

## **Selling Your Home in Today's Market**

The media has been full of stories about the slowing housing market – and although this kind of market normalization is commonplace in the real estate industry, there is no question that in many parts of the country, houses are currently on the market a little longer and there is more competition for buyers.

### **Hire a Professional**

If you want to sell your home fairly quickly, now is not the time to go at it alone. You want to make sure that your home gets the maximum exposure and the best marketing strategy. When you work with a qualified real estate professional, your home will be listed on a MLS database that other real estate professionals can access. In addition, you get the benefit of an experienced marketer and negotiator who is familiar with real estate issues in your community.

When selecting someone to represent you, interview at least three real estate professionals who are familiar with your area. Ask questions such as: How will your home be marketed to reach the greatest number of buyers? What price can they get for your home? What's the average time their listings have been on the market? They should be able to back up their answer with a Comparative Marketing Analysis and provide the names of two or three of their most recent sellers who you may contact for a reference.

### **Price It Right**

A house priced at just below market value piques the interest of real estate professionals and buyers, while overpricing chases them away. If your home is priced too high, interested buyers may never even tour your listing. It is true that you can always drop the price, but the first 30 days are the most critical. That is when interest is the highest, and it can be difficult to recapture people's interest later on. The longer the property is on the market, the fewer the prospects.

### **Get Your Home In Show-Condition**

Get your home in tip-top shape before any potential buyer views it. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression. Get rid of the clutter. Touch up the paint where needed. Clean the carpet. Consider having your home inspected, and make any recommended repairs. (If there are any repairs you decide not to fix, inform the buyers about the condition of your home and discount the repair cost from the selling price).

### **Curb Appeal**

Don't overlook the outside of your property. You don't want a buyer to rule out your home based on the outside appearance. The lawn should be trimmed, bushes and shrubs pruned, and leaves raked. The front of the house needs a



761 W. Michigan Ave.  
Jackson, MI 49201  
(517)780-3800  
[www.PPPjackson.com](http://www.PPPjackson.com)

clean, fresh appearance. Even the mailbox needs to be attractive and functional. (Believe it or not, a rusty, unhinged mailbox can turn potential buyers off.) And don't forget to put away bicycles; toys and other items that may make your property seem cluttered.

### **Offer Incentives**

Offering incentives can be just the impetus a potential buyer needs to select your property over others. You may want to consider offering a carpet or paint allowance. If the buyer knows up front that there is an allowance for the worn carpet or paint, they may overlook those cosmetic flaws in order to choose their own color. You could pay for a professional home inspection or a home warranty – and, depending on your market and budget, offer to pay some of the closing costs.

Don't be discouraged if there are competing homes for sale in your neighborhood. Making the right moves at the beginning of your home selling process can give you the upper-hand you'll need in today's competitive market.

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