google Maps? Here I've compiled a list of popular mapping sites and the URLs needed to access their respective maps. Be aware that these companies compile their information from many sources and possibly only a few times a year. Therefore an address search could vary between each website and it may not pick up the latest changes in your area. Completeness of the address in your CAMA data is important too; some of these sites get confused especially of the postal zip code is incomplete. I have found if you have lots of zip codes that are 00000-0000 its better to leave the postal code off entirely. To keep the URLs short for this article, I coded the CAMAvision macros. When you add one of these URLs into the Command line, you'll need to replace the codes with the appropriate macro text from this table.

Code	CAMAvision Macro Text	Description
<1>	$fulladdress	Combined house# and address of the parcel: "123 Main St"
<2>	$city	City name of the parcel
<3>	$state	State abbreviation
<4>	$postal	Zip code
<5>	$country	Country name (could hardcode to "USA")

Google Maps (http://maps.google.com):

```
http://maps.google.com/maps?q=<1>,<2>,<3> <4>
```

Yahoo! Maps (http://maps.yahoo.com):

```
http://maps.yahoo.com/maps?newFL=&addr=<1>&csz=<2>+<3>+<4>&srchtype=a&getmap=Get+Map
```

MapQuest (http://www.mapquest.com):

```
http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?address=<1>&city=<2>&state=<3>&zip=<4>
```

MSN MapPoint (http://maps.msn.com):

With zip code:

```
http://maps.msn.com/home.aspx?strt1=<1>&city1=<2>&stnm1=<3>&zipc1=<4>
```

Without zip code:

```
http://maps.msn.com/home.aspx?strt1=<1>&city1=<2>&stnm1=<3>
```

Mark Your Calendars
Upcoming Spring
Conferences

Iowa

Spring ISAC-Iowa State Association of Counties
Dates: March 4th–6th, 2009
Location: Downtown Marriott & Renaissance Savery Des Moines, IA

ICA-Iowa Certified Assessors
Dates: August 5th –7th, 2009
Location: Isle of Capri Waterloo, IA

ISAA-Iowa State Association of Assessors
Dates: October 4th –7th, 2009
Location: Airport Holiday Inn Des Moines, IA

Fall ISAC
Dates: November 18th–20th, 2009
Location: Coralville Marriott Coralville, IA

Illinois

IACO Spring Conference
Dates: April 27th– 29th, 2009
Location: Crowne Plaza Springfield, IL

IACO Fall Conference
Dates: November 23rd –25th, 2009
Location: Marriott Downtown Chicago, IL

Minnesota

MAAO-Minnesota Association of Assessing Officers (Summer Seminars)
Dates: May 27th –May 28th, 2009
Location: Holiday Inn St Cloud, MN

MCCC-Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative
Dates: June 1st –4th, 2009
Location: Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria, MN

MAAO-Minnesota Association of Assessing Officers (Fall)
Dates: October 4th –7th, 2009
Location: Ramada Mall of America Bloomington, MN

North & South Dakota

NDAAO-North Dakota Association of Assessing Officers
Dates: August 9th –13th, 2009
Location: Comfort Inn Bismarck, ND

SDAAO-South Dakota Association of Assessing Officers
Dates: May 19th –22nd, 2009
Location: Ramkota Watertown, SD

Misc

NCRAAO
Dates: June 15th – 17th, 2009
Location: Marriott Hotel & Conference Center Coralville, IA

IAAO
Dates: September 13th –16th, 2009
Location: Galt House Hotel & Suites (Louisville, KY)

Special Offer

VCS Backup

Making backups of your property data has never been easier. Did you know there is a new feature in the VCS backup program that allows you to quickly make a copy of a newly created backup file directly to a portable device, like an external hard drive or USB flash drive. With this new feature you can now easily take a copy of the backup off site for further protection.

Furthermore, from January through August 2009, if you purchase the VCS Backup for CAMA and/or VCS Personal Property you will receive a 16 GB USB flash drive at no additional charge. Contact your VCS sales representative for more information concerning this limited time offer.

Successful User Group Meetings

By: Teresa Ellerby

This year we had four very successful user group meetings. Minnesota and North Dakota had separate meetings and the Iowa Illinois meeting was moved back to Cedar Rapids. The Missouri meeting was held at the Isle of Capri in Booneville we had 83 attendees on day one for both Personal Property & CAMA and 55 attendees on day two for CAMA.   The Minnesota meeting was held at the Holiday Inn in Bloomington again we had 57 attendees on day one and had 41 attendees on day two.   North Dakota had its user meeting at the AmericInn in Moorhead, Minnesota with 32 attendees on day one and 31 attendees on day two. The Iowa/Illinois meeting was held at the Cedar Rapids Marriott in Cedar Rapids, Iowa had 186 attendees on day one and 141 attendees on day two. Great comments were heard through out all the meetings of which some are listed below:

Missouri Comments

1. My first time, thought was informative and got to hear a lot of good questions with which came good answers.
2. 1st year I have been able to attend this will be our 2nd year with the personal property program-I feel the user's meeting has been very beneficial to me.
3. 1st time here, I thought we got quite a bit of information. Look forward to next year.
4. Everyone was very helpful & nice. Good Job! Very Informational.
5. Presenters had a deep knowledge of the material and did a great job conveying the information.
6. Very informative with a lot of new information on programs, new ideas and updates on old things.
7. I still think it would be good to have data collection school (residentials & commercial) as a class not for conference.
8. Fun & informative
9. I would like a class for the beginning counties and another set for counties that have been on the system for awhile.
10. I found it very enlightening. A lot of my questions were answered.
11. Good job-keep up the job of keeping us updated on all upgrades.
12. Very good I learned a few new things.
13. Great as usual, Thanks for the gifts, hospitality, friendships and training.

Minnesota Comments

1. Always good information, I always leave learning something new, Thank you!
2. It would be nice to have break out session for commercial vs. residential a more one on one questions and answers with staff, need hands on with computer type class.
3. I'd like to see some hands on training/examples of queries.
4. Good conference-covered many topics without being too technical or detailed, interesting information. Projection screen not focused hard to see visuals.
5. I was able to learn more on queries.
6. More beneficial if we could pick and choose topics to attend (setup like summer seminars).
7. Good topics and sessions.
8. The conference was great as always.
9. When the conference in St Cloud it seemed there was more participation both days, conference was good as always.
10. Very good conference. It is always informative and fun at Vanguard conferences. Would be nice if CD with forms and handouts were sent out prior to convention so we could all follow along.
11. St Cloud has a better facility for classes and everyone to be together as a group for socializing and meals (a better variety & close to shopping and eateries).
12. Good conference.

North Dakota

1. Glad to see a ND "only" user group meeting held. was not in attendance the 1st day but heard great comments from all that were here.
2. More central location in ND-good information.
3. Great Comedy Club!!
4. Overall it was a good conference.
5. Rooms were clean & spacious, all presenters knew their topics, and great energy & excitement from staff, good topics, and great length of time spend on topics and same for breaks- Thanks for your hospitality & meals. You always have good themes.
6. Conference was a blast. Very informative.
7. Super Job for all.
8. Good conference, good topics, all of the presentations were done very well. Hold conference later in the fall after it's already cold.
9. Very informative, good job!
10. Very nice to meet everyone, great job.

Iowa/Illinois

1   Would like conference a little earlier before we start fall work (September).
2. This is a very nice facility.
3. Fun & informative conference, nice facility.
4. Would really like the conference to be in Des Moines.
5. I still like the idea of putting something into the last session slot that everyone doesn't have, like websites. That leaves time for us that live farther to get a better start especially if the weather could be bad.
6. Lots of good information.
7. School in the fall is very difficult when you are from a small office and have to do field work. Also the month of September is bad especially the last week or so when property taxes are being paid.
8. Very nice facilities, always enjoy your openings.
9. Would like handouts-outlining steps for new or improved functions within the system and how to navigate. I like noting on handouts during presentation.
10. All good topics
11. Wonderfully informative-thorough when answering questions-Thank You.
12. Thanks-Good Job!
13. Good information-great to have Bob E here to answer the specific appraisal/cost questions.
14. Great place to have this meeting.
15. Couldn't read the screen from rear of room.
16. Great hotel-just too far away.
17. You guys do a good job making learning fun!
18. Nice to have it in Cedar Rapids with so many meetings held in Des Moines.
19. Need some new topics, some same as before but always pick up something new.
20. Good conference & good reviews-Good video at end.
21. Keep up the great work.
22. Very informative. All speakers did a good job.
23. How about scheduling "Extra" modules all on the same day/time slot... that way those who don't have them wouldn't have to sit through those presentations. Hard to see screens.
24. Very well ran conference, nice length of sessions, well presented and nice breaks of time.
25. I always learn something I didn't know before which is why I like to attend.

We welcome ideas on workshops and user group meetings. Your opinion matters so please email teresa@camavision.com with times and location that work for you and items you would like to see covered.

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We're on the web...
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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.

New Employee Profile

On October 20, 2008 our VAI family added another member, Ryan Ehli, a homegrown North Dakotan, born November 15, 1983 and raised in Minot. Ryan is the baby of the family with two older sisters. He moved to Bismarck in 2002 to attend the University of Mary and graduated with a degree in Business Administration and then went on to get his MBA. Ryan loves to have a good time and hang out with friends and family.

Most of his extended family lives in Bismarck so they try to get together every once in awhile and catch up on everything. No pets for Ryan but he does share an almost two year old basset hound named Zoie with his roommate. She's always good for a laugh!

Ryan also loves traveling and seeing different places (preferably tropical!). In July he bought a 2008 Harley Davidson Custom Sportster. needless to say, it was a sad day when he had to put it in storage for the season. Summer is his favorite time of the year and he went on several camping trips with his new toy. He loves being outside – camping, golfing, spending time on the river and at Lake Sakakawea.

Please help us welcome Ryan.