

What Real Estate Advertising Really Works, How Buyers Find Homes, And How to Get Your Home Sold: An Analysis of The 2008 National Association of Realtors (NAR) Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers



According to the 2008 NAR Survey, these are the VERY FIRST STEPS home buyers take when they start their home search. Take advantage of this knowledge and do the three things REAlMARKABLE suggests in this table. They will help your home sell.

The Top Three First Steps Taken By Home Buyers		
FIRST Step Taken By Home Buyers	Percentage of Home Buyers Taking This First Step	REAlMARKABLE's Suggestion on How to Market Your Home to Best Capture These Buyers
Looked on the internet for homes for sale or for information on the home buying process	50%	What, are you kidding me, get your home's information on as many of the most used real estate internet sites as humanly possible!
Contacted a real estate broker	17%	Get your home's information in the MLS
Drove by homes	9%	Get a really cool, attention capturing sign in your yard, and get the outside of your home looking really nice

How Brokers Marketed a Home		Where Buyers Actually Found the Home They Purchased	
Internet Advertising	90%		32%
Yard Sign	80%		15%
Open House	59%		0%
Print Newspaper	42%		3%
Home Magazine	37%		1%
Direct Mail	22%		0%
		Real Estate Agent t(think MLS exposure)	34%

You're becoming a marketing expert on this stuff already. The table to the left reiterates that you want to advertise your home on as many of the most used internet real estate sites as possible, that you want your home in the MLS, and that you should have a cool, attention grabbing sign in your yard.

Then don't bother paying for open houses, print newspaper ads, home magazine ads, or direct mail pieces all through higher sale commission rates from a broker. Do only what directly helps to sell your home, and don't pay for anything that does not directly help your home to sell. This last sentence sounds like a line from a Dr. Seuss book. That's okay, he imparted to us all a bit of wisdom.

Okay kids, this is a no-brainer. Once a buyer found a home online that they liked, 77% ran to their car and drove by it. Get a cool, attention grabbing sign, and get the outside of your home in really nice condition. If they hate the outside, the buyers may never request to see the inside. Sixty-three percent arranged an interior viewing—so okay, get the inside show-home ready also.

Actions Taken By Home Buyers After an Internet Home Search	
Action Taken	% of Buyers
Drove By the Home	77%
Arranged Interior Viewing of the Home	63%
Grabbed Their Broker	27%

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Okay, this set of information is REALLY important. This tells you exactly where home buyers actually found the very home they purchased. The table to the right says **“here’s where I found the home I actually bought!”** Look at the top three 2008 statistics, these categories are where you need to market your home; and please note that the internet is the fastest growing marketing channel for selling real estate!

Where the Buyer Found the Home They Actually Purchased									
Source of Information	1997	1999	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Real Estate Agent	50%	49%	48%	41%	38%	36%	36%	34%	34%
Internet	2%	4%	8%	11%	15%	24%	24%	29%	32%
Yard Sign	17%	15%	15%	16%	16%	15%	15%	14%	15%
Home Builder	3%	4%	3%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%
Friend, Relative, Neighbor	9%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%
Print Newspaper Ad	8%	8%	7%	7%	5%	5%	5%	3%	3%
Knew the Seller Personally	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Home Magazine	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Data from the National Association of Realtors 2008 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers

Now, we don’t want to start some conspiracy theory here, but NAR has really been playing with their own survey results and have tried to retroactively change the last ten years’ statistics regarding open houses. From 1997 through 2006, there was a VERY SPECIFIC category called “YARD SIGN” in the research statistics “Where the Buyer Found the Home They Purchased”. It held moderately steady at 17% to 15%, an average of about 16%. Zero buyers reported finding the home they actually purchased at an open house during this decade, and the yard sign was the only sign category mentioned in the NAR surveys. In the 2007 and 2008 studies the category Yard Sign has been miraculously changed and back-dated to read Yard Sign/Open House Sign with a 15% result of where the home the buyer actually found the home they purchased.

Honestly, this is terrible to change a statistic like this to make you think that all of a sudden open houses cause a home to sell. In retroactively changing this statistic, it makes it appear that NAR is trying to make open houses look useful, thus making brokers sitting at them look useful, when they have never been useful for selling houses. Here are some **more articles proving open houses do not sell homes**, and you should not pay for them through higher commissions. At this point you may also wish to view the article **Can A Real Estate Broker’s Advice Be Trusted**.

How Long Buyers Looked for a Home, and How Many Homes They Viewed		
	Number of Weeks Buyers Searched Before Buying a Home	Number of Homes Buyers Viewed Before Buying a Home
2001	7	10
2005	6	9
2008	10	12

According to the NAR survey, once a buyer starts their physical search for a home they will be under contract on a home within 10 weeks (median time frame). This means that half will look for less time and half will look for a longer period. The buyer’s goal is to quickly cross off their list homes not meeting their needs, and immediately contracting on the one best meeting their needs. Your opportunity to capture the buyer for you home is limited in time, and they really don’t typically want to see hundreds of homes. Have your home fully ready for buyers to see in its best light from the very first day on the market.