

# The **ART** of APPRAISAL:

Bridging the Gap  
Between Appraisers  
and Real Estate  
Professionals

BY SHAWN FOPPE



An appraisal is not merely a checklist—it is a professional analysis grounded in expertise, research, and sound judgment.

### Closing the Knowledge Gap

In today's fast-moving real estate environment, reliable appraisals are crucial. Yet many professionals and clients have limited knowledge of the process. The Art of Appraisal is designed to change that—offering transparency, education, and connections with agents, lenders, and the broader public.

Shawn has developed strong, trusted relationships with a broad network of industry professionals—including appraisers, lenders, Realtors, builders, and home inspectors. His experience working with cash buyers and conducting pre-listing appraisals revealed a common thread: widespread misconceptions still exist about the appraisal process.

### This Month's Focus: Why Accurate MLS Data Matters More Than Ever

The first spotlight topic focuses on improving the quality and quantity of data in the MLS. Appraisers rely heavily on MLS information to identify and analyze data. The efficiency and accuracy of an appraisal report are directly tied to the available data.

When MLS data is incomplete or inaccurate, it can lead to delays in the appraisal process. Appraisers cross-reference sources—such as county records or details provided by other parties—to verify key information. In some cases, a potentially strong comparable may be excluded due to missing or inconsistent data. When discrepancies arise, appraisers explain the variations and clarify which source(s) were deemed most reliable. Data such as room counts is typically not available without the MLS. The use of MLS data does not expire once a listing is closed.

### Key MLS Information Appraisers Need

Realtors are encouraged to include the following details for their listings:

- **Photographs:** Include all four sides of the home, plus patios, decks, pools, outbuildings (inside and out), basement finish, and mechanical systems. Photos provide essential visual insights into quality, condition, and amenities.
- **Renovation & Updates:** Clearly state recent improvements, remodels, or upgrades.
- **Lot & Parcel Info:** Provide accurate lot dimensions and details about included parcels. Explain if any adjoining parcels were included in the sale, or closed simultaneously.

- **Square Footage & Room Counts:** Properly report above-grade and below-grade square footage, room counts on each level (sizes are helpful), and room sizes in finished basements (including floor finishes).
- **Disclosures:** For properties with solar panels, indicate whether the system is owned or leased.

If unsure about how to measure square footage or input correctly, consult a certified appraiser. Professionals are obligated to be informed and include accurate data. Shawn Foppe Appraisal regularly shares educational content on its Facebook page and is developing a new resource section at [ShawnFoppeAppraisal.com](http://ShawnFoppeAppraisal.com).

When MLS data is utilized to create a CMA and the square footages are not properly reported, it affects the reliability of a report. If the home is a split level, or bi-level: only the levels that are 100% above grade should be reported in the above grade finish.

We sincerely thank the dedicated Realtors who complete the diligence to ensure MLS data is entered accurately and thoroughly. Your attention to detail

not only supports more reliable appraisals but also strengthens the entire transaction process.

### Conclusion

The Art of Appraisal is more than a service—it's a commitment to communication, education, and transparency. By improving MLS data and strengthening valuable information sharing, we will create a more efficient, reliable and smoother process.

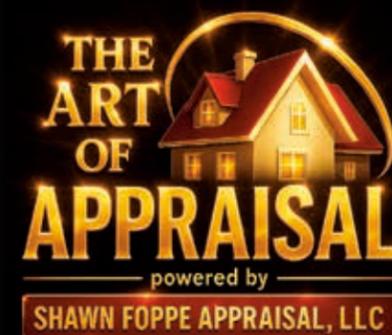


**About The Author:** With over 27 years of experience in Southern Illinois, Shawn Foppe Appraisal, LLC is proud to launch The Art of Appraisal—an educational initiative designed to demystify the appraisal process and enhance collaboration across the real estate industry.

Shawn Foppe Appraisal joined Real Producers with the goal of fostering stronger partnerships and providing meaningful education. The mission is simple: to promote a better understanding of what appraisers do, what they cannot do, and how accurate, well-supported valuations are a vital part to each transaction.

## PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND CREDIBLE APPRAISAL REPORTS

27+ years of experience serving Southern Illinois



The Art of Appraisal, bridging the gap between appraisers, real estate professionals, and the general public through educational content, training, and consulting.

Over the past two decades, I've built lasting relationships across the industry—working with buyers, sellers, lenders, attorneys, title companies, construction professionals, property flippers, and fellow appraisers—to ensure that every appraisal serves as a credible, reliable resource.



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