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Excellence achieved through people, products, and service.™

Winter 2010



Special points of interest:

- Future UGM Topics
- New UGM Contest
- Enhance Your Mapping
- End of Year
- Personal Property
- Going Green

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It's 2010 Already

By Scott Johnson

I can't believe it's 2010 already. Do you know what you're going to be doing this year? I see 2010 as the year of change. Whether you are just starting to think about it or already have your calendar full, I don't want you to miss something.

There are so many things that you could be doing that you need a special CAMAvision® calendar and/or to do list. First go over what you do have and go from there to set your goals.

For those of you who have previously converted to the new manual version you have already dealt with some, if not all, of the main issues. You may be thinking you have a little breathing room and can go on with other concerns.

You should be asking yourself the question "Did I really get everything done that I needed to?"

The real questions are, "Did you have the time that you needed to do a really good job?", "Did you run short and now you need to go back and review and finish up the little things you missed or didn't have time to fix?"

Those of you who converted to new manual for 2010 should now be working on the changes and issues that came up either before, during or after the conversion

For this group I would recommend that you contact a jurisdiction that has already completed the process. What they would do the same? What they would do differently? Experience is the best teacher and this is no different. Use the experience of those who have already dealt with the changes and issues. Let them relay the good as well



as the bad so you don't make the same mistakes they did.

For those of you thinking about converting in 2010 to set values for 2011, please think it through. Give yourself the time to do it right. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Remember, there are no dumb questions only dumb answers and hopefully you won't get any of those.

Again ask those who have been through it and see what worked and what didn't.

If you need help or just have a question please call or ask. Too many times I have come across someone who would not ask the simple question and so headed down the wrong road. What happens then? They had to turn around, go all the way back to the beginning and start all over.

Remember, we are in this together.

News for friends of Vanguard

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Successful 2009 User Group Meetings

By: Terri Scheuermann

We here at Vanguard have completed another very successful string of User Group Meetings in 2009. Our Iowa/Illinois meeting had 164 attendees on day one and 148 attendees on day two. In Minnesota we had 37 attendees on day one and 31 attendees on day two. Missouri we had 89 attendees day one and 53 attendees on day two. Our North Dakota meeting had 30 attendees on day one and 23 attendees on day two. The "Hollywood Squares" theme was a huge hit. Brad also announced a new contest for the upcoming year, look further in this newsletter for contest details. Great comments were heard throughout all the meetings, some of which are listed below:

Iowa/Illinois User Suggested Future Topics

More query stuff ~ Ag Bldg presentation Scott gave at state school was very good...giving again more in depth. I learned a lot in his presentation ~ Commercial ~ Combination & split process with VCS ~ Recon setup & operation ~ Exemption Module ~ Sketching circles & odd shapes ~ Query building ~ Anything it's all helpful ~ Query tips & hints, income module demo ~ New enhancements & queries ~ Recon and transfer to CMS ~ More sales ratio statistics

Minnesota User Suggested Future Topics

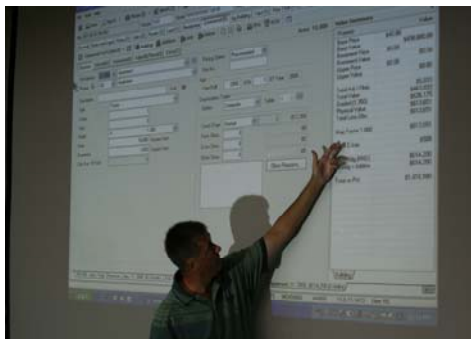
Residential lot values and land values ~ The topics you pick are best because they are new items ~ Queries ~ Grading residential houses was good, two comparable residential houses, older houses, covered grading, condition, etc (when one is entirely gutted)

Missouri Comments Suggested Future Topics

Bob E training time before conference started ~ Will have more questions next year-new for 2010 ~ Covered great topics this year, may come up with more before next year ~ Everything seems to be covered every year ~ New updates ~ Adding more lines to tables (ex-misfile) ~ Board of equalization and its report. Other reports and queries that can be used to help with accuracy ~ Information on the queries that you design yourself ~ More on extensive queries ~ More real estate-make real estate as nice and as easy as personal property "spelling" house group ranges etc

North Dakota User Suggested Future Topics

Advanced Query Wizard ~ Sales Ratio ~ Information & topics were very useful always nice to be informed of new updates & modules ~ Query Wizard ~ PreComputed & Component ~ Grading, conditions, importance of end RCN relationship ~ Update on the new scanning option ~ Haven't been working to long with program but learning different ways to navigate ~ These were good ~ More manual training ~ Updates & refreshers



Bob Ehler at Manual Training Class before UGM



Mesmerized audience at Missouri UGM



Mike Dvorak & TJ Koenigsfeld
Black Hawk County at
Iowa/Illinois UGM

2009 User Group Winners

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Iowa/Illinois:

Allamakee County IA-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Linda Zuercher) & beverage.
Tama County IA-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Janine Anderson) & VAI pad folio
Crawford County IA-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Duane Zenk) & beverage
Sioux City IA-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Al Jordan) & VAI pad folio
Floyd County IA-Bruce Hovden, Garmin GPS (Name Badge Drawing)

Minnesota:

Nicollet County-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Bridget Olson)
Polk County-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Beverly Johnson)
Rice County-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Maria Hetletvedt)
Dodge County-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Wendell Engelstad)
Polk County-Peggy Schumacher, Garmin GPS (Name Badge Drawing)

Missouri:

Shelby County-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Marge Gander)
Callaway County-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Vicky McDonald)
Vernon County \$500 off license of service plus time (winner Cherie Roberts)
Carroll County \$200 off license or service plus time (winner Devin Frazier)
Callaway County-Dan Roe, Garmin GPS (Name Badge Drawing)



Dan Roe, Callaway County and Gary Kirk at Missouri UGM

North Dakota:

Billings County-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Lynn Arthuad)
Stark County-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Diane Brines)
Ward County-\$500 off license or service plus time (winner Julie Straabe)
Golden Valley-\$200 off license or service plus time (winner Stacey Heckamen)
McLean County-Lauren Hunze, Garmin GPS (Name Badge Drawing)



Lauren Hunze, McLean County and Ryan Ehli at North Dakota UGM

2010 User Group Contest Announced

This is your chance to win \$500 off the module license fee of your choice. All you need to do is take a VCS bumper sticker and have your photo taken in front something unique.

Examples: In front of the Grand Canyon or Mt. Rushmore while on vacation, the Sears Tower, Trump Plaza, at the Indianapolis 500, at the Kentucky Derby, any unique house or building in your jurisdiction, or just a picture of you having fun at something you like to do. The possibilities are endless.

Submit your digital images via email to Brad @ camavision.com OR mail on a CD to the Cedar Rapids Office by August 1, 2010. For complete official rules and to get your bumper sticker contact your sales representative or call the Cedar Rapids office.

HAVE FUN



PRICED IN VCS



VAI Hosts Online GIS Maps

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By: Andy Colson

Many moons ago Kevin, Hamilton County Iowa Assessor, asked if we could "just" host his maps, something simple. I'm sorry, Kevin, I know nothing about GIS, never played around with them, have no experience with them. "After asking him for a copy of his data of which he let me have I started playing around with it." Now many moons later, we are hosting maps online. Thanks Kevin.

Our maps are simple. We don't have all the advanced tools that the big guys have and we may not be able to give you every option under the sun, but if you are just looking for "a simplified map viewer", we've got you covered.

We need shape files and whatever aerial imagery you'd like to display. We support panning, zooming in and out, single click for details and

multiple layers (click the plus sign to open up the layer selector, its in the upper right hand corner of the map).

Click here to see what we have:
<http://buchanan.iowaassessors.com>

Did I mention that this enhancement is FREE to all our current customers! What's the catch? No Catch. What's the fee? No fee and no additional charges to pay. You provide us with the GIS maps and tell us what layers you want shown. It is just that easy.

This offer does not stop here. If you let us load your GIS maps on the CAMAvision© website, we will reduce your current website service contract by 10%. It's like we are paying you to host your GIS maps. Even if you have a multi-year contract, we will reduce your current website service fees by 10% just by letting us add the maps.

For questions contact Stan Moellers stanm@camavision.com or myself at andy@camavision.com

CAMAvision Workshop hosted by South Central ISAA

By: Terri Scheuermann



The ISAA South Central District hosted a CAMAvision workshop that was held on November 4th and 5th, 2009 at Central College in Pella, Iowa and attended by 27 registrants. The class instructors were Scott Johnson and Terri Scheuermann of Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. The class was geared towards workstation setup, basic residential entry, sketch, and photovision on the first day. The second day focused on basic queries, query lite, advanced queries, and the ProVersion report writer.

The class was such a huge success that two other districts have scheduled similar workshops. Check your ISAA calendar for dates and details.

Enhancing Your Mapping with CAMAvision Views

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By Nick Klein

At one of the 2009 User Group Meetings it was demonstrated how to leverage your existing GIS maps by tapping into your parcel data stored in CAMAvision. That is to say, you can plot on your maps such items as sale prices, land rates, map factors, residential styles and more. This isn't simply an extract of data from CAMAvision and statically plotting it on a map. What was showed was accessing live data from your CAMAvision database and visually displaying the results on maps. Believe it or not, if you already have ESRI® ArcView® on computers in your office, you're closer than you think to make this a reality.

Stan Moellers is the point man in the field, talking with clients and helping them get their ESRI tools talking with CAMAvision. The CAMAvision end has a few items to setup which I have been taking care of before Stan visits for training. I should note that you do not need to be on the latest releases of CAMAvision to use these features. They work for both new and old manual.

The first setup item is to make sure some database Views are installed into your databases. You can think of these as predefined queries like what you find in the Query Wizard. I tried to simplify this step by automatically including the latest incarnations of the Views right within the v13.13 and v15 updates. Both users of Firebird and MS SQL Server need these database Views.

The second setup item, if you are using the Firebird database, is an ODBC driver needs to be installed on every computer in your office that uses the mapping software. This is the software that allows ArcView® to query data stored in Firebird databases. If you are using MS SQL-Server, then the ESRI software already has the tools to get you connected.

Lastly users need to know if the PIN in CAMAvision is compatible with the PIN used in mapping. So far I've had to adjust the standard Views to use PIN, GIS-Number, and even Computer ID. I've even had to trim parts of the CAMAvision PIN to match the "PIN" used in the maps. If ever there was a reason to consider standardizing PINs between systems, this would certainly be near the top of the list!

The entire setup is generally an easy process, taking less than 15 minutes per computer. It's something I can do over your lunch or break - without kicking people out of the program. So contact Stan and find out how we can make CAMAvision and your mapping software work even better for you.

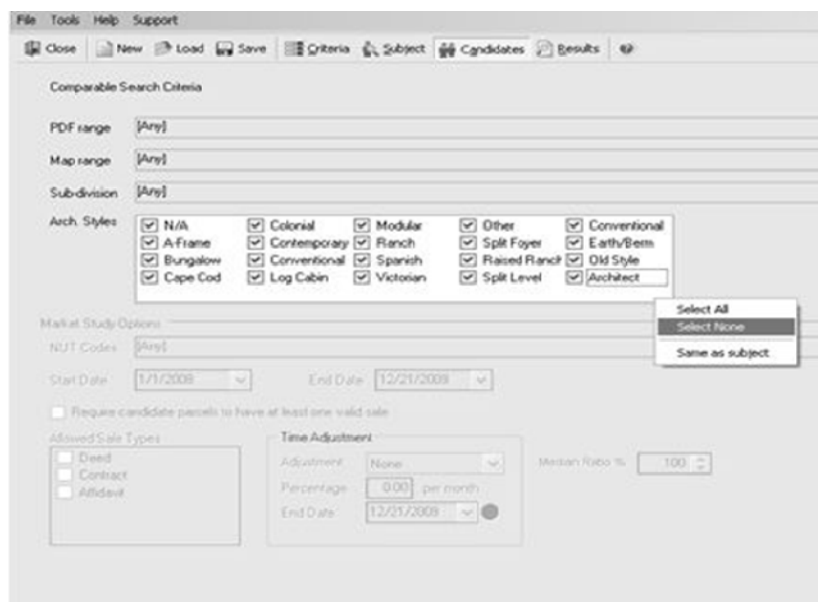
Sherry's Tips and Tricks

Did You Know that in version 15, Arch Style was added to Comparable Search. If you right mouse button click in the white box, 3 options appear.

Select All – Selects all Arch Styles so the search will not discriminate based on Arch Style

Select None – Removes all the green check marks which makes selecting only one much easier than unchecking each box individually.

Same as Object – This will set the Arch Style to the same as the Subject parcel



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Integration—Gee Its Simple

By Stan Moellers

Integrating CAMAvision® and Geographical Information Systems – Gee Its Simple

You have your data in CAMAvision and your jurisdiction has a Geographical Information System (GIS) in place. Now you need to make them work together and produce results. Now is the time to make GIS Gee Its Simple.

Geographical Information Systems have been in use for many years and the last 10 years it has become the buzz word in county government. The majority of CAMAvision® data is based on a location so it is a natural fit to make them work together.

Let's get started with a Little History lesson:

Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI®) was founded in 1969 in Redlands, California by Jack Dangermond. ESRI's company's focus remains on producing excellent software and delivering exceptional service to users.

Vanguard Appraisals, Inc was founded in 1968 in Cedar Rapids, IA by Bill Stewart and Bob Duggan. Vanguard's corporate vision is Excellence achieved through people, products, and service.

It would be fair to say that in the late 60's neither company envisioned the advancements in technology that would allow two companies offering very diverse services the ability to join their individual data to make the assessment and mapping world come alive. So what does it take to get you started in integrating data and telling your assessment and mapping story?

A—A PHD in Mapping?

B—GIS Coordinator?

C— Nothing; it is just too difficult

D—Yourself or someone in your office that understands or wants to understand the basics of GIS and the need to put your data to work and display it where it exists in the real world and a quick call to Vanguard to assist you in getting started.

Of course the correct answer is D; it is something that you can do yourself and let the data work for you. So have you given Vanguard a call, and see what will happen next? First someone from the computer department will connect to your system and setup the ODBC connection and the GISviews that allow ArcView® to connect to the CAMAvision database. Secondly, I will setup a time to give you training in your office on how to use ArcMap® to make your data come alive. You will need to have some things in place and a general knowledge of some ESRI ArcMap® products. They include:

ArcView which is geographic information system (GIS) software for visualizing, managing, creating, and analyzing geographic data. Using ArcView, you can understand the geographic context of your data, allowing you to see relationships and identify patterns in new ways. One seat of ArcView would be the recommended for a typical jurisdiction to perform the majority of the analysis required in the assessor's office.

ArcReader® is a free, easy-to-use desktop mapping application that allows users to view, explore, and print maps and globes. Anyone with ArcReader can view high-quality interactive maps authored by a higher-level ArcGIS® Desktop product and published with the ArcGIS Publisher extension. ArcReader is an option to view data on the map, but not to do the "what-if" analysis. There are some intermediate 3rd party software packages that may bridge the gap between ArcView and ArcReader.

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End of Year Routine

By Mike Weeks

It's getting to be that time again. Assessment rolls will be going out soon and we'll have to start the entire process over again for next year. But before you do that, have you completed the necessary maintenance in CAMAvision? If not you may want to consider the following:

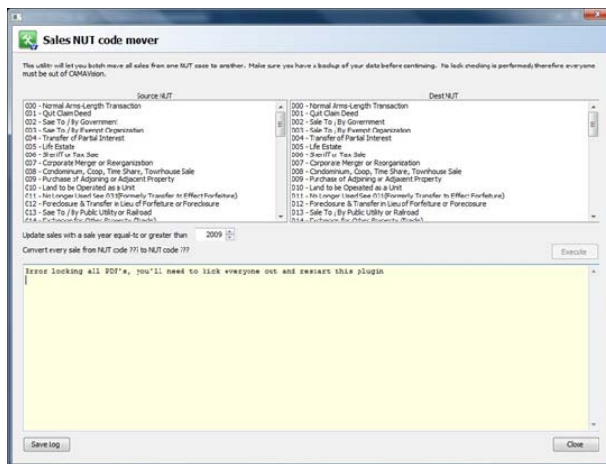
First make sure you have good back-ups before you start any of these processes. Then you could Archive your certified database to create the necessary history of your records. Next roll your Working database to Certified. When you do a full maintain Certified the current database will be overwritten. This is why it is so important to have a good backup and the Archive processed first. Next in your Working database, I would update prior year, clear any parcel flags, reset your reconciliation and update the base year for Depreciation, Exemptions, and Income Modules. Keep in mind that updating your base year may force a Revaluation to be run and your values WILL change. Depending on your plans for 1-1-2011 you may not want to do this step. You may do all or some of these processes but it's never a bad idea to think ahead. We're always glad to help, if you'd like your friendly neighborhood CAMA Specialist present when you do this work let us know.

New Sales Codes for Iowa CAMAvision Clients

By: Jenny Burkart

Recently we mailed out updates to the old manual and the new manual versions of CAMAvision. One of the main enhancements in this update for both versions is the new NUT Codes that the Iowa Dept of Revenue requested. If you have applied the update already then you noticed that at the top of the list are the new ones. The old codes are still listed in the table but are pushed to the bottom of the list. The update only updated the table & did not alter the codes that are on the sales in the system already.

To assist our clients with the task of assigning the new codes to their existing sales we have written a utility to assist in setting these. We are charging 15 minutes of our time to hook this up in the program and train the client on how to utilize this new tool. This time can be deducted from your training time balance.



The function of the utility is simple in that it allows the client to pick the original NUTC & set it to the new one. There is a field that allows you to select a year. This essentially is taking all sales that are equal to & greater than January 1 of the year entered in that field.

Everyone does have to be out of the program when you run this utility and all parcels must be checked in.

If you have a website with Vanguard Appraisals we have added a feature to the website to allow users to select all Normal Type Sales instead of going through the list and selecting what they know to be good sales codes. This uses the field in the Non-Usable Transaction Codes table (under General section) called Normal Sale. If this is set to Yes then when the user selects the "Select all normal sale types" on the website it will use all the codes listed with a Yes in the table.

Non-Usable Transaction Code
Multiple selections allowed using CTRL or Shift key.

[Select all normal sale types](#)

HELP

0 NORMAL ARMS-LENGTH TRANSACTION
1 QUIT CLAIM DEED
2.1 SALE TO / BY GOVERNMENT
2.2 SALE TO / BY GOVERNMENT; CONDEMNATION IS ALSO ABNORMAL
3.1 SALE TO / BY EXEMPT ORGANIZATION

If you have any questions or are interested in getting the utility setup on your system, please contact Sherry (sherry@camavision.com) or myself (jenny@camavision.com) to have us connect to your system.

Personal Property—Starting Your New Year

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By: Virginia Molina-Steen

The new Value Guide Item values are usually published and available to us in mid-January. As soon as we get the new 2010 Valuation Guide, Brad starts to update the program, adding the new values for both the Value Guide and My Guide clients. Depending on the number of issues that need to be resolved in the Value Guide, the newly updated program will be released around late February. Remember, any “User Priced” items will not be automatically recalculated when the new guides are uploaded into your system.

Important: You do not need to wait for the 2010 Guides to start entering and processing accounts for 2010. When the new value guides are loaded, all accounts will be automatically recalculated with the new 2010 prices.

Things you can do in preparation for the new pricing guides:

- ◆ User-entered items – open List Report to run the “User Priced Items” report. This report will display the item type, description, and the user’s price. This report will help you find and edit changed values in the pricing account values and to review tables.
- ◆ Update the Business Tables - the Depreciation table would need the base year edited. For example - for the year 2010, the base year is changed to 2009.
- ◆ Update the Livestock Table – the Livestock table will need to be reviewed and edited.
- ◆ Update the Farm Machinery Table – the Farm Machinery table items will need to be reviewed and edited.
- ◆ Update the Heavy Machinery Table – the Heavy Machinery table items will need to be reviewed and edited.
- ◆ My Guide Table – Most of the My Guide prices will update with the Value Guide prices. However, the items you specifically entered may need to be reviewed and edited. The way to find the items specifically entered is by:

1st - Click the drop-down arrow next to the “Load” button and choose the option “Load Non-Sync Value Guide Only”.

2nd - Click the “All Makes, All Models, All Bodies” button located just to the right of the Select Type drop-down list.

All the items specifically entered will be displayed. To print the list, click the print button in the tool bar at the top of the screen.

* My Guide Trending Table Values: Also, remember you can use “Trending” to update the values by percentage, or to “Set Value” to edit items beyond 20 years.

* Ultimate My Guide Table Prices – When the new My Guide is loaded, it is done without performing the ultimate feature. If your county uses the Ultimate My Guide, you will need to re-run that process.

After all the tables are edited and changes are saved, remember you will need to copy Test to Main tables, located under Main Menu | Table Utilities. A Recalculation has to be run for the values to update accounts for the fiscal year.

Lastly, after the new 2010 pricing tables (Value Guide and My Guide) are loaded, do not forget to run the List Report “Items with Zero Value” to locate any accounts that have items that are still not priced. If any questions arise for this process, please call 319-286-6451 or email virginia@camavision.com at Technical Support.

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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.

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



Service Contracts Going Green

In an effort to save paper and the environment, starting April 2010, Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. will no longer be sending out printed copies of yearly service contract renewals. Instead, we will be only sending invoice & remittance slips, indicating your current balance for software and services.

Should the service contract change in any way, you will be sent a new copy. Furthermore, if you would like to continue to receive a yearly copy of your service agreement, then please contact Kara Leyse (kara@camavision.com) at our home office. Thank you for your support in helping Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. **Go Green in 2010**

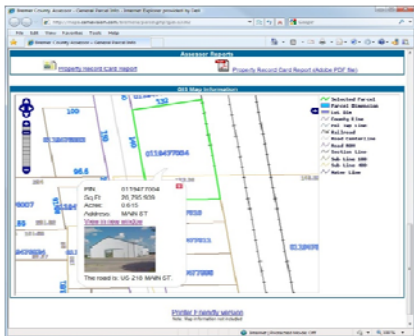
ATTENTION

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Want your GIS maps on your Vanguard website for **FREE and save 10%?**

At the 2009 VCS User Group Meeting, Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. announced that we will now host GIS maps on the CAMAvision® websites free of charge to all our current customers. What's the catch or fee? There is no catch, no hidden fees, and no additional charges to pay. You provide us with the GIS maps and tell us what layers you want shown. It is just that easy.

This offer does not stop here. If you let us load your GIS maps on the CAMAvision website, we will reduce your current website service contract by 10%. It's like we are paying you to host your GIS maps. Even if you have a multi-year contract, we will reduce your current website service fees by 10% just by letting us add the maps.



Break free from paying GIS mapping website fees!

So, even if you are stuck paying monthly fees to your GIS vendor for providing website maps, you can still break free. Since we are doing it for free, there is nothing to lose. Let us add the maps and save 10% off your current Vanguard website service fees. At **Vanguard Appraisals**, we realize that servicing our clients is a privilege. We believe your software company should work hard for you, especially when you need it most.

Call Stan Moellers at (563) 380-2010 for a personalized demonstration on how Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. can change the way you feel about your software company.