


NEW HOMES & CONDOS

How technology is transforming new housing



RICHARD LYALL
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Housing is undergoing a massive transformation thanks to technical innovation.

I refer to this as the Uber effect — unlike some industries where transformative technologies are creating difficulty, the story with housing is entirely positive.

New-home buyers should pay attention because innovation is going to take housing to a new level.

It starts with design. Housing based on BIM (Building Information Modelling) platforms holds the promise of better designed and built living environments.

So, what is BIM? It's a digital process that allows builders to quickly design the physical and functional characteristics of a home. You'd swear it was something out of Star Trek, but the future is here and it's fantastic for this industry.

It is now used on all manner of construction projects of all forms, including residential.

BIM-enabled projects can result in greater precision in a new community of homes from start to finish. It better integrates design with materi-

als and contractors, it reduces errors and increases accuracy which results in a better quality building.

Presumably, that will mean happier customers too.

At the beginning of the homebuying process, the design and related renderings are better prepared with more advanced visuals. This gives new-home buyers a clearer picture of what they are getting.

Because of the data that BIM provides to the home builders, suppliers know exactly what they have to do and the scheduling of trades and work is more precise.

That takes a lot of pressure off builders, site supervisors and anyone else watching the clock and calendar — believe me, a more harmonious job site is a better built site.

With the streamlining of the home-building process, this should reduce delays.

On the back end of the homebuying process, BIM opens the door to create an improved living experience for the occupant.

To borrow an automotive term, the fit and finish of the new home is improved. It is

easier to measure the energy performance of buildings as well as its environmental effect.

This is vitally important because the way in which people live is the starting point for most other things in a well-ordered life.

BIM will take new-home building from the mundane to the extraordinary and open up new opportunities for the next generation of new-home builders.

It will rapidly advance the industry and open the door to new possibilities relative to the customization of the living environment for individuals and families.

The advantages of new housing over existing will become ever more apparent. The biggest obstacle to this development is the inertia of “we’ve always done things this way.”

RESCON has identified the promotion of innovation in housing as its No. 1 priority. We shall be seeking to accelerate the introduction of BIM and reducing barriers to the changes it supports.

Consumers also need to learn more about what is possible. A home is not just an investment measured by square footage, but rather a support base for one's ongoing life experience.

— *Richard Lyall, who has represented Ontario's residential building industry since 1991, is the president of RESCON. Contact him at @RESCONprez or lyall@rescon.com.*



New homes that are based on the Building Information Modelling (BIM) platform hold the promise of better designed and built living environments.



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