

ARE REAL ESTATE AGENTS MARKED FOR DESTRUCTION?

The end of real estate agents was forecast on *4 Corners (Future Proof 16/01/17)*, with the suggestion that real estate agents were destined for the scrap heap in the future, one of many careers, including accountancy and law, that would be taken over by computers, apps, robots or machines.

“More than 40% of jobs in Australia may disappear over the next 10 to 15 years – that’s 5 million jobs. Most of them replaced by automation and a new generation of computers learning to think for themselves,” *4 Corners* host Sarah Ferguson said.

The experts, including KPMG social demographer Bernard Salt, may be right.

There is no doubt that since the industrial revolution, more than 200 years ago, machines and robots have slowly been taking over jobs that were previously done by humans.

But the experts could also be wrong.

Real estate agents are not crucial to selling a property. For almost as long as there have been houses for sale, there have been people selling and buying without the help of an agent.

But 98 per cent of those who buy and sell property in Australia still choose to do so with the support of an agent.

And even over the past five to 10 years, with the advent of apps and websites and so-called “disrupters” that are apparently going to spell the end of the agent, the agent has prevailed.

That’s because agents bring experience, insight, knowledge and humanity to the transaction.

Apps can’t provide the **personal service and human element**. They can’t spot a worried face or a concerned expression and address those concerns. All the technology in the world can’t hold your hand on auction day and steady your nerves as you wait for the auctioneer to bang the gavel.

And the technology can’t **adapt**. The digital tools that are proliferating in the real estate space are static tools and if they don’t suit you then you simply don’t use them.

However, an agent can tailor their approach for each different client in multitude ways. They can provide more information – or less if you’re overwhelmed. They can provide more communication – or less if you’re busy and trust them – to suit each client’s particular needs. In the end, it’s the agent with the ability to adapt who will win the day.

And that’s why the agent will always be part of the process.

Consumer Advice



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