



Beyond Borders: A Global Perspective of International Real Estate Valuation

CHAPTER 61:

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ON GLOBAL VALUATION PRACTICES

SEPTEMBER 2, 2025 | BRUCE D. GREENBERG, FRICS | MAI | SRA | ASA | ARM

Digital transformation is reshaping nearly every industry, and commercial real estate valuation is no exception. From the automation of property data collection to the use of artificial intelligence in risk modeling, technology is rapidly changing how valuation professionals conduct their work—especially on the international stage. In a global marketplace where speed, transparency, and accuracy are critical, digital tools are becoming indispensable.

Yet, the impact of this transformation is not uniform. While developed markets benefit from advanced platforms and regulatory openness to tech integration, emerging markets still face infrastructure gaps, legal constraints, and cultural hesitancy toward automated methods. For valuation professionals operating across borders, understanding the tools driving this shift—and how to adapt them across varying contexts—is essential.

Key Technologies and Their Global Influence

One of the most significant changes in valuation practice is the availability and integration of big data. Instead of relying solely on traditional comps and manual market surveys, today's valuation professionals can draw on millions of data points—ranging from lease structures to pedestrian traffic flows—to form more precise and contextualized opinions of value.

Take, for example, a multinational investment firm assessing logistics assets in Singapore, Munich, and São Paulo. Cloud-based databases like CoStar or Real Capital Analytics can provide location-specific transaction histories, economic

forecasts, and zoning overlays—all accessible in real time. The result: faster, more informed decisions and a more accurate reflection of market conditions.

Another prominent force is the increasing use of automated valuation models (AVMs). These algorithm-driven tools apply statistical techniques to determine value estimates based on historical transactions, property characteristics, and market indicators. In mature markets such as the U.S. and U.K., AVMs are already standard in residential lending, and their commercial use is growing—particularly in portfolio-level valuations where cost and efficiency matter.

However, AVMs remain controversial in many international markets. In countries with limited or non-transparent data, the outputs can be unreliable. For example, in parts of Southeast Asia or Eastern Europe, professionals must often reconcile AVM results with their local expertise, underscoring that automation should complement—not replace—human judgment.

Then there is the emerging role of blockchain and smart contracts, which are beginning to influence international property transactions. Blockchain offers a tamper-proof record of property ownership, helping reduce fraud and title disputes in cross-border deals. Smart contracts, which execute automatically when specific conditions are met, can streamline valuation milestones such as third-party inspections, escrow releases, and regulatory disclosures.

or instance, a German REIT acquiring assets in Dubai

might use a blockchain-enabled platform to validate property titles and initiate legal reviews without multiple intermediaries. While adoption is still early, the long-term implications for due diligence, valuation transparency, and cross-border compliance are significant.

Finally, cloud-based collaboration tools have revolutionized how global valuation teams operate. Whether managing multi-country portfolios or working on a joint appraisal across time zones, platforms like Microsoft Teams, Dropbox, and bespoke data rooms allow seamless sharing of reports, comparables, and modeling assumptions. Combined with secure virtual inspection technology—such as drone imaging or 360-degree property scans—valuers can work remotely while maintaining rigorous standards.

Challenges and Considerations

Despite these advances, digital transformation introduces a range of challenges, particularly for professionals working across international boundaries.

- Data integrity and comparability remain key issues. While big data improves decision-making, the quality and consistency of that data vary drastically by region. Valuation professionals must apply discretion when integrating AI-generated insights with localized context.
- Technology readiness and infrastructure differ significantly between developed and emerging markets. In some regions, poor internet access, legal restrictions on data sharing, or lack of standardized reporting formats may limit the use of digital tools.

- Legal and regulatory adaptation is also a hurdle. Many jurisdictions are still revising their legal frameworks to accommodate AVMs, blockchain property records, or e-signatures for appraisal documentation.
- Ethical concerns and client perception play a role. Clients in certain markets may resist machine-generated valuations, preferring the perceived authority of a human appraiser—especially for high-value or litigious assignments.

Best Practices for Navigating the Digital Shift

To leverage the benefits of digital transformation while mitigating its risks, valuation professionals can adopt the following strategies:

- 1. Blend technology with local expertise:** Use AVMs, predictive analytics, and big data as starting points—but always overlay them with market intelligence gathered from local professionals.
- 2. Invest in cross-border digital infrastructure:** Establish secure, scalable platforms for communication and document sharing. Ensure compliance with international data privacy laws such as GDPR or Brazil's LGPD.
- 3. Stay legally informed:** Monitor how local jurisdictions are regulating digital valuation tools. Work with legal counsel when implementing blockchain or automated reporting mechanisms.

4. Prioritize training and upskilling: Teams must be proficient not only in valuation methodologies but also in digital tools like GIS mapping, regression modeling, and data visualization platforms.

5. Maintain transparency in reports: Clearly disclose when and how technology was used. Clients should understand the sources of data, assumptions applied, and the role of human oversight.

Hypothetical Scenario: A Cross-Border Retail Valuation

Consider a valuation assignment for a portfolio of shopping centers across the U.K., South Korea, and South Africa. The U.K. portion benefits from a robust AVM and transaction database; the South Korean assets require collaboration with local partners to interpret lease structures unique to that market; and the South African properties demand a hybrid approach that combines remote inspections with historical trend analysis due to limited current transaction data.

- In this case, a digitally equipped valuation team would:
- Use AVMs and cloud-based analytics for the U.K. assets;
 - Conduct structured interviews and use localized software tools in South Korea;
 - Deploy drone-based inspections and scenario modeling in South Africa.

The final valuation report would outline these methodological differences while maintaining consistency in valuation philosophy and reporting format.

Conclusion

Digital transformation is redefining the tools and techniques used in global valuation practices. While the potential for efficiency, transparency, and accuracy is significant, professionals must remain vigilant in how they apply these tools across diverse international markets. Success lies in striking a balance between automation and human expertise—adopting digital innovations while respecting local market realities, legal frameworks, and client expectations.

As technology continues to evolve, valuation professionals who embrace continuous learning, collaboration, and thoughtful implementation will be best positioned to lead in a digitally enabled global economy.



Bruce D. Greenberg
 FRICS | MAI | SRA | ASA | ARM
 Managing Director | Principal
 +1-480-440-2842 Ext. 01
 bdgreenberg@fourcv.com
 www.fourcv.com



Four Corners Valuations delivers exceptional valuation and advisory services across the US and globally, offering a unique blend of local expertise and international experience. Utilizing advanced technology and superior data sources, we ensure accurate and comprehensive valuations for developers, investors, lenders, and other stakeholders. With licensed professionals across the United States and experienced in more than 60 countries, we are dedicated to excellence and committed to guiding our clients towards informed and successful decisions.

+1.480.440.2842
 www.fourcv.com

OFFICE LOCATIONS

USA

Chicago - Dallas - Houston - Los Angeles - Phoenix - Tucson - Washington, DC

INTERNATIONAL

Argentina - Barbados - Brazil - Chile - Ecuador - Guatemala - India - Israel - Mexico - Morocco - Panama - Paraguay - Peru - Philippines - Puerto Rico - Spain - UAE

VALUATIONS • MARKET / FEASIBILITY STUDIES • LITIGATION SUPPORT • CONSULTING
 ESTATES • BANKRUPTCY • PROBATE • DIVORCE • DAMAGED PROPERTY • PARTNERSHIP SOLUTION • MINORITY INTEREST ESTIMATES