



HOW TO SELL YOUR HOME FOR TOP DOLLAR IN ANY MARKET

MITZI DE LA CRUZ



Crespillo De La Cruz Group

TN# 369137

www.crespillodelacruz.com

931-922-2590

What's inside...



Introduction



CHAPTER 1

Location



CHAPTER 2

Condition



CHAPTER 3

Marketing



CHAPTER 3

Price



In Closing

The real estate market

is always changing. Regardless, the basics never change. At the Crespillo De La Cruz Group, we understand that there is a right way and a wrong way to sell your home. In this short e-book, we will break down best practices for selling your home as well as common mistakes to avoid. If you're ready to think like a pro, read on!

Real Estate Professionals know that four factors sell a home:



Location



Marketing



Condition



Price

Understand how these factors play into one another and you've got yourself a sale! We will break them down one by one to help arm you with the knowledge of how to Sell Your Home for Top Dollar in Any Market!

The background is a solid orange color. It features a large, light-orange location pin icon in the upper left quadrant. A light-orange path, consisting of solid and dashed lines, winds across the lower half of the image. The text 'CHAPTER ONE' is positioned in the upper right, and the word 'Location' is centered in the middle.

CHAPTER ONE

Location

You cannot do anything about the location of your home regardless of whether it's a help or a hindrance to your sale. So, you must factor the location into the price. Every buyer is different, so what is a problem to one may be a convenience to another. It's all about marketing the location in a way that finds the buyers looking for a home in that locale. This is why it's important to enlist the help of a savvy real estate team. Experience matters!

Location could be problematic if the home is on a busy road or backs up to railroad tracks. These can create deterrents for some home buyers, but by no means, all. The location should factor into the price as it's always better to underprice a home than overprice a home. If home buyers are not bothered by the location of the home, you'll know it by the way the market "talks to you."

You might ask, "How will the market 'talk' to me?" If you have showings but no offers, it could be the home's location. This could be echoed in feedback your agent will get from the showings.



Alternatively, if you are in a desirable area, rejoice! You likely chose your home in part based on this factor. The marketing should include insight into what makes your location so great. Does your home feed into a desirable school district? Is it steps away from a beautiful park, backs to protected open space, or features dazzling views? The benefits of your home's location should factor into price and marketing to earn you top dollar on your sale.

Buyers care about different factors when it comes to the location of your home. Your location may appeal to some, but not all. Great marketing helps buyers see an increased value they may have not seen before. For example, let's say your home is across the street from the high school. Your kids are grown up and out of high school, so to you, the location creates a traffic nightmare twice a day. But to a home buyer whose kids will be able to cross the street and be home, imagine their delight! A buyer's kids will get home easy plus it'll be the place where the kids hang out. After all, who doesn't want to have the house that all the kids hang out at? Effective marketing helps buyers see the best in the home no matter the location.



Location is also very personal to each buyer.

Why does a buyer want to live in your area? Knowing that gives you an edge to understand their motivation. Imagine for a moment you receive an offer from a home buyer whose parents live next door? Wouldn't those buyers be particularly motivated to pay top dollar for your home? In most cases, yes. Do you think they would squabble over some minimal repair found by an inspector?

Not likely as they wouldn't want to risk the deal. The risk of losing the home would outweigh the potential gain of negotiating.



A large, stylized outline of a house in a light orange color, serving as a background for the text. The house has a triangular roof, a small square window in the upper center, a larger rectangular window with a horizontal bar in the lower right, and a door with a small circle handle in the lower left.

CHAPTER TWO

Condition

We can all agree that the condition of the home can be very polarizing for buyers. Many buyers want a turnkey home that they can move right into. Others want to select their own paint colors, flooring, and may even be up for a kitchen or bathroom remodel. Still others want to find a great deal and create their own sweat equity.

Know the condition of your home and consider it when pricing your home. Remember when we said it's much better to underprice your home than it is to overprice your home? Well, it's true. And any home will sell if priced right. Whether your home needs a little updating or a lot of updating, there are buyers who want to buy it! Make the price match the condition and watch your home sell quick... you may even get multiple offers!

If you are able to make improvements to the condition, you are likely wondering what to do. You may be asking what you should focus on for your best return on investment. We wish we could tell you to do A, B, C, and D, you'll get X more dollars for your home, but the answer is complex. The best strategy is a home visit where we can create a list of things for you to do to prepare your home for the market.



You may have heard the adage that kitchens and baths sell homes. In our experience, this is only part true. Some buyers want a fully turnkey property and they'll settle for nothing less. To these buyers, an updated kitchen and bathroom isn't enough.

What if your home needs a new roof? Should you should replace the roof before listing? It depends. Unless you have a gaping hole in the ceiling, don't worry! Buyers make emotional decisions and back them with logic. The new roof you spend \$15,000+ on will not appeal to a buyer's emotions, so save your money.

Instead, focus on curb appeal, paint, cleaning, decluttering, and replacing lights. These improvements provide the biggest return on investment. Why remodel when you can do these fixes quick and on a tight budget? Let's break them down one by one:





CURB APPEAL

This is one of the biggest areas of ROI as it focuses on your home's first impression. Mow the grass before listing photos are taken, while the home is listed, and during escrow. Brown grass should be greened up and kept green through escrow by watering when the sun goes down.

PLEASE NOTE:

If you water while the sun is up, you risk burning your grass. Only water when the grass is shaded or the sun is down

Freshen up or replace ornamental bark or rocks where needed. You can find a lot of variation in the price of materials, so be sure to shop for the best price. Ornamental bark and rock are a great way to liven up your landscape and add visual interest. They can also be especially helpful in cutting down on weeds, too. Take advantage of upcoming seasonal sales for added cost savings at hardware stores.

Add flowers

Another great way to spruce up your yard is by adding fresh flowers to flower pots. Yellow flowers are particularly helpful as yellow is a positive memory color. This helps homebuyers to associate your home with positive feelings. Use flowers and decorative shrubbery to add pops of color. Fresh soil and flowers get expensive, but there are cost effective alternatives that can still improve the look of your home. Some sellers opt to use silk flowers in place of real flowers. They still glean the benefit of improved curb appeal and see a positive effect to their bottom line.





For dry rot/damaged wood

Do you have visible dry rot? You may if you have a wooden porch or railings, wood siding, a deck, or exposed wood on eaves and overhangs. Water to wood contact or chipped and peeling paint on wood are the causes. Dry rot can be especially prevalent on parts of the home that are exposed to afternoon sun. Most of the time, homeowners are unaware of the extent of the damage. Many homeowners find out about the damage through home buyer inspections. Completing pre-list inspections is especially helpful in revealing these hidden hazards. We recommend pre-list inspections in cases where it's likely that there may be an issue. The cost of a pre-list wood destroying organisms inspection typically varies between \$100 - \$250. This is a small price to pay to avoid being blindsided by a big issue down the line.

Regardless of what you choose to do, you should address any visible dry rot you see. When you're selling your home, you want home buyers to see you are intentional with maintaining your home. Visible dry rot communicates the exact opposite of this, so be sure to address it prior to list.





For garage doors

Do you have a metal garage door? There are so many things that can be done here to help your home look it's best! If the paint on your garage door is worn out or chipped, you can repaint it. Be sure to bang out any dents before doing this and then give your door a fresh coat of paint. You'll love the result and so will home buyers! You can add visual interest to your garage doors by adding decorative hardware to the outside of the door. You can pick up inexpensive kits from your local hardware store. You'll be amazed at all the options available! While you're there, be sure to look at options to replace the square windows along the top of your garage door. Most people don't realize they are easily replaced with new windows as they pop right out! This is so much easier than replacing the door!

PRO TIP

If you have decorative shutters, paint them to match the garage door. You'll fall in love with your home all over again



Repaint your doors



Speaking of doors, your front door would also enjoy a fresh coat of paint or stain. Pay attention to trendy front door colors or finishes that compliment the color of the rest of your home. Find a local handyman or if you're handy, go for it! The cost shouldn't be too much and the return you'll get from impressed buyers will far exceed the cost. Also, be sure to pressure wash the front to get rid of any cobwebs you may have overlooked. Remember, your home only gets one chance to make a first impression!





PAINT

We talked about painting the exterior of the home in certain spots. Now, let's take a deep dive into this topic.

Painting your home inside and out is one of the least expensive ways to maximize your ROI. Exterior paint tells homebuyers that you maintain your home. Interior paint makes the home look fresh and clean. Not everybody has the cash to paint the exterior and interior of their homes and that's okay. You can only do what you can do.

Some sellers believe a simple solution is to offer a paint credit. We don't recommend this as it's not effective for one simple reason - buyers usually don't have vision.

If painting the home before listing the home isn't an option, there's no need to try to entice a buyer with a paint credit. It's ineffective and unnecessary.





CLEANLINESS

This one is an easy one, so we'll keep it brief....

Your home should be deep cleaned before going on the market, period.

Whether you are doing this yourself or hiring a professional, it's important to perform a deep clean. Attend everything on the interior of your home, top to bottom, as a buyer will notice any problems. Pay close attention to dusty ceiling fans and dirty air conditioning filters. Clean windows and windowsills, ovens, stoves and all kitchen appliances, and clear cobwebs. Look carefully at tubs and toilets which may contain hard water stains/rings. If this is the case, a pumice stone can be very effective at tackling rings in your toilets and porcelain tubs. You can pick one up in the cleaning section of any store for a couple of dollars. If you weren't able to paint, wipe down baseboards, doors, and interior walls. Get rid of fingerprints on light switches, doorknobs, and streaks on mirrors.

Remember, the goal is to make the impression to homebuyers that you maintain your home in all areas. We want buyers to know we keep a clean, well maintained home.



DECLUTTER

Some realtors will give blanket advice to sellers. They'll say that to declutter, you should take all items down to a third. Our philosophy is that your home is unique to you and so should be the advice. You should consult with an experienced agent who can direct you on what to pack away and what to keep. Remember, it is never too early for this home visit!

When selling your home, you need as much time to prepare as possible! It's a lot to juggle between prepping the home for the market and living your life. We get requests for home consultations at all stages of the home selling process and we love it..

Sometimes, multiple visits are necessary before a seller is ready. We love that, too, as different homeowners need different levels of direction. We are here for it all!

Now that we've stressed the importance of getting personalized advice, let's talk about a couple general rules of thumb. This is based on what we see in homes when touring them with buyers along with questions that come up time and time again from sellers.



No need to take down your pictures

First off, you do not need to take down all your personal pictures unless you choose to. We find homes with pictures of happy kids and smiling couples lend a feeling of warmth to the home. This helps to speak to the buyer in a positive and emotional way. Remember when we said homebuyers make emotional decisions and back them with logic? This is a great way to do that. We've seen buyers make offers on homes because of the photos on the wall. Seriously! Something as simple as someone wearing a jersey of the buyer's favorite sports team could move the buyer to write an offer.

That's not to say that there can't be too much of a good thing. When it comes to personalized photos, they are good in moderation. If generations of family photos plaster every wall, a buyer may have a hard time seeing their family there. Remember, when it comes to personalized photos, less is more. We'll provide guidance on this when visiting your home during a pre-list home visit.





LIGHTING

Upgrading your home's lighting is a small investment that packs a big punch. You can do this in two ways. You can update light fixtures themselves or replace lightbulbs with daylight light bulbs. We recommend doing both. Just be sure you are getting daylight light bulbs as opposed to white light bulbs.

Light fixtures can date your home. Lighting styles change over time but lighting is often overlooked when making updates. Replacing fixtures is a fraction of the cost as other upgrades and makes a big difference. Take advantage of sales in hardware stores or online by shopping early. There are tons and tons of options, so be careful not to get overwhelmed. Pinterest, Instagram, and the internet are great resources to identify trends. When making selections, choose modern yet timeless options when available. Remember, we are happy to give you direction in this department too, so please don't be shy about reaching out.

Why daylight bulbs?

The answer is simple - they will liven up your home AND your professional real estate photos. Both of these are necessary for selling your home for top dollar. Again (we cannot stress this enough), do not mistake white bulbs for daylight bulbs! Your photos will have an underlying yellow tint, and you do not want this! Every photograph has either a blue or yellow tint. Blue tints (daylight bulbs) make the space look bright while yellow tints (white or yellow bulbs) make the space look dingy. Which look do you prefer to have to represent your home?





ODOR

Bad odors turn a buyer off while pleasant smells draw a buyer in. The smell of a fresh baked pie may take a buyer back to Christmas morning at Grandma's house. This sparks a positive emotional response from a buyer and helps them see their own family in the home. Offensive odors, such as pet urine or cigarette smoke, can completely turn a buyer off. Some sellers will try to mask bad odors with candles and plug-ins, but savvy buyers see right through this. Attempting to mask the smell turns buyers off and makes them wonder what else you're hiding. It's better to avoid unpleasant odors altogether.

If you are planning on selling your home and you have strong odors to resolve, you should do the following:



Use an ozone machine

An ozone machine will neutralize odors in the air, such as smoke. They do not cost much to rent and their impact far exceeds the expense. They are so impactful, in fact, that our team keeps one on hand exclusively for our sellers to use.

Have your carpets professionally cleaned...

or if possible, replaced. You may need to rehome pets for a while that may not be fully housebroken, at least until after the sale.

Try odor reducing primer

Paint the walls with an odor reducing primer such as Kilz and then follow up with fresh paint. This is especially necessary when painting rooms affected by cigarette smoke. Keep in mind that it may take a few coats to fully remedy the smell. You'll also want to make sure not to smoke in the home afterwards to avoid recreating the initial problem.

Taking measures such as these create real and measurable results, so don't skimp on this! Consulting with a realtor will help you identify odors you may not notice and give you tips on how to tackle them.



Looking to liven up the smell of your home by adding some sweet fragrance? Here are a few things you can do to help your home smell the absolute best!



Baked goods.

Cookies, pies and pastries are a great way to spark nostalgia and help buyers fall in love with your home! You can get pre-made baked goods or choose to make your own... It's the little things that make a big difference!

Simmer vanilla and cinnamon on the stove.

You don't have to "bake" anything to get the fresh baked goods result!

Use lavender scented laundry soap and dryer sheets.

Lavender is a familiar smell that almost everyone loves!

Taking measures such as these create a lasting memory for buyers and sets your home apart. Remember, we are looking to appeal to all 5 of the prospective buyer's senses!





CHAPTER TWO

Marketing

Of the Four Factors that Sell a Home, Marketing is one of the absolute most important. We live in a world of constant distractions competing for our attention. It's more urgent than ever that the agent you hire to sell your home uses marketing tailored to your property. You may have heard the adage that says, "Hope is not a strategy." When selling your home, taking cell phone pictures, putting a sign up and hoping your home sells is not enough. Your property needs to be showcased in it's very best light. It must appear in front of your ideal buyer through marketing. Experienced realtors understand the importance of professional photography and videography. They write catchy marketing descriptions that paint an appealing picture for buyers. They know what feeder markets your buyer may come from and advertise there.

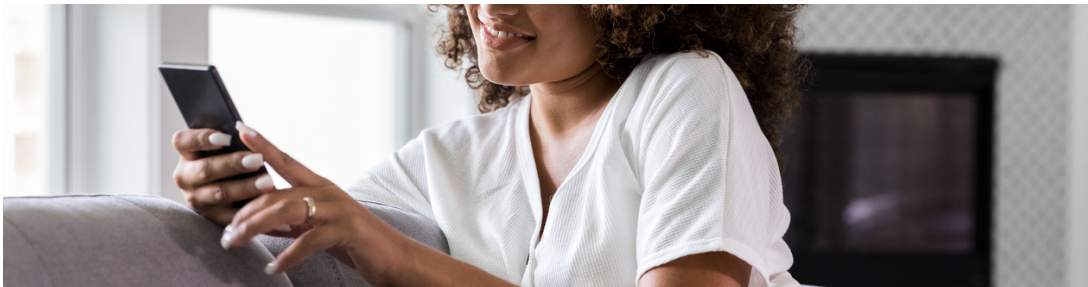
Your marketing plan should include the following, at the least....





PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

This includes twilight photos, when appropriate), videography, 3-D tours and drone photos (when appropriate). Our team provides this at no added cost to the seller. We believe that when we represent a listing, it is our job to make sure that the property looks its absolute best.



SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

We guarantee our comprehensive marketing plan is unlike anything you've ever seen! Using algorithms embedded in different platforms, we can reach buyers in feeder markets as well as local buyers. The internet is always tracking us, so why not use that information to your advantage in the sell of your home?





FOR SALE SIGN(S)

When appropriate, we will install multiple signs to help buyers find your listing!



GRAND OPENING

We understand that you get one shot at introducing your home to the market. Our Grand Opening Events stand alone in the marketplace. We partner with you to pre-select a strategic day to introduce your home to the market. We follow this up with an invitation to your home's Grand Opening to neighbors and buyers alike. This creates an urgent situation where people are willing to do what it takes to make your home their own!





Our team regularly reviews the latest real estate trends. We study new marketing techniques and go the extra step. We specifically design a marketing plan your home and home selling goals. Marketing is an art and one that we've mastered. We'll put our expertise to work for you to take the guesswork out of your home sale.



The background of the page is a solid orange color. Overlaid on this background are two large, light-orange, stylized icons. The first icon, on the left, is a simplified outline of a house with a gabled roof and a chimney. The second icon, on the right, is a large dollar sign (\$) enclosed within a circle, resembling a coin or a currency symbol. These icons are positioned behind the chapter title text.

CHAPTER FOUR

Price

Any home will sell if priced right, period. As of the writing of this book (fall, 2023), we have a major shortage of housing inventory across the entire nation. Home buyers are out looking for homes despite fluctuating interest rates. If you've listed your home on the market and it hasn't sold, chances are, it's overpriced. You can analyze what may have happened by considering the other 4 Factors that Sell a Home.

- Was your home overpriced considering the railroad tracks behind your property (#1, Location)?
- Was your list price too high when you think about the needed repairs (#2, Condition)?
- Was the marketing plan incomplete (#3, Marketing)?



We left the matter of Price as the last of the 4 Factors that Sell Your Home as it pulls the other 3 together. The price your home sells for is directly affected by the other factors. Our goal will always be to help your home sell for the highest price possible in the shortest amount of time. We hope the information contained in this book will help you do that. In a sales climate where we have a major shortage of inventory, your home will sell! What's important is making sure it sells for top dollar.

Experienced agents will look at several factors when helping you price your home.

On top of what we've already discussed, you'll need to look at what other homes in your area have sold for recently. Your realtor should categorize comparable sales in three categories -- Active, Pending, and Sold.

Active listings are your competition. Pending listings reveal what the market is doing RIGHT NOW. Sold listings show us what the market has done for the past few months. All of this information is vital when deciding where to price your home.





PRO TIP

You cannot underprice your home in this market. If your home is underpriced, the market will drive the value of your home up with multiple offers.

It's simple supply and demand, and there is a shortage of homes. However, if you overprice your home, you will narrow down the buyer pool. The home will sit and likely sell for less when it does sell. New listings are stale after 3 weeks on market, and buyers wonder what's wrong with your home if it's still on the market. This starts a chain of price reductions and lowball offers, so it's important to be competitive priced from the gate. You won't regret using this strategy!



In Closing...

The real estate market is constantly evolving. With over 40 years of combined real estate experience, we've helped sellers achieve high level results in down markets, up markets, and everything in between. We hope this book has served as a great resource to help you think like a real estate pro. We've highlighted best practices as well as common mistakes to avoid, and we hope you found value.

If you take our advice with the 4 Factors to Sell Your Home, you cannot go wrong!

Our team is here to help guide you, so call us today for your free, no obligation consultation!



Crespillo De La Cruz Group

TN# 369137

www.crespillodelacruz.com

931-922-2590

