

Listing photos - make sure they are good

According to research, most buyers will start looking for property online before they go to any other source. What this means is that the first impression buyers will have of a home is its online listing photo.

Adrian Goslett of REMAX says that this shows the importance of using listings photos that highlight the home's top features to entice buyers to want to look further.

"An attractive, highly marketable home can be overlooked by buyers if the listing images are poor quality or don't showcase the property's selling points. For this reason, it is imperative that listing photos are high-quality images that draw in buyers' attention and provide them with insight into what the property has to offer."

"Buyers are not going to take the time to see the home in person if they are not interested in what the images portray online. Sellers should ensure that they are completely satisfied with the images that the agent uses to market their home," advises Goslett.

It goes without saying that not every seller will have professional photographic expertise, but most will be able to discern whether a photo is good or bad. Sellers need to look at the photos from a buyer's perspective and be as objective as possible. "Ask yourself, if you saw this photo and nothing else, would you want to see more? Are the images enticing or would you scan over it and move onto the next home?"

While the task of taking the photos can be left up to the agent or a professional photographer, Goslett says sellers should ensure that they prepare and get their home ready before it is photographed. He provides a few pointers that seller can use to ensure the images of the home convey the right message:

Ensure the home is clean and tidy

Sellers should look at the photoshoot as a show day and prepare the home accordingly. Pack away items that are not in use, ensure the beds are made and that there are no dirty dishes in the sink. These things will detract from what's important and will draw the attention away from the home's features. If the photos are in high resolution, which is advisable, the photos could reflect evidence of dirt, so the home should be cleaned beforehand. Pay particular attention to reflective surfaces, as these can easily show marks and streaks.

Get rid of clutter

A simple, minimalistic look will keep the focus on the home's features and not on the seller's style. Less is more, so if it is possible, remove clutter and any bulky pieces of furniture that can make an area appear smaller than it is.

Take a few test shots

With the advent of digital cameras, sellers can take as many photographs as they need to get the right ones. A good idea would be to take a photo, review it, and then make adjustments if need be.

Pay attention to the interior and exterior

When preparing the home for a photo shoot, don't just focus all the effort on the inside. Mow the lawn and ensure that the garden is clear of refuse. Pack away any garden tools and toys that may be outside. If possible, it is best if there aren't any vehicles in the pictures.

The weather and time of day

The ideal time to take a photo of the property would be either early in the morning or late in the afternoon on a clear sunny day. These times of day will ensure that the home is sufficiently

lit without having the harsh glare of the midday hours. If the light is too bright, the photos could appear flat or colourless. If the weather is overcast and rainy, there is the chance that the home could appear very dark and uninviting. Irrespective of whether photos are being taken of the inside or the outside of the home, ensure that the lights are on as this will provide extra lighting and enhance the details seen in the photos.

Ideally, use a professional

Although photos taken by the seller or agent can suffice, it is best to get the expertise of a professional photographer.

"Because photos play such a pivotal role in the successful marketing of the property, it's worth making sure that the images are of a high quality and standard. Through the eyes of potential buyers, the photos can impact how the property is perceived and whether they would be willing to take the next step of viewing the property in person. Taking the time and effort to get the images right will pay off and will help the seller achieve their goal of attracting buyers," Goslett concludes.

RE/MAX Press Release