

“ This solution has revolutionised our business, and our success was recognised when Countrywide Surveyors won the prestigious ‘Best Mobile Application’ award at the prestigious O2-sponsored ‘Communication in Business’ awards. ”

Bill Ashworth, IT Director, Countrywide Surveyors



Countrywide Surveyors

Background

Countrywide Surveyors is by some margin the largest residential surveying organisation in the UK, with almost 600 surveyors operating from offices in all major towns and cities. It is the appointed valuer by virtually all major UK lenders.

Business Issue

Historically, the processes involved in taking an instruction from a bank or building society to carry out a survey, through to delivery of the survey back to the lender and house buyer, were characterised by being relatively slow, labour intensive and prone to human error.

Countrywide Surveyors wanted to automate this process in order to make substantial productivity improvements and cost savings, with the goals of improving profitability and growing market share.

The Challenge

To replace the existing, paper-based surveying system with a paperless solution that would allow instructions to be received electronically and automatically assigned to a surveyor, who would complete the survey on a tablet PC and electronically generate the final report for signing, approval and submission.

Solution

DB Consulting developed a bespoke solution that provided full electronic surveying capabilities, removing the necessity for manual data entry and re-keying. The system is fully automated from end to end and delivers substantial cost and time savings in the survey process. Built on a foundation of Microsoft .NET technologies, the solution incorporates a suite of fully integrated applications to manage all the core business process of Countrywide Surveyors.

Surveyors are provided with tablet PCs to enable mobile data capture. A VB.Net forms application running on the tablets allows surveyors to capture survey information electronically whilst out ‘in the field’ and, crucially, it allows them to generate, approve and submit completed surveys without returning to the office.

Internal users are provided with a browser-based ASP.NET application to manage the process and to provide management information. An internet portal, built using ASP.NET and C#, enable the end customer to track the progress of the survey.

Finally, full system integration with the leading banks, building societies and panel members is also incorporated, using Web Services built using Microsoft .NET.

Results

Substantial cost savings have been realised due to a very significant reduction in administrative head-count, delivering improved business profitability.

Time taken to complete surveys in the field is reduced, as is the time taken to deliver the survey to the end user. Business productivity (measured as completed surveys per week) has improved by a measured and verified 11%.

Data quality has also improved, due to the implementation of automatic validation at the time of data entry and the elimination of manual re-keying of data.

The system provides a clear competitive advantage for Countrywide Surveyors, enabling the company to grow market share by offering faster, more accurate turn-around of surveys from instruction to delivery.

DB Consulting

DB Consulting works with ambitious, forward-thinking companies aiming to achieve strategic business objectives through the deployment of modern Information Systems.

We design, build and support software for companies operating in a wide range of industries, using technology products from Microsoft, Oracle, IBM and other leading software vendors.

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