

Unorthodox Methods of Surveying Knowledge Dissemination in the Digital Era

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SUMMARY

The global land surveying profession continues to face an ongoing question about its perceived decline and relevance in a more digital and interdisciplinary world. This paper critically explores two key structural factors underpinning this perception. The first is an internal generational disconnect between the profession's traditionally structured, technically dense methods of knowledge transfer and the learning preferences of Generations Y and Z, who exhibit a strong inclination toward technology-driven, modular, and self-directed learning. The second is an external communication gap between the surveying profession and its stakeholders in the built environment as well as the wider society. Within the South African context, the role of land surveyors is often underestimated in project lifecycles. At the same time, among property owners, the procurement and importance of surveying services are undervalued or misunderstood. Collectively, these disconnects contribute to the misconception that surveying is relevant only at the outset of development or during boundary disputes, thereby diminishing the profession's visibility and perceived impact.

To address these challenges, this paper introduces and validates a set of digital communication strategies, specifically infographics, video storytelling, and interactive online events as innovative tools for both pedagogical transformation and professional advocacy. The study employs a mixed-methods approach that integrates social media analytics to measure engagement metrics such as reach and interaction rate, audience surveys to assess changes in comprehension and perceived value of surveying, and structured interviews with university students and members of the public to gain qualitative insights into knowledge retention and attitude shifts.

Preliminary findings demonstrate that visual and interactive content formats substantially enhance engagement, promote visual reasoning, and simplify the communication of complex technical

concepts. Compared to conventional lecture-based or text-heavy dissemination, these methods improve comprehension and foster more meaningful connections between surveyors and their audiences. The research underscores the effectiveness of blended, visual learning as an inclusive and dynamic approach to sustaining professional knowledge and advocacy. While it is particularly relevant to South Africa, the study holds broader significance for other nations in the Global South, where similar challenges of professional visibility, generational engagement, and public awareness persist. The proposed digital methodologies offer a replicable framework for transforming how surveying knowledge is disseminated and how the profession advocates for itself in diverse socio-economic and educational contexts. By using accessible digital tools, surveyors in developing regions can bridge generational gaps, build public trust, and reinforce the importance of surveying in sustainable development.

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