



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.

Does Winter Mail Bring Spring Sales?

As the spring home buying season gets underway, many sellers are looking for ways to make their home stand out from the competition, particularly in markets that saw increased inventories in 2006.

Successful selling strategies incorporate creativity and a solid understanding of local market fundamentals, including buyer demographics, seller position, and current financing options. Some strategies include:

- Targeting the right buyers. First-time home buyers and people who have had credit problems in the past but have resolved them can take advantage of favorable conditions in many markets.
- Pricing correctly. This isn't just about comparing recent sales for like properties; it's also about anticipating where the market is headed and thinking strategically about online search results and the price ranges in which buyers look for homes.

Story Springboard

• Relatively speaking... There are more homes on the market today than a year ago, but nationally, the 6.8 month's supply at the end of 2006 seems like a tight market in comparison to the 13.8 months supply and 17 percent mortgage interest rates in 1982. Interview Realtors® who were in business in the early 80s to learn about how market conditions and home selling strategies have changed over time in your area.

And Now a Word from the Ys

Born between 1981 and 1999, members of Generation Y are poised to make a big impact on the country's real estate market. Researchers and demographic analysts see important distinctions between this up-and-coming generation and their baby boomer parents.

Rather than the suburban ranch of their parents, many members of Generation Y prefer urban lifestyles, with homes that give them wide open spaces, lots of light, wireless access, and green building features, according to experts at a recent Urban Land Institute meeting.

Demographers also suggest that, given their tendencies to delay marriage and childbirth, some members of Generation Y may delay other commitments like homeownership, as well.

Story Springboard

• What a Y wants
Talk to people in their early and mid-20s about their views on and experiences with homeownership. What's important to them in a living environment, how do they live now, and where would they like to be in 20 years, from a homeownership perspective? Interview Realtors® in your area about their younger clients – how do they approach the process of home buying, what home features are important to them, and what are their expectations of homeownership?

Don't Let Your Buyers Grow Up to be BUBBAs

With many real estate markets favoring home buyers these days and the wealth of online information provided to consumers by the real estate industry, some buyers are becoming BUBBAs, or buyers unrepresented by a buyer's agent.

According to the *2006 NAR Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers*, 13 percent of recent home buyers bought directly from a builder without the help of a real estate professional, and 9 percent bought their home from its previous owner without professional assistance.

Buyers who make what can be the biggest investment of their lives without an agent may be confused about commissions, think they are saving money because they believe sellers will pass along any savings to a total stranger, or are uninformed about the complexity of today's home buying process.

Story Springboard

• A tale of two buyers
Interview two recent new home buyers: one who purchased with a Realtor®, another who bought directly from the builder. Compare their experiences, from search to initial offer through settlement. Whose home was delivered on time? Who made concessions? Who got the best deal, when all was said and done?

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



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