

S

taging a home for sale is smart marketing when it's time to move a home in just about any kind of market.

Staging is to the interior of a home what curb appeal is to the exterior – nipping and tucking, furnishing and accessorizing, buffing and polishing until the place looks like a model home, without being clinical. But it can also include curb appeal.

With just the right special effects, the effort can transform a house into a dream home and help potential buyers visualize the homes potential.

Here's a few points to consider:

- **Appeal.** Start with curb appeal, including landscaping, doors, fixtures – anything that customers see upon approach to the front door. Curb appeal should exude an unforgettable first impression that prompts buyers to cross the threshold.
- **Enchant.** The entry should generate some pop, excitement or drama. Create a focal point with an oversized mirror, a dramatic piece of art, strategic lighting, fresh flowers or candles – but not all at once. Add drama, not comedy.
- **Refresh.** Update worn attributes. Sand and refinish hardwood floors. Clean or replace the carpet. Pressure wash stone flooring.
- **Rearrange.** New furniture layouts make for a new look, feel and flow to a room. A fireplace need not be the focus in the middle of summer. A point of view to the patio, beachfront or pool area may be a better selling point.
- **Upgrade.** Stainless steel appliances are the rage because they add the commercial look of perceived value. Install a glass-front wine cooler for a bit of sex appeal.
- **Accommodate.** Give your baths that "Five-Star" look. Add thick, white, luxury hotel towels, extra hand towels at each sink and a container of those hotel goodies – candles, cotton-ball and Q-Tip holders and the like.



- **Impress.** Treat your master bedroom like a luxury hotel suite featured in the movies. Include thick white sheets and pillows. Use a thick white duvet and duvet cover, a nice tray with reading books, candles and warm colored walls. A ceiling-height plant adds perceived height. A nice chair and reading light or sofa seating area brings in coziness. Remove the clutter, photographs, no note pads, pens or pencils. Nothing you would not find in a luxury hotel suite.

- **Reorganize.** Clear the set. Remove the clutter. Put in professionally built-out closets. Closets should look good and smell good, not musty or mildewy. Rack or drawer your shoes and other accessories. Leave nothing on the floor. Add cedar blocks for scent and invest in matching wood hangars for every item of clothing to project a lifestyle of success.

- **Entertain.** Add a sound track. iPod music to wireless speakers. Install a plasma TV tuned to an eye-catching, replaying, high density disc of panoramic scenes. You want to present your home as modernized and updated.

- **Accentuate.** "Add" square footage with dramatic effects – mirrors in small areas, focused furniture positions, lighting, vistas, etc.

- **Captivate.** Purchase extra-long white sheer mesh draperies and install rods around your trellises or outdoor area for that billowy drapery feeling found in exclusive resort hotels. This is a dynamic, fast way to provide the 'major wow' you need to sell your home faster and for the highest price.

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