

Harris real estate takes pole position with new digital advantage.

For Harris Real Estate, there's no question that the real estate industry needs to modernise the way it does business. According to Tom Hector, co-owner of the South Australia real estate agency, it's about time.

Harris, South Australia's largest independent real estate firm, knows how to take full advantage of the current wave of disruption hitting the industry. It has expanded rapidly in its eight years of operation, growing to 150 employees and five offices during that time, bolstered by a focus on delivering exceptional customer service supported by technology.

Tom Hector, property consultant and auctioneer in addition to part-owner of Harris, says agencies must have a value proposition that keeps customers coming back. For Harris, it's exceptional customer experience which, today requires a whole new level of speed and convenience. "We are using DocuSign to meet these expectations. Most people are time poor and coming in to sign documents or printing and scanning them at home represents a poor experience for them. Not to mention that, if we were to send out a contract by email or post, we would have no way of knowing whether it had been received."

The old way of working meant contracts could take days to finalise—prolonging the start of the cooling off period and impacting the effectiveness of agents. Time and worry wasted on admin got in the way of building relationships with customers, not to mention prospecting and selling.

Using tech to accelerate growth

Always looking for ways to improve the customer experience and sell more houses faster, Harris was quick to adopt DocuSign when it was integrated with REI Forms Live – fundamentally changing the speed and ease of property engagements.

As a result, agents instantly prepare, sign and send contracts electronically from any device. They can see when a contract has been viewed but not signed, and get in touch with the customer to address any concerns.

"The increased speed at which we're getting contracts back is a game changer," said Hector. "We can easily go from 180 to 300 sales a year purely because we are using DocuSign to get past that frustrating stage when documents go back and forth. It's been that transformative for our business."

Results

65% increase in sales capacity

60 properties sold in a 3-month period using DocuSign

80% of contracts signed using DocuSign

"What we're seeing is the emergence of the mobile agent. If you're not keeping up with technology, you've got no chance of making it."

Tom Hector

Co-owner and Property Consultant
Harris Real Estate

In the firm's first three months of using DocuSign, almost 80% of contracts were electronically signed by customers of all ages. "We expected to see the younger tech-native generations take up the opportunity to sign a contract online more readily than older generations, but that's not been the case." What's more, it was Harris' best quarter ever with sales topping that of every other firm in the state. "The increases in volume and customer satisfaction we've achieved in this time would not have been possible without DocuSign. It is so easy for customers to use and we can get deals done in a flash."

Tearing down barriers to success

DocuSign has immediately freed agents from the burden of admin. They have more time for selling and rather than sitting down with clients to sign paperwork, they can enjoy a coffee with them later on. They also have the flexibility to get deals done anytime, anywhere, even if it is 11pm on a Friday evening as was recently the case for Hector.

He explains, "We had a family that was headed to the airport on the way to New Zealand, and they wanted to purchase the property ahead of the auction. I was able to negotiate with the vendor in Melbourne and finalise the deal using DocuSign – all on a Friday night from my car. In the past, that would never have taken place."

Other agents at Harris are similarly using electronic signatures to finalise agency agreements and confirm on reserve prices to keep transactions moving forward at the pace Harris clientele have come to enjoy and expect. Now Hector is also evaluating use cases within HR and property management.

"If you're not keeping up with technology, you've got no chance of making it," said Hector. "We've started a digital journey and glimpsed at the potential of what we could do if we continue this journey."

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About DocuSign

DocuSign helps organisations connect and automate how they prepare, sign, act on, and manage agreements. As part of the DocuSign Agreement Cloud, DocuSign offers eSignature: the world's #1 way to sign electronically on practically any device, from almost anywhere, at any time. Today, more than 500,000 customers and hundreds of millions of users in over 180 countries use DocuSign to accelerate the process of doing business and to simplify people's lives.

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