

Ten Simple Steps You Can Take To Ensure Your Home Sells At Top Dollar

1. Emotional appeal. Make sure your home looks, feels and smells its best. You're competing with 5000 to 7,200 other homes for sale. Buyers buy on emotion... let your home be the cleanest, freshest and cheeriest, and you'll have a much faster sale... at a higher price.

2. Read my "How To Show Your Home" flyer very carefully. If your home is logically a good value, but a buyer doesn't feel warm and emotionally attracted to the home, it will not sell. Buyers buy on emotion, not logic. You'll want lots of people to say or think, "Wow! This is nice! I would like to live here!"

3. Lots of light. For maximum effect, turn every light on, even on a sunny day. Open all window shades. Clean your draperies and curtains. Make sure your windows are spotlessly clean. Let the sun in and keep those lights on. Leaving all your lights on for two hours costs only 23 cents, and makes your home look larger and more spacious.

4. Weekly open houses. You can't expect to sell a house quickly at the top price unless you get lots of buyers inside to see it. There are more than 5,000 homes competing with yours for attention. Your home must be exposed to buyers regularly and repeatedly to get a fast sale at the full price. Weekly home showings are the key to the success of my Hotline Tour of Homes, giving my clients fast, full-priced sales.

5. Constant exposure. Your home won't sell unless buyers know about it. To get top dollar, be sure to have your home repeatedly exposed to qualified, ready-to-buy buyers. Some brokers charge you a discount commission, then don't advertise your home. This is a mistake. The \$4,500 or \$15,000 you save in commission is more than offset by a sale price of \$20,000 or \$10,000 less than what you would have received if your home had been properly marketed. Remember, buyers can't know about your home unless you or your buyer has a marketing plan to ensure that your home is brought to the attention of home buyers.

6. Non-traditional advertising. 83% of buyers looking for a home in the \$350K to \$450K price range are firsttime home buyers. Many first-time home buyers don't even know they can afford a home. They don't know that owning a home costs less than renting. They think that they need 20% for a down payment, plus closing costs! If your home is in the first-time homebuyer price range, a substantial portion of your marketing dollars should be aimed directly at first-time homebuyers. This means advertising and marketing in areas other than the "Homes for Sale" classifieds or Sunday Open Houses in the Grand Rapids Press.

7. Education. First-time homebuyers are more likely to pay top dollar for your home. If your home is in the firsttime homebuyer price range, make sure that your marketing program shows first-time buyers the benefits of home ownership and how affordable your home is. Design a marketing plan to get first-time home buyers to see the inside of your home.

8. Multiple signs. Many home-buyers don't even see traditional "for sale" signs, because they aren't actively thinking of buying. They often don't realize that they can afford a much nicer home. The strategy of an additional sign in the yard shatters the "advertising protection armor" that every consumer wears. Ten years of testing by U.S. Home and Realty in Grand Rapids, Michigan has proven that a second bright-yellow sign, hand-lettered, will result in more inquiries, more showings, a quicker sale, and a 3% to 5% higher price for your home.

9. Aggressive Target Marketing. Lots of buyers will buy your home for less than it's worth. The secret in getting top dollar is to find a buyer who is perfectly "matched" to your home. Right now, there are at least ten buyers who would love to own your home, can afford it, and would pay a fair asking price... if only they knew about it! Some of these buyers may not even be thinking of buying yet, but if they knew about your home would love it! It takes a lot more than just a sign in the yard and an ad in the paper to market a home effectively. Aggressive target marketing will find those buyers!

10. Create urgency. The Rule of Full Price states that if a buyer feels the asking price is fair, and has sufficient sense of urgency, he will pay the full asking price. Example: My weekly showings of my listings to more than one buyer at a time creates a feeling of urgency. Prospective buyers feel an "auction effect" because of other buyers showing interest in your home at the same time. I have found that the more buyers I can show your home to at the very same time, the higher the feeling of urgency. The auction effect causes people to become more excited and enthused about your home, thereby creating a sense of competition and urgency which results in full price sales for 96.5% of my clients.