

The Client Connection

News and Updates from The Gensler Group

May 27, 2014

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The Markets

Alongside the irises, daffodils, tulips, and other perennials that were popping up (in seasonal parts of the United States) last week, there was a lot of talk about the housing market and what its performance means about the state of the economy. Perceptions varied.

The U.S. housing market has showed improvement in recent years; however, sales slowed during 2013 as interest rates and home prices moved higher. Last week's housing data showed sales of existing homes were up 1.3 percent for April which was lower than expected, but sales of new single-family homes were up more than expected. In addition, the S&P/Case-Shiller 20-City Composite Home Price Index showed February housing prices had reached levels last seen in 2004.

According to MarketWatch.com, some big-name investors are worried about the housing market's recovery because younger investors are not inclined to take on mortgage debt. Others suggest homeownership may drop because people are marrying later. Balancing





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the naysayers are pundits who believe demand for housing will continue to strengthen.

[Click here to read the entire article.](#)

The Newest European Import

The newest European import is the chip and pin card.



Discussions about credit and debit card security were heating up even before retailers experienced data breaches last winter.

Needless to say, after the breaches and a wealth of media reports touting the fact that Europe, Canada,

and most of the rest of the world already have more secure payment systems than the one we use in the United States, interest in replacing our current system increased.

Eighty countries around the world are currently implementing Europay, MasterCard and Visa, or EMV™ technology. In some places, EMV compliance is further along than it is in others. For instance, about 95 percent of point-of-sale credit card machines (aka terminals) in Europe are EMV compliant; 79 percent of terminals in Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean; 77 percent of terminals in Africa and the Middle East; and 51 percent of terminals in the Asia Pacific region.

[Click here to read the entire article.](#)

To Have and to Save

Sometimes Cash is the Most Practical Wedding Gift

Rose Kory, 25, and Daniel Schneider, 26, had been sharing an apartment for several years. So when the Chicago-based couple decided to marry, they realized they didn't need traditional wedding gifts, such as pots and pans or a blender, Ms. Kory says—they already had those. What they could use, though, was cash.



To give guests a hint and streamline the process, the couple registered with Present Value, an online gift registry that allows users to direct cash gifts toward financial goals like a down payment on a home, paying for the honeymoon or simply building a nest egg.

[Click here to read the entire article.](#)

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