

First American sues eight firms for AVM

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First American CoreLogic has filed a federal lawsuit against eight rivals, including the real estate Web site Zillow.com and mortgage service provider Lender Processing Services. Santa Ana, California-based CoreLogic says it has a 1994 patent on the automated valuation model (AVM) the companies are using to assess property values for clients.

The other firms named as defendants include: Fiserv, IntelliReal, Interthinx, Precision Appraisal Services, Real Data, and RealEC Technologies.

CoreLogic says all of the eight companies continue, "to willfully, wantonly and deliberately engage in acts of infringement." None of the defendants have released statements in response to the suit. According to the complaint, First American CoreLogic is demanding a trial by jury. The company is seeking an injunction against the eight competitors and asking for triple damages to cover lost profits, as well as compensation for attorneys' fees.

AVM is basically giving people an automatic value of their home. Zillow.com, back by more than \$70 million, is the largest player in this arena. Among the real estate community, Zillow.com is notorious for giving completely inaccurate values making the job of real estate agents a tad more difficult.

First American, a large holding company that provides the technology for the Regional MLS, Martin MLS and others across the nation, is claiming that they hold a patent on this technology.

Source: DSNews.com, Carrie Bay, (05/05/2010)