Piecing together the future: A click-to-buy real estate world

Ready for the ultimate challenge? Put together a 2,000-piece jigsaw puzzle without the box cover. Then make it interesting -- flip an hourglass and race with your mates against the sand. That adrenaline rush is exactly how I have felt the past few weeks, trying to piece together what the real estate industry might look like in the coming years. I am certain it is morphing, quite fundamentally, and not around the edges. But even as the pieces begin to fall into place, the future is like an abstract impressionist painting, the toughest kind of puzzle to assemble. To be sure, these changes are being driven by a new guard of leaders, business models and inventions revolutionizing the way homes are bought and sold. Old guard franchisors and broker owners are not behind a coming transformation but neither are the discounters or startups peddling bots as alt-Realtors. I have been on a raft of briefing calls with Inman Connect speakers the last few days -- Robert Reffkin at Compass, E...

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