



Why Isn't Everyone Doing Virtual... What?

By George Donatello, CMS, Principal Consultant, TEAM Consulting

The older I get, the less I know! Some of you may say that I never really knew anything to begin with, so that is not news to you. I'm sure this latest missive will seal my fate.

I recently attended the IAAO International Conference in Phoenix, Ariz. A good friend and colleague came up to me and told me that he was going to start doing virtual appraisals and wanted to know what I thought of the idea. I told him that there was no way to meet standards and do a virtual appraisal and that it was really a bad idea to embark on such a venture. My friend was taken aback and walked away in a huff.

What threw me off and offended my friend was the use of the term appraisal, because at this time I do not believe we can technically do an appraisal without physically inspecting the property. We have been doing "near virtual" data verification and valuation for as long as there have been Polaroids, aerial photographs, and reviewers in cars; we just never called those "virtual appraisals."

Wikipedia says that the term "virtual" in philosophical terms means something that is not real but may have the salient qualities of the real. Informally, virtual is used to mean "almost," particularly when used as an adverb, e.g., "That's virtually [almost] impossible."

By extension to the original philosophical definition, the term virtual has also come to mean "modeling through the use of a computer," where the computer models a physical equivalent. Thus, a virtual appraisal would model a physical inspection with remote-sensed structures (street view imagery, ortho's and obliques, etc.) and a computer to create reality.

What it boils down to is that there are a lot of people already doing a lot of virtual assessment administration functions like assessments, data verification, and discovery at a fraction of the cost of doing the "real" thing, using remote sensing and the IAAO Mass Appraisal Standard. New technology and imagery have evolved to the point where it will become VIRTUALLY impossible not to understand the strengths and weaknesses of these new methods and implement them in our jurisdictions!

If we don't start embracing and championing change in our assessment systems to help us verify, discover, and value properties (real and personal) using all of the remote-sensing tools commonly available today, others will begin to make those decisions for us. When that happens, we will not like the Draconian results! ❖

A busy, busy guy!



Keith Cunningham, PhD

Want to keep up with TEAM member Keith Cunningham? You better pack a bag and your brain! His calendar of recent and upcoming presentations includes:

Cadastral Audit and Assessments Using Unmanned Aerial Systems
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Geomatics Conference
September 2011, Zurich, Switzerland

A Geospatial Inventory of Riverine Hydrokinetic Resources for the US
National Academy of Sciences
September 2011, Woods Hole, Mass.

Voluntary Carbon Trading Audits Utilizing Satellite Remote Sensing
World Climate Research Programme
October 2011, Denver, Colo.

Remote Sensing for the Audit and Assurance of the Carbon Market
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Global Humanitarian Conference
November 2011, Seattle, Wash.

Unmanned Aerial Systems for Monitoring Arctic Oil Spills
American Geophysical Union
December 2011, San Francisco, Calif.

Read Keith's bio on TEAM's website:
<http://www.teamconsulting.cc/keithcunningham.html> ❖



Award-Winning Performances. Above: The staff of the Alachua County, Fla., Appraiser's Office. Left: Ed Crapo and Wendy Sapp.

IAAO Awards Crapo and Staff Members

The 77th Annual Conference of the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) was held in Phoenix, Ariz., on September 18 – 21, and it was a very good conference for **TEAM** member Ed Crapo, CFA, ASA, AAS, and his staff in the Alachua County, Fla., Appraiser's Office.

Ed received IAAO's prestigious Clifford B. Allen–Most Valuable Member Award. This award is named after the 35th president of the IAAO and is presented to the member who has, over a period of years, made a significant contribution to the IAAO through participation in its activities, and who made an outstanding contribution to the realization of the mission of the IAAO.

Ed, who is the elected property appraiser of Alachua County, has earned three professional designations, including IAAO's AAS, and been honored with many awards from state, local and national organizations. He served as president of the IAAO in 2000-2001 and as president of his state appraiser's association and his local chapter of the American Society of Appraisers (ASA). He has made numerous presentations and has served as a consultant both nationally and internationally.

During Ed's tenure, he has overseen the growth of Alachua County's tax roll from \$1.5 billion to \$14 billion, and he implemented Alachua County's first successful GIS. His jurisdiction was the first to earn IAAO's prestigious Excellence in Assessment Administration award.

The staff in Ed's office has a reason to celebrate as well: the office won IAAO's Public Information Program award. This award is given to assessment jurisdictions that have developed and implemented an effective, fully operational system for disseminating information about the assessment process to taxpayers. Congratulations to everyone on a job well done! ❖

TEAM & business partners present at IAAO conference

Members of **TEAM Consulting** and **Pickett & Co.** made the following presentations at the IAAO conference:

■ **I Can't Do That! Wait, Yes I Can!**

Rick Stuart, CAE, TEAM Consulting

As we begin our career, we set goals we want to accomplish within our profession, but we don't always know how to proceed to achieve those goals. This session provides some tips, guidelines and suggestions on how to start developing your personal growth and reach those professional goals. (See the presentation at http://www.teamconsulting.cc/images/Ricks_2011_IAAO_Conf_Presentation.pdf)

■ **Challenges in Appraising Pipelines**

Robert T. Lehn, M.Ch.E., P.E., RPA and Tony Bell, RPA, Pickett & Co.

Natural gas collected from wells and sent through gathering systems to gas processing plants and then on through cross country interstate pipelines is a vital and increasingly important (and cleaner) energy source. The appraisals for assessors across the country vary from unitary valuations to industrial appraisals. Current trends, some geographic plays, such as shale gas fields, will be described. The speakers will concentrate on the challenges faced at local and at state assessment levels.

■ **Issues Involving the Valuation of Wind Farms**

Tony Bell, RPA, Pickett & Co.; Tom Flowers, CMI, Florida Power & Light; and Michael J. Diedrich, AUS Consultants

A panel discusses issues affecting the valuation of wind turbines used for the generation of electricity. Upon completion of the presentation, attendees should be comfortable developing an appraisal which considers all three approaches to value. ❖

Marion Johnson, CAE



Marion Johnson, CAE

I have worked in county government in Kansas for over 30 years. Most all of that time was in the appraisal field. However, most people probably don't know that I started out as an elected county clerk in the county where I was born and raised. I worked for the local weekly newspaper covering the county beat, and the county clerk at that time decided not to seek re-election. I was asked to run for the office and, as they say, the rest is history.

My movement into the assessment field came during my first term in office. The position of county appraiser came open, and the county commission asked if I wanted to serve both roles, which was allowed in Kansas counties under a certain population size. I only left the assessment world one other time. I accepted the county appraiser's position in a larger county, and after serving in that jurisdiction for a few years, the position of county administrator was open. Again, the county commissioners approached me about assuming the duties of county administrator. Thinking I would like to try something new, I accepted but soon learned that it was not really what I wanted to do. So I left that role and moved back into the assessment world, where I remained until I retired in 2008.

Something outside of the appraisal world that people probably don't know about is my passion for mission work. I have made nine mission trips to two different countries the past 10 years. I have been to Guatemala six times and Haiti three times. The week I spend in these countries regenerates my spirit and makes me really appreciate all the things I have been blessed with in my life. We always work on construction projects in these countries, and as anyone who knows me will tell you, I am not that good with a hammer and drill. But the work is so rewarding and the people are so friendly and appreciative of anything we do. My plans are to return to Guatemala again this January.

Finally, the last thing that most people don't know is that I have 14 grandchildren (nine boys and five girls) ranging from 13 years old to 20 months. They multiplied in a hurry one year when one daughter had triplets and my other daughter had twins. Needless to say, holidays at my house are hectic but loads of fun.

Since my retirement from county government, I do quite a bit of instructing for TEAM and IAAO. In fact, I was counting all the states I had been in either as an instructor or for IAAO, and I was surprised when I realized that there are only four states (Maine, West Virginia, Mississippi and New Mexico) that I have not visited. Also, I am currently working on a couple of consulting projects in Kansas. It keeps me active in the appraisal/assessment community.❖



Congratulations Marion!

At the TEAM Consulting, LLC board meeting held on September 21 during the IAAO Conference in Phoenix, the partners voted unanimously to add Marion Johnson, CAE, as a partner of TEAM. Fred Chmura, AAS, will continue to be the managing partner. George Donatello, CMS; Ed Crapo, AAS; and Rick Stuart, CAE, will continue as partners.

TEAM workshops highly rated...

■ *Valuation of Self Storage Properties*, TEAM's newest workshop, was a hit on its initial offering. Taught by co-author Marion Johnson, CAE, the overall rating for the material was 4.8 on a scale of 5. Comments included:

- Information was current, good
- Interactive
- Useful for my job

■ *The Valuation of Unique Properties* was recently taught by co-author Rick Stuart. The overall rating was 4.7 on a scale of 5. Comments:

- Excellent
- Interesting subject – good content
- Very interesting on different/unique properties out there. Great to know about EPA issues and how to handle these types of properties.
- It addressed many of the unique and new types of properties in my townships

■ *Residential Quality, Condition and Effective Age*, written and recently presented by Rick Stuart, CAE, was student-rated at 4.8. Comments:

- Learned a lot of great information
- It is relevant to my work
- Excellent use of case study problems and actual data

■ *The Art of Making a Powerful Presentation* was presented and co-authored by Rick Stuart, CAE, with a student rating of 4.9. Comments:

- Good class—tough with nerves but helped to control them with practical tips
- I enjoyed the feedback
- Great interaction

Contact Rick Stuart at rstuart17@cox.net or 785.259.1379 to set up these or other TEAM workshops. Self-study workshops can be purchased on TEAM's website: <http://www.teamconsulting.cc/workshops/selfstudyworkshops.html>

The AAS good news continues...

There are a large number of new AAS designees—and almost all of them used TEAM's new AAS Case Study Review material.

Does using the material guarantee success? Of course not. But it appears it was very beneficial to some.

Congratulations to: John Potter, North Carolina. This brings to at least 14 the number of successful AAS candidates that used the Study Review prepared by Fred Chmura, AAS, and Rick Stuart, CAE. We are confident the number of successful candidates is even greater, as some have purchased and used the self-study guide. See *Fair and Equitable* (April, May, June and July 2011) for successful AAS candidates who used TEAM's AAS Case Study Review.

About the Workshop. The purpose of this 2½ day workshop is to provide a review of materials and an understanding of the composition of a case study to help prepare for the AAS Case Study Exam. This is a guide emphasizing the most prevalent items to study for but cannot be all-inclusive of what may actually be on the exam. (See a list of topics discussed above.)

Within the material will be multiple problems associated with the assessment and valuation processes, and the workshop concludes with a four-hour case study exam followed by a review of the answers.

This is not an IAAO workshop but one developed by TEAM Consulting, LLC.

To schedule the workshop, contact Rick Stuart at rstuart17@cox.net or 785.259.1379. Or you can use a local instructor to present the workshop. You can also order the complete workshop as a self-study guide on TEAM's website: www.teamconsulting.cc/images/AAS_Order_Form_2010.pdf ❖

Topics discussed in TEAM's AAS Case Study Review:

- USPAP
- Rates and levies
- Effective tax rates
- Economic principles
- Property definitions
- Ownerships and rights
- Three approaches to value
- Attributes in an effective tax system
- Role of the assessor
- Ratio studies
- Tax policy

<http://www.teamconsulting.cc/aasreview.html>

I heartily endorse the AAS Case Study Review.

I have been an IAAO member since about 1987, and for many years I worked as a chief deputy in large, high-valued townships in the Chicago metropolitan area. Since I was responsible for the ad valorem valuation of all types of non-farm property, I hoped to one day earn the CAE designation. However, working for three different townships as a licensed fee appraiser and raising a family of five children, I never found the time.

Eventually I was honored to be chosen to be the supervisor of assessments in McLean County in central Illinois. The office was a mess when I arrived. I often describe it as taking over as captain of a ship that is lying at the bottom of the ocean with a huge hole in the hull. With hard work and a better staff than I deserve, the boat was floated and now rides proud. My career had taken a turn, however. I am now much more an administrator than an assessor/appraiser. I switched to the AAS candidacy, but once again found more excuses for not completing the designation. One day I received a brochure for an AAS Case Study review, and part of the review included the opportunity to take the 8-hour exam on the final day. Finally, it was an opportunity to force myself, after 24 years of procrastinating, to see if I had the knowledge, experience and drive to earn a designation.

To make a long story short, if it had not been for the Case Study Review, I would still be a candidate instead of a proud holder of the AAS designation. A word of warning: read the preparation materials and do a good review before you get there. I felt like I was taking an exam on my 24 years of assessment practice. The feeling of accomplishment cannot be adequately described. I heartily endorse the AAS Case Study Review.

Robert T. Kahman, AAS, CIAO-I
Supervisor of Assessments
McLean County, Illinois



McLean County, Ill.



What is TEAM Consulting All About?

TEAM Consulting is a network of experienced “problem solvers” who can offer cost-effective and practical solutions to both large and small assessment jurisdictions. The core of **TEAM Consulting** is our vision, mission and values. These items are the key elements that guide **TEAM** in creating innovative solutions and partnerships that have the potential to change assessment administration and property valuation today and in the future.

Our Vision

TEAM’s vision is two-fold. First, our vision for the future of assessment administration and property valuation is to help build systems that are technologically efficient, cost-effective and valuable to the publics who depend on them for information. Secondly, our vision for **TEAM** is to become a recognized leader who can make a difference in assessment administration and property valuation by creating a link to all parties involved in this process. Third, **TEAM** is a strong advocate of education and will create or assist in the creation of specialty designed educational workshops and courses.

Our Mission

“To enable the emergence of a new technology and innovative concepts and ideas to improve the performance of assessment administration and property valuation processes for the benefit of our customers and taxpayers who we all work for.”

Our Values

TEAM’s values are central to who we are as individuals and as a team. Following are our primary values:

Respect – appreciating and valuing diverse perspectives; building relationships based on trust; and relating to others as individuals, without regard to role, authority, skill, experience or compensation.

Creativity – comes from thinking progressively and being open to the new concepts and ideas that have the potential to work better in the future and bring us closer to our mission.

Performance – takes many forms, but at its essence, this value reflects our desire for achievement, quality, professionalism and success.

Growth – comes out of education, learning from the examples of others and reflecting on our experiences in order to gain insights into how we can improve.

Purpose – knowing why we are doing something, which results in being more effective in our work. When we have purpose for our individual efforts that connects to the purpose of our group and corporate efforts, we have consistency of purpose as an organization.

Service – focusing on others rather than purely on us. Service drives our mission to create something that is of value to others.

Ethics – we subscribe to a code of ethics and the highest standards of our profession.

Check us out at www.teamconsulting.cc