



# Rover Technology Fusions, LLC Project Description

## Hillsborough County Property Appraiser, Tampa Florida

**Organization:** Hillsborough County Property Appraiser, Tampa Florida

**Contact:** Honorable Rob Turner, Elected Property Appraiser  
Warren J. Weathers, Chief Deputy Property Appraiser  
Phone: (813) 276-8815  
Fax (813) 276-2710  
www.hcpafl.org



**Business Challenge:** The Hillsborough County Property Appraiser’s office is known to be at the leading edge of the assessment industry’s technological advances. While the office was operating efficiently, they were always on the look out for new ways to do the job of field data collection faster, better, and more cost-effectively.

**Technology Solution Implemented:** Rover INK Mobile Data Capture



### Summary

The Hillsborough County Property Appraiser (HCPA) is responsible for appraising more than 506,000 properties within Hillsborough County Florida on an annual basis. To enhance the collection of field data and meet tax roll requirements, the department implemented Rover INK. Since the launch, the processing time for site review inspection has been greatly enhanced by eliminating a full step of data-input at the office.

### Organization Overview

The Hillsborough County Property Appraiser is an elected official charged with the duty and responsibility to appraise all property within the county. This includes real estate and tangible personal property businesses. In Hillsborough county the Property Appraiser estimates the market value for hundreds of thousands of individual parcels, including residential, agricultural and multifamily, commercial, industrial, as well as, thousands of personal property accounts.





## Previous Process

Field staff completed property appraisals using traditional paper forms for each property visited. The forms were relatively complex incorporating various sections, percentages of buildings, types of buildings and comment fields that required handwritten completion. Completed forms were then hand delivered to the office where data entry personnel manually keyed the information into the Software Techniques Inc. (STI) Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) system. Questions on inaccurate data were put aside until area supervisors were available for consultation to confirm the correct data.

## Business Challenge

With the real estate boom at its peak in 2006, the HCPA was processing a record number of site reviews and permit inspections. While the process was efficient, the office continually looked for ways to increase efficiency and accuracy.

## The New Process: Rover INK™

The Property Appraiser's office wanted to improve the turn around time of incorporating field data into their STI CAMA system. The process had to be seamless and require minimum training and investment. Included in the objectives:

- Keep data integrity
- Decrease the cost of the data collection process
- Reduce data entry time
- Interface with STI CAMA

HCPA chose the Rover INK solution, which integrates digital pens with Mi-Co forms and Anote Paper. Data verification takes a minimum amount of time and the verified data exports seamlessly into the Rover INK server and the office's STI CAMA system.

The decision to use paper and pen was made for several reasons. First, the expense of outfitting each field member with a laptop was cost prohibitive. Second, and more importantly, field personnel were used to utilizing pens and forms. There was a minimal learning curve to implementing this portion of the process. Rover INK was highly viewable and portable. Paper is easier than a computer screen to see in bright sunlight and can present much more information at any point in time than the screen of a PDA.

Field personnel, at the end of each day, dock their pens in their respective offices. Data is then sent to the main office where supervisors spend seconds per parcel verifying the accuracy of the data and approving it for export to STI CAMA.





## Challenges

- At the inception of the program, the appraisal form utilized by the field staff went through a re-design. The new form included business rules where only specific characters could be input. This required a minimal learning curve on the part of the field staff that was realized within 2-3 weeks.
- There was an initial resistance by field personnel for the need to change their writing in form fields to block lettering. When apparent efficiencies were quickly realized, the resistance evaporated.

## Benefits

The Hillsborough County Property Appraiser realized the following primary benefits:

- Increased the efficiency and timeliness of the data input process.
- Eliminates a significant portion of the office data inputting function, thus inside staff can be reallocated.

Hillsborough County Property Appraiser (HCPA) implements Rover INK's mobile data capture and digital writing software for efficient data collection.

- Allows much faster transmission of data from the field to the STI CAMA system.
- HCPA is exploring additional uses of the technology for other departments

