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REVOLUTIONIZING HOME INSPECTION

Pillar To Post Gives Consumers What They Want,
and REALTORS® What They Need



Interior Staircase



Living Room Front Window



Exterior Front Right

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\$7.95

COVER STORY

REVOLUTIONIZING HOME INSPECTION



**Pillar To Post Gives Consumers What They Want,
and REALTORS® What They Need**

By Maria Patterson

The frenzied housing market of the past 18 months has seen homebuyers go to new lengths to secure the home of their dreams. From agreeing to risky contingency plans to foregoing a home inspection, today's home sale experience has only added stress to what many consumers already saw as an uncertain and complicated process.

For real estate professionals trying to shepherd clients through this time, having the right tools and resources at the ready is no longer just a convenience, but a must. That's why Pillar To Post Home Inspectors®' newest suite of tech-powered products couldn't have come at a better time. Developed almost presciently, pre-pandemic, the company's innovative offerings provide agents with much-needed solutions, and consumers with the information and choice they've been craving. Designed to deliver speed, ease, convenience and transparency through a variety of virtual options, the technology based solutions are answering the call of both real estate professionals and consumers alike. The result? More confidence in the homeownership journey.

"Real estate professionals and their customers need more expansive and timely information to drive smooth transactions and ultimately, confident homeownership," explains Pillar To Post Home Inspectors® CEO Dan Steward. "Our technology platform and services have been developed to address these needs and bring an enhanced and faster experience for everyone involved in buying and selling residential real estate. We realized we could make buying a home a much better process."

RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN HOMEOWNERSHIP

From politics to the economy to world events, uncertainty abounds in modern times. Today's consumers are craving confidence in their decisions, especially when it comes to buying a home, most likely the largest investment of their lives. In today's frenetic and confusing real estate market, however, confidence is hard to come by.

Just ask Brian Copeland, broker at Doorbell Real Estate and the 2021 president of the Greater Nashville Association of REALTORS. "It's really hard to ground sellers right now," he reports. "Many are pushing us to put average homes on the market for above the selling price of their neighbor's home, assuming it will fly off the shelf. On the flip side, many buyers are leathered and worn from the past 12 months of craziness. They throw out monopoly money offers only to regret them, finding any loophole they can to abandon the commitment. Many are using inspections to either get out of a deal or to demand a steep post-inspection discount based on inflated fears they have of fixing it all."

In his role as entrepreneur in residence for the National Association of REALTORS®' Second Century Ventures, however, Jeff Turner has seen close-up how innovation can solve problems like these both for real estate



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professionals and their consumers.

"We live in interesting times. I think we need some things to be less interesting," says Turner. "We want more certainty and more confidence. I want to be able to trust the decision I'm making on the biggest investment in my life."

Steward and his team believe the new product suite from Pillar To Post Home Inspectors® can help that

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cause. By creating what they believe is the “ultimate home inspection experience,” confidence and trust can be restored to the home buying and selling process by providing customers with the information they need to make individual, custom, confident and personal decisions—where and when they want it served to them.

Available in a variety of packages, the new offerings from Pillar To Post include:

PTP360

Available with every Pillar To Post Home Inspection, PTP360 provides homebuyers with an interactive visual inspection summary built into a 360° view of every room, floor to ceiling, as well as the home’s exterior. The visual report features comments from the home inspector embedded into each view of the home so that homebuyers can see them in relation to the house. The visual inspection summary also gives buyers a way to revisit the home from any device, as often as they’d like, as well as share the report with family or contractors who may be enlisted to work on the home.

PTPFloorPlan

With a Prestige or Premium home inspection package, homebuyers will also receive the PTPFloorPlan. This accurate, measured floor plan of the entire home can help buyers plan for furniture placement and provide contractors with exact measurements, enabling them to provide accurate estimates on painting or repairs.

PTPEstimates

Another significant component of the enhanced packages is PTPEstimates, which provides clients with a zip-code specific estimate of what repairs on the issues highlighted in the inspection report will cost. This serves as critical information for sellers as well when they choose to do a pre-listing inspection.

PTPHomeManual

Also part of the enhanced packages, PTPHomeManual is a home management app that allows homebuyers to organize, operate and maintain their home from any device. The PTPHomeManual serves as an ongoing resource for buyers throughout their



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Entrepreneur in Residence,
Second Century Ventures

life in the home, putting information about appliances and other systems right at their fingertips when a repair or replacement is needed.

Virtual Open Houses

Pillar To Post also helps facilitate remote transactions with its Virtual

Open House options, allowing prospective buyers to tour a home at their own pace. The tours include every room, floor to ceiling, as well as the home’s entire exterior. For a nominal cost, an accurate floor plan can also be included.

For Steward and his team, it’s about getting the information into the hands of the people who need it most: real estate professionals, homebuyers and home sellers.

“This enhanced inspection experience puts more relevant information in the hands of buyers, sellers and their REALTORS®,” says Steward. “Put all these products together and you now have a more comprehensive picture and understanding of the home, all in fast, easy-to-use forms to build confidence for everyone involved in selling and buying the home.”

GIVING CONSUMERS WHAT THEY WANT

Pandemic aside, the virtual and visual solutions provided through Pillar To Post’s new product offering is something that consumers have demanded for some time now...yet the real estate industry hasn’t fully delivered on.

Take virtual tours, for example. According to Turner, pre-pandemic, 87% of consumers said they wanted to view a virtual tour before physically seeing a home. Yet, on average, less than 5% of listings have them.

“It is literally the most perfect technology that’s ever been built for showing homes, yet it’s rarely used,” says Turner. “The industry has not kept up with demand or the ubiquity of really expert technology that exists right now.”

That’s why the new line-up from Pillar To Post is so critical. “These are all things that make it easier for the consumer to make decisions,” says Turner. “And that’s what consumers expect today.”

Kim Cameron, founder of the Kim Cameron Group with Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate Preferred Properties in St. Louis, Missouri, has under-

stood this for many years, and has counted on Pillar To Post to help her deliver on client expectations.

“The changes at Pillar To Post over the last 15 years have been really impressive,” she says. “There’s only so much you can do to make a home inspection sexy, but Pillar To Post is always on the forefront of whatever needs to happen for the industry.”

It’s no surprise then that Cameron jumped on board with PTP360 and PTPFloorPlans, especially during the pandemic.

“In the past, clients would ask to get into the house one more time to see it before closing, but we couldn’t allow that as we dealt with the pandemic and lockdown,” says Cameron. “So it was a huge help to have the PTP360 Visual Inspection Summary and floor plan with the dimensions so that they could make all their plans, like furniture and paint selections. This gave the client more control.”

And this is exactly what Steward has set out to do. “Our business is to serve the REALTOR® and their home-buying and -selling clients,” he says. “Our goal is to provide the right information in the right way so everyone has objective information and can make an informed decision with peace of mind. Our deep experience combined with extensive research and involvement with real estate professionals and prop-tech thought leaders all blend together and drive us to continuously improve.”

HELPING REALTORS® DO MORE BUSINESS, BETTER

By giving consumers the experience they’ve come to expect, powered by innovative technology, real estate professionals gain an important competitive differentiation, critical in today’s market where the REALTOR®’s value proposition is increasingly under attack. And as Cameron reports, consumers are noticing.

“It’s total shock and awe” when

clients see the new PTP products, she says. “(Clients) think that all REALTORS® do this, but then they talk to their friends who say, ‘What, you got a floorplan? You got a 360 degree view of the entire home highlighting problem areas?’ This provides so much more than what the average REALTOR® puts into the MLS. And fewer and fewer REALTORS® have been doing 360 tours because homes are selling so quickly. We haven’t had a single client who hasn’t been thrilled.”

While Pillar To Post did a better job than most in documenting a home with two-dimensional photos, nothing compares to the 360 report, says Turner. “There’s just such a different experience,” he explains. “All the cognitive dissonance that gets created when you’re trying to piece together parts of 2D photos to form a recollection of the space goes away. I no longer have to draw from memory or 2D photos. I can see everything in its full context.”

Vehicles like PTP360, PTPFloorPlan and PTPHomeManual also play an invaluable role in extending the REALTOR®/client relationship beyond the transaction.

“The home inspection has always been beneficial for that point in time, but with the 360 Visual Inspection Summary, it now has a life that can live past that point,” says Turner. “You’re not just providing buyers with a document that’s meant to get them into the home and then collects dust in the file cabinet—you’re giving them a living document that can help them while they live in that home.”

And having access to this living document is an invaluable tool for retaining clients—and saving transactions—says Copeland.

“Home inspections have historically been seen as a microscope that informs a buyer on exactly what they are buying,” he explains. “Now, many buyers view the inspection as an insurance policy to free them from



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- Brian Copeland
Broker, Doorbell Real Estate

a contract they jumped into in less than three hours at a price they grew to regret. Tools like PTP360 take a lot of the liability to be the consumer’s window of memory away. Having PTP360 has taken a lot of that stress and responsibility away.”

According to Cameron, the PTP products also help keep the connection going between the client and the real estate professional during those several critical weeks before closing. “The gap between the inspection and the final walk-through can be quiet, so having something for them to continue looking at—to continue the connection



“The gap between the inspection and the final walk-through can be quiet, so having something for them to continue looking at—to continue the connection with the home—fills a void.”

- Kim Cameron

Founder, Kim Cameron Group,
Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate
Preferred Properties

with the home—fills a void,” she says. “This helps keep them moving forward the whole time during that lull.”

“This absolutely elevates the client experience,” she adds. “We’re nurturing clients after the closing and staying in touch, and they love the fact that we have the floor plan that’s available for them to use again and again.”

Living in pandemic times has only increased the value of the virtual options provided through the new PTP offerings.

“When Covid hit, shelter-in-place regulations forced many to stay in their cities while inspections and due diligence was happening,” says Copeland. “The buyer was satisfied with a PDF report with, at best, sketchy photos. Now, they are wowed when within a few hours they receive a full 360, 3D scan of every inch of their potential home. This is more than just an inspection tech toy. This is a valuable tool to help consumers feel more comfortable and confident in their purchase and process.”

Helping real estate professionals add value to the client experience in this way is a primary goal of Steward and his team.

“Every business exists to serve its customers and grow by serving more customers better than the competition,” says Steward. “REALTORS® remain at the front line to the real estate transaction and our job is to help them and their customers—to make everyone’s home-selling and home-buying journey a smooth, enjoyable and confident experience.”

According to Cameron, Pillar To Post continues to deliver on this mission. “Most companies don’t want to invest in technology, but Pillar To Post has been on the forefront—and it will take a while for others to catch up,” she says. “It’s like heated car seats—once you have it, you don’t want to not have it ever again. Once you have that floorplan, you don’t ever want to not have that option again.”

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR THE FUTURE

While Pillar To Post Home Inspectors® can certainly be lauded for its investment in tech innovation, they’d rather keep the focus on people, fulfilling the company’s vision to provide an

unmatched customer experience and deliver on what they promise. According to Steward, this mission is more important than ever in our diverse world, and reinforces that real estate is still a people business.

And products like the PTP suite of tools help real estate professionals achieve what’s ultimately most important for their future success: long-lasting, trusted relationships.

As Copeland says, “My job is to empower clients with knowledge for a great decision they feel confident in. Setting myself up as a great source for quality moments helps me be the REALTOR® of choice for not only my

current consumer, but the pipeline of people they send my way after the deal closes.”

Turner wholeheartedly concurs that the focus should always remain on the consumer. “Pay attention to the consumer,” he advises. “What does the consumer want? Everything else is extraneous

and unimportant.”

And that’s exactly what Steward and his team intend to continue doing. “The hockey great Wayne Gretzky once said, ‘skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.’ That aptly describes our driving force in serving REALTORS®, homebuyers and home sellers,” says Steward. “Anticipate their needs and take care of them.” **RE**

For more information, please visit www.pillartopost.com.



SCAN ME TO SEE NEW
PTP HOME INSPECTION
FEATURES.



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