

## Which Wholesalers Are Truly Service Oriented?

Most wholesalers will tell you that beyond pricing, service is their most important business element. Every wholesaler I've know brags about their service levels. Yet, where does their service go when they force brokers to re-enter data on web sites or provide woefully inadequate e-commerce solutions? Clearly, those wholesalers that wish to provide a high level of service would consider their web site to be one of the most important aspects.

Let's take a look at what wholesalers should be or could be providing. Unlike other areas of service, this is one area where it's real easy to identify and determine how strong a wholesaler really is. The items below are things that should be part of any basic wholesaler web site. Further down is a list of features that would be ideal from a brokers perspective – sort of a look at what's to come from the leading wholesalers.

### The Basics

- Data should flow from your Loan Origination System (LOS) to the wholesaler and it shouldn't take more than three clicks to do this. It also shouldn't rely on the clunky solution where the broker exports a DU file and then imports it into the web site. Then they have to typically add additional information that already exists in their LOS on the 1008, GFE or other forms. It's almost easier to re-enter the data then to take this twenty step process.
- If a wholesaler has proprietary forms that are needed, then they should be auto-populated with the data from the LOS. Again, a broker should never be required to enter data twice on a computer. These forms should then be able to be printed if desired by the broker.
- The broker should be able to submit a loan, lock a loan and cancel a loan easily and again, with just a few mouse clicks. Ideally, this would all be available from within an LOS. Why should a broker be forced to learn the navigational schemes of 10 different web sites from their favorite wholesalers? Performing these basic e-commerce transactions from within an LOS that is integrated with the wholesalers website and production systems provides a consistent user interface and it's far more efficient.
- A broker should be able to send the borrower data and request product recommendations that include pricing. Again, a couple of mouse clicks from within the LOS should provide you a list of products that the borrower will qualify for and what the current pricing will be. Rate and point combinations should be selectable. The data moves from the LOS to the wholesalers web site and the results would be displayed in the originator's browser. I call this a Prequalified Rate Sheet

(PRS).

- Related to the above, the wholesalers guidelines should be easily accessible and more importantly, each product detail should have hyperlinks to allow you drill down on all of the borrower requirements. In short, the prequal above should allow for greater depth of detail with links to the wholesalers guidelines.
- Loan status should be available that would tell you where the loan is at the wholesaler, days to expected close, price lock information, any conditions remain, etc. A broker should be able to see every important detail of a loan with one comprehensive screen.
- The broker should be able to see who is working on the loan and be provided email hot links for each employee of the wholesaler that is involved in helping close the loan.

You might be surprised by this list of basics as many wholesaler do not offer many of these features. This list should be a wake-up call for many wholesalers and they should be getting on the bandwagon. If your wholesalers aren't offering these solutions perhaps it's worth looking at a wholesaler that is interested in saving you time and money and helping you provide winning service to your clients. There are a few that offer all of these.

The list below are those areas that are a little more longer term and what we can all hope for. Only a few wholesalers might offer one or two of these and some aren't available anywhere (yet!).

- As each condition is signed off by the underwriter it should be immediately available for viewing. The broker should have the option of being immediately notified at least by email on major conditions. Ideally, each condition and the subsequent sign-offs should be sent to the LOS's condition database so that all details of a given loan when viewed, are up to date and in one place. A broker shouldn't be forced to go to a web site to get loan status. The standard loan status features inside every LOS should be fed the data by the wholesalers e-commerce engine.
- A PRS should be available from most every wholesaler and a broker should be able to go down a list of wholesalers and request a PRS from each. Further, they should be in such a format that they can be presented directly to the consumer and any pricing would include the brokers desired overage. Wholesalers should help create the presentation materials that brokers need to give to consumers. This also allows wholesalers to present their products in the best light possible.
- With the new Internet training tools available like WebEx, wholesalers should offer training for the brokers staff on how to be most efficient when using the technology solutions available from the wholesalers. Wholesalers should help the brokers staff be more efficient which sometimes requires training.

- Some current wholesale sites offer a pipeline look at all the loans that broker submitted to them. This is both self-serving and inefficient. Every broker relies on their LOS to obtain overall pipeline information. Further, anything that the wholesaler wants the broker to see, should be pumped down to the LOS so that it's available when the broker is working on that loan and is immediately seen in any pipeline reports that the broker produces for themselves. What broker wants to move among a half dozen wholesale web sites to get an idea of their pipeline. Wholesalers need to live in a brokers world for a few days to understand how the broker uses their computers and how it would be ideal if all information is centralized for the brokers easy access. The centralization of this data should be done by all wholesalers – in short, all wholesalers should pump their data to the brokers LOS. They should be so arrogant to expect the broker to live in their world.

As you can see, we are really at the very beginning stages of wholesaler e-commerce solutions. Imagine how efficient your office (and the wholesaler) would be if all of these features were available today. We would really live in a much better world. Now, if we can only get the wholesalers to move faster in implementing these features so we can all benefit from what the internet can bring to mortgage origination!