

So, you think you can sell your home by yourself? Read on...

My friend, Tony Dove, the dynamic Orange County, California, Realtor, sent me a list of the things a professional realtor has to do for their client... things that very likely never occur to an owner intent on going it alone in putting their property on the open market. I call it the 'List of 183'* - *Don McKay, DONMACideas!*

PRE-LISTING ACTIVITIES:

1. Make appointment with seller for listing presentation
2. Send Seller a written or e-mail confirmation of listing appointment and call to confirm
3. Review pre-appointment questions
4. Research all comparable currently-listed properties
5. Research sales activity for past 18 months from MSL and public records databases
6. Research 'Average Days on Market' for property of this type, price range, and location
7. Download and review property tax roll information
8. Prepare 'Comparable Market Analysis' (CMA) to establish fair market value
9. Obtain copy of subdivision plot/complex layout
10. Research property's ownership and deed type
11. Research and verify legal description
13. Research property's land use coding and deed restrictions
14. Research property's current use and zoning
15. Verify legal names of owner(s) in county's public property records
16. Prepare listing presentation package with above materials
17. Perform exterior 'Curb Appeal Assessment' of subject property
18. Compile and assemble formal file on property
19. Confirm current public schools and explain impact of schools on market value
20. Review listing appointment checklist to ensure all steps and actions have been completed

LISTING APPOINTMENT PRESENTATION

21. Give Seller an overview of current market conditions and projections
22. Review agent's and company's credentials and accomplishments in the market
23. Present company's profile and position or 'niche' in the marketplace
24. Present CMA Results to Seller, including Comparables, Solds, Current Listings and Expireds
25. Offer pricing strategy based on professional judgment and interpretation of current market conditions
26. Discuss Goals with Seller to market effectively
27. Explain market power and benefits of Multiple Listing Service
28. Explain market power of web marketing, IDX and REALTOR.com
29. Explain the work the brokerage and agent do 'behind the scene' and agent's availability on weekends
30. Explain agent's role in taking calls to screen for qualified buyers and protect Seller from curiosity seekers
31. Present and discuss strategic master marketing plan
32. Explain different agency relationships and determine Seller's preference
33. Review and explain all clauses in Listing Contract & Addendum and obtain Seller's signature

ONCE PROPERTY IS UNDER LISTING AGREEMENT:

34. Review current title information
35. Measure overall and heated square footage
36. Measure interior room sizes
37. Confirm lot size via owner's copy of certified survey, if available
38. Note any and all unrecorded property line, agreement, easements
39. Obtain house plans, if applicable and available
40. Review house plans and make copy
41. Order plat map for retention in property's listing file
42. Prepare showing instructions for buyers' agents and agree on showing time window with Seller
43. Obtain current mortgage loan(s) information: companies and loan account numbers
44. Verify current loan information with lender(s)
45. Check assumability of loan(s) and any special requirements
46. Discuss possible buyer financing alternatives and options with Seller
47. Review current appraisal if available
48. Identify Home Owner Association manager if applicable
49. Verify Home Owner Association Fees with manager - mandatory or optional and current annual fee
50. Order copy of Home Owner Association by-laws, if applicable
51. Research electricity availability and supplier's name and phone number
52. Calculate average utility usage from last 12 months of bills
53. Research and verify city sewer/septic tank system
54. Water system: Calculate average water fees or rates from last 12 month's bills
55. Well water: Confirm well status, depth and output from Well Report
56. Natural Gas: Research/verify availability and supplier's name and phone number
57. Verify security system, current terms-of-service and whether owned or leased
58. Verify if seller has transferable Termite Bond
59. Ascertain need for lead-based paint disclosure
60. Prepare detailed list of property amenities and assess market impact
61. Prepare detailed list of property's 'Inclusions & Conveynances with Sales'
62. Compile list of completed repairs and maintenance items
63. Send 'Vacancy Checklist' to Seller if property is vacant
64. Explain benefits of Home Owner Warranty to Seller
65. Assist Sellers with completion and submission of Home Owner Warranty Application
66. When received, place Home Owner Warranty in property file for conveyance at time of sale
67. Have extra key made for lock box
68. Verify if property has rental units involved. If so:
 69. - Make copies of all leases for retention in listing file
 70. - Verify all rents and deposits
 71. - Inform tenants of listing and discuss how showings will be handled
72. Arrange for installation of yard sign
73. Assist Seller with completion of Seller's Disclosure Form
74. 'New Listing checklist' completed
75. Review results of Curb Appeal Assessment with seller and provide suggestions to improve salability
76. Review results of Interior Decor Assessment and suggest changes to shorten property time on market
77. Load listing into transaction management software program

ENTERING PROPERTY IN MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE DATABASE:

78. Prepare MLS Profile Sheet - Agent is responsible for 'quality control' and accuracy of listing data
79. Enter property data from Profile Sheet into MLS Listing Database
80. Proofread MLS database listing for accuracy - including proper placement in mapping function
81. Add property to company's Active Listings list
82. Provide seller with signed copies of Listing Agreement and MLS Profile sheet Data Form within 48 hours
83. Take additional photos for upload into MLS and use in flyers. Discuss efficacy of panoramic photography

MARKETING THE LISTING:

84. Create print and Internet ads with Seller's input
85. Coordinate showings with owners, tenants, and other Realtors. Return all calls - weekends included
86. Install electronic lock box if authorized by owner. Program with agreed-upon showing time windows
87. Prepare mailing and contact list
 88. Generate mail-merge letters to contact list
89. Order 'Just Listed' labels and reports
90. Prepare flyers and feedback faxes
91. Review comparable MLS listings regularly to ensure property remains competitive in prices, terms, conditions and availability
92. Prepare property marketing brochure for Seller's review
93. Arrange for printing or copying of supply of marketing brochures or fliers
94. Place marketing brochures in all company agent mail boxes
95. Upload listing to company and agent Internet site, if applicable
96. Mail out 'Just Listed' notice to all neighborhood residents
97. Advise Network Referral Program of listing
98. Provide marketing data to buyers coming through international relocation networks

99. Provide marketing data to buyers coming from referral network
100. Provide 'Special Feature' cards for marketing, if applicable
101. Submit ads to company's participating Internet real estate sites
102. Price changes conveyed promptly to all Internet group
103. Reprint/supply brochures promptly as needed
104. Loan information reviewed and updated in MLS as required
105. Feedback e-mails/faxes sent to buyers' agents after showings
106. Review weekly Market Study
107. Discuss feedback from showing agents with seller to determine if changes will accelerate the sale
108. Place regular weekly update calls to Seller to discuss marketing and pricing
109. Promptly enter price changes in MLS listing database

THE OFFER AND CONTRACT:

110. Receive and review all Offer-to-Purchase contracts submitted by buyers or buyers' agents
111. Evaluate offer(s) and prepare a 'net sheet' on each for the owner for comparison purposes
112. Counsel Seller on offers. Explain merits and weakness of each component of each offer
113. Contact buyers' agents to review buyers' qualifications and discuss offer
114. Fax/deliver Seller's Disclosure to buyer's agent, or buyer upon request and prior to offer if possible
115. Confirm buyer is pre-qualified by calling Loan Officer
116. Obtain pre-qualification letter on buyer from Loan Officer
117. Negotiate all offers on Seller's behalf, setting time limit for loan approval and closing date
118. Prepare and convey any counteroffers, acceptance or amendments to buyer's agent
119. Fax copies of contract and all addendums to closing attorney or title company
120. When Offer-to-Purchase Contract is accepted and signed by Seller, deliver to buyer's agent
121. Record and promptly deposit buyer's earnest money in escrow account
122. Disseminate 'Under-Contract Showing Restrictions' as per Seller's requests
123. Deliver copies of fully-signed Offer-to-Purchase contract to Seller
124. Fax/deliver copies of Offer-to-Purchase contract to Selling Agent
125. Fax copies of Offer-to-Purchase contract to lender
126. Advise Seller in handling additional offers to purchase submitted between contract and closing
127. Change status in MLS to 'Sale Pending'
128. Review buyer's credit report results - advise Seller of worst and best-case scenarios
129. Provide credit report information to Seller if property will be seller-financed
130. Assist buyer with obtaining financing, if applicable, and follow-up as necessary
131. Coordinate with lender on Discount Points being locked in with dates
132. Deliver unrecorded property information to buyer
133. Order septic system inspection, if applicable
134. Receive and review septic system report and assess any possible impact on sale
135. Deliver copy of septic system inspection report to lender and buyer
136. Deliver Well Flow Test Report copies to lender and buyer and property listing file
137. Verify termite inspection ordered
138. Verify mold inspection ordered, if required

TRACKING THE LOAN PROCESS:

139. Confirm Verifications Of Deposit and Buyer's Employment have been returned
140. Follow Loan processing through to the Underwriter
141. Add lender and other vendors to transaction management program so agents, buyer and Seller can track progress of sale
142. Contact lender weekly to ensure processing is on track
143. Relay final approval of buyer's loan application to Seller

HOME INSPECTION:

144. Coordinate buyer's professional home inspection with Seller
145. Review home inspector's report
146. Enter completion into transaction management tracking software program
147. Explain Seller's responsibilities with respect to loan limits and interpret any clauses in the contract
148. Ensure Seller's compliance with Home Inspection Clause requirements
149. Recommend or assist Seller with identifying and negotiating with trustworthy contractors to perform any required repairs
150. Negotiate payment and oversee completion of all required repairs on Seller's behalf, if needed

THE APPRASAL:

151. Schedule Appraisal
152. Provide comparable sales used in market pricing to Appraiser
153. Follow up on Appraisal
154. Enter completion into transaction management program
155. Assist Seller in questioning appraisal report if it seems too low

CLOSING PREPARATIONS AND DUTIES:

156. Contract is signed by all parties
157. Coordinate closing process with buyer's agent and lender
158. Update closing forms and files
159. Ensure all parties have all forms and information needed to close the sale
160. Select location where closing is to be held
161. Confirm closing date and time and notify all parties
162. Assist in solving any title problems (boundary disputes, easements, etc.) or in obtaining Death Certificates
163. Work with buyer's agent in scheduling and conducting buyer's Final Walk-thru prior to closing
164. Research all tax, HOA, utility and other applicable prorations
165. Request final closing figures from closing agent (attorney or title company)
166. Receive and carefully review closing figures to ensure accuracy of preparation
167. Forward verified closing figures to buyer's agent
168. Request copy of closing documents from closing agent
169. Confirm buyer and buyer's agent have received title insurance commitment
170. Provide 'Home Owners Warranty' for availability at closing
171. Review all closing documents carefully for errors
172. Forward closing documents to absentee Seller as requested
173. Review documents with closing agent (attorney)
174. Provide earnest money deposit check from escrow account to closing agent
175. Coordinate this closing with Seller's next purchase and resolve any timing problems
176. Have a 'no surprises' closing so that Seller receives a net proceeds check at closing
177. Refer Seller to one of the best agents at their destination, if applicable
178. Change MLS status to Sold, Enter sale date, price, selling broker and agent's ID number, etc.
179. Close out listing in transaction management program

FOLLOW UP AFTER CLOSING

180. Answer questions about filing claims with Home Owner Warranty company if requested
181. Attempt to clarify and resolve any conflicts about repairs if buyer is not satisfied
182. Respond to any follow-up calls and provide any additional information required from office files and...

183. The most important thing: The Realtor's professional ability to market and sell the property - something most home owner-sellers have no expertise in doing, and slim chance accomplishing.

My advice... leave the selling of your property to a professional like Tony Dove and get the job done in the quickest amount of time while realizing the greatest amount of profitable return on your property investment. Call Tony Dove at (714) 282-4337.

* I had only one page to list the '183'. Sorry if you had to use a magnifying glass to see it all. - DNM