



# Stay in the loop

## *Innovation in Property Investing*

GRANT SMEE

***Property investing has come a long way in the last few years. This is partly due to digital technology and the rise of e-learning methods and tools that have helped to accelerate the industry that we are operating in today.***

The good news is that there is a wealth of (often free) resources out there to help make the journey simpler and to educate you throughout your journey. I truly believe that whether you're buying your first or 15th property, there is always something to learn.

### **The Fundamental Truths of Property Investment**

The first place to start when starting your Property Investment journey is understanding that there are no secrets, shortcuts, or ways to fast-track success. The road is long, are you committed?

**To be successful in property investment you need to know the following Truths:**

- Have a clear plan. It is important that you start with a goal in mind. The goal must be clear and measurable where you are able to align your Property Investment Strategy to ultimately realise the goals you have set.
- Educate yourself. Once you have a clear goal, you need to educate yourself about the Property Investment Strategies that will help you realise those goals. By understanding the strategy, you will be in a position to choose the right strategy for your needs.
- Take action. You can read a book, watch a show, sit in a seminar, surf the web and research to your hearts content, none of this will take you any closer to actually becoming a Property Investor. Only by taking action, viewing properties, negotiating deals, signing agreements and going through the effort of securing finance will you understand what it takes to be a Property Investor.
- Review, improve, repeat – systemise. Continuously creating processes and systems, then reviewing and improving these helps you create a sustainable and profitable venture that over time could become a passive business investment.

- Remember, it's a business. Treat your investment like a business at all times, be professional and become an expert.
- There is a downside & mitigating risk. As a business owner it is important to always realise there is a potential downside and as a business owner you need to do all you can to mitigate these risks. Rule number one of Property Investment, don't lose money.
- Don't buy into hype. Property won't make you rich tomorrow, in fact, very little will. It takes time and effort to create a sustainable and successful business.
- Beware of the furu (fake guru) – there are many teachers that make their money from selling theory, selling a dream, only making money from teaching and not doing. Careful of who you follow, who you buy into, who you spend money with. Remember, there are no secrets, shortcuts or ways to fast-track success, don't pay money if this is what you're promised.

### **Digital technology at your disposal**

In addition to mentors and friends who have done it all before, there is a wealth of credible resources out there to guide you on your investment journey. These include:

- Online tools
- Research tech – also known as proptech in this context.
- Business tech
- Education tech

A disclaimer. Before delving in to the world of "proptech," I think it's important to state my opinion on this often-misused term. My opinion is that most "proptech" is in fact not really anything other than tech enabled services rather than truly disruptive and innovative tech that is improving the industry.

However, proptech can be a valuable online resource for



its ability to help with property and investment research, discussed more in detail below.

**Proptech tools to assist with investment research include:**

- Ooba Home Loan's online tools and calculators . South Africa's largest mortgage originator has an app that provides extremely useful calculators to better understand the costs associated with buying a property.
- TPN Credit Bureau's Online Portal. TPN' data includes property valuation information as well as rental data and demographics which enable you to make informed decisions based on data.
- Lightstone Property Solutions. This is a great tool for providing property valuation data, area sales history and enables you to obtain contact details for the property owner. They include both property toolkits and once-off reports.
- Property Inspect. Also known for having the most advanced property inspection software on the market, this is a great tool for fulfilling your obligations in terms of the Rental Housing Act on joint inspections at the commencement and conclusion of a lease agreement. Online documented and backed up inspections with photos and accurate descriptions provides a landlord with the opportunity to prove any damage claims accurately should the need arise.

**Going hand-in-hand with the research capability of proptech, business tech tools include:**

- InvestmentBox. Has a great calculator to assist in running the numbers on your investment property giving an indication on the Return on Investment whether you are looking to buy and sell the property for profit or buy and hold for investment purposes.

- BidX1. I believe this tool to be the future of real estate transactions. Open market, transparent and electronic, everything the property purchasing process should be about.

- Zoho.com. I particularly like using Zoho Sign for electronic signatures of agreements.

Finally, there are a wealth of educational resources available online, many of which are available for free. I personally recommend using:

- Audible
- Youtube
- Udemy
- iBooks
- EPIC South Africa
- The Unsh\*t Show (Podcast)

**Start off with a strong foundation**

Your ability to access educational content without spending thousands of Rands on seminars and courses has never been easier. Although there is value in spending money on specialised, focused, expert led courses, there is plenty of content, education and information available online at extremely affordable levels to get you started.

As an expert led property investment education brand, EPIC offers:

- Free property investment basics and eBooks
- 6 module property investment training
- Free property development eBook

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