

LO, AE Jobs; Retention, Valuation Tools; LOS Survey; Economic News/Cap Markets

By: Rob Chrisman | Thu, Jul 30 2020, 9:42 AM

Lenders are “tonning it,” as indicated by Fannie Mae’s net income of \$2.5 billion for the second quarter of 2020, compared with net income of \$461 million for the first quarter of 2020. But with most of us hunkered down, the economy continues to hunker down as well, as shown by GDP down nearly 33 percent. Why own stock in United Airlines – flying somewhere? Few need to buy new clothes anymore. Or a wristwatch. Not everyone should eat more candy. (What do you think is going through the minds of candy manufacturers whose sales always zoom up in October... are we going to be “back to normal” in three months before Halloween?) As opposed to politicians, every originator will tell you that not everyone should own their own home. (By the way, President Trump [weighed in on affordable housing](#) yesterday.) Yet the homeownership rate increased to 67.9% in the second quarter, [according to the Census Bureau](#), the highest percentage rate since 2007. Builders certainly think everyone should own a newly built house: Their collective optimism [has jumped](#) despite delays in finding appliances and hardware.

Lender and Broker Tools

The number of companies extending their work from home policies and standards continues to increase as it becomes less and less likely that most of us will be back in the office before the end of the year. Digital mortgage provider [Maxwell’s](#) popular eBook, “[Lend from Home](#)”, provides fantastic advice and best practices to thrive in a remote lending environment. A great read for all lending teams. [Click here to download your free PDF](#). No form or email required!

With nationwide social-distancing measures in place due to COVID-19, Digital Mortgage Closings are getting a lot of attention as the industry looks to minimize or eliminate physical contact between borrowers, settlement agents, and notaries. Many lenders are scrambling to navigate the rapidly changing regulatory and policy landscape, select the right technology providers, and implement the process changes necessary. These initiatives have gained even more momentum as Ginnie Mae announced the launch of its [Digital Collateral Program](#) on July 16, 2020. A Washington DC based advisory firm, [Falcon Capital Advisors](#), is answering the call by offering customized Digital Mortgage Closing Roadmaps. This turn-key offering (also referred to by the firm as an “eClosing accelerator”) helps lenders quickly and clearly determine how “e” they can and should be, and how best to implement digital mortgage closings for their business. For more information on Falcon’s Digital Mortgage Advisory services, contact [Camelia Martin](#).

The integration between [Top of Mind’s Surefire CRM](#) and the [SimpleNexus](#) digital mortgage platform keeps getting better. Lenders can connect these two technologies to automate marketing efforts during the pre-application phase. Jonas Kruckeberg at Top of Mind explains it this way: “Mortgage lenders don’t always have a good system in place for following up with early-stage loan applicants. By pushing contact details to SurefireCRM as soon as an application is begun in SimpleNexus, mortgage lenders can deploy automated marketing communications as early as the pre-application phase.” Sometimes that extra communication is all that’s needed to push a loan application across the finish line. Even if the borrower never finishes the application, data sharing between SimpleNexus and SurefireCRM ensures mortgage loan officers can follow up with prospects down the road with rate opportunity alerts and other timely outreach. Reach out to sales@topofmind.com to learn more.

“Mortgage elephant in the room: Are your current customers still leaving to the competition? Ok, lender executive - this is for you: What’s the fastest and most predictable way to increase your sales BEYOND the current market? If you said ‘borrower retention’ you are 100% correct. Your solution: [The Attention to Retention Challenge](#). Starting August 17th, we’re sharing our expert secrets, and handing over the playbook on how to TRIPLE your retention rate without maxing out your overhead! Plus over \$9,000 in bonuses. People are calling us crazy, and we might just be. In this EXCLUSIVE event, we are walking you through our proprietary process, and teaching you how to fish for yourself! Lender executives, we’re limited to 30 sign ups. Register now: www.salesboomerang.com/challenge. *Current customers need not register... we got your back! Ask your CSM for details.”

[AssetVal](#) is celebrating its 25th year in business. The nationwide, full spectrum valuation company providing key products across the industry include appraisals, residential and commercial broker price opinions, inspections, rental data, and AMM reports. The independently owned company’s success is built on un-matched client service, delivering the highest quality of work and innovation. AssetVal was one of the first in the industry to develop an advanced proprietary web-based valuation application that is still creating a competitive edge and consistency in our product offerings. “Since my mother started the company in 1995, our complex industry has evolved and AssetVal has transformed with it by establishing the industry’s most stringent quality control and developing an innovative proprietary compliance module,” said Tami Rund, AssetVal CEO. “We are proud of our work and thankful for our clients throughout the years.” Let AssetVal make a

difference in your business! For more information please contact Brandon O'Briant, EVP (972-333-07090).

HomeBinder is offering a new post-close product to increase sales and retention. Are you only offering a home warranty post close? Mortgage loan officers can now offer an additional post close product to differentiate themselves in the marketplace. HomeBinder provides a centralized home management platform for homeowners. Used by over 400K homeowners, HomeBinder allows loan officers to brand each binder with every closed loan. Lenders can now stay part of the journey, helping homeowners prepare for every life event in their new home. Learn more at HomeBinder.com or call 1-800-377-6915.

How quickly are you providing homeowners access to COVID-19 relief? Mortgage relief programs changing rapidly, and your customers need access to delinquency alternatives now. Fortunately, sophisticated workflow technology can now intuitively survey borrower needs by easily guiding them through intelligently designed questions to identify the best relief options. It's happening through [CLARIFIRE COMMUNITY](#), an innovative feature unique to [CLARIFIRE](#), which is helping servicers eliminate customer backlogs, address investor requirements, and deliver real-time loss mitigation options. That includes automated extensions, payment deferrals, loan modifications and more. Want to learn how to optimize your resources and defend your organization from the next wave of delinquencies? Download Clarifire's new eBook, "[Self-Service Loan Modifications: The Next Step in Automated Mortgage Relief](#)," and find out how you can provide scalable, flexible, 24/7 self-serve support for your customers, en masse.... with no delays, easy answers, immediate eligibility determinations and fast results.

LOS Survey

How satisfied are you, overall, with your LOS and with the vendor who provides the technology? According to STRATMOR Group, more than 90 percent of lenders use at least one commercial Loan Origination System (LOS), but less than 25 percent of lenders report that they are highly satisfied with those systems. The LOS is the single most important piece of technology in your company. If you want insight into the functionality and resource requirements for the LOS available in the market today, participate in STRATMOR's 2020 Technology Insight Study LOS Survey and get the answers you need. It takes just five minutes to complete and lenders who participate receive the survey report for FREE. Complete all the surveys in the study and you'll have the entire 2020 Technology Insight Study for the investment of your time! [Take the LOS survey now](#) and rate the LOS you're using.

Capital Markets

I don't know about you, but I like it when there is actual news for markets to process rather than lingering fears or media cycle stories (e.g. COVID, Brexit, the U.S. – China trade deal, etc.). For example, there wasn't much new economic data out last week, but the uptick in initial jobless claims, which rose to 1.42 million, was a big deal. Increased restrictions in coronavirus hotspots over the last couple weeks are likely the catalyst for the rise in claims although they actually fell on a non-seasonally adjusted basis. More important is the fact that **the trend of declining claims has flattened at a significantly high level and that the enhanced benefits of the CARES Act expire this week.**

And recall that last week, despite the fact that 32 million Americans are receiving some form of state or federal assistance, we learned that housing saw a huge rebound in June with existing home sales up 20.7 percent. Mortgage purchase applications were 19 percent above their level from one year ago for the week ending July 17, suggesting that home sales will continue to show resilience. Additionally, with inventories of existing homes 18 percent below their year-ago level, many buyers are opting for new homes, which rose 13.8 percent in June. With mortgage rates expected to remain low for the foreseeable future and shifting preferences from urban to suburban living, housing has the potential to remain a bright spot even as other areas of the economy are beginning to lose momentum.

Yesterday was a day with actual news, even if it was the Fed sticking to its "whatever it takes" message. **The FOMC did not make any major policy changes yesterday, saying the current stance of policy is "appropriate"** and that the bank is willing to extend that accommodation for as long as needed, remaining committed to using all of its tools, if necessary. **The FOMC's Statement was largely as expected.** Additionally, the committee discussed changes in its forward guidance for rates and asset purchases, as well as the framework for policy decisions, with changes expected to be rolled out in September.

Fed Chair Powell warned during his subsequent press conference of the most severe economic downturn "in our lifetime." He tempered optimism over recent job gains and stressed that the evolution of the virus will dictate the course of the economy. Despite that outlook, investors liked what they heard, as the takeaway is the Fed's large, looming presence and ability to act more if needed will continue to provide a near-term backstop for risk assets. Following the Statement release treasuries barely budged while MBS saw slightly better selling on net versus the early afternoon. In other MBS-related news, Fannie Mae announced that they would start accepting SOFR (secure overnight financing rate) ARM's and begin issuing SOFR-based MBS as of August 3. U.S. Treasury yields saw a steepening across the curve, including no change to the 10-year yield by the day's end. Finally, Powell urged Congress to supply further fiscal support to the economy.

That comes as Republicans and Democrats are "nowhere close to a deal" on a new stimulus package. That quote was per White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows upon leaving Nancy Pelosi's office after the day's negotiations. President Trump earlier said the two sides are "so far apart" that they need to take action on temporary measures. Both of the latest proposals from Democrats and Republicans contain a slew of provisions that don't have much to do with a public health crisis (changes to military spending, new government buildings, tax breaks for high earners, etc.). Meanwhile, millions of Americans just saw their weekly unemployment benefits shrink by \$600. And 30 million Americans said they didn't have enough to eat at some point last week.

Markets this morning got a look at the economic damage done by the first wave of shutdowns. Data showed U.S. gross domestic product plummeted an annualized 32.9 percent in the second quarter, the most in records dating back to the 1940. We've also had initial jobless claims for the week ending July 25 (1.434 million, +12k) and continued claims for the week ending July 18 (17.02 million). The calendar rounds out with Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey for the week ending July 30 later this morning, and large corporate earnings reports until after the close. The NY Fed will conduct a repeat of yesterday's FedTrade schedule when they purchase up \$753 million UMBS15 2 percent and 2.5 percent followed by \$2.795 billion UMBS30 2 percent through 3 percent and \$1.448 billion GNII 2.5 percent and 3 percent. The Desk will report on MBS purchases for the week ending July 29 in the afternoon. After the GDP and jobless numbers Agency MBS prices are up nearly .125 and the 10-year yielding .55 after closing yesterday at 0.58 percent.

Employment and Transitions

With the continued impact of the Coronavirus affecting more and more individuals nationwide, we are proud to announce that Caliber Home Loans partnered with the United Way for a special Caliber Kindness campaign to support those affected by COVID-19. Team Caliber was up for the challenge and we delivered with total contributions of \$500,000. As a company, we have a tremendous opportunity to help the communities we live and work in! We help our customers obtain their dream of owning a home and we help their communities in times of crisis. #CaliberStrong Join Caliber, the company that "walks the walk". Interested in one of our posted job opportunities? Contact Jonathan Stanley for consideration. Interested in a sales opportunity? Contact Brian Miller for immediate consideration. Visit the [Caliber Careers](#) website for opportunities across the organization!

"At [Home Point Financial](#), we're committed to helping our broker and correspondent partners achieve excellence. After capturing 20% market share, the broker community has made their way into the spotlight. Now is the time to demonstrate leadership, and our President of Originations, Phil Shoemaker, shared his thoughts with [HousingWire](#) on this important topic. We're hiring hundreds of people on our team right now to support our partners during this defining moment. If you're looking to lead the way, look no further than Home Point! For immediate consideration, check out our [open roles](#) or send your resume directly to John Eite."

"[Evergreen Home Loans](#) is thrilled to welcome Dan Starelli to the Evergreen Home Loans family of associates. Starelli joins as Regional Manager of Northern California. With over 30 years of retail mortgage experience, he's helped build large origination platforms in California and has personally funded over 2,000 home loans. Passionate about mentoring and leadership, he helps originators and agents build their business. In his new role, Starelli will oversee the daily operations and strategic growth of branches in Northern California. "The reputation of Evergreen Home Loans for service along with their impressive digital mortgage technology and amazing culture made them an excellent choice," said Starelli. 'I'm excited to join the team and continue building the Northern California region.' If you're interested in growing your business, check out our [Careers page](#) for new opportunities or contact Chuck Iverson."

In the midst of a pandemic and historically low rates, non-QM is still in demand. Investors want it. Originators want it. And leading non-QM lender [Angel Oak Mortgage Solutions](#) is delivering it, having brought back 4 non-QM products to the marketplace. Self-employed borrowers can still take advantage of using bank statements to qualify while investors can use the cash flow of the property (DSCR) to qualify for NOO properties. In addition, Angel Oak is offering its Platinum Jumbo and Asset Qualifier programs. With improvement to rates and guidelines happening frequently, you can keep up-to-date on the [program](#) page. To assist with the increased demand Angel Oak is hiring, offering a \$10K signing bonus for remote underwriters. See [JoinAngelOak.com](#) for more information on that role and other operational openings.

"The Lenox/ WesLend Team is Growing! At [Lenox/ WesLend](#) you are family and we will empower you to grow and put you on an accelerated path to career advancement. We are looking to dramatically increase our Team, due to overwhelming demand. We know that good people are at the heart of our success. Lenox Financial mortgage is licensed in 40 states, with over 20 years of experience in retail and wholesale business channels, as well as servicing. Our executive team has over 100 years of lending experience. Family is at the core of what we believe in, which is why we encourage a positive work-life balance! We have remote work options available, and are looking for Underwriters, Senior Processors, Junior Processors, Account Managers, and Funders. Please send your resume to careers@lenoxhomeloans.com." "It's the biggest no brainer in the history of mankind."

8/10 (VA IRRRL), 8/13 (FHA SL), 8/17 (VA IRRRL) or 8/21 (FHA SL).

[Mortgage Connect LP](#) announced that Tim Anderson has joined the company as SVP of Digital Technologies to execute strategies to focus on the Company's eSign and eClose platform Simply Secure Sign, as well as digital strategy and delivery management.

[FormFree](#) has brought on [Jocelyn Brooks, AMP](#) as national account manager to strengthen customer engagement with AccountChek and AccountChek Plus. Congratulations!

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