

Five common mistakes sellers make

Putting your home on the market can be a stressful time, especially if this is your first time selling a property. There are five common mistakes that sellers frequently make when putting their property on the market and here we explain why it's important to avoid them:

1. Not using a professional photographer, or including floor plans:

Professional real estate photographs are very important because they showcase your property in its best light. An experienced real estate photographer will know how to make small yards look more appealing, kitchens look inviting and tired living rooms look cosy. Your photographs will be the first thing a potential buyer sees when they are scrolling through the property listings, so give your property the best chance you can to stand out. Buyers expect floor plans to be included so that they can see how the photographs of each room all fit together. There are many affordable photographers who include floor plans, so make sure your agent or your marketing plan includes professional photos and a floor plan.

2. Hanging around during an open home:

People who are selling their homes often forget what it was like when they were visiting open homes. You like to test the drawers to make sure they all slide smoothly in the kitchen, the oven door opens, the windows open and shut freely. You're not prying, but you're doing your due diligence. However, it becomes awkward when you know the owner is in the home and watching you every step of the way. Potential buyers feel awkward and may decide to leave the open home early to escape the awkwardness! Let your agent do their job and work their magic without you scrutinising every word they utter. Go out for coffee and try to relax while your agent sells your home.

3. Trying to sell your home yourself:

This is an issue that we don't see very often in Queensland but it does happen from time to time. Selling a house can be a big undertaking and can be very time consuming. It requires knowledge of the current legislation, an understanding of how to complete all the prescribed government forms correctly, an understanding of how to effectively market a property, an excellent understanding of the current market conditions in order to understand what your home is worth, along with first-rate negotiation skills so you can bring reluctant buyers up to your home's true value. You also need to be available at all times of the day and night to talk to potential buyers, manage all the open home inspections yourself, respond in a timely fashion to buyer queries which won't just be about your property but could also include what other steps of the buying process involve, or what kind of rents the property could achieve. It's unusual for a home owner to have all of these skills and be able to manage this complex and time consuming process as well as continue to manage their own busy life.

4. Don't listen to your agent:

The agent is the expert, someone who has been hired to bring their knowledge and experience to the transaction. But too often we hear about vendors who don't listen to the agent, whether that is thinning out the garden, replacing worn or damaged front stairs, de-cluttering the interior or hiring a professional to undertake some important tasks, such as having someone style the property's interior. We don't recommend blindly agreeing to everything the agent says, but we do recommend finding an agent whose advice you understand, whose experience is extensive, and whose success is demonstrated, and then trust their advice.

5. Don't price your home correctly:

This could be filed under 'don't listen to your agent', however, it's a significant issue on its own because people often don't understand how important it is to get the price right to begin with. If you price it too low, you lose money. If you price it too high, it sits on the market and becomes stale and people who are looking to buy then assume something is wrong with it and don't seriously consider it. Talk to the agent about comparable recent sales in your area, get some information about what the market is doing right now, and give your home an objective, honest look and be realistic about your price.

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