

Does an Open House Pay Off?

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Not very many years ago an open house was a good way to market real estate. Buyers were used to keeping an eye out for upcoming open houses and then visiting several in the course of buying a house. Now-a-days we don't get much activity from open houses. I don't think I can explain why. But I do think it has something to do with the advent of the internet. A buyer can go online and look through a dozen homes using Virtual Tours and digital photos at his own convenience in his own home and without any of the pressure from a home-owner or a Realtor. It kind of makes sense if you think about it, but I didn't write this article to discourage you from trying. Below you will find a few tips on how to make one successful gathered from professionals who still hold open houses.

First, make sure that people know about your open house. A Realtor I know makes a point of knocking on doors and passing out fliers during the week before a weekend open house. Newspaper ads and yard signs as well as directional signs may also help people find you.

Second, make sure you are ready to show the home. Prepare it just as you would before a showing. Remove the clutter. Mow the lawn. Wash the windows etc.

Third, be creative. A company I worked for held open houses on the same day as a yard sale, and invited yard sale attendees to walk through the house. You never know where you will find the buyer for your house.

Fourth, it's okay to do refreshments but make sure it is something that will clean up easily. I always buy a 12-pack of the 8 ounce bottled waters and some cookies without chocolate chips.

Fifth, be careful. We don't have much trouble with crime targeting open houses in our area, but you don't want to take any chances. Try to have a friend or spouse "sit" the open house with you and keep the phone close by.

Good luck.