



Can You Trust That Property Ad?

The Abuja Buyer Has a New Problem

The property looks perfect.

The pictures are beautiful. The compound is clean. The rooms are spacious. The location sounds excellent. The price is surprisingly attractive.

Then comes the message.

“Send a deposit so we can secure it.”

This is where many property buyers and renters face one of the biggest questions in today's Nigerian real estate market.

Can you actually trust what you see online?

Property advertising has changed dramatically. Buyers no longer have to walk around a neighbourhood asking everyone if they know a house for sale. A few minutes on a phone can produce dozens of apartments, houses and plots of land.

That convenience is useful.

But it has also created another problem.

A property advertisement can look genuine before the buyer discovers that the property, the price, the seller or the documentation is not what it appeared to be.

Seeing the Property Is Not Enough

This is one of the most important lessons for anyone buying land or property in Abuja.

Seeing the property does not prove ownership.

TheCable recently highlighted several forms of real estate fraud in Nigeria, including properties being sold by people who do not own them, the same land being sold to multiple buyers and documents being forged or used to hide problems with title. It also warned that physically seeing a piece of land does not establish that the person showing it has the legal right to sell it.

That is why a property inspection is only one part of due diligence.

You can stand on the land.

You can take photographs.

You can even meet someone who confidently tells you that the land is genuine.

But you still need to establish the legal position.

Abuja Has Seen Real Cases

This concern is not based entirely on stories shared on social media.

There have been documented land related disputes and fraud investigations in Abuja.

In July 2026, Premium Times reported evidence given in an ongoing Federal High Court case involving disputed plots in Abuja. A prosecution witness alleged that buyers had been given offer letters, payment receipts and other documents even though the defendants had not produced documents establishing ownership or authority to sell the disputed properties. The defendants have denied the allegations.

Earlier in 2026, the FCTA cancelled 485 area council land allocations after verification exercises found that the affected documents were fake or not genuine. The affected locations included Bwari, AMAC and Kuje.

These cases explain why some Abuja buyers are nervous.

They have heard stories of people paying millions for land and later discovering that something was wrong.

But there is another important lesson here.

The existence of fraud does not mean every property advertisement is fraudulent. It means buyers need a better process for separating legitimate opportunities from risky ones.

The Price Can Be a Warning

One of the first things buyers should examine is the price.

A cheap property is not automatically a scam.

Sometimes a seller genuinely needs to sell quickly. Sometimes a property is in an area that has not yet developed. Sometimes there are differences in title, condition, access or infrastructure that explain the price.

But when a property is dramatically cheaper than comparable properties without a clear explanation, that deserves investigation.

An Abuja buyer shared an experience online after searching for property within a ₦65 million to ₦75 million budget. The buyer reported receiving listings significantly above that range and also encountered properties that did not resemble the photographs and descriptions used in their advertisements. The experience eventually led the buyer to emphasise due diligence and proper documentation. Again, this is an individual account, not proof that every agent behaves this way, but it shows why buyers should independently verify what they are being shown.

Do Not Let Social Media Do Your Due Diligence



A large Instagram following does not establish ownership.

A beautiful website does not establish ownership.

A billboard does not establish ownership.

A famous person appearing in an advert does not establish ownership.

Even a professional office does not replace legal verification.

These things can help a company establish credibility, but property transactions require something deeper.

The buyer needs to understand the title, ownership history, seller's authority and relevant documentation.

For Abuja property, the role of the FCT land administration system is particularly important. AGIS provides land related services including title registration and other processes connected to property records in the FCT.

This is why experienced buyers often ask questions before they ask for a payment account.

Who owns this property?

What document proves it?

Who has authority to sell it?

Has the title been properly verified?

Are there outstanding obligations attached to the property?

What exactly will I receive after payment?

Those questions may slow down a transaction.

That is a good thing.

What About Developers?

The same principle applies when buying from a property developer.

Most developers operate legitimate businesses, but buyers should still investigate the specific property they are purchasing.

If the property is still under construction, understand the expected completion period. Understand the payment schedule. Read the agreement. Find out what happens if there is a delay. Understand what documentation you will receive and when.

Do not assume that because a company has built other properties, every property it is currently offering automatically carries the same legal or commercial circumstances.

The property itself needs to be examined.

The Real Red Flag Is Pressure

One of the most useful questions a buyer can ask is this:

Why do I have to pay today?

If the answer is simply that another buyer is waiting, take a breath.

Real estate is a major financial decision.

You should have enough time to examine the documents, ask questions and seek professional advice where necessary.



A genuine seller should be able to explain the transaction clearly.

A buyer who asks questions is not being difficult.

They are protecting their money

Buy the Property, Not the Story

Real estate marketing is designed to make property attractive.

That is normal.

But buyers should learn to separate the story from the asset.

A beautiful video tells you what the seller wants you to see.

A proper verification process helps you understand what you are actually buying.

That difference can save a buyer from making an expensive mistake.

For anyone considering property in Abuja, the goal should not be to become suspicious of everyone. The goal should be to become informed enough to know what questions to ask.

Because in real estate, the most expensive mistake is often not buying an expensive property. It is buying the wrong one.

How De Velli Can Help

De Velli helps investors explore real estate opportunities in Abuja with attention to location, documentation and structured ownership. Before you pay, understand the property you are buying.