

SPRUCE UP FOR PROFIT

Set the Stage for A Higher Price and Faster Sale



By Janine Mackie

WE'VE ALL HEARD of the real estate trick of baking cookies or boiling cinnamon sticks, but today's housing experts say sellers should concentrate on a more progressive marketing strategy called home staging.

"That's where working with a good REALTOR is essential," explains MACDONALD REALTORS manager Glenn Temes who has sold and managed for over 20 years and held various positions with the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, the British Columbia Real Estate Association, and the Real Estate Foundation.

"When you become a seller you need to think of your house as a product. Buyers don't come with rose coloured glasses, they come with magnifying glasses," says Temes. "We look past our own dirt and clutter, but if you want top dollar for your home, you need to consider all the details." In today's hot housing market, usually the most obvious factor is price.

"If the homeowner wants top dollar but their location is not good, then that house might sit for awhile," says Temes.

"Other times, it can be subtle details like smells, landscaping, unattractive paint colours or lack of furnishings." In real estate, first impressions count and typical homebuyers make up their minds within minutes of viewing a home. From painting to fixing up, there are a lot of things you can do. But for some REALTORS, telling their client to trash the cat memorabilia or that their furniture is outdated feels like telling a friend she has bad breath.

"We have to be very careful about insulting someone," explains Temes. "At MACDONALD REALTORS we take good care of our people and attribute 60 years in business to building long-term relationships with our clients and their families."

When it comes to getting personal, enlisting the services of a third-party can really pay off. "The light bulb went off when I learned about a new home staging company in Vancouver called DEKORA," says Temes.

A proven real estate strategy, used by successful home sellers and REALTORS across North America, home staging is the art of preparing and packaging a home for sale. With their mission to turn home browsers into homebuyers, DEKORA plays on its team's experience

in film and television set design to bring the wow-factor to any home. Whether it's a condominium, family-oriented house, heritage estate or vacant property, sellers can gain a competitive edge in the marketplace.

"Our goal is to create inviting spaces with broad appeal and ultimately see that our clients sell their property for highest possible dollar in the shortest period of time," explains DEKORA's John Carter.

DEKORA's services range from personal consultations to completely transforming a home inside and out. "Rather than seeing us as a solution to a problem, we hope REALTORS and consumers will call us when they first decide to sell. Home staging is quite affordable when you consider the potential upside and the fact we can rent our clients almost any style of furnishing and artwork," adds Carter.

Bottom line? It's a seller's market. The key to getting the most value from your home is understanding what buyers are willing to pay for and putting your home's best foot forward - even if that means giving it a makeover.

"I've used DEKORA's services with great success and recommend both the concept of home staging and DEKORA," says Irene Ho of Macdonald Realty in Richmond.

For a MACDONALD REALTORS office near you, call (604) 263-1911 or visit www.macrealty.com. Interested in home staging? For a personal consultation, contact DEKORA at (604) 876-4355 or www.dekora.com.