

Sam Corea Aims to Keep Clients from Leaving Money on the Table

Homeowners need knowledge, experience and guidance now more than ever

In a real-estate boom like the one that's swept Calgary in the last year, it might be tempting for homeowners to try to forego realtors' fees and attempt to sell their home on their own. That, according to Sam Corea, is a mistake.

"People are leaving money on the table," he says. "Homeowners need the right advice now more than ever. The market is changing in leaps and bounds and you have to make sure you're doing your homework."

With fewer than half the homes on the market than this time last year and prices rising almost daily, assessing the value of a home has become a challenge your average homeowner is not equipped to handle.

"The market has increased 42 per cent since January," says Corea. "I encourage people to not just jump into selling their home as there is a lot of misinformation out there."

Corea sells a home every three days and has sold more than 1,000 homes over 13 years in Calgary. He is in the top 80 of more than 100,000 Re-Max realtors worldwide – he knows the market, he knows your home's potential and he knows how to market it for all it's worth. In fact, Corea recently trademarked that very phrase – "Marketing your home for all it's worth."

Business in Calgary sat down with Sam Corea at his office in Marda Loop to talk about the dangers and potential pitfalls of selling your home without the benefit of an experienced, knowledgeable full time realtor. He came up with three common mistakes people make in this exciting but challenging market.

Mistake #1: Underselling

Corea says that even those who earned an excellent return on investment on the sale of their homes, very likely asked too little – often using city assessments as the basis for their asking price. These people undersell their property leaving as much as \$60,000 to \$100,000 on the table.

"My clients know that when they call me, I'm in the driver's seat," says Corea. "They give me the keys and ask what they need to do." He recalls an example of a couple with a condo in Inglewood. Corea decided to list the property at \$275,000.

"They laughed in my face and told me they'd

give me their first born if I got that price for them," he says. "On the very first day, we got an offer for the full asking price."

Mistake #2: Timing

Sam Corea has extensive experience in market cycles and knows the best time of year to list, buy and sell homes – insight a novice home seller can't possibly have.

"I take my homes off the market in December," he says. "As that is the slowest month of the year. It's important to understand when you're going to get the highest return on investment for your home." Corea also suggests ensuring you have a place to go before listing your home.

"In this market, people should have a handle on where they're going as there have been people left homeless," he says. "I invite them to talk to me first and we'll work on it together."

Mistake #3: Improper Staging

Corea recommends a professional stager and he has a great deal of expertise in how homes should be presented to maximize the perceived value.

"I suggest at a very minimum the depersonalization of the home by removing things such as religious artifacts, clutter, family photos, strong smells and so on to set the stage emotionally for potential buyers visiting the home," he says. Again, Corea works closely with his clients to offer his guidance and expertise throughout the process.

Perhaps one of the more unique things about Corea's approach is his dedication to marketing the properties he's selling.

"Many realtors market themselves with their portraits on their cards and in all of their advertising," he says. "I spend half of every day and between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per month marketing the homes."

He is also adamant about being available to his clients (existing and potential) on a personal basis.

"When people call me, they're often surprised to get me directly," he says. "When you call, you're calling my cell phone. I think it's important to work hand in hand with my clients – and the results show that."

For more information on Sam Corea, visit www.samsluxuryhomes.com or call him (on his cell, of course) at (403) 870-8811.

