

# Realtors Work For You

## What Realtors Do for Home Sellers

One of the first things a Realtor will do for a home seller is evaluate the property. This price won't necessarily be the same as the listing price. An experienced Realtor will know the local real estate market very well. If similar houses in the area are selling for more than their appraisal values, then the Realtor knows how much higher the seller can reasonably go. But if the market is really slumping, then the Realtor may suggest listing the home at its appraisal value or even slightly lower.

A Realtor, is an expert on the details that buyers look for in a home. Most sellers grow accustomed to the eccentricities of their homes without realizing that a few simple improvements could drastically increase the marketability of their property. Sometimes it's as simple as a fresh paint job, removing excess furniture and clutter, or tearing up carpet to reveal hardwood floors.

Realtors know the most effective ways to advertise and market a home. Because a Realtor is a member of the local real estate association, he or she has access to an extensive network of **buyer's agents**. More than 50 percent of home sales are **cooperative sales**, where a seller's agent works with a buyer's agent [source: National Association of Realtors]. Your Realtor might include your home in a **caravan**, where groups of buyer's agents tour multiple properties.

Because they're licensed real estate agents, Realtors are able to post listings for free to the **Multiple Listing Service (MLS)**, a national database of homes for sale. This database is searchable by other real estate agents and by the public at Realtor.com. Savvy Realtors know what to include in these listings to make them most attractive to potential buyers. Clear, attractive photos are key, and the description should focus on all of the best qualities of the home without sounding too much like a used car salesman.

More and more homebuyers are searching the Web for properties. A good Realtor knows which Web sites are the most popular with homebuyers and what search engine optimization strategies will get your listing to the top of Google. Community Web sites, like Craigslist, require a different marketing strategy than the typical MLS listing. A smart Realtor will tailor each listing to its potential audience.

Once there are prospective buyers, the Realtor will to arrange **showings** and **open houses**. As the primary contact for the home, the Realtor is responsible for making individual appointments for showings. He or she is also responsible for making sure that the house is ready for each showing, which includes getting the current occupants to leave for an hour or so. For open houses, Realtors might even recommend hiring a professional **home stager** to add interior decorating and design touches that present the home in its best light.

Once there's an interested buyer, the Realtor will be the chief negotiator and point of contact for all of the paperwork. The Realtor will guide the seller through the closing process.