

# New vision for real estate in which all can win



By [Berry Everitt](#)

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The real estate industry will no doubt look very different by the end of this year to the way it looked before the Covid-19 pandemic - but in many cases, the changes made will be extremely positive for estate agents and principals as well as their clients because of the potential for both better service and greater rewards.



Berry Everitt, CEO of the Chas Everitt International property group

In the post-lockdown market, there will be exceptional opportunities for property buyers, sellers and estate agents, even though the impetus that is usually provided by exceptionally low interest rates is likely to be somewhat dampened by greater uncertainties around employment, affordability and bank lending.

## Efficient and intuitive service

However, the key for agents to succeed in this period, we believe, will be the ability to adjust quickly to a major shift in consumer demand for service that is not just more efficient but also intuitive and able to provide solutions that are tailor-made to fit specific circumstances.

This change has been hastened by the pandemic, which has clearly shown people that they don't want to be just a 'number' who receives generalised advice in an automated system. They want to connect with a human who listens to and understands their particular needs - and then is able to access superior technologies to really help them save time, money and inconvenience.



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## Achieving and maintaining success

This means that estate agents, and the principals and companies behind them, are going to have to 'step up' now as never before if they want to win clients and achieve and maintain success. And, as always, there will be those who can do this largely because they are already trained, prepared and equipped to do so, and those who can't, and are unable to innovate fast enough to avoid losing ground to their more nimble, adaptable competitors.

In short, there will be survivors who go on to thrive and there will be casualties – and those who anticipate being in the latter category are likely to have a very different view of market prospects for the next 12 to 18 months than my own.

Indeed, we have seen some really gloomy predictions being circulated over the past few days about prices crashing, distressed stock flooding the market and the real estate industry collapsing.



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## Positive outlook

But our outlook is very positive, given what our agents were able to achieve, even during the hard lockdown. There was no shortage of demand once buyers realised what was possible, and we expect the momentum to increase now that the economy is opening up again and we are also able to conduct physical property viewings and speed up the transaction process. There will be more properties for sale, and prices will come under pressure, but this will just create more opportunities for sales, especially if interest rates remain at current levels or fall further.

The digital ecosystem used by Chas Everitt principals and agents has been specifically designed to keep agents at the centre of the transaction. We have never sought to automate the agent out of the transaction. On the other hand, we did anticipate the growing need to liberate principals and agents from desks and offices and specific sales areas, and we built our Notebook and Nomad systems accordingly.

We believe this state of readiness is going to stand us in very good stead over the next few months as the industry undergoes the new round of disruption (which we like to call progress). At the same time, market fluctuations and differing views of the future will create more scope for industry mergers and acquisitions over the next few months – and generate more movement among top professionals who are seeking to join forward-looking companies with good leadership.

## ABOUT BERRY EVERITT

Berry Everitt is the CEO of the Chas Everitt International property group, which is one of the top five estate agency companies in South Africa and widely recognised for its innovative marketing methods, its technological leadership - and its absolute dedication to achieving exceptional customer service. Everitt is the youngest son of the group's founders, Charles and Tilla Everitt, and has been involved in the business since it was established in 1988.

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