



## The Effective Use of Web-based Tools for Property Management Companies in Hong Kong

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**Final Report**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this research project is to study the ways to use web-based technology to provide process enhancement to the property and facilities management profession.

The objectives of this study are:

- to investigate the current developments in web-based property management tools in Hong Kong;
- to understand how the user-friendliness of the current user-interface can be improved so that residents can accomplish the available functions more effectively; and
- to explore the extent to which the capabilities of web-based and ‘cloud’ technology are maximised for the benefit of the property and facilities management profession.

A desktop study of private residential estates that provided web-based property management tools was carried out followed by face-to-face semi-structured interviews with experienced property managers. Feedback from residents served with web-based property management tools was collected by means of a questionnaire survey.

The Study was conducted in three stages. Stage 1 aims to explore the current developments in web-based property management tools in Hong Kong, including the scope of property management services provided by local property management companies, the number of private residential estates that used such tools, and their local distribution. Stage 2 aims to identify the weaknesses and challenges of the current development of web-based property management tools through interviewing professional property management managers and practitioners. Stage 3 aims to investigate users’ habits of using web-based property management tools, their personal experiences of using such tools, and their levels of satisfaction.

The findings of this study show that a number of property management companies did provide web-based property management system (WPMS) services to residential buildings. Some property management companies committed a considerable amount of financial resources to develop web-based property management tools as platforms to improve property management services and collect feedback from users. Meanwhile, these companies strived to enlarge the scope of property management services through WPMS and encouraged residents to use it to request services. However, the results of the survey contained in this study showed that the usage rate of WPMS among residents was rather low. Even though Hong Kong's principal property management companies actively promote WPMS and commit a considerable amount of resources to WPMS development, most Hong Kong residents have yet to form a habit of requesting property management services through WPMS. They still prefer direct interaction with service providers before requesting property management services such as making phone calls to their offices and informing estate security.