

# OFFICIAL *home seller's* GUIDE

By Realtor® Gabriela & Broker Boots



Selling a home can be daunting and overwhelming. However, when you have a **Trusted Realtor® Team** on your side, the process becomes a lot of fun, gratifying, and profitable! Your **Trusted Realtor®** can also shoulder most, if not all, of the burden to get your Property to Market and be your advisor and friend during what can be an emotional process in one's life.

Our Guide will introduce or refresh you to the process of Selling a Property and who the key Professionals involved are.

Gabriela Kandziora, Tami "Boots" White and Team are here to help you with achieving your Real Estate dreams & goals. Gabriela and Boots would love to become your **trusted Real Estate advocates**. Do not hesitate to reach out. ***We provide "Results That Move You!"***

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LICENSED REAL ESTATE AGENTS WITH PREMIERE PROPERTY GROUP, LLC IN THE BEAUTIFUL STATE OF OREGON

# SELL QUICKLY & PROFITABLY!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Introduction.....	Page 2
Key Professionals Involved.....	Pages 3-6
Expect Impressive and Professional Service From Your Real Estate Professional.....	Page 7
Preparing Your Property.....	Page 8
Renovations.....	Pages 9-12
Strategically Pricing Your Property.....	Page 13
Get a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) From a Real Estate Professional.....	Page 14
Price Your Home.....	Pages 14-16
Effectively Marketing.....	Pages 16-17
Professional Photos.....	Page 17
Setting the Stage to Sell.....	Page 18
Time-Proven Tips.....	Pages 18-19
IMPORTANT.....	Page 19
Successfully Negotiating the Deal.....	Pages 19-21
Closing the Deal.....	Page 22
Completing the Transaction.....	Pages 23-24
Summation.....	Page 24

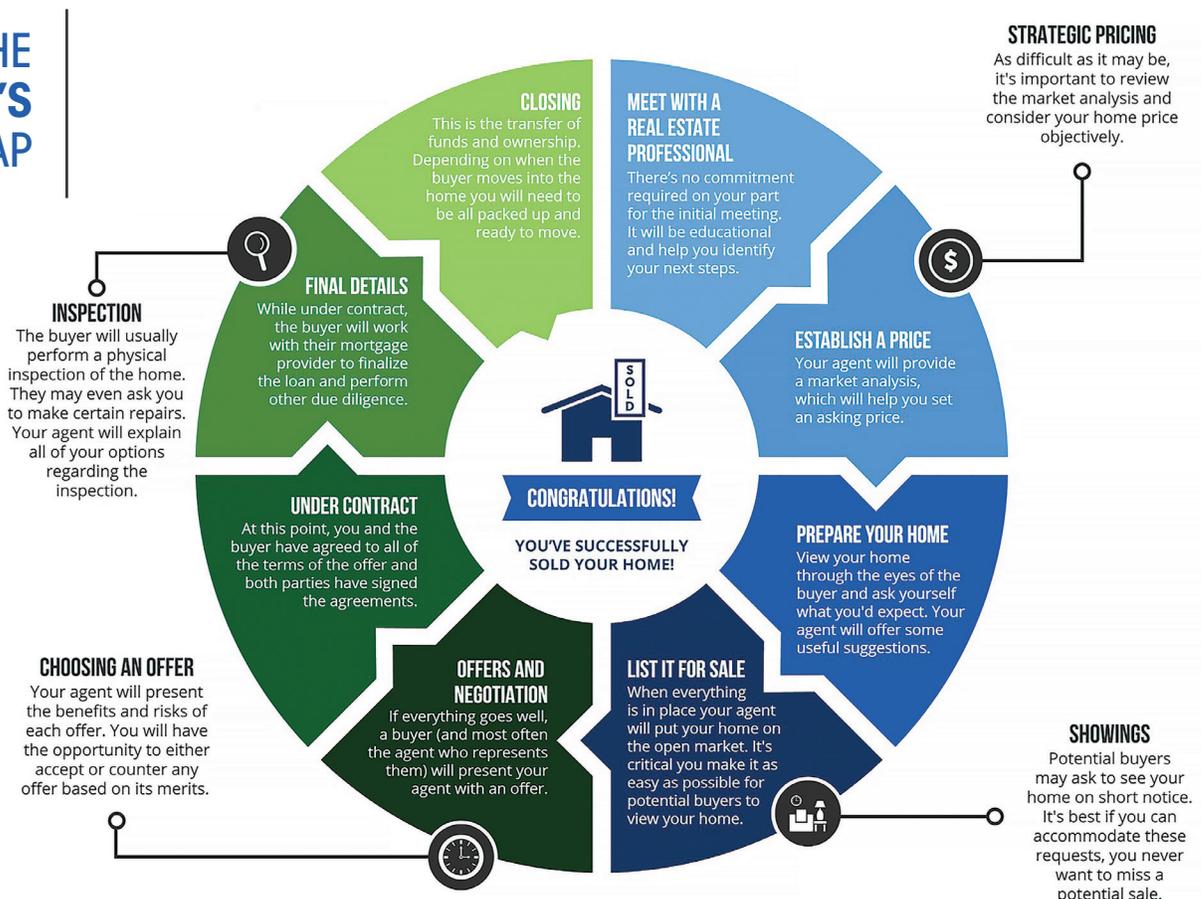
# INTRODUCTION

Our Guide is designed to outline the most important aspects of Selling a Property, including:

- **Preparing your Property to show its best** and appeal to Buyers
- **Renovating your Property within a reasonable budget**, so that you will get the highest price possible, Sell quickly, and attract as many Buyers as possible
- **Strategically setting the asking price** to Sell quickly and create a possible bidding war
- **Marketing your Property** with the best technology and strategies, including proven traditional methods
- **Showing your Property** at its best
- **Negotiating** the best possible price, timeline, and outcome
- **Strong Finish** and follow through completing transaction, from start to finish and beyond

With all the complexities of the current Market, how quickly things change and move, this Guide can only supplement the help of an Experienced and Trusted Realtor® and their Team, who, when you are ready to Sell, will be able to expertly consult and guide you every step in the process.

## THE Seller'S ROADMAP



## KEY PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED

Our Guide is designed to outline the most important aspects of Selling a Property, including:

1. Your Listing Realtor®/Realtor® Team/Agent Broker (This Realtor® may also represent you in a new purchase)
2. Your Buyer Realtor®
3. Your Listing Realtor's® Contractors and Vendors
4. Your Lender/Mortgage Advisor/Loan Officer (if you are purchasing a new home)
5. Your 1031 Exchange Team (if you are reinvesting gains)
6. Your Certified Public Accountant
7. Your Certified Financial Planner
8. Your Insurance Agent
9. The Title & Escrow Officer/Company
10. The Movers

### 1. Your Listing Realtor®

Did you know that every **Listing Realtor®** has to do the same 50+ checklist items to get your Property on the Multiple Listing Service? However, what distinguishes an Impressive, Working-Hard-For-You Professional Realtor® from just a good Realtor® is what happens past that first checklist. An Impressive Realtor® takes time and consideration in helping you prepare your Property for Market. Not only providing Contractors and Vendors to help with clearing out the Property, renovations, and staging but also organizing, designing, managing, and seeing through these renovations and tasks with their Contractors and Vendors. An **Impressive Listing Realtor®** will handle all the details of prepping your Property for Market, without much burden on you. A Seasoned Impressive Realtor® also has a customized Marketing plan, updates you regularly, negotiates offers and price changes, handles demands from the Buyer side, creates a smooth path to finalizing this transaction, helps you with a moving checklist, movers, and so much more. Ultimately an Impressive Realtor® will remain your True Advocate and Real Estate Resource for Life.

## 7 BENEFITS OF USING A REAL ESTATE AGENT TO SELL YOUR HOME

- 01 \$ List at the right price.
- 02 👥 Better home presentations.
- 03 🏠 Get more buyer exposure.
- 04 📈 Higher offers from Buyers.
- 05 ♀ Negotiates inspection results.
- 06 ⌚ Speeds up time to close.
- 07 \$ Home sells at top dollar.

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- 1 SECOND SUMMARY -  
**GET A REALTOR!**

## 2. Your Buyer Realtor®—When Re-Investing Your Monies Into Real Estate

Did you know that working with a **Buyer Realtor®** is typically **FREE** to you? The Seller most often pays for the commissions for the Realtors®. Therefore, it is especially beneficial for you to utilize a **trusted Buyer Realtor®** who will become your advocate and friend for many years to come. Your **Buyer Realtor®** will consult with you and find out your wishes in a new home and then search for homes based on your criteria. Your **Buyer Realtor®** will view the Property with you and help you assess and ultimately negotiate on your behalf, if it is a good value, what needs to be repaired, the price point, location, and so many more criteria that need to be discussed before putting in an offer. A successful Realtor® Team will have working relationships with the Professionals and more on the above list. A seasoned Team closes many transactions per month and has systems in place to assure success and navigate the red flags and pitfalls that crop up in most transactions. By enlisting a **trusted Buyer Realtor®**, you have access to all their accumulated knowledge and experience.

## 3. Contractors and Vendors

If you don't have a toolbox of vetted, **Professional Contractors and Vendors**, an Impressive Professional Listing Realtor® should be able to provide this for you! Beware of the Realtor® that does not have a toolbox full of Contractors and Vendors and who pushes the burden of prepping entirely on your shoulders. Realtors® who work hard for you will have a toolbox of Professionals who do whatever it takes to get a Property ready for Market. There is nothing that cannot be repaired on a house. These Contractors and Vendors work in sync with the Listing Realtor® on a tight schedule to get your Property to Market on or before the selected deadline to enter the Market. These Professionals and the Realtor® should have a trusted working relationship that functions in the sole interest of doing the best they can for you and your Real Estate goals.



## 4. Your Lender—When Re-Investing Monies Into Real Estate

It is always advised to work with a **local Lender** versus with an online brokerage. Why? Because having that personal relationship with a Lender who can go to bat for you on your loan now and in the future ensures your success. Your Lender will gather your financial data, listen to your circumstances and goals and then craft a loan package or two that will best meet your needs. This loan package is crafted with the lowest payment and interest rate possible given your circumstances and credit. A seasoned Lender will know up front what is required to process the loan, ensuring no last-minute delays. Your Realtor® Team can typically refer you to a few outstanding Lenders.

## 5. Your 1031 Exchange Team

If you are Selling at a profit/capital gain and reinvesting, you will definitely need a **seasoned 1031 Exchange Team**. Your Listing Realtor<sup>®</sup> should have a working relationship with such a Team. This Team will help you navigate the timeline of reinvesting profits to avoid as much tax as possible, keep in constant contact with your Realtor<sup>®</sup>, CPA, CFP, Title Team, and you.

## 6. Your Certified Public Accountant

If you don't have a **trusted CPA**, your Realtor<sup>®</sup> or Certified Financial Planner should. Whenever one Sells a large asset, there are bound to be some tax strategies that need to be navigated. A CPA is the best person to consult with on these matters. Discussing this with your CPA should happen as soon as you are wishing to Sell your Property.



## 7. Certified Financial Planner

If you don't have a **trusted CFP**, your Realtor<sup>®</sup> or Certified Public Accountant should. Whenever one Sells a large asset, along with tax ramifications, there may be opportunity to invest monies, if not re-entering the Real Estate Market with profits/gains. A CFP is the best person to consult with on this. Discussing this with your CFP should happen as soon as you are wishing to Sell your Property.

## 8. Your Insurance Agent

Insurance will need to remain on your Property until the Property has recorded with the county into the new Property owner's name. Once that happens, your **Insurance Agent** will need to either refund you any premiums or install a new policy on your new Property/properties. Each Property transaction has its own nuances that only a seasoned Insurance Agent can advise on. This is something you will want to work on as soon as you know you are Selling.

## 9. Title Company & Escrow Officer\*

The **Title Company** and **Escrow Officers** are commonly thought of as one role but are actually two different positions, often paired in one office. The **Title Officer** takes care of all issues that have to do with the Title (also referred to as the deed) of the Property. The Lender will always require a Title insurance policy. This policy guarantees that the Title represents correct and indisputable ownership of the Property. This is necessary because the Lender will be wiring a large sum of money with only one item as collateral: the Title to the Property.

The **Escrow Officer** is the neutral third party that ensures everyone involved receives what they expect out of the transaction. The Escrow officer will take care of receiving the final loan documents, as well as other paperwork associated with the sale of the Property. The Escrow officer confirms that the Buyer signs these loan documents correctly. The documents are returned to the Lender, who then wires the money to the Escrow officer. Once received, all funds are properly dispersed. You as the Seller collect the money owed to you, your mortgage holder (if there is one) receives their payoff, and all other monies are distributed where they are owed. This includes Real Estate commissions, homeowner's insurance premiums, Property taxes, and various closing costs. Finally, the Escrow officer will see that the Buyer is properly recorded in public records as the new owner. Both the Listing and Buyer Realtors® work closely with both the Lender and the **Escrow Officer** to ensure that we close/finalize the transaction as per the contract.

\*In some states one or both of these roles are handled by an attorney.

## 10. The Movers

Your Realtor® should have several companies they are comfortable with and have recommended to other Buyers and Sellers. If you are utilizing a company that is going interstate, speak with your Insurance Agent to see if there is a specialized coverage. Sometimes certain credit cards, such as American Express®, cover any losses or damages that may have occurred. If you are moving across town, things are a little less hectic. An Impressive Realtor® will give you a moving checklist along with utilities to "turn-on" at a new Property or "turn-off" at your current Property. This is something that should be scheduled once you are "Sale Pending" on your Property and when you know the exact closing date. Sometimes the closing date changes from the originally agreed-upon date due to repairs taking longer, Buyers needing more time, funding not coming through as originally planned, a Buyer backing out, or other unforeseen circumstances. It is rare that a transaction does not close, but it can happen. Your Realtor® will keep you updated. It is advised that you keep your Realtor® Team updated on your move-out schedule.



## EXPECT IMPRESSIVE AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL

After renovating, staging, discussing a muscular Marketing plan, getting your Property to Market, organizing Open Houses and Broker Tours, your Listing Realtor® should provide you with stellar communication and negotiating skills, navigating and avoiding pitfalls. This next phase of the Selling process is another segment of the process where the Impressive, Hard-Working-For-You Professional Listing Realtor® will distinguish themselves from other Realtors®.

### A Professional Realtor® Should Do the Following:

1. **Communicate and update** you on a regular basis such as once/twice a week on all the Marketing strategies that are being performed to Sell your Property
2. **Provide feedback** on all showings and all open houses
3. **Update** you on both Real Estate and money Market changes that could impact your Property's sale
4. **Be available** to help potential Buyers with pre-qualification and purchase of your Property
5. **Promptly present and evaluate** each offer with you
6. **Negotiate** the highest and best price and terms for you
7. **Manage** all transaction, contractual, Title, details and paperwork and keep you informed
8. **Ensure** that the transaction stays within deadlines and that important items are signed, sealed, and delivered before closing day
9. **Arrange** for a moving company and relocation Realtor®, if needed

You will be receiving comprehensive, high-quality service and attention on the transactional side, a valuable Real Estate resource and friend for as long as you like.



# PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY SO THAT IT IS MORE ATTRACTIVE TO A MAJORITY OF BUYERS

Beyond “Location, Location, Location”, when presenting your Property to prospective Buyers, first impressions are crucial.

Buyers begin judging a Property from the moment they drive up to it! Most Buyers, unless looking for a fixer, prefer a Property that is well-maintained, clean, and clutter-free.

This is why anticipating what a Buyer will be judging your Property on and addressing these home improvements **BEFORE** going to Market can really boost your Property’s saleability and sale price. Keep in mind that a Professional and Seasoned Realtor® knows what today’s discerning Buyers are looking for and can provide more ideas that will maximize your Property’s appeal. Often a small investment in time and money can give you a big edge over your competition and generate a faster sale at a higher price.

These improvements are typically: renovations/upgrades/repairs, organization, and upkeep/maintenance. A Realtor® should help you with the design, organization, managing Contractors/Vendors, and the timeline of work. Handling the process of it all while getting your Property to Market as soon as possible. An Impressive and Professional Realtor® will work to shoulder the pressure and burden.



## RENOVATIONS—WHICH ONES ARE MARKET-SMART?

It is not typical to renovate your entire home to Sell because one does not always recoup the entire reno cost in the sales price. However, minor renovations can really improve the overall impression of a Property's character and quality. Thus, the reno costs will pay for themselves.

### Here Are Just a Few "Market-Smart Makeovers" You Might Consider:

- 1. Kitchen** – A kitchen can make or break a sale. Buyers typically look for updated kitchens and you can recover a large percentage of your expenses on resale. It is costly to replace everything. Your Property needs to be assessed by your Realtor® and given a list of things to upgrade/improve. Often your Realtor® can suggest some simple improvements without going "all-in". Even a minor face-lift—for example, new paint, flooring, cabinet doors and hardware or just painting them, can pay off in a faster sale at a better price.
- 2. Bathrooms** – As with the kitchen, renovating bathrooms can pay off in terms of both value and Marketability, especially in an older house. Opt for good lighting, large mirrors, attractive fixtures and materials, plenty of storage and neutral colors.
- 3. Energy-Efficient Improvements** – With the push for "going green" and saving energy, new windows, furnace, water heater, and thermostats are a wonderful Selling point and can help increase the saleability of the Property along with pushing up the purchase price.

### When Considering Renovations in Anticipation of Selling, There Are Two Important Rules:

- Don't over-reno
- Be careful not to make renovations which please you personally, but which might turn off otherwise interested Buyers



before



after

Both scenarios will cost you. An experienced Real Estate Professional will be able to counsel you on which renovations are likely to be good investments in terms of your overall plan.

## Small Upgrades and Repairs Will Make a Big Difference

There are few things that put Buyers off more than viewing a home that screams of being uncared for. If you want to maximize your chances for getting top dollar, you might need to make some minor upgrades, but you'll definitely need to make all necessary repairs – even those that are “out of sight, out of mind”. Again, your Realtor® will help you with coordinating these repairs and upgrades.

### EXTERIOR

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- Fix, replace, or remove anything that is worn out or damaged, such as deck boards, siding, window trims, gutters, fences, light fixtures, and steps
- A fresh coat of paint will do wonders for the curb appeal of a Property. Paying particular attention to a trendy color for the front door and adding a fun front door mat. Don't forget to paint the mailbox and chimney
- A new door light and new door handle are an inexpensive way to add class to a Property
- Fix doorbells, tighten loose doorknobs, use WD-40 to remedy squeaks and sticky door locks
- Manicuring the front yard is imperative: trim plants, weed, mow and edge the lawn. Add colorful plantings. Potted plants by the front door create an inviting energy
- Power wash the driveway, walkway, and even the street and gutter at the front of the house

### INTERIOR

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- Fix or replace cracked molding or floor tiles, faucets and toilets that run or leak, loose door knobs, squeaky door hinges, closets or screen doors that are off their tracks, bathroom lighting and hardware, toilet seats, loose caulking or grout
- Fix and touch-up walls, ceilings, windows, trim
- Brighten interiors with a new coat of paint in light, neutral colors
- Shampoo carpets and rugs, replace if necessary
- Make sure major appliances are in good working order
- Replace switch and outlet plates and register vents with more elegant ones

- Add closet organizers or shelving to make closets more functional and spacious
- Add organizers or shelving for basement and garage
- Clean and paint concrete floor and walls
- If possible, patch and paint the garage walls
- Clean water heater and drain sediment, change furnace filter
- Service the furnace and clean the heating ducts

## Maintenance and Organization—The Obvious That Makes a Difference and Needs Doing

Similar to necessary repairs, basic reorganization and maintenance tasks are “must-dos”. While Buyers might not notice such work when it is done, they’re sure to notice when it isn’t. This impression of neglect will make it more difficult for them to comfortably project themselves into your home’s living space. Here are a few reorganization and maintenance tasks that can improve your home’s curb appeal and inside hominess.

- Remove unnecessary items from the exterior of the house: garbage cans, trailers, garden art, etc
- Clean gutters and windows
- Wash the house down, if not getting painted. Remove cobwebs
- Roll hoses up and put in the back yard
- Clean the garage and make sure everything looks neat and tidy. If you are storing your items there for moving out, make sure they are neatly stacked



A Realtor® will tell you that after curb appeal, the next most impactful moment is when the potential Buyer walks through the front door. The Buyer needs to be ‘Wowed!’ This means the house should look its absolute best! Here are some ideas for “wowing”.

- Depersonalize and declutter each room, especially the entrance and rooms within view from the entrance
- Remove all extra furniture. Allow your Realtor® to stage the Property with either your own furniture or an exterior company

- Clean out closets and pack away or donate items, since you will be moving soon, it is advised to get a head start on clearing out the Property
- Organize your kitchen and reduce items to what is essential for living in the house until moving day
- Thoroughly clean everything. Your Realtor® knows a Professional cleaner that can come in and get everything done in a matter of hours
- Replace outdated appliances, sinks, faucets, counters, and paint
- Add air fresheners
- If pets live in the home, ensure that pet odors are handled. Listen to your Realtor® on this. One of the biggest turn-offs to potential Buyers are pet odors, litter boxes, pet fur/hair on furniture and on floors

### Final Words About Organization and Clutter

For most Buyers, clutter tends to make houses appear smaller, less full of air and light, and somehow requiring of more maintenance. Conversely, clutter-free properties generally seem brighter, more open and spacious, perhaps cleaner and requiring of less work. Additionally, clutter-free houses can make it easier for Buyers to visualize their own interior design ideas, as well as the placement of all their belongings. While you may have many beautiful and meaningful belongings, they might make it more difficult for you to Sell and cost you thousands of dollars when you do. Be sure to consult your Real Estate Professional in this regard because they'll be able to provide you impartial feedback.



# STRATEGICALLY PRICING YOUR PROPERTY TO GET TOP MARKET VALUE

Determining the best asking price for a Property is one of the most challenging, and also important, aspects of Selling it.

In fact, it's a balancing act. You don't want to set a price that's so high that it discourages showings and serious offers from the very qualified, motivated Buyers who would ultimately determine your Property's top Market value. On the other hand, you don't want to set a price that's so low that it attracts lots of interest, but sets the stage for offers and negotiations that could result in your getting less than the Market would actually support if you were a little more aggressive. Moreover, this balancing act is always changing, given the Market nuances, interest rate changes, headlining news, and other emotional economic uncertainties. All the more reason why, when you make your decision to Sell, you should seek out the advice of your experienced Real Estate Professional who is immersed in the waters of pricing properties 24/7.

## So What's Your Home Really Worth?

In a perfect world, your home's value would be everything you think and need it to be. Perhaps you have specific financial goals or you've just made an offer on another home that's dependent on Selling your home at a certain price in a given time frame. However, simply put, your home's value is not determined by you, but by what the Market is willing to pay for it at a given time. These days, the Market increasingly includes home Buyers who have researched Property values over the internet for months and may have already viewed several properties. This backs up the strategy of making sure your Property shows its absolute best. Your Realtor® will help manage your expectations with regard to pricing. In trying to determine your Property's true Market value and help you set your expectations for what it will likely Sell for, you might wish to:

- Try to be impartial. Unfortunately, the Market is not interested in what you originally paid for your Property, or how much you need to Sell it for to Buy your next home and meet your financial goals. In addition, your Property may have features that you highly value, but which might actually reduce its Market value by limiting the number of potential Buyers. Or your Property may have features that were costly but are not valued in today's Market. Keep an open mind with pricing.
- Remember why you are Selling. Do you want to Sell or do you need to Sell? While in a Buyers' Market you'll seldom get more money than is required to meet your financial needs. Unfortunately, your personal situation may dictate that you take less money than the Market would otherwise be willing to give you if you had more time. In a Sellers' Market you can price higher and often do less to a Property to Sell it. Your Realtor® will help you determine the entrance price.

## GET A COMPARATIVE MARKET ANALYSIS (CMA) FROM A REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL

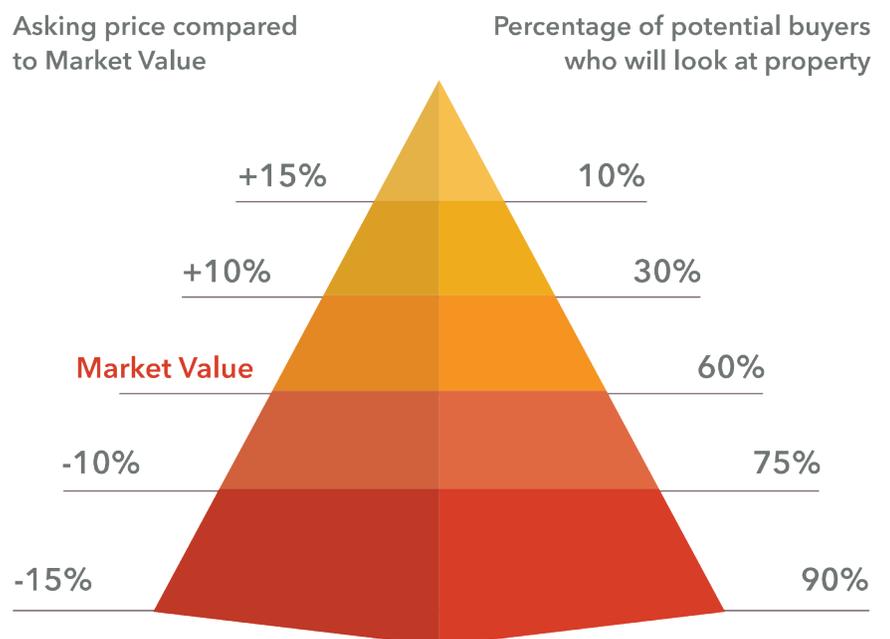
A **Comparative Market Analysis (CMA)** is a document, drawn from a local Multiple Listings Service (MLS) database, that presents pricing information, Property details and photos of properties similar to yours (termed “comparables”) that recently sold, failed to Sell, or are currently on the Market in your area. A Realtor® will typically provide you with a **CMA** as part of a listing presentation they bring to a sit-down visit with you at your home with the intention and hope of being able to exclusively represent your interests when you Sell. This **CMA** will include the price or price range that the Realtor® thinks you should list; although the Real Estate Professional might adjust that figure on the spot if it’s the first time they have been to your Property and had the chance to examine its layout, quality, workmanship, condition, and so on. Once the Realtor® has examined your Property, a narrow price range can be suggested and may change depending on the Market changes that happen between this visit and the actual date your Property enters the Market.

It is the goal of your Realtor® to get the most amount of money with the least time and hassle involved. An Impressive Realtor® can typically help you get your Property on the Market very quickly.

## PRICE YOUR HOME TO SELL FOR MAXIMUM MARKET EXPOSURE AND BUYER INTEREST

In a purely numbers sense, how you price your Property will directly impact how many Buyers, showings and offers you attract, as well as how easily it Sells, as depicted in the Pricing Pyramid diagram below. However, the practical dynamics of attracting those qualified, motivated Buyers who will pay top Market value for your Property is a little more complex. That’s because experience shows that you’re far more likely to get top Market value if you Sell your Property during a certain “golden window of opportunity” during the listing. In short, timing is crucial.

With the exception of hot, Sellers’ Markets, properties generally attract the most interest and activity among Buyer prospects and their agents during the second to fourth or fifth weeks they’re on the Market. Beyond five weeks, your Property will more than likely be viewed as a stale listing



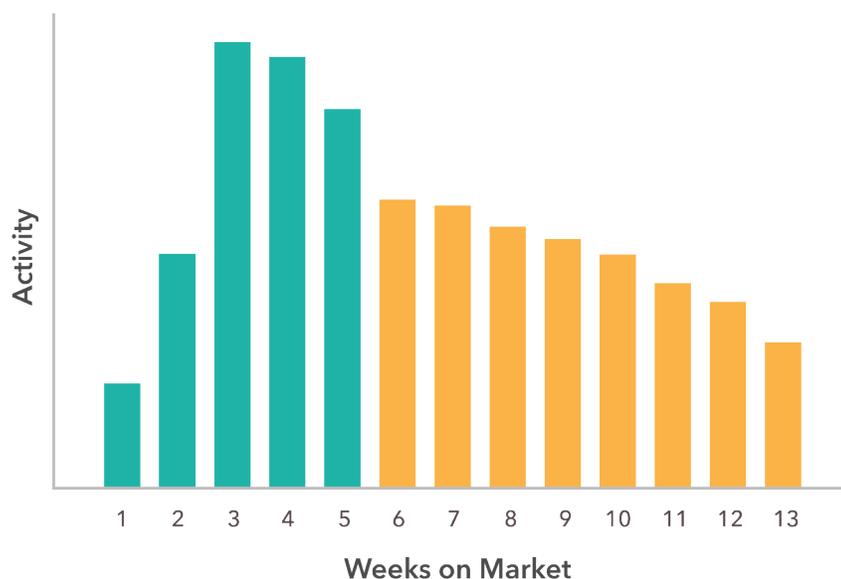
– i.e. as a commodity with a history of being rejected by other Buyers. Consequently, there will be less Market buzz, less showings, less offers and less likelihood that you'll get your asking price. This is why it is crucial to price your Property correctly right from the beginning so that you get and accept a solid offer during the three or four week "golden window".

**Pricing your Property realistically from the start is the best strategy.**

**Here are some of the consequences of pricing your Property too high:**

1. Fewer Buyers—*even if they're otherwise attracted to your Property*—will respond to the online and offline Marketing since they may know it is over-priced. They will wait for it to come down in price and then more than likely "under bid" on the Property banking on the fact that you are a bit fatigued and know that you now have fear of not Selling
2. Fewer Realtors® will show your home because fewer Buyers wish to view it
3. The Right Buyers—*looking to Buy a Property like yours*—may never even view it because they'll confine their search to a lesser price range where yours should have been
4. You'll attract the wrong Buyers—*i.e. those looking in your price range*—who won't be interested in your Property, having viewed other homes truly worth the higher price you are asking
5. An excessive price on your Property makes other properties more attractive—i.e. both those priced where your Property is at AND also those price where yours should be
6. You'll get fewer—*if any*—serious offers overall because Buyers may consider doing so a waste of time
7. Even if you do get a serious offer, the excessive price can lead to a mortgage rejection for the Buyer once the Lender has a Professional appraisal done on your Property. This leads to critical lost time waiting for finance approvals that never go through. Although, in a hot Sellers' Market, an Impressive Realtor® can confirm that the Buyer will have funds to cover the balance if an appraisal comes in lower than the offer price
8. Reducing the price after Buyers have begun to perceive your Property as a stale listing will not generate as much interest as if you'd price it strategically to Sell from the start

**The bottom line:** realistic pricing is strategic pricing! All this is why pricing your Property realistically right from the beginning—to coincide with its window of maximum Market exposure so that you can best leverage Buyer interest and emotions—is important, particularly in a Market like this one. If you do so, you'll not only attract more Buyers, you'll attract the right Buyers: qualified, motivated and willing to pay top Market value for your home at the very time during the listing when you're most likely to get it.



## EFFECTIVELY MARKETING YOUR PROPERTY FOR ALL IT'S WORTH

The successful Marketing of a Property, like that of any good or service, is a multi-faceted process that includes nearly every activity involved in getting it sold.

In fact, Marketing encompasses just about every topic covered in this Guide—home preparation, pricing, presentation and even negotiation, as well as strategic advertising and networking. All these activities are undertaken with one aim: to maximize your Property's Market exposure, and with it the number of showings and offers you get so that you ultimately Sell for top Market value. An experienced Realtor® has the knowledge, expertise and resources to implement a plan that will effectively coordinate all of these activities so you do just that.

## HOW BUYERS FIND OUT ABOUT PROPERTIES FOR SALE

As we've seen, strategically preparing and pricing your Property are master keys to attracting serious, financially-qualified Buyers. However, in order to maximize the impact of these preparation and pricing strategies, your Property needs to be effectively exposed to the Marketplace through a variety of advertising media, utilizing modern and traditional strategies.

Currently, the internet (including Realtor.com®, Real Estate Professional websites, social media, blogs, etc.) and direct contact with Real Estate Professionals (Open Houses, networking) are far and away the main sources of home information for Buyers (at 90% and 87%, respectively)\*.

# PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS ARE IMPERATIVE TO THE SUCCESS OF MARKETING YOUR PROPERTY ONLINE.

## Here is What Buyers Look for on the Internet:

1. 98% Property Photos
2. 98% Detailed Information About the Property
3. 78% Virtual Tours
4. 78% Realtor® Contact Information
5. 78% Neighborhood Information



\*According to the National Association of Realtors® Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers.

Your Realtor® will want to maximize the number of serious Buyers looking, thus maximizing showings and offers you will get. To do so it is necessary to employ a broad spectrum of advertising in a coordinated manner. Real Estate Professionals have a wide range of options for maximizing a Property's exposure to the Marketplace, including but not limited to:

- Multiple Listing Service
- Private Realtor® Websites
- Social Media
- Notifying Potential Buyers in Database and Company Wide
- Open Houses
- Direct Mail and Email Campaigns
- Networking With Top Realtors® in the Area
- For Sale Sign
- Networking in the Local Community
- Event Marketing

Such extensive Market exposure will not only generate more interest from motivated Buyers, it will also ensure that you don't Sell your Property to just any Buyer, but to the right Buyer—the one who fully appreciates what they're Buying and will pay top dollar for it.

## SETTING THE STAGE TO SELL: AIM FOR PERFECT OPEN HOUSES AND SHOWINGS

Having invested effort and expense of preparing your house to Sell, you'll certainly want it to take full advantage of it when you open up your Property to prospective Buyers and other Realtors® during open houses, Realtor® tours and showings. That's why making sure your Property looks its very best can give you that little extra competitive edge that will help get it sold. Keep in mind that many Real Estate Professionals have, through education and experience, mastered the art of home staging. Make the most of their skills—and impartiality—to create that "Buying feeling" in your Property.



## TIME-PROVEN TIPS FOR SHOWING YOUR HOUSE

Here are a few ideas that will help you maximize your Property's attractiveness to Buyers:

- Ideally, you should be absent so Buyers feel comfortable making comments and looking around
- Open all drapes and shades during daylight hours to let in as much light as possible, but be sure to screen out unappealing views
- Turn ALL lights on, even in garage; and porch lights in the evening hours
- Light or turn on fireplaces
- Heat the Property comfortably
- Turn off television but have background music playing
- Add fresh flowers
- Open all doors between rooms to give an inviting feeling
- If possible, open windows before the showing to circulate fresh air
- Pick up toys, remove daily clutter, ensure beds are made, put clothes away
- Floors should be clean, carpets and rugs vacuumed
- Trash and recycling bins should be tidy and odor-free

- Ideally, pets should be unseen. Pet areas should be clean and odor-free. Not everyone may share your Love of animals and some may even be allergic to them
- The kitchen and bathrooms should sparkle
- Lock away medicine and valuables

## **IMPORTANT: IT IS ADVISED TO KEEP YOUR HOUSE AVAILABLE—AND READY—FOR SHOWINGS**

Particularly during the first weeks after you list your Property, Realtors® from many firms will want to show it to their Buyers. It is especially important during this window of opportunity, when interest will be at its highest, that you make your Property available for showings, preferably at the time requested by the Buyers' agents. Occasionally, this may pose an inconvenience for you, but you'll certainly want to maximize the number of qualified, motivated Buyers who see your Property. Indeed, doing so just might make a big difference in when you Sell, for how much and under what terms.

Along these lines, you should do your best to ensure that your home is **ALWAYS** ready to be shown. You never know when the right person is going to look at it!

## **SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATING THE DEAL**

With rare exception, negotiating the transaction is the most complex part of Selling a Property. At the same time, it's the one that can involve the most creativity.

That's why it's important to have an experienced and savvy Real Estate Professional who has successfully worked through many different transaction scenarios. What follows is a brief description of the negotiation process and a few strategies for negotiating the best possible deal you can. This includes: keeping in mind your situation, priorities and needs, not giving your situation away to the Buyer and Buyer's agent, trying to understand and respect the priorities of the Buyer, being creative and, where necessary, willing to compromise to get the deal done.



## The Basic Process

When a Buyer, typically with the help of their Realtor<sup>®</sup>, makes an offer on your Property, they'll do so using a contract that has been developed by your local Real Estate association in conjunction with legal counsel. These contracts enable the Buyer to set a sale price, and also include many clauses for specifying various terms of purchase, such as the closing and possession dates, the deposit amount, and a variety of other conditions. The Buyer's Realtor<sup>®</sup> will then deliver the offer to your Realtor<sup>®</sup>, who'll present it to you. Your Realtor<sup>®</sup> should closely review every detail of the offer and the process with you.

You can then accept the offer, reject it, or counter it to initiate the negotiation process. Successive counter-offers, with deadlines for responding and meeting various contingencies and special conditions (e.g. a home inspection, the Buyer securing financing), will be exchanged between you and the Buyer until a mutually-satisfactory pending agreement is reached or the negotiations collapse.

## Don't Reveal Your Motivation For Selling

It is crucial to keep certain aspects of your Selling situation (e.g. your finances, why you're Selling, how urgent you are) as concealed as possible from the Buyer and Buyer's agent. Remember, it's the job of the Buyer's agent to get the best deal they can for their client, so any vulnerability you show could end up compromising your position and costing you thousands of dollars. This is not the same, however, as expressing your priorities very clearly throughout the negotiations. Properly done, the firm statement of your priorities will strengthen your position. It is the responsibility of your Realtor<sup>®</sup> to make sure the Buyer and their Realtor<sup>®</sup> only know what they're legally entitled to know and, beyond that, what you want them to know.

## Understand and Respect the Buyer's Priorities

If, during the negotiations, you can find out more about the Buyer's priorities, you'll not only improve your position, but you'll also be able to resolve any obstacles more creatively and sensitively. For instance, if a Buyer is adamant about the sale price—perhaps because they love your Property, but they're at the limits of their available financing—they might be more flexible about the closing date or willing to make concessions about some other terms. Or if there are certain upgrades or repairs that the Buyer is requesting that you were not counting on doing but if done, will solidify the deal, perhaps this will change your mind on doing something you were not wishing to do in the beginning. Your Realtor<sup>®</sup> will help you and will be negotiating with the Buyer Realtor<sup>®</sup>.

There are no "one size fits all" approaches to negotiating. Every deal is different! In principle, though, the more you know about the Buyer's priorities, the more you'll be able to work with them in order to achieve your own priorities.

## Have You Found the Right Buyer? If So, Make the Deal Happen.

Particularly in a Market where reasonable offers can be hard to come by or even in a Seller's Market, once a Buyer makes one, you should be willing to make a few compromises to seal the deal. Most often, the first offer is the best offer. And your Impressive Realtor® should always put any other offers in the back-up position, if possible. You may never know when the next serious offer will come along—or what it will cost you to wait for it.

That said, here are a few basic principles of successful negotiation to consider if you're committed to completing your sale:

1. Remember your priorities and respect the Buyer's. Don't let small things get in the way of your better judgment.
2. Disclose everything. Smart Sellers proactively go above and beyond legal necessity to disclose all known defects to their Buyers. Most states have Property disclosure forms. Use them. If the Buyer knows about a problem, they can't sue you later.
3. Ask questions. Offers may contain complicated terminology, sometimes three or more addenda. Your Realtor® will help clarify everything for you. Respond quickly. When Buyers make an offer, they are in the mood to Buy. But moods change, and Buyers are known to get Buyers' remorse. Don't delay if you want the sale.
4. Stay calm and be patient. At all times keep communication civil and agreeable, even if the Buyer gets tense, or you might lose your sale.
5. If necessary, defer until later. If small issues get in the way of big ones, focus on and consolidate your agreement on the big issues and come back to the small ones later.
6. Meet halfway. At the end of the day, if there are disagreements about relatively small expenses, split the difference and smile.
7. Take care with contingencies. When you've landed your Buyer, your signed acceptance of a written offer becomes your sales contract. Except for removing any contingencies, this document is the binding basis for the sale.
8. Rely on your Realtor®. It's your Realtor's® responsibility to represent your best interests every step of the way. Your success is their success.

The reality is that most negotiations proceed without much problem. In the event that there are difficulties, but you're still committed to Selling, remember: where there's a will, there's a way. And sometimes, despite everyone's best intentions and work, the deal may still fall through. Remember the Buyer can drop out of the deal any time they wish. It is rare this happens. Your Realtor® is there to help you remain in the game and get to closing.

## CLOSING THE DEAL

If you and the Buyer have both efficiently taken care of your respective contractual obligations associated with finalizing the sale, the process of completing the transaction—known variously as the “closing”, “Escrow” or “settlement”—will go smoothly with no surprises.

A pending sales agreement nearly always includes contingencies and special conditions that have to be fulfilled by the Buyer and Seller by the closing date, which usually falls 30 to 60 days after both parties signed the agreement. Typical contingencies and conditions may include:

- Buyer securing of financing
- Title Search—a review of all legal documents relating to the ownership of the Property to ensure that there are no claims against the Title of the Property. This goes through the entire history of the Property
- Purchasing the Title Insurance, in case the records contain errors or there are mistakes in the review process
- A Professional Appraisal of the home requested by the Lender to ensure that the home’s actual value justifies the loan amount. An Impressive Realtor® will ensure that the Buyer can provide the difference between what they are offering and the appraisal value, if the Property comes in under value. This may happen in a cooling Market
- The Buyer will do an inspection and present a Buyer Repair Addendum. There may be repairs that need to be done in order for financing to go through or for the Buyer to continue in the process
- Buyer may do a pest inspection
- Any additional contractual promises you have made in connection with Buyer incentives, repairs, etc.
- A final walk-through—the Buyer is given the chance to look at the home to make sure it is in the same condition as when the sale agreement was signed

It’s important to review the sales agreement with your Realtor® so you understand your obligations. Any shortfalls or mistakes at this point can be very costly. Your Realtor® can discuss and remind you of these obligations, as well as help arrange for their fulfillment and prepare you for the closing.



## COMPLETING THE TRANSACTION

The Senior Escrow Officer from a Title/Escrow company will conduct the signing and closing proceedings, reviews the sales agreement, and does the following:

1. Determines the total amount due from the Buyer and collects this amount
2. Determines all the adjustments (i.e. Seller prepayment of taxes, utilities, etc) and ensures that they are factored into the closing transaction
3. Assures that all fees associated with closing this transaction are paid
4. Determines the Seller's payments, credits, and adjusted net proceeds
5. Witnesses the Seller's signing of the Property Title and all other documentation associated with this transaction
6. Collects the keys and any other necessary items from the Seller
7. Provides the Seller with the net proceeds as well as copies of the documentation pertaining to the sale
8. Ensures that the Buyer's Title is properly recorded in the county office along with any mortgage liens

In most cases, the Buyer's Possession Date will fall within a couple days of the Signing and/or Closing Date, at which point your former Property will now belong to a new owner.

It is Important to Understand and Differentiate Between the "Signing" and the "Closing", "Closing Date", and the "Possession Date" of a Property. Here are Some Definitions:

1. **Signing** – This is the day you go into the Title/Escrow Company Office and sign the paperwork to release your Property to the Buyer. Nothing is official yet. The Senior Escrow Officer will go over everything with you and if you are happy, you will be asked to sign the Settlement. The Buyer typically comes in a few days after you to sign. The Escrow Officer will double check everything and then proceed to closing on the closing date.
2. **Closing and Closing Date** – The final steps in the transfer of Property ownership. On the Closing Date, as specified by the sales agreement, the Buyer will take possession of the Property (unless there is an agreement stating otherwise) at the contracted time after the final disbursements are paid and the new owner is recorded in the county on the Title of the Property.

**3. Possession Date** – The date, as specified by the sales agreement, that the Buyer can move into the Property. Generally, it occurs within a couple days of the Signing Date and sometimes, if an “Agreement to Occupy After Closing” addendum has been signed, the Buyer cannot take possession of the Property until the agreed upon date in that addendum.

## SUMMATION OF THE PROCESS

This, in a nutshell, is the entire process of getting your Property prepped, on the Market to Sell, going sale pending, negotiating to keep the Buyer in the game, and then on to closing the transaction.

An Impressive Professional Realtor® will make the entire process fun, enjoyable, with reduced stress, help you field emotions, and help you with a strong finish.

Your Realtor® will want to be your Real Estate Resource for a very long time and be your Friend. Everything your Realtor® does for you is with your best interest in their mind. With your Success, your Realtor® Succeeds!

