

Online property marketing key to getting property sold

Recent research from Stats SA indicates that almost half of South African households have at least one member with access to the internet. This means that where you list your property online, and how you market your listing digitally, could mean the difference between selling your home or wringing your hands in frustration.

In the UK 98% of all buyers browse for property online. The percentage in South Africa is lower but is increasing rapidly so estate agents need to understand that online property marketing is paramount.

One agency that has fully embraced the new age of property marketing is Steeple, which is unsurprising considering that it is South Africa's first online real estate agency operating on a low commission basis. Steeple has invested heavily in targeting buyers for its properties via digital media channels including property portals such as Property24 and Private Property and social media, like Twitter and Facebook. Many traditional estate agents are still overwhelmed by the change in mindset required to market effectively in the internet era.

The major advantage of marketing a property online is that it is never unavailable. If a buyer wants to browse properties at 3am on a Sunday morning they are able to do so.

Buyers are also able to narrow their search for properties by using filters such as suburb, price range, number of bedrooms etc. This enables a buyer to generate a shortlist from the comfort of their own home, so they only have to physically visit properties that have great potential.

The most techno-savvy estate agencies can use their knowledge of the online tricks of the trade, such as search engine optimisation, to get their properties seen by more buyers and thereby increase the chances of a sale.

As the internet in SA becomes cheaper and more accessible, online property marketing will become even more important. The most successful estate agencies will be those that best understand digital marketing.

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