



Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: Lauren Oakley Schwenk

Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions questions that affect us all.

Lauren Oakley Schwenk is the CEO and President of Oakley Rhinehart Cassidy, LLC, a real estate investment, development, and management company in Central Florida. As a young professional, she is actively involved in her community and seeks to engage other young professionals to be retained in the area. As a result of her role on various boards and professional committees, she was the recent recipient of the Polk Emerging Leader Award for young professionals in her region.

Q: What do you see as the key emerging uses of the internet for the Housing Development?

A: The internet has given us greater access to sales data, mapping capabilities, property information, upcoming job drivers, and has allowed us to stay ahead of housing trends in areas that are rebounding quickly.

Q: What surprising applications of the Internet have you found in Housing Development?

A: The use of Smartphone apps has been an incredible tool in researching and contracting for land. One app in particular lets us pull-up next to any property and gives us property appraiser, land use, flood plain and sales data within seconds.

Q: What have been the “Best Uses” of the Internet for you in Housing Development?

A: The sheer amount of reliable data that is available at our fingertips and in relation to the rapidly changing real estate market.

Q: What should be avoided when dealing with the Internet in Housing Development?

A: There are many times when using the internet will not come close to replacing face to face discussions with the personnel or leaders of state and/or local governmental entities.

Q: Which next steps might you recommend for all of us to take in Housing Development?

A: The entry steps are difficult but cannot be short cut. There are many land owners who find the way appearing to be blocked, who might be best served to ally themselves with those who have been down the path.