Vanguard Appraisals, Inc.

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Excellence achieved through people, products, and service. ™

Fall 2015

Some New & Old Website Features

By Jenny Burkart

"There is nothing so powerful as an idea whose time has come." –Victor Hugo

Our products and services continue to improve through ideas from our clients. One request was to be able to maintain or upload their Forms/Reports for public access. Brilliant! There is a Forms Document Upload page that does this very thing. Within this page, you set up the Groups or Categories. Then under those, you add the documents (file), or you can also include a link to another website. You also have the ability to give it a title that you know the public would see.

A *newly added feature* is the Change Log. You do need to be logged into the Administration Login area to view it, but there are many things that you can learn. Database Updates will display when you did the last full update, from what database, what the program version was and what PDFs were used. You will also see when your last sales update was performed. If we host the maps, it will also show you the last time they were updated. There is also the Website Updates tab, which will show you the enhancements that are being made to your website and when they were done.

Lastly, another cool feature recently added was the auto-fill of the street name. The user simply needs to type at least 3 letters of the street name, and it will come up with a list of possible names for that area. The user can still override it by just pressing the Enter key, but now there is a unique list of possible street names for each county website.

If there is something that you see on another Vanguard website that you do not have on yours, please let us know. Contact Sherry Surrett (sherry@camavision.com) or Jenny Burkart (jenny@camavision.com) to discuss this.
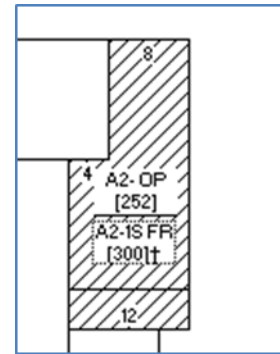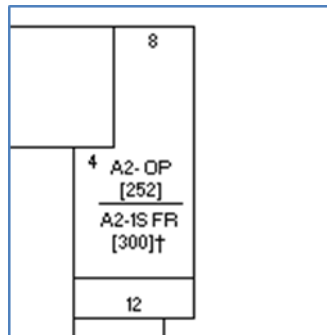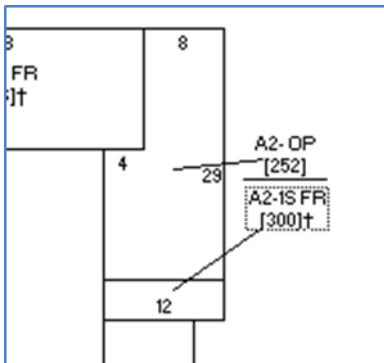
The Display Order in Sketch

By: Nick Klein

Today, I am going to write about a feature of Sketch called the Display Order. This is the order sketch objects are stacked on top of each and determines the order in which they are drawn. By manipulating this stacking order, it is possible to produce some interesting effects.

For this example, I'll demonstrate how to stack objects and apply a fill pattern to one –without obscuring the label text of either object. For clarity, my first image shows the labels outside the object. The second image shows the labels inside, and the final image shows how I want the finished drawing to appear. Because I want the labels to be inside shaded objects, yet still be readable, we'll have to take into consideration the Display Order in which the objects are drawn.


An easy way to think about the Display Order is when objects are drawn, they get added to the **end** of the Display Order list. Hence, the first item drawn is at the top of the list, the second object is below the first, the third is below that and so forth. Objects higher in the list can be made to overlap and obscure objects lower in the list, because by definition, they are drawn before the lower objects.

In my example, the typical drawing procedure is to first draw the 1-story frame addition, and then draw the smaller, open-porch addition. Therefore, the object higher on the list (i.e., the 1-story addition) could obscure the open-porch, which is lower in the list.

If I enable a fill pattern on the 1-story addition without changing the display order, I get a result that obscures the label of the open-porch. We can make this better by changing the display order these two objects.

First make sure the transparency of the label text is **disabled** for both objects. Change it (if necessary) via the Object Name Properties box.

Next open the Display Order box by pressing **<F6>** or from the **Edit > "Display Order…"** menu.
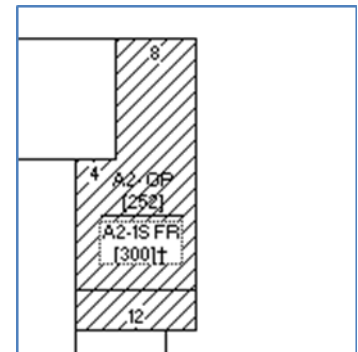
The Display Order in Sketch-Continued
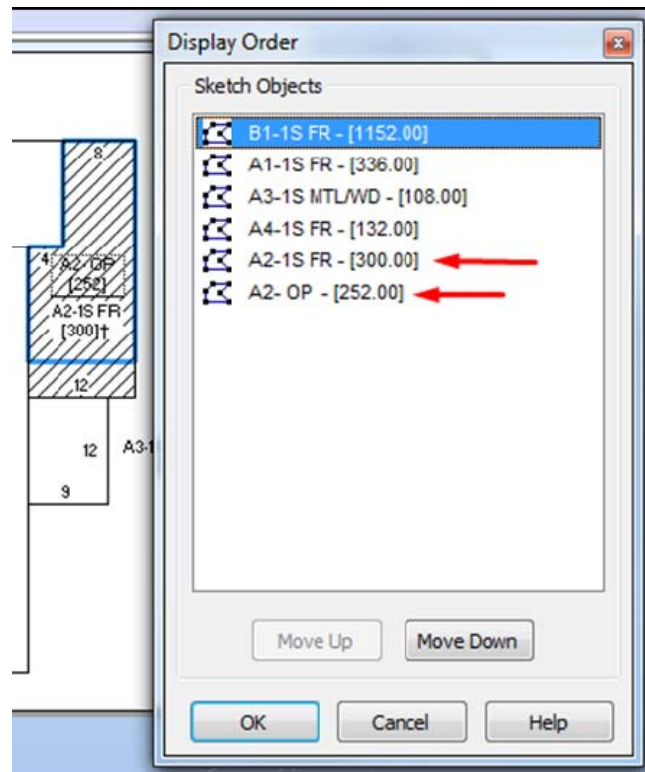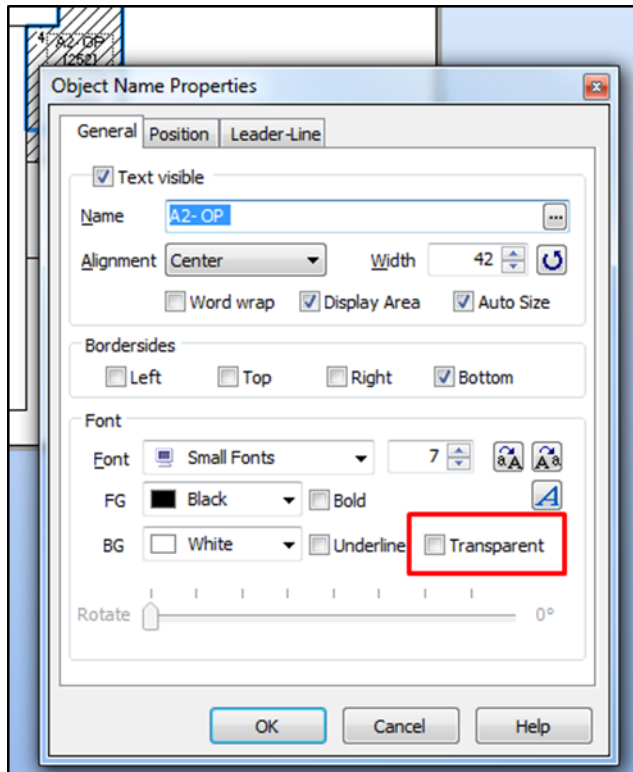
With the Display Order dialog open, notice the open-porch is **lower** in the display order than the 1-story frame addition. The user can now manipulate the order by selecting an object and pressing the respective Move Up or Move Down buttons, or by using drag-n-drop with the mouse.

After changing the order and pressing OK, the sketch will refresh. As you can see, the Sketch makes it pretty easy to change the display order of objects. Some users who know about the Display Order may simply want to use the quick shortcut menus to move objects all the way to the top or to the bottom of the Display Order.
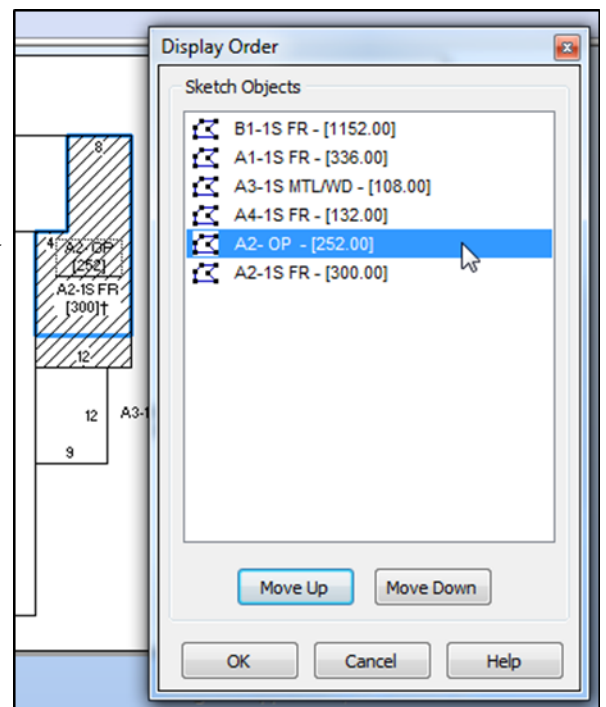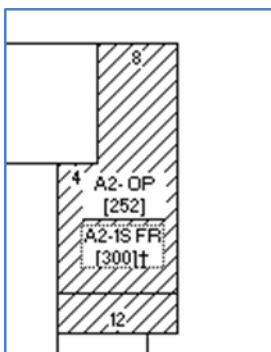
Shout at Us:

By: Patrick Alexander

When I was growing up, my mother always told me, "If you don't have anything nice to say, then don't say anything at all." Several hours later, she would inevitably ask, "You're awfully quiet today, what's wrong?" Now, I love my mom, but she provides a textbook example of contradiction. And while I would love to say this phenomenon is limited to her, I know it rests in all of us. Although, it might exist in her just a tad bit more than most.

That fact aside, let me get to my point, and yes I actually have one for those of you wondering. In this day, you often hear vendors provide lip service in stating your opinion matters, and they take all of your suggestions seriously. Then they turn around and implement only what they have to, and none of your additional requests ever see the light of day. Well if they don't care about your input, then why did they bother even asking for it?

We take a different approach at Vanguard. All of your requests, whether via email, suggested in person or over the phone, are written down and evaluated. We love making our product more usable and closer to your ideal of an indispensable office tool. Now, that doesn't mean all the submitted requests will make it into the program. There are many factors that need to be considered before it gets a green light. How do your suggestions affect other clients and/or states? Is there a process already in place for accomplishing the same task? Do we have the manpower available to implement and maintain this new or changed functionality? Also, is it even possible, given the current framework of the program?

Even if your request ultimately doesn't make it into the program, we are still excited you cared enough to make the suggestion and are likely to look for alternatives to reach your desired result. In the end, you will never be heard if you never speak, so shout at us to your hearts content.

"like" us on facebook   facebook.com/camavision

Join us on LinkedIn   search: "Vanguard Appraisals"

2016 PHOTO CONTEST

Photo Contest Rules   Back to Index

1. A photo, series of photos, or video can be submitted
2. The Vanguard bumper stickers must be visible, readable
3. Content of the photo/video must be Facebook appropriate

When the Vanguard staff chooses a photo, you will have 30 days to get as many likes as you can.

Submit digital images by email to brad@camavision.com, or mail on a CD to Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. 1065 Sierra Ct NE Suite D Cedar Rapids, IA 52402.
Put Attn: Contest 2016
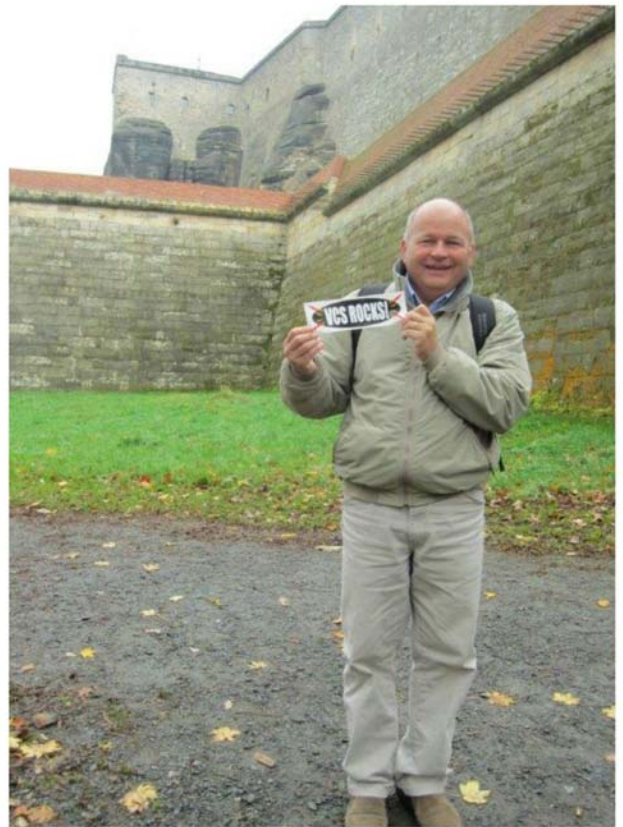Digital photographs only-no printed photographs will be accepted

facebook.com/camavision

First Photo Contest Entry

Tim Peters from Monona County, Iowa is our first photo contest entry. Go to facebook.com/camavision to like Tim's photos.

Meet Scott McDowell: Our New Controller for Vanguard Appraisals, Inc.

Scott grew up in Walker, Iowa and moved to Des Moines after graduating from the University of Northern Iowa. About five years ago, he returned to the Walker area and the family acreage. Scott has spent several years as a controller role, largely in the construction industry, most recently with Paulson Electric. When not tending to his acreage and vegetable garden, Scott enjoys coaching summer t-ball teams and in the fall, watching a weekend of football, cheering for the Hawkeyes or Chicago Bears. But most of his spare time is spent with his 3 children (Morgan, Colton, and Maddy) and his wife of almost nine years, Coleen.

CAMAVISION.com /BLOG

Tablet Tips: Why the Surface Pro 3 is the device that can do it all

What you had to say about User Group Meetings in 2014

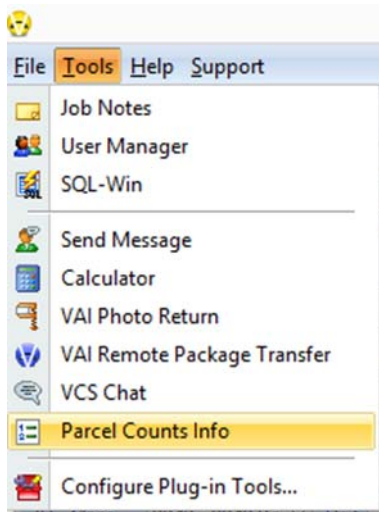New weekly entries

Tips for CAMAvision

User Group Meeting news

Did You Know...

By: Mike Weeks

That you can view parcel count information with 2 clicks of the mouse?

You may have never noticed the handy Utility located under the Tools button within CAMAvision®. This tool gives you a snap shot of your data, Parcel Counts Info and Statistics of many areas of the system.

You will see the number of parcels for many different parts of CAMAvision®. This can be used as an audit tool to find discrepancies in your data or to verify the info being stored in your system. For example, (for Iowa Clients) if you know you have 600 parcels with exemptions in your Tax Administration System, you could use this tool to verify you have exemptions on 600 parcels in CAMAvision® as well. If your IT staff is asking about the size of your CAMA database you can use this utility to explain that you have 49,406 photos in your system which may take up a sizable amount of server space. Overall, it's just good information to have at your figure tips.

USER GROUP MEETING 2015

I ♥ my job!

PhotoVision® on your tablet

By: Mike Weeks

When training on tablets and Remote, I've had several questions regarding taking photos with my tablet and having those photos import directly into CAMAvision®. This may be a little hard to describe in a Newsletter article, but I'll give it a shot.

The first step is to make sure your settings on the **MAIN SYSTEM** are set as shown below:
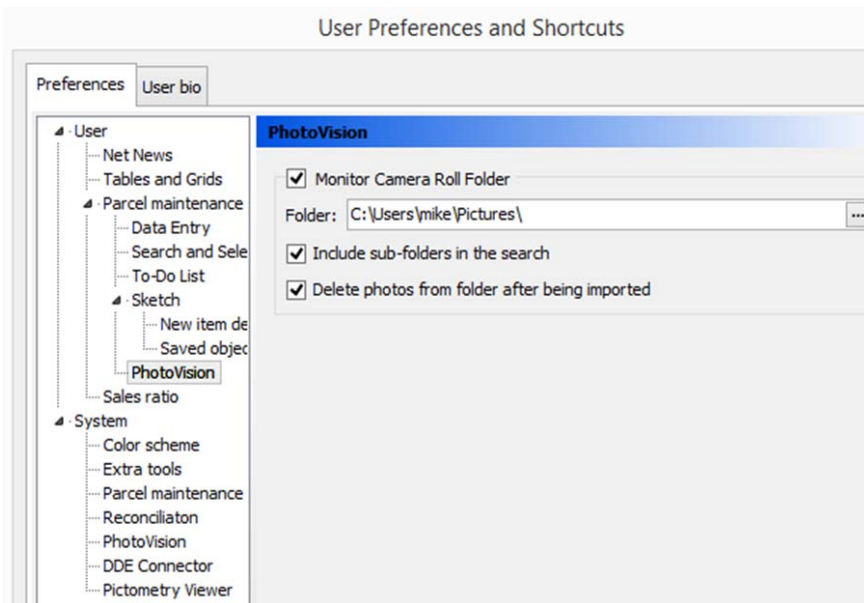
Go to the PhotoVision section of your Preferences, and then click the check box for the Monitor Camera Roll Folder. This should be done for each user who will be using a tablet, as it is not a system-wide setting.

After checking your parcels out onto a tablet, Load a parcel and **OPEN** PhotoVision.
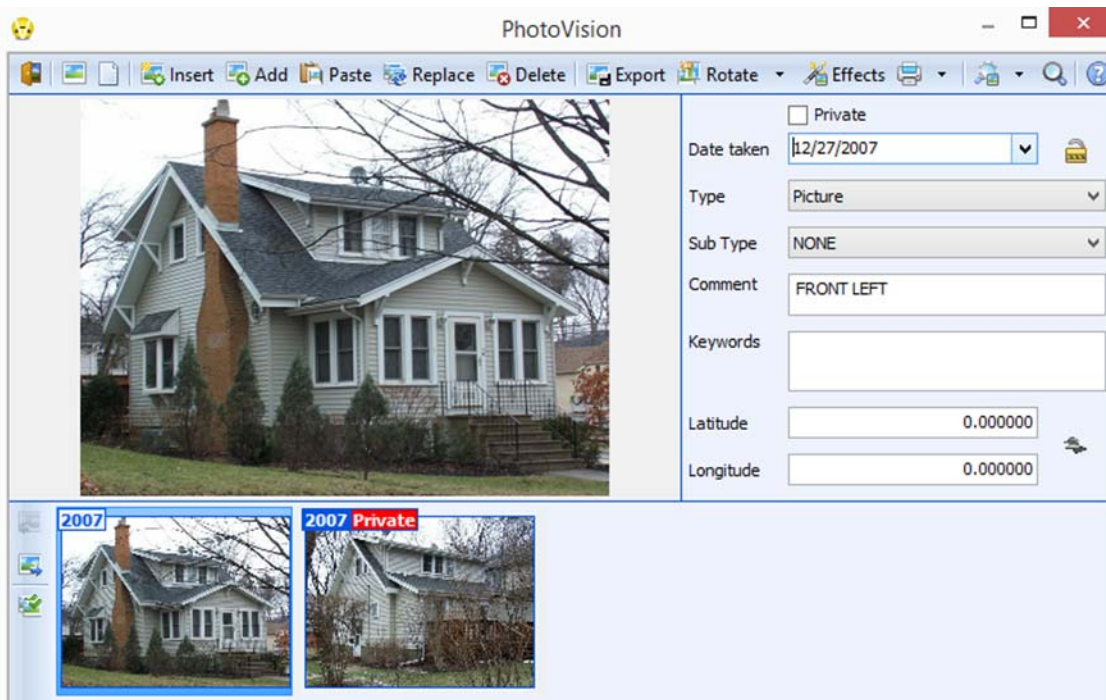
PhotoVision® on your tablet-continued

The Next step is to use the camera app on your Windows 8 tablet. To do so, drag from the left with your finger or stylist to activate the Windows 8 menu tool bar.

Then tap on the start button.

Next find the camera app icon, it may be hard to find at first but should look something like this.

Tap on that icon. This will activate the tablet's camera. **Keep in mind that cameras on tablets usually don't have the same quality as most of your digital cameras.**

After activating the camera, you may have to use the settings to switch from the forward "selfie" view to the camera on the back, because NO ONE wants to see THIS in PhotoVision!

After taking your photo, swipe from the left of tablet screen to the right, bringing CAMAvision to the front. Your newly taken photo will have automatically dropped into PhotoVision.

If you Swipe less than half way across your screen you will get the "split screen" effect, showing both CAMAvision and the Camera. You'll have to get used to your tablet. I know my tablet and my Windows 8 laptop have much different sensitivity when it comes to the split screen. Have fun, and let us know if you have any questions. Also, feel free to bring your tablet to any conference or User Group Meeting to have us help you with these settings.

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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.

Mark Your Calendars Upcoming Conferences

IAAO-International Association of Assessing Officers

Dates: September 13th – September 16th, 2015

Location: Marriott Indianapolis

MAA-Missouri Association of Assessing Officers

Dates: September 28th – October 1st, 2015
Location: Branson

MAC-Missouri Association of Counties

Dates: October 15th – October 16th, 2015
Location: Osage Beach

ISAC-Iowa State Association of Counties (Fall)

Dates: November 18th – November 20th, 2015
Location: Double Tree Cedar Rapids

NACO-Nebraska Association of County Officials

Dates: December 9th — December 11th, 2015
Location: Younes Conference Center Kearney

ISAA-Iowa State Association of Assessors

Dates: September 27th – September 30th, 2015
Location: Airport Holiday Inn Des Moines

MAAO-Minnesota Association of Assessing Officers

Dates: October 4th – October 7th, 2015
Location: Craguns Brainerd

NDACo-North Dakota Association of Counties

Dates: October 25th – October 27th, 2015
Location: Bismarck Event Center Bismarck

IACO Illinois Association of Counties (Fall Conference)

Dates: November 22nd — November 24th, 2015
Location: Marriott Pere' Marquette Peoria

Register for 2015 User Group Meetings

North Dakota-October 7th & 8th at the Comfort Inn Bismarck

Iowa-October 14th & 15th at the Cedar Rapids Marriott Cedar Rapids

At this year's meetings we will be offering a residential grading, condition & data input day 2 with Scott Johnson/Mike Weeks

http://www.camavision.com/events.php