

TOP *Dollar* GUIDE

For Staging and Selling Your Home



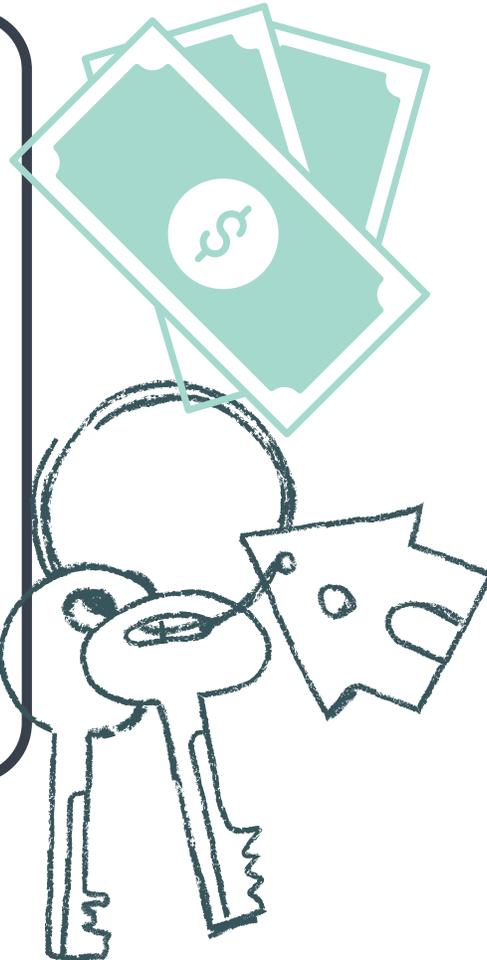


“People see only what they
are prepared to see.”
Emerson

Selling your home is not easy. It takes time, energy, objectivity, expertise and a team of experts to help you! Luckily there are people who specialize in each step of the process like Real Estate Agents, Title Companies, Inspectors, Appraisers and Home Stagers. What is a Home Stager? A Home Stager is someone who is an expert at decorating and preparing a home to sell. What is Home Staging?

“Home Staging is using limited funds, practical creativity and extraordinary expertise to professionally prepare a home to sell so that it becomes infinitely more attractive to potential buyers, sells quickly and for more money. In turn, home staging becomes an investment for the home seller through the greater home sale earnings that are realized.”

Audra Slinkey, President of the Home Staging Resource
www.homestagingresource.com



WELCOME HOME



STAGING AND SELLING FOR TOP *Dollar* OVERVIEW

Selling your home is a process and this guide is intended to walk you through the most important elements of success in that process:

- The Three Keys to Selling Your Home
- Understanding Buyers
- Getting Buyers to “Feel Home” in Your Home
- Creating a Plan for Preparing Your Home to Sell



THREE *Keys* TO SELLING YOUR HOME

Don't worry about the idea of selling your home in a slow "buyer's market" or busy "seller's market" because when these three keys are done right, success is right around the corner regardless! Why? Because most home sellers today are neglecting one or more of these crucial steps, impeding the realization of a successful sale and leaving money on the table.

If you are serious about selling your home, here are **3 ESSENTIAL KEY STEPS** you must take into consideration to make your home stand out from the competition:

1. **Marketing Your Home On the Inside** – Professional Home Staging
2. **Marketing Your Home to the Public** – Online marketing photos, brochures, open houses, etc...
3. **Pricing the House Right** – Reviewing comparable homes in your area, getting a good agent, finessing your price

When each key is just right, offers will come!

First Key – Disassociate and Prepare Your Home on the Inside (Home Staging)

Most home sellers are aware of the need to spruce up their home (product) so that it sells, but often have no idea where to begin or how to prioritize the improvements. In fact, according to a recent poll of over 3500 homes professionally staged, the average staging investment that is between 1 and 3 percent of the home's asking price will generate a return of 8 to 10 percent in the sale price of the home! That means when a seller with a \$300,000 home invests \$3,000 in preparing it to sell, they will typically see a \$24,000 return!

In today's real estate market, it simply means you will be able to attract more buyers and sell your home quickly because it appeals to the broadest range of buyers. Home sellers know they need to spend; they just need professional guidance in knowing where to spend those staging dollars in order to have the greatest return on investment.



After living in a home for more than 2 years, it is almost impossible for people to “objectively” view their space and their sentimental belongings from a buyer’s perspective, allowing them to focus on spending their staging budget wisely.

Elements of the home that may have annoyed us originally, we no longer notice. Our homes become very personal, filled with belongings that create memories and emotions, so that objectively altering them to fit a buyer’s perspective becomes nearly impossible to do ourselves!

So what does a home seller do to view the home objectively and get the most from their staging budget?

- **Be a Buyer** – Disassociate from your home and try to see your home through a buyer’s eyes. The next section in our Staging Guide will begin to walk you through this.
- **Get Professional Guidance** – Hire a professional Home Stager who is an expert at marketing and photographing the inside of a home, creating an emotional response from buyers to each space. Staging and decorating is what we do all day, so we know a bit about what looks great and appeals to buyers.

We’ll talk a lot more about this first key in the coming pages, as well as give you a plan for your home.



Hands On: Staging is an art form like gourmet cooking, painting and decorating, so consequently most people don’t have the expertise to transform and market each room of the home correctly on their own. Would you paint your own paintings?



Second Key – Have an Amazing Online Photo Presentation (Marketing Campaign)

Your online photo presentation is Key Number Two in selling your home fast and for the best price!



- 95% of homebuyers are ONLINE first looking at photos of the homes, before they decide to drive by and visit
- 84% of buyers reported the photos to be the most useful information
- The number ONE action taken after viewing a home online was to drive by or visit the home!

NAR Profile of Buyers

Your home's online photo presentation is competing against many other homes for the buyer's attention, so make sure the listing presentation shines by following these simple strategies:

- **Use a Professional Photographer** - If you think all agents are alike in the way they list a home and market it to the public...think again! Make sure the agent you hire uses and pays for a professional photographer to capture your gorgeously staged rooms.
- **Use Over 20 Photos** – Did you know that the more photos in a listing actually helps that listing sell faster and for more money? Make sure your agent includes many professional photos of your home in the online listing, so buyers fall in love before they even step in the door.

1 photo = 5 views and 1.37 leads

21 or more photos = over 77 views and 11+ leads

Clearly the listings that added 20+ photos generated nearly 10 times the number of leads and over 15 times the number of views.

1 photo = 70 days on market

6 photos = 40 days on market

16-19 photos = 36 days on market

20+ photos = 32 days on market

****according to Point2.com**



- **Place the Best Photos First** – Typically an agent places the exterior photo of the home first in the listing but if the home has the best yard in the neighborhood...you may want your agent to put that photo first. In other words, use the best photo first since buyers scroll quickly and you want them to stop and click to see the rest of the home.
- **List Only When Ready** – When an agent lists your home, buyers who have signed up for “e-mail alerts” for your area will get an e-mail of the online listing presentation. Make sure that all the staged room photos and details are in place before the listing is launched, so that buyers are instantly attracted to the home!



Danger: Again, make sure the photos are of professionally staged rooms! There is nothing worse than multiple photos of awful looking spaces!

Remember to think like a home buyer and go online to review your listing and photos. Does it visually have appeal and stand out among similarly priced homes in your area? If not, go back to First Key and Second Key to either increase the home’s attraction or consider pricing as explained in the Third Key.

Third Key - Price the Home Right the First Time

Your real estate agent is an expert on the marketplace and at reading and understanding comparable homes nearby. Statistically, a home that “sits” on the market loses its new listing buzz and ends up selling for a lower price down the road. In fact, according to a National Association of Realtors survey, the longer a home stays on the market, the further below list price it drops. Homes that sold in the first 4 weeks averaged 1 percent more than the list price; 4 to 12 weeks averaged 5 percent less; 13 to 24 weeks averaged 6.4 percent less than the list price; and 24 weeks averaged more than 10 percent less than list price.



Research the homes for sale in your area at a website like Zillow.com and talk with your agent about introducing your home at a price that will encourage potential buyer traffic because the first two steps to selling your home will be sure to promote offers. If you plan to “shoot high and see what happens” that’s fine but be prepared to change the price in two weeks if you don’t attract buyers to your home.

Understanding Buyers



In order to understand how to sell a product, you have to understand your buyer and what makes them go from making a logical decision to visit your home, to the emotional decision of placing an offer. Here are some simple tips to keep in mind when you are staging and selling a home:

The Home Seller Has Marketing Advantage

- **A Perfectly Targeted Audience** – Most buyers who come to your house are good prospects. They are actively shopping for the product you are selling and your house should already meet their general criteria.
- **A Captive Audience** – The buyer is in your house and will probably spend up to an hour studying it.
- **An Opportunity to Make Multiple Impressions** – Each room gives us the perfect opportunity to make dozens of first impressions. With each detail, we will move the buyer from looking at your house to evaluating whether it could be their home.



Homes Are Purchased On Emotions

- We want buyers to think “This is it. This is the one!” I will use my eight-step, *FEEL HOME* process to depersonalize the space and create “emotional connection points” which actively engage a buyer’s mind to imagine how life could be in your house for their family.
- Like most first impressions, buyers will be looking to reinforce their opinion throughout the rest of the home. I will make those first impressions *positive in every room!*
- When a house feels like home, buyers will reprioritize their list. I will accentuate the positive and downplay the negative in each room. I’ll create warmth, scale, harmony and cohesion by using expert decorating tricks of the trade.

Buyers will “profile” the sellers In their buying decisions...

- Neat and organized sellers are viewed as taking care of a home. The opposite is also true. We’ll declutter those areas buyers use to profile neatness.
- Nationwide, the typical homebuyer household consists of a married couple aged 36 with a household income of \$71,300. We will target these people in our style and décor so our “profile” fits.

Buyers will view your personal things, impersonally...

- If you can’t see objectively, you can’t market effectively. We’ll put on “buyer’s eyes” in each room of your house, so that you can see how to market your home everyday of the process.

The "Feel Home" Staging Philosophy

Simply Stated Staging & Design believes that successful staging is the art of using marketing and design techniques to create an environment that buyers can "aspire" to. "If I buy this house, I can live like this." At Simply Stated Staging & Design, I use the art of "positioning" to create several "emotional connection points" throughout the home so that when a buyer steps into the house they "feel home." This is it. This is the one.

What does "feeling home" look like? For Simply Stated Staging & Design, it's a combination of eight things I analyze in each room in order to create a lasting impression for the homebuyer:

First Impressions - I will walk through your home room by room, taking note of first impressions, what grabs me, what glares at me, and what gives me a feeling of home.

Home Buyer's Appeal - In order for a buyer to "feel home," they need to not be reminded of this being your home. I'll depersonalize the space while retaining the warmth and fun of photos.

Eliminating Clutter - The packing starts now, as I pack away a good percentage of everything in the room in order to create a more clean, open and spacious feel.

Obligations - Cleaning/Repairs - The dirty work speaks for itself but is often overlooked because you've lived here for so long. Let's remove any potential inspection issues and the buyer's mental "repair list."

Emphasizing the positive while downplaying the negative - Finding your beautiful focal points, I will emphasize what I love about the room and hide or distract any of the potential negative aspects of the rooms.

Modernizing - This involves updating your style and building simple accessories out of what you already have to create clean lines and form. I will recommend critical purchases not only as valuable investments in the staging process but to modernize and refresh your current items.

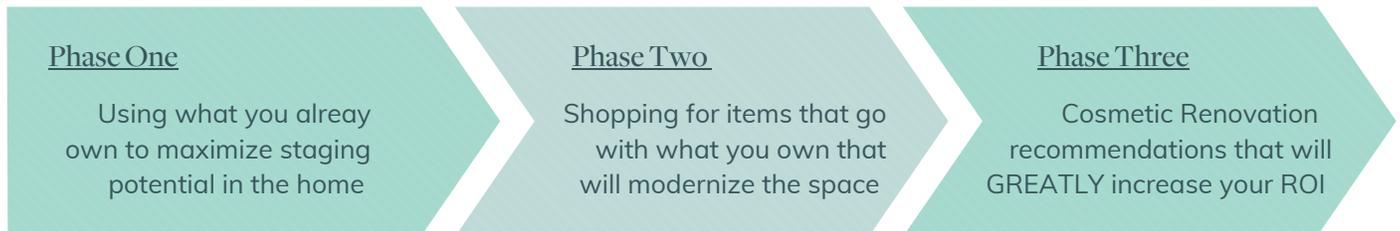
Lighten Up - Focusing on lighting and color, I will make each room into a bright, warm and inviting space buyers can respond to. Paint and light fixtures are key elements to buyers.

Emotional Connection Points - Creating the "Wow Factor" - This is the fun part and is a huge focus of my positioning strategy. I'll show you how to build in these subtleties in order to make the buyers subconsciously desire to live here and "feel home." The "emotional connection points" are where marketing strategy really comes in to play.

NEXT STEPS

We are eight critical steps away from selling your home quickly and for the most money possible! We'll start the process in our consultation by having you put on "buyer's eyes" as a first step in transforming your home into what home buyers will fall in love with.

Now that you know what it takes to get your home sold fast and for the best price, let's get started! As you know, the first key to getting your home sold is home staging. There are three phases to the home staging process, which will be addressed completely in my home staging services starting with a Consultation and continuing through our Staging Days:



Phase One – Maximizing What You Have, so That it Appeals to Buyers

You will be amazed at the dramatic transformations I will be able to accomplish in a single Staging Day using what you already have! Successful home staging must make financial sense and I am experienced and trained in making the most of your current belongings in order to turn buyer traffic into offers. I will start with a Consultation in order to assess your space.

Phase Two - Recommended Purchases as “Investments” in Selling Your Home

Working within your budget, I will only recommend purchases that will MORE than pay for themselves in the speed and dollar amount of sale. During the Staging Day, I will bring in accessories in order to get fantastic photos for your Realtor’s marketing efforts and to attract Internet traffic. Over 95% of homebuyers are online searching for homes BEFORE they visit a home, so we want to make an excellent first impression and compel them to come to your home. The accessories I bring in during the Staging Day will also give you a “visual” of the simple and inexpensive purchases you can make that have a dramatic effect on each room of your home. I also offer a shopping service if you need more guidance in this area.

Phase Three - Simple Yet Dramatic Cosmetic Updates and Changes

Depending on your budget and timing, I may suggest paint, electrical and other cosmetic improvements that will result in a high return on investment. I will tell you which rooms and improvements are “worth it.” Don’t spend on cosmetic changes without first consulting the experts!

Let’s Work Together Marketing A Home Buyers Will Love!

