

Price and Marketing are Critical to Selling Your Home

By J. Lennox Scott

When selling a home, there are five “rights” that every seller needs to know about to ensure a successful sale: house right, yard right, price right, marketing right, and the right Realtor. This week I will discuss the importance of pricing and marketing your home right.

Any Realtor will tell you that the key to a successful and efficient sale lies in correctly pricing your home. It’s proven that the first two weeks of a sale are the most important because it is the only time your home is considered “new on the market.” If your home is overpriced you could miss this window of opportunity, compromising the sale of your home. Furthermore, overpricing can lengthen the listing time, possibly resulting in a lower selling price than would have otherwise been obtained had the home been appropriately priced from day one. It’s also important to keep in mind that a property that is left on the market for an extended period of time can become “shop-worn,” causing potential buyers to think something is wrong with it.

There are certain steps that your Realtor will follow to ensure that your home is appropriately priced. The goal is to find a balance between attracting solid offers and ultimately receiving top dollar. To do so, your Realtor will conduct a competitive market analysis (CMA) of your home and give you an estimate of its fair market value. Fair market value is a range that fluctuates depending on the housing market in your area and what similar homes are selling for. This involves comparing your home to other homes that are similar in style, design, square footage, and amenities. They should also be located in near-by or similar neighborhoods. Much of a home's value is also determined by the potential emotional impact it will have on buyers. These emotions are based on subjective elements such as drive-up appeal, interior décor, colors, views, landscaping, light, room flow, etc. The emotional factors are usually what enable one home to command a higher price than another similar style home in the same market.

Once your home has been properly priced and prepared to sell, your Realtor will utilize several methods to market it. The first step is to enter your home into the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). The MLS is a member-based organization that provides comprehensive information to real estate companies and agents about all properties for sale in a certain geographic area or market. This marketing tool attracts current buyers in the market place to your home by providing agents with instant information about your property. Every listing is assigned its own MLS number which potential buyers can use to search for your home online. Furthermore, homes that are a part of the MLS are subsequently posted on all MLS-member real estate websites, which maximizes the online marketing exposure of your home.

In addition to the MLS, everything from the internet to newspaper advertising and yard signage is successful at attracting potential buyers—it usually takes a combination of all of these things to effectively sell a home. The internet provides endless marketing opportunities, such as multiple photos, interactive maps, guided tours, and detailed audio descriptions. On some local real estate websites you can now even look up sold home information in your neighborhood and get a 3-D Bird’s Eye view of homes for sale. All of these high-tech features drive buyers to the internet and potentially to your home.

Any or all of these items can be tailored to you and your home’s individual needs; the key is to work with your Realtor to determine the most effective combination so your home receives the highest level of marketing exposure in the best possible light.

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