



TECH OF A LIFE

Let's discuss: Visionary Thinking



Edition 4

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BEN RIDGWAY***
Co-Founder



JAMIE COOKE***
Co-Founder

EDITORS LETTER

In this edition we explore visionary thinking and the impact that technology and people have on setting goals for the future and leading change.

In the midst of continuous change and a busy time for agents as they work to build their pipeline in challenging market conditions, we know how difficult it can be to take a view to the future, instead of focusing on the day to day. Now is the time to become a visionary thinker, and be bold enough to run with new ideas and opportunities, before the rest of the crowd. With new technologies on the rise, there are plenty of tools to help agents navigate changing customer expectations and help facilitate new ways to set their business and teams up for success.

In this edition, we'll explore everything you need to know to think like a visionary, including the home buyer and seller of the future, AI, the lessons we can learn from Amazon and building a winning team mentality. Our contributors discuss what Estate Agents can do now to prepare their teams for future success and the lessons we can learn from outside of the sector to change the property industry for the better.

As always, we value your feedback, so please let us know what you think and the themes you'd like us to explore next.

WINNING HEARTS AND INSTRUCTIONS WITH NEXT LEVEL CUSTOMER SERVICE

Whether housing stock is high or low, one thing remains constant for Estate Agents: competition for instructions.

The stats on the slowing market are widely known, but a slowdown is by no means doom and gloom – it's an opportunity for Estate Agents to stand out by exploring what buyers and sellers really want and understanding more about the experience they expect. It's an opportunity to experiment with new ways of working that will really impress their customers and a time to think strategically about how to attract new leads.

In our recent surveys of UK agents, they discussed the growing expectations and heightened 'emotional involvement' consumers have when it comes to service, communication and timescales – with speeding up the process and better communications high on the agenda.

But where to start – how do agents better understand and match the experience consumers expect?

As a follow on to our agent discussions, we went out to the UK consumer to find out more.

We asked over 600 people who have sold a property in the UK in the last two years, how they rated their experience with their Estate Agent. To help inform your big thinking we set out to understand what really resonates with consumers and what they value in their experiences outside of the property transaction too. This is what we found out...

89%

of respondents said that exceptional customer service is most important in choosing any brand or service provider in all areas of their lives.

Key findings:



Customer service is top of mind when consumers choose a brand.



Amazon is the consumer favourite for positive experience, tracking the likes of Apple, Google.



Past experiences with a brand or recommendation from family and friends are what prompt a seller to use an agent.

Rising demands and great expectations

Our data confirmed that customer service is still the key to success. 89% of respondents said that exceptional customer service is most important in choosing any brand or service provider in all areas of their lives. With a major decision like choosing an Estate Agent to manage their property sale, customer service becomes even more essential.

When asked what the key qualities of exceptional customer service look like to them, 87% of respondents said clear, responsive and transparent communication mattered most to them, while 76% said that companies giving a realistic expectation of timeframes was the most important thing.

When putting a lens on communication within the moving process, it being timely and transparent remains a frustration across the industry for everyone involved in transactions.

For Estate Agents, no two days are the same and are always fast paced with a lot to juggle. As an agent, you might feel like you're doing everything in your power to communicate with clients as best and as frequently as possible, but their expectations are continuing to rise. We know how much more time you'd love to spend with your clients instead of juggling admin and everything in between – because you tell us.

This is where automation-driven technology can come in to its own. Consumers expect an experience that aligns both in person and digitally. They want to build relationships and be able to ask questions, they want empathy and guidance, but they also want instant updates and somewhere they can log in and see everything in one place. Automation will align with the experiences they have become accustomed to everyday, with the standards they hold so high in every other sector.

87%

of respondents said clear, responsive and transparent communication mattered most to them.

What can Estate Agents learn from the world's automation leader?

There is no surprise that when we asked respondents which big brands are nailing customer service, more than 50% said Amazon. Amazon is the consumer front runner for the most positive experience, tracking streets ahead of the likes of Apple, Google, Netflix and Uber.

Speed of service, clear communication, personalisation and the way in which problems are resolved are the things people love most about their Amazon experience. What's the secret to this success? All of these plus points are enabled by market-leading automation at every step, and all with a personal touch.

Amazon's automations work behind the scenes, so you never see them, but you feel their impact when you use their services. The most common stand out for consumers – 95% said that feeling when your Amazon parcel arrives. It's on your doorstep by lunchtime even though you ordered it just hours ago, late at night before going to sleep after being served the perfect ad. How did they know, before you did, that you needed an air fryer? This consumer feeling of 'exceed my expectations' isn't made possible by Amazon workers frantically packing up your order – systems feed your request through to robots who select your items from meticulously catalogued shelves, then load it into vans, while automated communications keep you updated as to where it is on the optimally efficient route that was planned by GPS trackers – the whole process is powered by automations, all designed with customer service at the heart.

People at the heart

What respondents valued most from their experience of working with Estate Agents was a friendly attitude (62%), closely followed by their local knowledge and expertise (55%). These are things that automation can't replace and will always require the human touch. Imagine if you had more time to spend really building that relationship. This is something that automation can enable, supporting agents to spend their time in the places that add most value to the client experience, without other parts of the process slowing down as a result.

On the flip side when it came to problems respondents had faced, lack of updates and communication (19%) and lack of speed (21%) got the majority vote. These were the two main complaints that stood out for them when working with their Estate Agent. No surprises here as these experiences are the opposite to what respondents value the most.

More choice for consumers

Alongside speed, consumers are seeking more choice and control according to the GWI 2023 consumer trends report. They want to make decisions that match their lifestyles and give them the outcomes they seek. When we asked the 600 respondents about the sale options they had been given by Estate Agents, only 10% were offered auction by their agent, despite auction being a solution to the two top priorities identified – a quick and secure sale.

By offering auction as an opportunity to sellers', Estate Agents are showing they have listened to and understand the modern consumer and their desire to speed up the process, be given more choice and a more transparent experience.

Key takeaways for agents

When asked to give the top reasons they chose a particular Estate Agent, respondents said past experiences (29%), recommendation from a family or friend (24%) and customer service (23%) had the biggest influence.

Our research confirms that understanding consumer needs and investing in delivering the five-star customer service they are accustomed to in other areas of their lives is the key to success for agents.

To be the best agency you can be, you need to focus on giving your clients not just great results, but also a great experience. In short – automate what you can, be friendly and informed, and remember why customers pay a premium for Amazon Prime.

Problems respondents faced:

19% Lack of updates and communication

21% Lack of speed

Estate Agents who are less familiar with online auction can find out more about what it has to offer, and its growing popularity, in iamproperty's most recent [Online Auction Index](#) which offers an overview of Q2 2023.

Most important thing to consumers when choosing an Estate Agent:



What respondents valued most working with Estate Agents:



SCORING SUCCESS



Paul Blake,
Owner, Newcastle Eagles

Demand for inspirational sport documentaries is on the rise, with different arenas of sport sharing their stories with audiences across the world.

The likes of Drive to Survive which goes behind the scenes of Formula 1, and The Last Dance which follows the rise of Michael Jordan, are captivating millions of viewers – and not just those who are devoted fans.

These shows have got us hooked on the stories of sport. The highs, lows, challenges and successes in equal measure, which are all part of the game – and life. To navigate this flux, athletes and those involved in elite sport from managers to owners often have one big thing in common – a winning mindset and vision that drives them to operate at the top of their game.

Synergies between sport and business have long been compared, particularly in the highly competitive world of property. Here, the owner of Newcastle Eagles basketball club shares his winning formula for why it's important to have a vision, how to adapt it, and how to set yourself up for success on the road to realising it.

Newcastle Eagles is the most successful professional basketball team in UK history. Over the last 24 years, the team has won an impressive 27 trophies under the ownership of Paul Blake. No stranger to the court, Paul started playing basketball when he was 12 years old, working his way up to National League level, before moving across to the business side of the sport.

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A winning vision – not just shooting hoops and securing sales, you need aggressive defence and hard work

“At any level of sport, I think there is often too much focus on whether you’re recruiting attackers or defenders, although in basketball we use the terms offense and defence. I’ve always had the attitude that defence wins games, no matter how good you are in offense. To win you need to have strong defence. You don’t need lots of sporting talent to play defence well in our sport either, it’s all in your mental attitude, you need to want it.

“I think there are parallels with business. Offense is the fun bit in business, going on corporate golf days, networking events or launching new services for example. Whereas defence is the hard work – being consistent with your finance, emails, and business strategy. Winning new business isn’t going to be worth much if you aren’t on top of what you’ve already built.

“Another key element of a winning vision for me is hard work. American NBA player Karl Malone said, ‘Every minute you’re not in the gym, I am’. You can’t win anything without hard work. On the basketball court you might be a great point scorer clocking 20 points in a game, but if the man you’re guarding scores more, you’re not working hard enough. Being committed to staying ahead of your competition will keep you and your business sharp.”

Picking the winning team – all about attitude not aptitude

“Winning in sport and business means having the right team of people around you. What is sometimes overlooked though is how much personality matters. We invest a lot of time and energy into making sure we recruit the right personalities for the Eagles. Having all the best technical capabilities isn’t enough if candidates are negative characters. We take a good look at their previous experience to see how they have worked in a team. The difference between a professional and amateur sportsman is not always how technically gifted they are, but their mentality. We have developed a glass half full culture at the Eagles – an ethos that our Head Coach, also the Head Coach for the British Men’s Basketball team, Mark Steutel lives and breathes. I also think this is key for any successful business, as culture is everything.

“To help with finding the right players, we have a group of volunteers who support us with pre-season photos who have said on several occasions they can tell from the way the players behave when they coordinate photo sessions which ones will succeed or fail. They’re often right. It’s all about mental attitude – are they coachable? Do they want to learn? Will they go the extra mile? Will they listen to someone who they see as not being ‘on their level’ giving instructions? These all offer us clues as to whether they will be part of our winning team and support our vision.

“We are also always looking for people who are in it for the long-game, positive people who want to ‘play for the badge’, and want to make Newcastle their home. We are the best supported club in the league, and we want our players to fall in love with the city as well as the sport – this all plays into a winning mentality. If you have someone in your team who isn’t engaged with the wider vision and instead see their role as a stepping stone, you don’t get the player trying to win a trophy, you get an individual looking after their own stats. Creating a strong culture within your business will give your team the motivation they need to work together.”

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Creating a strong culture within your business will give your team the motivation they need to work together.”

Navigating the journey – stay positive

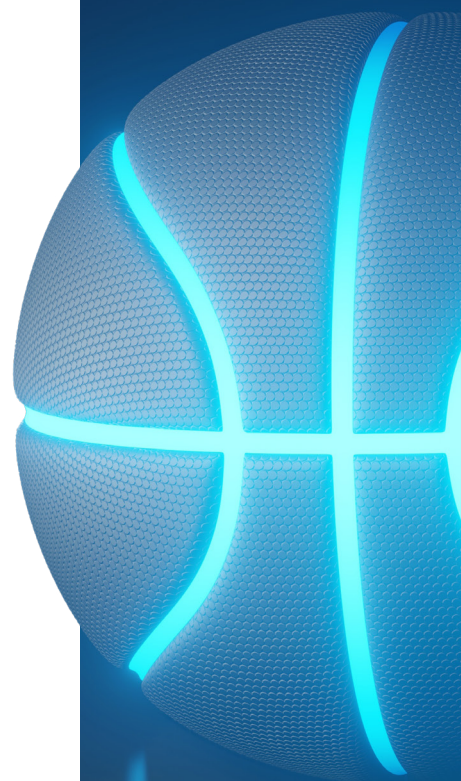
“I’ve always believed that big goals need breaking down into steps, and still do the same today. In my playing days, my vision for success started with getting on the court in the first place, by being chosen to play the game, tournament then majority of games in the season. It was a process, and I had to work hard at each step. I never got to where I wanted to be in basketball, but back then there wasn’t as clear a pathway as there is today. My love for the sport never faltered though, and I didn’t let this blip in my vision get me down – for long anyway. I adapted and moved over to the business side of the sport, shifting my vision and realising the opportunities ahead.

“Newcastle Eagles encompasses multiple businesses – the club, the foundation, and the arena we play in. Even though I am passionately invested in club games, I am also involved in the day to day running of all three businesses. If we lose a game at the weekend – even though I really struggle to get over losing games – I must find a positive mindset to approach the tasks that need doing for the other businesses on Monday morning. Remaining positive is a key pillar to winning and staying on the path to achieving your vision. As a team after losing a game we focus on everything we’re doing well – we might have lost on points, but we may have sold out all tickets again. A couple of years ago we lost our Coach, Fabulous Flournoy MBE who is now working for Toronto Raptors, so we took a step back and made a lot of changes. We supported each other through this transition period, knowing that change is necessary to grow, and our new Head Coach, Mark is in a positive place and we’re starting to win again. The same applies in business, especially an industry like property where things can change quickly. There are always wins to be found and although it’s important look at how we can improve, it’s not productive to dwell on the negatives.”

Aim high, then aim higher still – does your vision have a purpose?

“We took on Newcastle Eagles when it was a loss-making business and looked at what we had to do to make it break-even. There weren’t enough young people playing basketball and we knew anyone who plays is likely to come and watch so we got involved in community delivery, built up an audience, and ultimately set up a foundation in 2005. The club was doing okay on court, the foundation started growing, and people started coming to games. We didn’t have our own building then, so we had to pay for venue hire and couldn’t train in the same building. We started the ten-year journey of building our own arena which is now the home of the Eagles. The club is continuing to win in the new venue four years in.

“We now want to run larger events via the foundation which will provide a revenue to support junior basketball training. One of our goals is giving as many young people as possible the opportunity to play the game. We’re now looking at extending the building and on the club side we’ve taken the decision to join a European League. There are always new goals being set, and your vision adjusts. As long as the changes you make have a purpose, you’re on the right path.



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“Remaining positive is a key pillar to winning and staying on the path to achieving your vision.”

Push through failure

“You’ve got to be willing to always pick yourself back up from failure. A lot of businesses fail in the first two years, and some say you have to fail a couple of times before you succeed. We’re all human at the end of the day and make mistakes, take risks, try something new that doesn’t come off. My wife and I could have easily – and nearly did – say this isn’t going to work, but it’s worth recognising that starting out is the hardest bit. We didn’t accept failure and found ways to keep the cash flow coming in. Drive, passion and resilience is what has helped us to achieve everything we have so far – always with a clear vision ahead as to what we were striving for.”

A legacy vision

“I hope the work I’ve done means this team never disappears. Much like football clubs that have been running since the 1880s and other longstanding businesses which naturally go through different ownership and leadership, I hope the Eagles keep doing what they do for hundreds of years. I am just the latest person running the club and will take it as far as I can during my time here.”

A NEW ERA OF AI IN ESTATE AGENCY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities are constantly developing, faster than we could have ever imagined.

Almost overnight, we have been given the power to compile research and create content in minutes rather than hours or even weeks. How is the property industry set to develop alongside, now Estate Agents have the power of AI?

Shedding some light on the evolving landscape of AI and automation are two leading tech experts from the residential property world. Simon Whale, MD and Founder of Kerfuffle and Neil Hope, Chief Technology Officer at iamproperty, both deal with tech that incorporates AI and automation every day.

Simon brings his insider knowledge of property technology to explain what AI and automation mean for Estate Agents and consumers, while Neil shares his background in software development to explore the benefits that AI and automation powered tech can have on Estate Agency branches in the UK.





Simon Whale,
MD and Founder of Kerfuffle

The differences between AI and automation

Automation has been around for a long time – if we look right back to an early laptop or even a typewriter, automation has always helped us to do more in less time.

A lot of the early Estate Agency software systems, which we now recognise as CRM, used an automated workflow to support agents with tasks – from helpful reminders, mail merging of letters and emails, and making daily processes more efficient. Today, automations massively increase productivity levels in agencies and can even automate full admin processes.

While automation is something we are already familiar with, AI is a genuine disruptor.

AI can already be used in many ways, such as helping agents generate content quickly and accurately or help make sense of data and identify trends, often pulling out interesting angles and patterns that might take a person hours to identify. But AI has so much more potential yet to be tapped into.

Many suppliers have already implemented AI in their software for Estate Agents, such as being able to use AI to write a compelling prospecting letter, while others have new projects underway that revolve around AI. There's more to come, and it's an exciting time for the industry from an innovation perspective.

AI: friend or foe?

When it comes to feelings towards AI, I believe that people fall into three main categories. There are the people who aren't confident in it and want to avoid any risk associated with AI. At the other end of the spectrum, there are the evangelists, who are excited about AI and want their business to be ahead of the curve. Then in between, there are those that are excited by AI's capabilities, but are remaining cautious.

I can appreciate all views – it's a hot topic and evolving at pace, but there are a lot of unknowns and questions.

Love it or loathe it, AI is going to affect almost every part of our lives and sometimes we won't even know it's happening. A classic example is in customer service, when you direct message a company via live chat online to resolve a query. Some people aren't aware that in some cases they have been having conversations with chatbots, under the impression that they were chatting with actual humans. People are still utilised for more complex enquiries as you are often passed on to a member of the team who can offer further support, while AI chatbots free up this time by fielding enquiries in the first instance.

AI can support admin heavy tasks like this to allow people to focus on the jobs that really add value and require the human touch. In the future, AI could even open up new roles for humans that give them time to use their creativity to create new commercial opportunities by finding unique ways to stand out to competitors.

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“AI can support admin heavy tasks like this to allow people to focus on the jobs that really add value and require the human touch.”

The influence on property technology

AI can help Estate Agents by connecting the dots. Single sign on and integration between different software is improving thanks to AI's ability to link things together and support in passing the digital baton from one provider to another. This will be brought to life by the iamproperty ecosystem, which will combine auction, onboarding and CRM solutions in one place, with one central login.

AI will also become more accessible in the same way that technology generally has. It wasn't long ago when you could get completely lost by technological jargon which made software in business difficult to understand. Now, people without technical skills can use technology freely, evolving as far as software like Chat GPT, where anyone can use AI.

The AI learning curve

One of the difficulties that may emerge as we adopt AI more into our businesses, is the information overload that could come because of increased productivity. The challenge for suppliers and agents will be how to stand out in a market that is heavily saturated with insight driven content.

Another challenge will be maintaining competitiveness – as AI becomes commonplace and all branches have access to the same AI powered tech, clients will come to expect this level of service, instead of seeing it as perk. This is where the human touch comes in, as agents shouldn't solely rely on technology to deliver a great experience to clients. Enhanced use of technology is all about freeing up agents to do the parts of the job that require their expertise and service.

AI powered Estate Agents

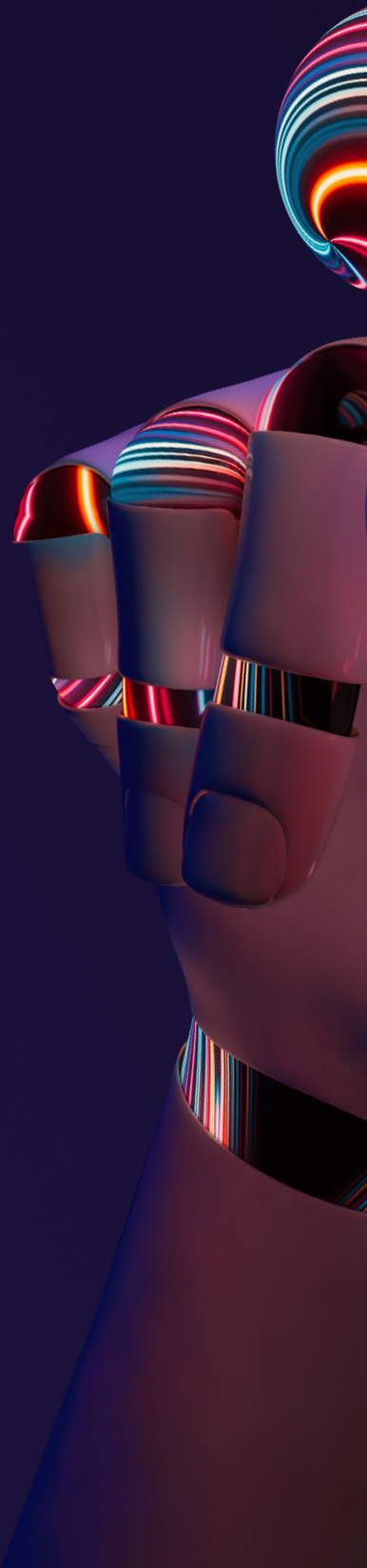
Technology is designed to make you more efficient and empower you to do more with less. AI works in the same way, by allowing you to be more productive and stay one step ahead. The personal interaction and relationship piece that is key to making a good Estate Agent is hard to recreate, which is why there will always be a need for agents.

Valuation tools are also going to become exponentially better as AI advances, particularly those that are automated. Then, successful sales will be all about presentation, telling the story or holding together the chain to push through a sale and manage completion timelines.

If agents don't embrace the change and have competitors that are taking advantage of these advances, then they could see themselves at a disadvantage in the future.

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“AI works in the same way technology is designed to make you more efficient and empower you to do more with less.”





Neil Hope, Chief Technology Officer, iamproperty

Our core aim is to develop tech solutions for Estate Agents that make their lives easier and free them up to do what they do best. Automations already play a huge part in this, by making repetitive admin tasks happen automatically. AI is only set to improve this. Here are some of the key benefits of AI and automation powered tech:

1 OFFERING A MORE PERSONALISED EXPERIENCE

AI can quickly read data to understand and segment clients – knowing someone's occupation and income level can help you suggest properties that would suit them – giving you a bigger picture of their needs so that you can offer the best possible service. With these insights, AI can create automations within your CRM to offer clients greater personalisation by sending emails and reminders at the right times and in the most appropriate tone for your contacts.

2 MORE TIME WITH CLIENTS

Automations streamline your processes, reducing the time you need to spend on admin to free you up for parts of the job that add the most value to clients, like having face time with them and progressing their transaction. More efficient processes also increase productivity, giving you time back to spend on ideas and activities that grow the business and drive positive change.

3 SPEED UP SALES

Speeding up sales is in the interest of your team and your clients, so that you can secure your fees and clients can get moving faster. Research from McKinsey estimates that a third of all sales tasks can be automated, which means that tech has the potential to make significant cuts to your transaction times. Tasks that can be automated include pinpointing times to contact leads, invoicing, onboarding and client management.

4 BOOST COMPETITIVENESS

At a most basic level, automations reduce natural human errors within businesses, so can support from a client service and compliance point of view. There are many other ways that AI and automations can power up the service you give clients, including faster responses to client enquiries and better understanding of your client base for well-targeted marketing.

5 TEAM BUILDING

AI and automation powered software is designed for ease of use and accessibility for all, to make sure your whole team can use tech to spend more time with each other instead of buried in lengthy admin processes. This increased time for collaboration can be strengthened by easy data sharing enabled by automations in your CRM and integrated systems.

MY LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP



Nick Neill, Managing Director
(Head Shepherd), EweMove UK

EweMove is one of the UK's most distinctive and successful national sales and lettings agency franchises. Bringing decades of business experience to the role, Nick Neill is currently shepherding EweMove towards exciting pastures new – growing the brand, technology and processes behind the scenes that make it a success.

Drawing from his corporate background in the early days of his career, to his experience founding and directing the accelerated growth of a successful business franchise, Nick shared with us his words of wisdom on how to successfully lead a business whilst also achieving personal goals.

What is your vision for EweMove?

Our vision is to bring a customer focus to the agenda. Estate Agencies work best when customers are put at the heart of operations, and at EweMove we're doing just that. We have now reached a point where we know we can deliver excellent results for customers, so the next step is to grow the franchise over the coming years.

The vision has always been to grow, but we needed to get to a place where

we had seriously good credentials on what we had delivered to use as collateral. We now have evidence that offering first-class service creates good outcomes for both the customers and the agents – so the next step is growth. We had to figure out what good looks like before scaling, and now we have that, our vision is to expand customer-focussed services across the UK.



“Something I have learned with tech-led businesses, they are easier to grow and whilst remaining lean and

Do you have a vision for yourself and your own career?

Yes, but my vision has changed as I have progressed through my career. I was always corporate career minded as a youngster, but in my mid-40s I took the plunge and became self-employed – which was brave because I was at my highest earning level, but I wanted to test myself. I bought a business franchise, and it was very successful for over three years, and I learnt a lot about scaling and growing a business in that time.

When I first came across EweMove, I loved the brand and had a strong vision of how I could take it to another level. Since then, as Managing Director, I have used my knowledge of driving growth to make it profitable, stable and grow the brand which is fundamental to the DNA of the business. In my role at Ewemove, I am enjoying using the skills I acquired during my career as well as the disciplines I learnt through studying for an MBA at Edinburgh Business School and graduating in 2005.

My long-term vision is that I'd like to take on some non-executive directorships with growing businesses to support them in scaling-up.

How do you balance driving your business vision as well as your personal vision?

For me personally these go hand in hand. In growing EweMove, I get more opportunities to talk to other ambitious business leaders and support my own development.

Something I have learned working with tech-led businesses, is that they are easier to grow and scale whilst remaining lean and agile.

The opportunities to utilise new technology and automate systems is moving so fast that if you're in a leadership role it's important to stay up to date with what's available. For me, keeping my ear to the ground for developments enables me to deliver both the business vision but also my own personal ambition to consult for growing businesses.

If you can find a role where your personal objectives align with that of your organisation it's a good place to be as there is no conflict, otherwise personal and business growth will be slower – and your mind will frequently be elsewhere.

Enjoy what you do, and it won't feel so much like work!

Do you have any advice for an agency looking to expand?

If you're planning to scale your business, you need to think about whether you're scaling problems or opportunities. Whatever your set-up is in the current business, it will be replicated if you expand.

I have always calculated how much revenue the business is generating per employee when deciding whether we're at a point where we can grow. My rule of thumb is that a business should be generating three times someone's salary before it takes the next step. If the business isn't doing that, then the leadership team need to look at why not – is the sales conversion not right? Is it the wrong person for the job? Is it inefficient?

If you're already achieving those numbers, then yes, consider expanding but remember every person you bring in on the journey needs to generate similar numbers. We work in a cash hungry industry with tight margins, so its important agents keep their eye on the numbers to see them through atypical periods like an interest rate hike or when everyone goes on holiday.

What would be your advice to Estate Agents who want to lead with a clear vision?

Don't do anything at all until your focus is on the customer.

First you must focus on the customer, this is where the money comes from. Invest time and energy finding out what they want and need, then you can work out how you can deliver that securely and profitably.

A shocking statistic I came across recently claimed 50% of customer enquiries to Estate Agents go unanswered. I have seen it myself where agencies invest more and more money in marketing or tech before they've addressed the captive audience they already have.

Future-focussed Estate Agents need to focus on the customers that are already engaging with them before trying to improve elsewhere.

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INTO THE ECOSYSTEM: AN EXCITING FUTURE FOR ESTATE AGENTS



Ben Ridgway,
Co-Founder of iamproperty

Since Jamie and I started iamproperty 14 years ago, we've been dedicated to innovation. It's in our DNA and we still get excited by what's possible for our industry.

Technology plays a huge part in the 'what's possible', but for agents tech must work in a way that is right for them; it must help free them up to do more of the things that add value to their business and clients.

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“Our ambition is to lead the market with an integrated ecosystem of solutions where agents can manage their whole day – everything under one roof, one central login, one partner relationship.”

We've spent the last two years collaborating with our Partner Agents and industry leaders to really understand what matters to them when it comes to technology solutions and working with them to shape the future.

We asked Estate Agents about their biggest frustrations and what they really want from solution providers. Nearing the top of the list of frustrations is having to deal with fragmented solutions that only tackle part of the transaction process. Agents are finding themselves with multiple disconnected systems that fail to give them that single view of their clients and business that they are looking for; coupled with the complexity of managing lots of suppliers and the time burden of using more than one system to do a job.

It's this insight that has led us to the next phase in our innovation journey and the launch of our ecosystem vision. It's ambitious and unique, and we are confident this will deliver what agents are looking for and add value to their businesses. We are excited to share our plans as we once again look to pioneer new solutions and ways of working and continue to transform the home moving process.

Ecosystem Insights

We have collaborated with a wide range of Estate Agents to explore their aspirations, frustrations, and preferences for technology solutions.

The key takeaways and learnings:



Agents want technology to work in the background and give them more time, choice and control.



Consumer demand is changing and agents want technology to support the 'emotional' client journey and take away the admin burden.



Tech is frustrating and they want a single view of clients that doesn't rely on multiple systems.



What agents want – a single pane of glass

Agents shared their frustration at not having a “single pane of glass” available, and the inefficiencies of conducting their work via fragmented solutions. Any experience which automated manual tasks was valued, but ultimately, they want technology to give them choice and control and to work in the background, not to replace their roles within the transaction. They want it to drive and deliver better communication (which their clients expect) through sophisticated automations and give them a single view of their clients, their day and their business without having to log into multiple systems.

The timeline to completion, with duplicate information and systems not able to interact with one another, is another huge frustration. Agents want a seamless experience for themselves and their clients that matches the experiences consumers are accustomed from other service providers.

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"I would love it if everything was put all together. Everything that a business might need."

Estate Agent

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"Instead of logging in and out of various systems, a single sign on with speed of use is absolutely key, so you can access everything you need for your customer relationships."

Owner and MD, Large Franchise

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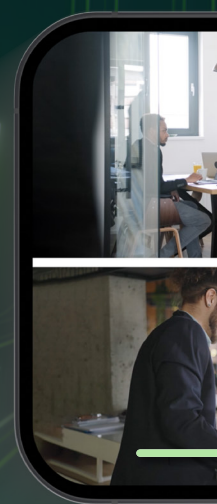
"Every little bit of time that we can save really does add up and make a difference, getting that time back to be able to actually concentrate on talking to people is the goal."

Estate Agent

Consumers – what's changed?

Of course agents want quicker transactions and more time to spend on the things that make a difference to their role and their business, but most importantly they want to deliver a great service for their clients who have a whole new set of expectations. During the interviews agents noted that consumers are more ‘emotionally involved’ in the process than ever before and that they expect constant communication throughout the transaction, which is adding to the admin burden. We also understand that consumers place customer service and ease of experience high on their list of priorities with all brands, not just Estate Agents.

Agents also discussed the increasing consumer frustrations around the process and communication. This echoed the consumer research we carried out earlier in 2023 around timescales and technology solutions, where consumers noted their growing frustration surrounding duplicate information, lack of communication and time to completion. They agreed that change was needed and that they would happily pay higher fees to speed up the process and to access a platform that would keep them updated at every stage of the transaction. Consumers and agents are ready for a quicker and more modern approach to buying and selling houses.



Introducing the iamproperty ecosystem

Our vision for the iamproperty ecosystem is to bring about the change needed to solve agent and consumer frustrations now, but also pave the way for continuous innovation that will create more opportunity and solve market challenges in the future.

For us, innovation is about so much more than a platform or a service. It's about empowering our Partner Agents with a win-win relationship that makes a real difference to their business. The iamproperty ecosystem has been designed to set agents up for success, with one solution and one partner relationship that will prioritise innovation and development so that they are always at the forefront of change.

Our ecosystem will give agents a central intuitive system that works flexibly around their business to give them a single view of their clients, bring more speed and security to every transaction and support efficient processes that make them money, not cost them money.

We put people at the heart of technology and that's what sets us apart, as not everything can be delivered through tech. Service needs to be wrapped around great technology to get the most from it.

What core benefits will the ecosystem deliver for our industry?



Access to a central intuitive system that shows a single view of an agents clients and business.

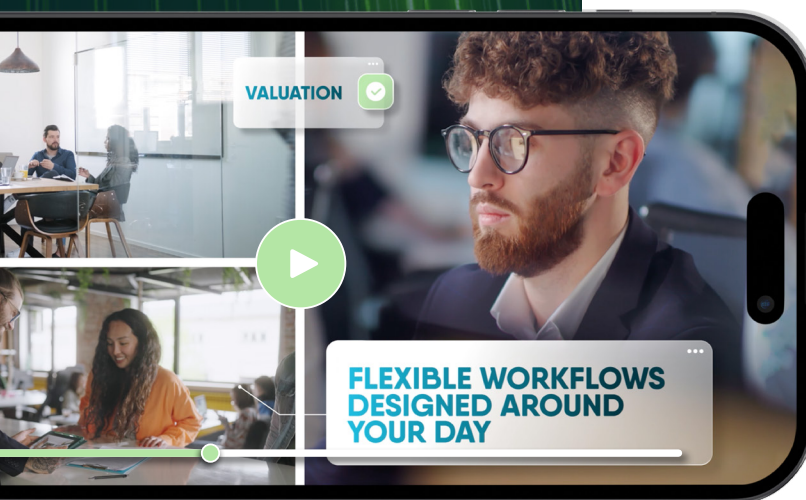


More speed and security for every transaction to benefit agents and consumers.



A modern system that aligns the home buying and selling process with consumer wants and demands.

The future is exciting and we will continue to work with Estate Agents to shape the solutions they require and how we as an industry embrace technology together.





TECH OF A LIFE

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