

# The 50 Most Powerful Things YOU Can Do To Get Your House Sold!

By: Cheryl Johnson

## A FULL SERVICE MARKETING PLAN FOR SELLING YOUR HOME

- Ask a Mortgage Broker to design flyers with different payment amounts and options for your buyers. Put these flyers out with your own flyers on your marketing table and/or on the back of your flyer in your info tube.
- If you elect to pay closing costs for the buyer, make a sign rider and put it on your yard sign. Also add the statement to your flyer.

\*\*\*Side Note: Don't forget to get pre-qualified for your next mortgage

- Call a residential Inspector if you are questioning any of the following issues: polybutylene piping, LP siding, synthetic stucco or even hard coat stucco. They can give you a letter of opinion for around \$150.00, which they will display on your marketing table.
- Call a residential inspector to get research material for your buyer for you to add to your marketing table. This material covers many topics and will be specific to your home.
- Get your home fully inspected by a residential inspector. Make the repairs needed and then put the report on your marketing table.
- Call a professional decorator to come into your house and rearrange your home to the most selling potential.
- Repaint all dirty walls, baseboards and non-traditional colors in your home to the hottest neutral colors. .
- Call a professional decorator and send a picture of your home and get some ideas on adding curb appeal.
- Create emotion in your home by making your home clean and fresh. Smells are important, but don't overdo. If you have pets, get an air purifier.
- Clean your baseboards, windows and front door area. Use Mr. Clean' Magic sponge.
- Create a curb appeal with color. Use flowers, pots, and wrought iron planters that hang on your brick. Use flags, lanterns, decorative animals etc... to enhance the "Oh, isn't that cute" factor in your home.
- Replace old doorknobs, air intake vents, switch plates, kitchen and bathroom faucets and old kitchen cabinet handles.
- Hold your own Open Houses every day of the week when you're there. Just put an Open House sign out and add your directional signs. Wal-Mart has balloons in a box that

you can add to your signs. Keep an Open House log.

- Offer an allowance for any worn carpet, or any flooring or painting that you don't want to do by posting a sign in the home. Don't state how much you are paying.
- Offer 4% to a buyer's agent. This should put you at the top of agents' show lists when they pull up properties to show their clients. This will allow you to rule out agent apathy as a reason for why you're not getting traffic.
- Make a list of the ages of the kids in your neighborhood. Put on your marketing table.
- Write a letter to the prospective buyer telling them about the neighborhood, neighborhood events and clubs, why you are moving and your feelings about your home. Put on your marketing table.
- Get a letter from the neighbors on both sides of you expressing their views of your neighborhood. Put on your marketing table.
- Draw a map to the nearest grocery store, schools and parks. Put on your marketing table.
- Put a 12-month average of your utilities and the names and numbers of the providers on your marketing table.
- Make CDs with pictures of your home for your potential buyers. Put on your marketing table.
- Advertise your home on FREE For Sale By Owner websites.
- You may want to add yourself to the Do Not Call List to avoid a ton of agent calls trying to list your home.
- Advertise your home on ebay.com.
- Advertise your home in local, neighborhood papers.
- Get professional pictures made of your home.

\*\*\*Side Note: We have found that the method of evaluating traffic in a home has changed. Most buyers use the Internet to view interior and exterior photos before they decide what they would like to see in person. Good photos are a MUST!

- Offer your home as Lease Purchase, which we can add to your listing. We recommend that you require 5% down which is non-refundable if the buyer does not purchase. Lease Purchases tend to bring the seller not only a high price, but also a good cash flow for the 6 months to 1 year that the home is leased.
- Do an auction on your home. Visit online auction services, which specialize in home auctions or buy the book, How to Sell Your Home in 5 Days. It is sold on Amazon.com.
- Have home professionally appraised and advertise appropriately. In other words, if your home is listed for \$5,000 below appraisal, you can advertise this. Of course, if your

home does not appraise for a high price, simply don't advertise the appraisal.

- If you have outside accent lighting, make sure that you put on every night. If you have a formal living room that you keep your drapes open in at night, put on the lights and leave on at night until you go to bed. Many buyers drive through neighborhoods at night.
- Add small lamps to your kitchen and bathrooms.
- Make your closet ½ full and neat.
- Seal your garage floor.
- Add fresh flowers to the inside of your home.
- Leave refreshments for your buyers.
- Ask buyers to take off their shoes upon entering the house. Post a sign in the entryway. It presents an idea that you are a pristine housekeeper.
- Don't have big dogs in the house and don't leave items around that make people think that big dogs are in the house.
- Change litter boxes everyday. Some people mistake the litter box smell for animal urine on the carpet.
- Take smelly shoes out of closets.
- Remove some family pictures, but keep in mind that most people want to believe that you are very happy in your home. The feel of a home is just as important as the appearance of the home.
- Keep your flyers stocked and give buyers an easy way to reach you. Cell phone number, work number and home number.
- De-clutter! You may have to get a storage unit. It will be worth the hassle. Read survey below.
- Do not smoke in the house! And, if you smoke outside, remove the ashtray.
- If you really want opinions on your home, consider what some other clients do. Get a nanny cam to capture their impressions.
- Add note cards to the areas where you have upgrades that might be overlooked.
- Give your attorney power of attorney to close your home so you can be home with the movers instead of at the closing.
- Set up any dining areas with place setting as if you are having a party at your home that night.
- Set up any basement area tables with games.

- Set up screen porches and deck tables with party decorations including place settings. Use paper lanterns.
- When a buyer comes to your home without an agent, send the name to your mortgage broker. Johnson Realty will write the contract for you when the buyer is ready.

\*\*\*Side Note: Pristine homes, which are homes that shine with pride, usually sell quicker and for 2 to 3% higher than other homes. It is very difficult to find pristine homes. Most homes are dirty.

I recently took a survey from my buyer's agents on several topics. Here are their responses.

Why did your last client choose the home they bought?

Big, fenced yard; personality of the home; not much yard work; front porch wrapped around the house; located near interstate; neighborhood appeal; layout; decorating choice of colors and flooring; location; layout of home; size of lot and location in subdivision; open floor plan; kitchen; backed up golf course; location to work; floor plan and upgrades from builder; level backyard with privacy

What were the biggest turnoffs when you went to homes?

Clutter; pet smells; loose pets; wallpaper; neighborhood; didn't want to have to do a ton of work to the house; a dark home; dated homes; ugly exterior; colors of paint too strong; home in bad repair; country colors and too much wallpaper; the house seemed too dark; small outdated kitchens; outside maintenance to be done; cheap kitchen; floor plan too choppy; sloped backyards; cheap colors and wallpaper

How long did you work with your clients?

3 weekends; 2 weekends; 1 weekend; 2 months; 1 month; 2 months; 6 months; 2 months; 3 months; 1 month; 2 months; 6 weeks; 2 months; 2 weeks; 1 month; 4 weeks;

Did you or your client know the comps for the neighborhood before you went to it with your client?

Yes, I pulled comps prior to looking; Yes, I pulled comps; Yes, we both did; No; No; No; Yes; Not Always; Vaguely; No; No; No; No; No; No;

Does the effort put forth from a client to have all the lights on make a difference?

Yes; Yes; Absolutely; Yes, mainly in areas that get or are dark like the basement, garage, room with no windows; Yes; Yes, it psychologically affects buyers in a positive way, and makes the seller more involved in the process; Yes, especially if older home or heavily wooded; Yes, lighting is very important

Does music make a difference? If yes, what kind?

Soft, light, jazz music; Yes, soft elevator music or Jazz Flavors; Yes, very low classical or

classical guitar, non-controversial; Yes, soft classical music – not too loud; generally no; Sometimes, it depends on the house and the area; No; Yes, sets the mood

Do your clients make comments about the yards?

Mainly about size, but they do notice if the yard needs a lot of work; Yes; Yes, especially if it is really great or really bad; Yes, often size, look of plantings, amount of work it will or won't take to maintain; Yes, is it kept up, do these sellers really care about the house; Yes, especially those with large dogs or children who have trashed the yard; Yes, but usually if unusually good or bad; Yes, a pristine yard makes a huge difference

Do your clients make comments about a dirty home?

Yes, they leave more quickly; Yes! Yes! Yes, many people have a hard time "seeing what the house is" if it is dirty; Yes, some will make allowances for children; Oh yeah; Yes, turn off; A dirty home would make me wonder or assume that there must be other things relating to the home that don't get taken care of;

Do your clients make comments about a cluttered home?

Yes; Yes; It takes away from the appeal of the home; Definitely – dirt and clutter are the two biggest turnoffs; Yes, it can be overwhelming; Yes, they can mask stained carpeting and detract from a client's ability to mentally visualize their furnishings in it; Yes, they want to leave without seeing the home's bones; Yes;

If your client is not interested in the house, how long do you stay?

Just a few minutes; 1 to 2 minutes; If the homeowners are not there we leave immediately, otherwise as soon as graceful; 1 to 2 minutes; Generally 5 minutes or less, sometimes we don't even go in, even if they have seen the pictures; 1 minute; Less than a minute; Not long;

If your clients are interested in the house, how long do you stay?

30 minutes; Sometimes up to 30 minutes; 30 to 45 minutes; Sometimes as much as an hour; 15 to 20 minutes; As long as necessary; As long as 1 ½ hours, but usually 30 minutes; 15 to 30 minutes;

What do you think makes a house sell?

Clean, clutter free appearance; Price, shows and smells; Whatever it makes the buyer fall in love with it, but generally location, condition and price; It is the right house for that client; Neutral colors, clean, neat, organized with attention to detail; Great yard, clean and crisp interior, good decorating and updating; Price, location, upkeep, neighborhood and how much work is going to have to be done to make it the perfect house; If it is homey looking and comfortable then you don't want to leave;

What percentage of your clients searches the internet for a home?

90; 100; 100; 85-95; 100; 100; 100; Most

Do any of your clients make comments about why they overlooked a home on the

internet? If so, why?

No, because I explain how the MLS works compared to Realtor.com; I had one because she thought the house looked plain, I had shown it to another client and knew it was perfect for them, I asked her to look at the interior pictures and she loved it; No pictures or not enough pictures or not enough info about the house; The pictures made the room look small and unappealing, etc... They weren't sure about the area; Yes no pictures; No pictures or bad pictures are a turnoff;