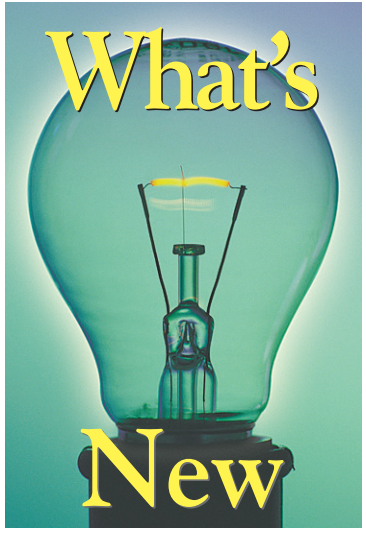

Homazooma offers anonymous advice and home listings

A new website offers real estate listings, financial planning and mortgage decision tools and anonymous home evaluations.

Homazooma.com is a free public resource with no industry biases or affiliations, its founders say. The site says it provides its members with all the calculation tools and professional expertise required to make confident, informed choices – anonymously and hassle-free.

In addition to browsing (or posting) real estate on Homazooma's search engine or crunching numbers with mortgage calculation and credit management tools, members can solicit the advice and opinions of as many real estate and financial professionals as they wish without having to reveal their own identity.

For licensed real estate agents, financial planners and mortgage professionals, Homazooma says it represents the opportunity to connect with – and impress – potential clients in a neutral, permission-based context.

"The whole idea behind Homazooma is that you can go about your business and get the information you need, when you need it, anonymously and with no strings attached. Your identity remains confidential until you decide to reveal it to the professional(s) of your choice," says Tracy Thomas, co-founder.

Following almost two years of research and development by its parent company DataAbacus Inc., Homazooma offers tools and features not available anywhere else, the company says. That includes "the most advanced mortgage calculation tools on the Internet today," as well as "a robust and detailed alternative to MLS," the company says. Homazooma's search engine allows members to search for homes across Canada and to choose from over 80 search criteria, from the height of the ceilings to whether the roof has skylights or the lot is treed.

Members can anonymously post details about their homes to receive evaluations from different real estate agents. Members can also complete an anonymous financial profile – no name, address or employer – and post it to message boards for review and recommendations by mortgage and financial planner professionals. It's up to the member to directly contact their professional of choice when they are ready.

Monica Stanciu named Stager of the Year

Toronto-area home staging consultant Monica Stanciu from Staged 2 Sell Solutions was selected as the Real Estate Staging Association 2012 Professional Stager of the Year for Canada. Stanciu's award was presented at the 2012 International Home Staging Convention awards banquet recently in Las Vegas.

"Being chosen as the best home staging professional in Canada is not only a great accomplishment, but an incentive to work harder and help more home sellers and Realtors to get their properties sold faster and for the highest amount of money," says Stanciu.

She also nominated the winner of the 2012 RESA Realtor of the Year, Arsen Gulesserian from Re/Max Crossroads Realty in Toronto.

Stanciu is the founder and principal decorator at Staged 2 Sell Solutions, a home staging and redesign corporation. Since its inception in 2007, the company has helped sell more than $300 million worth of real estate. The company provides staging consultations, vacant and occupied home staging, staging for investors, furniture/accessories rental and redesign services.

Stanciu is also a mentor with the CSPI Training Academy and mentored over 50 new staging graduates. Her work and dedication as a mentor was recently recognized by the CSPI Training Academy with the 2011-2012 CSP Mentor of the Year award. She is also the recipient of CSP's Best Marketing Campaign and Most Promising Star awards. For information: www.staged2sell.ca.

'People & Pay Services' tailored for small business

Ceridian Canada recently launched a new online service that gives small business owners the tools necessary to pay and manage their people in one convenient location, the company says. Ceridian for Small Business provides employee-related solutions, which will result in up to a nine-per-cent reduction in labour costs for organizations with less than 50 employees, the company says.

Ceridian Canada president Dave McKay says, "Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, but they are unnecessarily burdened when it comes to managing people in a fast-paced environment. Too many services, with