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REAL ESTATE SURVEY 'FLAWED, USELESS'

A survey purporting to show an increase in the use of websites by property seekers at the expense of print has serious methodological flaws that render its findings useless, according to Property Press General Manager Pat Houlihan.

The survey sponsor, realestate.co.nz, claims that the Nielsen research shows “the growing dominance of specialist real estate websites as the media most preferred by active property buyers”.

But those surveyed were “active property seekers” on New Zealand real estate websites. In other words, people looking for property online were asked if they looked for property online. Unsurprisingly, many said they did.

By contrast, and reflecting the reality of the property market much more accurately, other data available from the Nielsen Readership Survey show that 1.3 million New Zealanders, when looking for property will use a print publication and that 62 per cent of those will *not* use the internet.

“We at Property Press believe that more and more people are using print and online in combination to give themselves the widest possible number of options when looking for property,” says Houlihan.

Houlihan says a more accurate picture was revealed by a Massey University survey of people who had recently bought property, which was conducted on rigorous research principles earlier this year. “This showed that 26 per cent of people used the internet, while 30 per cent used Property Press and daily newspapers combined,” says Houlihan.

It is also worth noting that in the past 12 months trademe property – the industry’s largest website - has been averaging 730,000 unique browsers each month. Just two leading print vehicles –Property Press and Herald Homes –reach 870,000 each *week*.

“We are disappointed that realestate.co.nz, RE Journal, which reported the results, and Nielsen all seem happy to have let this misleading information be disseminated,” says Houlihan.

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For further comment contact:

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