



# HOME DELIVERY

## Residential Real Estate Trends, Issues and News for Consumers

The National Association of REALTORS® distributes *Home Delivery* every month to real estate, personal finance and consumer journalists as a resource for background or story ideas.

### Timing is a Tricky Thing

In many areas of the country, today's real estate market is built for buyers. Interest rates have fallen for seven months in a row and are near 40-year lows, inventories of existing homes are higher than they have been in decades, and prices are stabilizing. But some would-be home buyers are still on the sidelines.

Conditions for sellers are likely to improve next year, with recent pending home sales on the rise and a continued increase in the number of U.S. households, strengthening demand. The national median price of homes bought 10 years ago has increased 88 percent, and prices are expected to rise again next year.

Homeownership is a safe, secure way to build long-term wealth. Over time, owning real estate has always proven to be a good idea.

### Story Springboard

- What are buyers waiting for? Interview people who are either currently looking for a home or have chosen to postpone a home purchase to learn about what motivates their home buying decisions and what their plans are, moving forward. Talk to Realtors® about how their strategies have changed as they represent both buyers and sellers in the local market, the concerns their clients have about buying or selling a home, and their recommendations and tips for buyer and seller success in the current environment.

### How Much is that Mortgage in the Window?

At the current pace, the foreclosure rate for 2006 is expected to be high, according to RealtyTrac™ data. Some of these owners will lose their homes because they were the victims of predatory lending practices.

Nearly all predatory lending occurs in the subprime market, which includes more than 1 in every 10 mortgage holders in today's market, according to Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies in its most recent *State of the Nation's Housing* report.

NAR and the Center for Responsible Lending have developed a new brochure, *How to Avoid Predatory Lending*, to help Realtors® educate their clients about predatory lenders. It also provides advice for consumers about how they can protect themselves when buying or refinancing a home. Read the brochure at

[www.realtor.org/housopp.nsf/pages/mortgages?OpenDocument](http://www.realtor.org/housopp.nsf/pages/mortgages?OpenDocument).

### Story Springboard

- Mortgage mentoring  
Talk to a variety of recent home buyers about their mortgage loan process, how they financed their purchase, and how they're faring as homeowners. Interview Realtors® who specialize in helping first-time home buyers and people with less than ideal credit, and follow up with some of their clients to learn about the challenges these buyers face and advice for other would-be homeowners.

### Internet Influences Realtor®-Client Relationships

The recently released *2006 NAR Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers* shows that 80 percent of recent home buyers used the Internet to search for a home, and that buyers who use the Internet in their search process tend to be younger than those who don't, with median ages of 39 and 51, respectively.

Earlier this month at NAR's Conference & Expo, a panel of Realtors® who have earned the Accredited Buyer Representative® designation discussed how the Internet influences their client interactions. Buyers who have searched for homes and information online often have a better sense of what they want than non-Internet users, but they often need their Realtor® to help them interpret the information, focus their search, and correct inaccurate information found on the Web.

### Story Springboard

- Connections in cyberspace  
Talk to Realtors® and their clients about how their business relationship began. For buyers and sellers who found their Realtor® online, are their expectations different than for clients who came by way of referrals or more traditional means?

Please contact Stephanie Singer, 202/383-1050, or via e-mail at [ssinger@realtors.org](mailto:ssinger@realtors.org), for additional ideas, sources, data and resources.

