



What You Need to Know About Choosing a Real Estate Agent

Most homeowners realize they need a real estate agent to help them sell their home. But how is one agent different from the next?

Reno, NV, March 26, 2008 --(PR.com)-- Using his 30 years of experience in the industry, Assist-2-Sell co-founder and co-chief executive officer Lyle Martin helps clarify some misperceptions about real estate brokerages and offers homeowners some tips on what they should look for in an agent.

Most homeowners will use a real estate agent to sell their home. With more than a million REALTORS® nationwide, how do you choose one? Most home sellers will either ask their family and friends for a referral or they'll call the agent who sold them their home originally. Some will choose the agent who kept in touch through neighborhood marketing. Others choose a brand name brokerage they recognize and take whichever agent answers the phone. While all these methods are fine, there are some things you can do to be more pro-active in selecting a brokerage and an agent.

Select a Real Estate Brokerage That:

- * Is properly licensed and in good standing with the state. (This just requires a quick phone call or a visit to the appropriate Web site. The department that licenses and regulates the real estate industry in your state may be called the Real Estate Division, the Department of Real Estate or the Real Estate Commission.)
- * Belongs to the local Association of REALTORS® and the local Multiple Listing Service (MLS).
- * Specializes in residential home sales.

Select a Real Estate Agent Who:

- * Works in the real estate business full time.
- * Is a REALTOR® and a member of the MLS.
- * Is experienced in residential home sales.
- * Demonstrates competence and local market knowledge.

Once you've determined that a brokerage and an agent are fully licensed, experienced and qualified to meet your needs, you'll need to decide how much you're willing to compensate them for their services. Use the following information to demystify this decision-making process.

Myth: Bigger is Better

Many home sellers think if they retain a large brokerage, all the agents in the office will be trying to sell their home. There is rarely an incentive for an agent to sell a home listed by another agent in the office. Agents typically rely on the MLS for information on homes for sale and are happy to show and sell homes listed by agents outside of their brokerage.

The MLS levels the playing field, so don't worry about the size of the brokerage. Focus instead on the strengths of the agent.



One thing many home sellers overlook is the fact that smaller brokerages are often comprised of more experienced agents. A lot of new agents get their start at large brokerages, while experienced agents often leave to start their own brokerages.

Myth: Brand Name = More Marketing

Regardless of the size of the brokerage, the marketing of individual homes is typically paid for by the listing agent. It has been proven time and again that the most effective marketing tools are the MLS, yard signs and the Internet. That's what home buyers are using to find homes. And any agent can provide these marketing tools.

If the brokerage you hire is spending a lot of money on television ads, billboards and park benches, you have to ask yourself how that is benefiting you. Are they looking for buyers for your home or simply attracting more business for themselves and justifying their high fees?

Myth: You Have to Pay a High Commission

Real estate agents who charge a high commission want homeowners to think they have to pay six or seven percent in order to sell their home in this market.

The truth is there are many alternatives to paying such high commissions. There are discount firms like Assist-2-Sell that offer full-service for as low as a few thousand dollars. With a full-service discount real estate company, home sellers receive all of the services they would get with a high commission brokerage, but without all of the cost.

There are other real estate companies that discount their fees by reducing the level of service. These are good for home sellers who are willing to take on some of the work, such as taking calls and showing the home. Fees can start at only a few hundred dollars.

Checking into these companies can save home sellers thousands of dollars.

Myth: You Get What You Pay For

Home sellers will find that most real estate agents charge the same high commission yet agents don't come close to offering the same value. Call a brand name brokerage with many agents and chances are you'll get a newer, less experienced agent. Do they have the same level of experience, negotiating skills and marketing budget as a seasoned agent? Certainly not, yet they want the same commission. This doesn't mean they won't do a good job and succeed, but you are not getting the same value (i.e. what you pay for), compared to hiring a top producing agent.

It's not difficult to find top producing agents working at discount brokerages. These agents have discovered they can make more money in volume by charging home sellers lower fees, while still providing full-service. And home sellers are happy because they're saving money and receiving full-service.

Selling a home is a complicated process and it does require the use of professionals, especially in this



market. Remember, the commission you pay does not ensure value. Select a real estate agent who is licensed, qualified, experienced, knowledgeable and ready to represent your best interests. With a little research, you will find someone who will sell your home quickly and will help you get as much money for it as possible.

Real estate veteran Lyle Martin is one of the original founders of Assist-2-Sell Inc., America's Leading Discount Real Estate Company. Started in 1987, there are now more than 550 franchise offices throughout the United States and Canada. Assist-2-Sell provides home sellers with full-service for a low, flat fee. Home buyers also have access to a full brokerage services. Find an office at www.assist2sell.com. Contact Lyle at (775) 688-6060 or lyle@assist2sell.com.

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