

PRESENTING OUR BIGGEST ASSET FOR SALE by Allistar Walker

We are in the greatest global financial meltdown since 1946, but so what? Meltdowns come and go like autumn follows summer, except this year winter seems to have followed summer and like the economy; we have all been plunged, outside of our control, into unsympathetic fridity. But life goes on and we can all do things to make our world better, boost our property value (even in these times) and give ourselves a marketing advantage over our similar priced opposition. Does it need to cost? No. However, so many people just don't bother to dress their properties for sale.

Here are a few tips to make your home sell better and once done, who knows, you might not even want to sell.

Freshen up the Walls – Dirty or old paintwork, outdated wallpapers will undersell your home. Choose neutral colours that unify the entire house. Seek to lighten and look larger with lightish colours.

New Mouldings – for scotias and skirting boards, can look better than old tired ones.

Updated fixture – Look at lighting switches, light fixtures, door knobs, cupboard handles, etc.

Window Treatments – Do your windows look naked or do you have decent blinds or curtains?

All hardwood floors – These can be restored and can be an asset in the modernised home. Sort of, if you have them, flaunt them, if you don't, cover them up.

Bathroom – Replace shabby bathroom vanities, old style towel rails, tap ware. You don't necessarily need to go down the whole 'tile everything' route, but if it is shabby, change it. New towels and mats can also brighten and freshen a bathroom.

Kitchen – Often people judge a house by its kitchen. I have heard figures of something like spend 10% of your house value on your kitchen. If you are selling you won't want to do this, but have an honest look at it. Would it benefit from new cabinets from the likes of Mitre 10 or Placemakers, or new tap ware? What about the paintwork – is it fresh and clean looking?

Living Areas – Do you have clutter? Your favourite comfy features may detract from what it could look like. So minimalise. Less can be more when it comes to presentation. It will also make the house look roomier and give potential buyers a 'feel good' feeling.

If your furniture is a little shabby, put covers on it and store away any excess.

Exterior – Make sure first impressions from the street count. Paint or stain if you have to. Look at the front door, is it inviting you in? What about the front door mat? Do you have a garden in front? If not could you put a few flowers and shrubs in to help the overall frontal appearance? After all when you first find a partner, what is usually the most common first attractant? It is the look isn't it? Well it's the same with a property.

Clean out gutters, replace rusty or damaged guttering, and clean the driveway with a water pressure sprayer or a chem-wash such as 30 Seconds. If you've got the rest of the winter then treat it and 'walk away'. Mow the lawns but don't scalp them.

Maybe this is a little divergent from mortgage tips, interest rate advice or what sort of insurance to take. Nevertheless, this home of yours is probably your biggest asset and where a lot of your hard earned dosh is hidden. Treat it well and it will look after you when you need to pass it on.

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