

Staging: The Right Response in a Recession

With home prices trending lower in 2009, buyers are even more demanding when weighing purchasing decisions. They want more value, more features and a home that ticks all their boxes. With a plentiful supply of houses on the market, your home must make a good first impression or it might be passed up without a second thought.

Kathy Wood of Oakville's Divine ReDesign says that staging is one of the most effective tools that any seller can put to use in selling a home quickly. "A professional stager uses tried-and-true techniques to increase the charm of a home and build the kind of appeal that is so important in a highly competitive market" she says. "Done right, it often means that a home will sell faster and for a price that's much closer to the asking price."

One of the most important attributes that sets one stager apart from others is the ability to show off a home's strong points and highlight the features of each individual room. "Buyers form an emotional opinion about a house within seconds, if not minutes," notes Wood. "It's important to capture their attention and make it easy for them to imagine themselves living there. If they don't form that initial bond, they'll easily pass up one house for another." While that may sound simple, the real trick is being able to strike the perfect balance that will distribute visual interest around the room. "Many of the principles of design used in interior decorating are put to work with staging," continues Wood, "but with staging everything is intended to showcase a property. When decorating, you're creating a home that's comfortable for family living, whereas with staging the focus is on creating a space in which a potential buyer can envision living. There's a difference and it's that distinction between the two that can make or break a good staging project."

Effective staging means having the home's personality shine through, not the home owner's. And, it means putting your best foot forward right from the beginning. "Staging starts outside your home", stresses Wood. "If you don't have that all important curb appeal, the interior of your home won't even be given a chance. Potential buyers can drive right on by and head to the next house on their list. Inside, getting rid of clutter and editing personal items is just one step in the process. Success comes from knowing what to include and what to pack away in storage. Again, it's that fine balance that's so important to creating the right atmosphere for buyers."

Kathy is part of a multi-faceted team of professionals created by Dan Cooper to provide exemplary service to Cooper Team clients. Visit her online at www.divine-redesign.com or contact her via telephone at 416-520-7857.