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client profile



## Lubbock Central Appraisal District Create a More Accurate Valuation Method with Orion In-software Modeling

**Industry:** County Government

**Location:** Lubbock County, Texas

**Population:** 278,831

**Tyler Client Since:** 2003

**Tyler Products Used:** Orion<sup>™</sup>

### In Their Own Words:

**“With in-software modeling, we now have the breakouts we need, including item-by-item values of fireplaces, bathrooms and more. It also takes into account age variables, and how they affect properties like mansions and shacks differently. The resulting comp grid is vastly superior to what we had before. It’s explainable, accurate and defensible.”**

— Ronald A. Rowe, Assistant Chief Appraiser,  
Lubbock Central Appraisal District, Texas

### The Facts

Lubbock County is the birthplace of Buddy Holly, home to the Texas Tech Red Raiders and one of North America’s largest cotton-growing regions. It’s also the official jurisdiction of the Lubbock Central Appraisal District (CAD), the local governmental organization that’s responsible for calculating property values for approximately 90,000 residences across 900 square miles. That means, their staff has a lot of constituents to answer to every time they send out property adjustments.

### Key Challenges

- All positive and negative adjustments among comparable properties were aggregated into a single number, which was then applied as a lump-sum adjustment to comparable sales prices.
- Use of the aggregate adjustment resulted in values appearing to be out of proportion, particularly when owners compared the many overall differences between comparable residences.
- Taxpayers were confused about how property values were calculated, and they were not confident that the values were fair and equitable.
- Because they lacked itemized breakouts for unique qualitative and geographic property features, the district appraisal staff found it difficult to explain and defend their valuations to taxpayers and the local appraisal review board.

### Benefits of Using the Latest Technology

- The in-software modeling process made possible by Tyler’s Orion software achieved a new and far more accurate valuation method for the Lubbock CAD team.
- A defensible comp grid was developed that would assign values, based on true market value, to each significant qualitative feature of a property owner’s home.
- By using the new comp grid, the district could more accurately calculate property values, and clearly explain and defend them to each constituent.
- A considerably more flexible and accurate valuation method was adopted that ensured both appraisers and constituents were confident in the validity of assigned property values.

## Before In-software Modeling, Comparable Properties Weren't All that Comparable

For many years, when the Lubbock Central Appraisal District performed a comparable analysis, comparable properties received a simple, one lump-sum adjustment. That's because all positive and negative adjustments among all comparables were aggregated into a single number. There were often many physical and qualitative differences between comparable properties causing some owners to feel like their final valuations were out of proportion.

Because the appraisal district was unable to use or generate itemized breakouts for unique property features, it was difficult for them to explain or justify the calculated property values to their constituents and to the local appraisal review board.

The district knew things had to change. Their staff needed a more flexible and accurate valuation method that they could easily explain and defend, while constituents needed to understand how property values were calculated and also trust that the assigned values were fair and equitable.

## Orion In-software Modeling Led to a More Accurate and Defendable Valuation Method

By using the multiple regression analysis (MRA) feature in Orion Appraisal™ computer-assisted mass appraisal software, the district's newly formed modeling team was able to test and identify the most flexible and accurate valuation methods possible.

A series of models was created based on the geographic and qualitative factors of homes found throughout the district. They divided all single-family residences into twelve separate models, ensuring that each model segment contained a large enough sample size to generate legitimate and accurate appraisal adjustments.

The appraisal district could also assign values to individual property features, such as pools, basements and living areas, as well as geographic and qualitative features that are unique to a property. A new comp grid was established by setting these values based on existing market data. The grid enabled the district to improve the accuracy of property valuation and make it easier for officials to explain and defend the values.

Ultimately, a new valuation method was created that delivered far greater accuracy than the previous version. Property values were easier to calculate for appraisers and were viewed as more fair and accurate by taxpayers. The appraisal district also found the new method easier to explain and defend to their constituents and the local appraisal review board.

## Tyler Provided the Technology and Guidance to Help the Appraisal District Reach Its Goals

As a Tyler client, the Lubbock Central Appraisal District received full technical support throughout the launch of this important initiative. A Tyler expert spent three days training the district team and gave them the hands-on experience they needed to better understand and use the MRA feature. This approach

allowed Tyler experts to work alongside the modeling team to set up variables and offer multiple suggestions to ensure Lubbock CAD achieved their goal.

The process was streamlined because all models were generated completely within Orion Appraisal using the MRA feature. There was no need to import data from or export data to a third-party software solution.

Ultimately, the lump-sum adjustments of the past have been replaced by a comp grid with up to a dozen individual adjustments for items, such as fireplaces, pools, shops and quality ratings. Every dollar value is now clearly categorized and listed on the comp grid in a clear and concise format. What was once a laborious and, sometimes, inaccurate valuation process is now easier to execute and defend.

## Why Tyler?

- Tyler has more than 75 years of experience in the appraisal and tax software and services industry.
- We will work with you to solve your most demanding challenges and ensure that your Appraisal & Tax solution supports a highly productive and efficient operation.
- With our evergreen philosophy, your software investment will remain up to date with the latest technology and software enhancements through a steady stream of significant, yet manageable updates without relicensing fees.

## About Tyler's Appraisal & Tax Solutions

For more than 75 years, Tyler has been the trusted provider of integrated appraisal software and services to more than 1,300 jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada. Given our deep public domain experience, we understand that when it comes to serving your jurisdiction, you need the right blend of innovative functionality and reliable performance in one integrated system.

For more than a decade, Orion has delivered unparalleled access to appraisal, tax and collections information across more than 200 jurisdictions. Orion serves as Tyler's premier appraisal and tax solution in Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Oregon and Texas, producing hundreds of thousands of assessment notices and tax bills each year. In Texas alone, Orion has generated more than 6.3 million tax bills.

Contact Tyler to learn more about this and other best-in-class Appraisal & Tax solutions.

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