

## ***When things get tough, the tough get creative!***

No one will argue that the real estate market is tougher today than in many years. There are a lot of homes on the market and the mortgage industry is going through a shake down. However when there is a downside in an industry there is always an upside! According to the Denver MLS, at the end of July the homes on market count was 30,272 and the average "days on market" was 95 days (average days till sold). The good news- there were 4,980 homes sold in the Denver metro area in July. It is like life, the Yin and Yang, night and day, hot and cold. The market is going through an adjustment. So if your home is for sale, or you are considering selling -what to do?

When things get tight and competition is stiff, you need to think creatively. And get your Real Estate broker to market creatively.

Creativity is not always thinking outside the box. Sometimes it is getting your head and heart into a different box. Ilya Prigogine wrote "*The future is uncertain... but this uncertainty is at the very heart of human creativity.*" It is our uncertainty that stimulates our creativity. Take a moment and listen to the creative side of your



mind and soul. What can you do to get more people to consider your home as their next? First think like a buyer, not a seller. In most neighborhoods, this is a buyers market! What do they (the buyer) want? I recently had a client ask me a question that spurred my creativity, "How can we get someone to fall in love with our home?" What other properties are they looking at in your neighborhood and comparing your home to? A question you need to ask is, "How do I (and my Realtor) get more people in to see my home and get an offer?" I will share a truth with you. Most people who make their livelihood through sales are afraid to get creative. They are frozen by the thought, "what if it doesn't work?" So they play it safe. In this market, safe gets you at least 95 days on market.

"*The true creator is necessity,*" said Plato, "*who is the mother of our invention.*" When you feel the pressure, don't throw up your hands in despair and look for someone to blame, or even worse quit. Try brainstorming instead. It is way more useful and fun! We want to share with you some ideas we have used to market homes. Be careful if you try these ideas, you might just sell your house right away!

Recently instead of a Saturday/Sunday Open House we threw a Friday evening Open House Party. We placed ads in 8 newspapers, emailed over 400 people, placed Open House signs up to 1 mile away and hand delivered 65 Party invitations to neighbors within 4 blocks. We served a nice selection of wine and tapas and had some tranquil music playing. It was a blast!

Often realtors will hold a "Broker Open". This is an open house for other Realtors to entice them to visit a home and possibly encourage a buyer to consider that home. We find that many of these broker opens are poorly attended, sometime drawing a mere handful of Realtors or none at all. It may be a nice idea whose time has passed. We decided to add a new twist to this marketing idea. We sent out emails to over 1000 Realtors with an invitation to a "Virtual Broker Open" house via a link to a visual tour we created of this beautiful home we have listed. The "hook" was a contest/drawing to identify the colors in a piece of artwork that showed up in the Visual Tour. The drawing prize was dinner for 2 at a very nice restaurant. We had a tremendous response from brokers who "attended" the open, closely reviewed the home via the visual tour and offered their answer for the drawing. It was a huge success!



Sometimes drastic times demand drastic measures. Years ago, before I was a licensed Realtor, I sold a home by throwing in a car in the deal. My brother lived in Kentucky and owned a home in the city where I lived. He had the house listed with 3 different agents who would each do exactly the same thing to market his home. It was going nowhere. When the listing agreement expired, he asked me to help him. I asked him if he could afford to put-up \$5K to really market the house. He was willing to do so to unload it. I took the \$5000 and bought a brand new base-line Chevrolet Chevette Scooter. I parked the car in the front yard next to a 4'x4" sale sign and offered the house at his list price + \$5000. The sign simply read: BUY THIS HOME, GET THIS NEW CAR FOR FREE! We found him a qualified buyer in 8 days and sold his home! I found a licensed Realtor to process the paper work.

If your home is on the market, or you plan to market it soon, consider these 10 things:

1. What is my Realtor currently doing to creatively market my home? ASK!
2. How do I get my Realtor "to partner with me" to be more creative in marketing my home.
3. How can we brainstorm together to come up with new possibilities?
4. Am I priced right to sell? Are my expectations and time frames realistic?
5. Could I price strategically a bit under the market to create more activity and interest? (Remember if this is a buyer's market I could make up the difference and more by getting a deal when I purchase my next home.)
6. Have I done everything I can to make the most of the times when people actually come to see my home? Clean-spotless and smells great, decluttered, staged, available etc?
7. Are we getting the home details and photos out to as many people as possible to see my home?

8. Besides plenty of photos, do I have a visual tour to give my home the best chance of showing up on internet sites around the world? Who can I personally send the tour links to? Friends, co-workers, etc. (Hint: without pictures forget it! People will pass your home by!)
9. Is there some fun or creative activity my Realtor and I can generate to get more people in to view my home? Virtually?
10. What kind of Real Estate Commission approved incentives can I offer buyers and buyer's agents?

**One of your most powerful inner resources is your own creativity.  
Be willing to try on something new and play the game full-out. Marcia Wieder**

If you are in the market, put on your creative thinking cap and allow yourself to create and try things. The seller who tries something will always beat the seller who just thinks about being creative!

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