



Realtors Say Staging a Home Increased Offered Prices, Cut Marketing Time

Does staging really work? That was among the home buying and selling topics covered in a new survey from the National Association of Realtors® (NAR) and the answer appears to be "yes."

Eight-two percent of buyers' agents said home staging made it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as a future home. **Staging also appears to increase how much buyers were willing to spend for a property.** Twenty-three percent of buyers' agents said that home staging raised the dollar value offered between 1 percent and 5 percent compared to similar homes on the market that hadn't been staged.

The response from sellers' agents was nearly identical, with 23 percent reporting a 1 percent to 5 percent price increase on offers for staged homes and 18 percent sellers' agents putting the increase between 6 percent and 10 percent. None of the agents for sellers reported that home staging had a negative impact on the property's dollar value and 31 percent said that home staging greatly decreased the amount of time a home spent on the market.

"Staging a home **helps consumers see the full potential of a given space or property**," said Jessica Lautz, NAR's vice president of demographics and behavioral insights. "It features the home in its best light and helps would-be buyers envision its various possibilities."

The changed selling methods necessitated by the pandemic such as video tours may have increased the importance of staging. Eighty-three percent of buyers' agents said having photographs for their listings was more important since the beginning of the pandemic. Seventy-four percent of buyers' agents said the same about videos, and 73 percent said having virtual tours available for their listings was more important in the wake of COVID-19.

"At the start of the pandemic, in-person open house tours either diminished or were halted altogether, so buyers had to rely on photos and virtual tours in search of their dream home," said Lautz. **"These features become even more important as housing inventory is limited** and buyers need to plan their in-person tours strategically."

Opinions on the parts of a home to stage vary, although living rooms (90 percent) and kitchens (80 percent) proved to be the most common, followed closely by master bedrooms (78 percent) and dining rooms (69 percent). As many workers were forced to work from home due to the pandemic, 39 percent staged a home office or office space.

Television is not helping agents when it comes to staging or other aspects of homebuying, affecting the ways buyers view a potential property. Agents surveyed said that typically 10 percent of buyers believed homes should look the way they appear on TV shows and 63 percent said buyers requested their home look like homes staged on television. "The magic of television can make a home transformation look like it happened in a quick 60-minute timeframe, which is an unrealistic standard," said NAR President Charlie Oppler.

Television portrayals of the homebuying process are also skewing expectations. Seventy-one percent of agents said that television depictions have **impacted their business by setting unrealistic or increased expectations.** Sixty-one percent said that TV sets higher expectations of how homes should look, while 27 percent credit TV shows with producing more educated home buyers and sellers.



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Forty-five percent of agents said they have seen no change in the share of buyers who planned to flip a home in the last five years, while 42 percent said they had. Fifty-nine percent reported an increase in buyers planning to remodel a home in the last five years, while 34 percent said they have seen no change. Agents surveyed said that typically 25 percent of buyers who plan to remodel will do so within the first three months of owning their home.