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55 YEARS

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A technologist's outlook on title closing software - by Kamran Varahramyan

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“[Some] never seem to grow old. Always active in thought, always ready to adopt new ideas . . . Satisfied, yet ever dissatisfied, settled, yet ever unsettled, they always enjoy the best of what is, are the first to find the best of what will be.” - William Shakespeare

The real estate settlement process is entering a golden age. Across New England, times are changing, and more counties are offering electronic searches and recordings. Still, my home state of Vermont may be a laggard, but for good reason. People deserve a personal touch when making the biggest financial decisions of their lives. Accordingly, title agents and law firms need a software tool-set that is streamlined for every condition.

Creative disruption in technology depends upon shared technical advances. You may be familiar with Gartner research reports. They have noticed a pattern they call the hype cycle. It starts when a new innovation is announced, and expectations shoot through the roof. This is almost always followed by a fall from grace, into the infamous “trough of disillusionment.” For example, some years ago we heard so much about autonomous vehicles. Lately, we only hear about autopilot from our friends who drive Teslas. In a few years, the technology will enter the aptly named “slope of enlightenment,” and finally achieve our early expectations – cars that take the kids to soccer practice for us.

Real estate innovations blaze similar trails. Companies try creative ideas to push the industry forward, and over time, the industry gets it right.

At present, the technology to digitize every aspect of a real estate transaction is feasible. Remote showings, electronic loans and checks, title office automation, remote notarized closings, and blockchain county recordings will all come to be. For instance, in the future, recording onto a digital blockchain may actually become the norm. It just makes sense to have a public county ledger, ever available, unchangeable, that only the county has the keys to append. And imagine the increase in efficiency if all prior records and searches were already written in. The chain of title will be fully digitized and cryptographically sealed for all of posterity.

There are good reasons for digital change. We used to go to the Yellow Pages for information. Now we just ask for what we need out loud and it is granted. There are similarly compelling reasons for some things to stay the same. Every region has local grocery chains that have stood the test of time. Wal-Mart will never completely meet a community’s unique and seasonal needs.

At SnapClose we have provided title closing software in the New England region for 20 years. We believe that regional title companies and law offices will thrive, in the midst of industry consolidation and tech disruption, when they have the right tools at hand. We are presently hard at work, building a new platform that provides this toolset, in alignment with the title industry’s advancing ecosystem.

In the title business, it all comes down to high quality of service and fast turnaround times. To give

you a preview of what we have in store, we are building our platform with a clear, task-oriented design, and with seamless communication in mind. Tasks and events adjust without extra work. Teammates collaborate on tight deadlines with all the involved parties, sans friction. Integrations with lenders, realtors, and underwriters continuously streamline the process.

Imagine managing your closings with a SnapClose system that can predict your needs. The machine's predictive behavior algorithms learn how you use the software, and can, for instance, present you with the reports you need on the day that you need them. Common workflows are gleaned from usage, making configuration a breeze. We believe an opener can start 10 files in 10 minutes, and easily allocate tasks to available staff resources.

What if the system just knows what your employees need to do today, and provides you with a conductor's command view from which you can orchestrate your business? Managing your business should be a Snap! Our priority is to give you the power to achieve more, and together disrupt the industry.

As we re-open, and venture out into this brave new world, let us continue to innovate how we conduct title closings, while remaining grounded by tried and true New England principles.

I have always been interested in technology and business. In academia, I published research exploring the limits of semiconductor manufacturing, as part of the global effort to make computers faster. Wanting a more varied career in the here and now, I transitioned to software engineering and began working on innovations in the auto insurance industry. Currently, I am the principal engineer at SnapClose, building a new class of title settlement software.

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