



Real Estate Staging Association

Advancing Professionalism and Excellence in Real Estate Staging

# **THE CONSUMERS GUIDE TO REAL ESTATE STAGING**



# Definition of Staging

**Real Estate Staging** is the act of preparing and showcasing residential or commercial property for sale. It is a systematic and coordinated methodology in which knowledge of real estate, home renovations and creative design principles are applied to attract a buyer.

Preparing property involves all or part of cleaning, de-cluttering, updating and repairing, while showcasing is the process of arranging furniture, accessories, art and light.

Whether the property is owner-occupied, estate condition or vacant, staging is recommended before listing a property. It can be equally effective after a property has been on the market for an extended period unsold.





# Staging Benefits

- Professionally staged homes present and show better than competing houses for sale, including new construction homes and higher-priced houses.
- Staged properties will sell faster when compared with houses that have not been staged. From the date of listing until the day of closing, home staging shortens this time frame, even in a slow real estate market.
- Staged properties can increase the number of offers and selling price in hot markets.
- Buyers view professionally staged listings as "well-maintained".
- Buyers' agents recognize that professionally staged listings are "*move-in*" ready and are inclined to show staged properties.
- Photos of professionally staged listings look better in print and web media.
- Professionally staged listings "STAND-OUT" in prospective buyers' minds.



## Vacant Homes Previously on the Market

87 Homes	Listed Un-Staged Not Sold	Those same homes were Staged, Listed, SOLD	SOLD
2009 Study 01-09 to 12-09	277 Average DOM	63 Average DOM	78% Less time on market

Our study includes 87 vacant homes (not staged) previously on the market an average of 277 days unsold. Those homeowners had their properties staged. Those same homes **sold in 63 days on average** after staging. **This is 78% less time on the market.**



## Occupied Homes Previously on the Market

39 Homes	Listed Un-Staged Not Sold	Those same homes were Staged, Listed, SOLD	SOLD
2009 Study 01-09 to 12-09	233 Average DOM	53 Average DOM	78% Less time on market

Our study includes 39 occupied homes (not staged) previously on the market an average of **233 days unsold**. Those homeowners had their properties staged. Those same homes sold in 53 days on average after staging. **This is 78% less time on the market.**



The Property Promoters



## Vacant and Occupied Homes Previously on the Market

126 Vacant and Occupied Homes	Listed Un-Staged Not Sold	Those same homes were Staged, Listed, SOLD	SOLD
2009 Study 01-09 to 12-09	263 Average DOM	60 Average DOM	78% Less time on market

Our study includes 126 vacant and occupied homes (not staged) previously on the market an average of 263 days unsold. Those same homes were staged and sold in 60 days on average after staging. **This is 78% less time on the market.**



# Vacant and Occupied Homes Staged Before They Went On The Market

284  
Vacant and Occupied Homes

2009 Study  
01-09 to 12-09

SOLD on average in  
40.5 days

Our study includes 284 vacant and occupied homes that were **staged before they went on the market and sold in 40.5 days** on average after staging.



Just Perfect! Home Staging + More

# Staged First, Listed and SOLD

	167 Occupied Homes Not Previously on the Market	117  Vacant Homes Not Previously on the Market
2009 Study 01-09 to 12-09	Sold on average in 39 days	Sold on average in 42 days

Our study includes 167 **occupied homes** that were staged before they went on the market. **These homes sold in 39 days on average after staging.**

Our study includes 117 **vacant homes** that were staged before they went on the market. **These homes sold in 42 days on average after staging.**





## **RESA® Conducted a Survey of Professional Stagers and Found**

99.2% of professional stagers recommend repairs to sellers

72.4% of professional stagers report that 89% of sellers are willing to address repairs

66.4% professional stagers report that, on average, their sellers invest \$500 to \$2,500 in upgrades

21.9% professional stagers report that on average their sellers invest \$2,500 to \$5,000 in upgrades

73.2% of professional stagers report their clients invest between \$500 to \$2,000 in repairs

20.8% of professional stagers report their clients invest between \$2,000 to \$5,000 in repairs

## **Staging Benefits Buyers**

Overall, professional stagers agree that staging a property prior to going on the market benefits everyone involved with the sale and purchase of the property. Professional stagers recommend repairs and upgrades that are needed to get the property in market ready condition.

Staging also shows buyers the property's true potential.

Buyers often do not have the funds to purchase a home and pay more money to address repairs, painting, etc. Buyers realize and appreciate the benefits of purchasing a professionally staged property.

## Hiring a Professional Stager vs. Doing it Yourself

Stagers are trained professionals and understand exactly what is needed to get your property prepared for sale. They understand current market conditions and know how to get the job done.

VS

Homeowners do not do this professionally and may not understand market conditions and other important information that dictates how the home should be presented.

Professional stagers develop relationships with industry partners like painters, carpet installers, carpet cleaners, roof repair, etc. These relationships can benefit you because stagers can pass on savings. In addition you will gain peace of mind knowing you are more likely to get quality service from people they work with on a regular basis.

VS

Homeowners may have to pay retail or rely on friends or family to refer a service provider. Do-it-yourselfers won't have the luxury of a previous working relationship to ensure a job well done.

Professional stagers can "see what the buyer sees". Buying decisions are made very quickly. Professional stagers know how those decisions are made and create an environment that allows for a favorable decision to be made when buyers look at a property.

VS

Homeowners do not have the ability to "see what the buyer sees", because they are not trained in this capacity and it is difficult to be objective about their own home. Staging is an art and a science. Without training and experience, the outcome is less sure.

84% of buyers (some estimates are higher) look on the internet to preview homes before they go to see a home in person. Properties with beautiful photographs will be looked at first. A staged home photographs better and looks better on the MLS.

VS

Anyone can snap a photograph of a room, but will it be of the best angle or have the best lighting to showcase the home? Professional stagers will get the best shots for your agent to use.

Most stagers provide additional website presence through blogging or on-line flyers. Additional web presence means more prospective buyers may see your home.

VS

If you don't work with a professional stager you will lose these benefits. Stagers can give your property more attention by bringing in more buyers.

# How much money could you save by staging your home before listing?

The Real Estate Staging Association® (RESA®) study shows 126 homeowners had their property on the market on average of 263 days before they decided to stage. **263 days = 9 months!!!**

Those same homes were staged and sold in 60 days on average after staging. This is 78% less time on the market. **This is 7 months less time on the market.**

**As an example, using this formula you can determine approximately how much money you will continue to spend while your home is on the market un-staged.**

**If your mortgage is :** **\$1800.00**

**If your direct expenses are:** **\$300.00**

**Total carrying cost per month:** **\$2,100.00**

Our study shows home owners had their property on the market for an average of 9 months.  
**\$2,100.00 X 9 months = \$18,900.00 in expenses.**

Had those homeowners staged first, their time on market would have been cut by 223 days on average (7 months).  $\$2,100.00 \times 7 \text{ months} = \$14,700.00$

**Staging their homes first would have saved them \$ 14,700.00.**

These numbers are all relative to individual mortgage and expenses. Use this simple formula to determine how much you will save by staging your home or listing before putting it on the market:

**Mortgage + expenses (utilities etc.) = Monthly expenses**

**Monthly expenses X 9 months (avg. time un-staged) = Cost to list house un-staged**

**Savings: Expenses x 7 months (average time on market reduced) – staging fee = Savings if you stage your house first!**

**\*\* If you have a price reduction you can also add that into the loss you are taking by listing a property un-staged.**



# HomeGain® Home Sale Maximizer Guide 2010

The HomeGain® Home Sale Maximizer guide helps homeowners identify the key repairs that can result in a higher sale price for their house. Nearly 1,000 real estate agents nationwide responded and contributed to the list of the top 12 moderately priced home improvements that will benefit sellers most when they sell their homes. The list includes some repairs that are recommended in this guide that may not increase the price of your home, but may make your house more marketable and reduce the time on the market.

## Which Home Repairs Result in the Greatest Return?

In the HomeGain® Prepare-to-Sell study, real estate agents said that it is the small improvements that pay the biggest dividends when a home is sold. The majority of agents who were surveyed normally advise homeowners to do as little as possible – perform touch-ups on floor tiling instead of replacing the entire floor; shampoo the carpets instead of replacing them, for example.

However, if the homeowner and their real estate agent determine that the condition of certain areas is deemed to be too poor, more extensive work may provide the greatest benefit. Most of the activities identified in HomeGain's Prepare-to-Sell study are common sense, but many sellers overlook some of the most critical items in the pressure of getting their home prepared for sale.

The following is a summary of the results of HomeGain's 2009 national survey, based on the 12 areas of home improvement identified by real estate agents in HomeGain's original survey in 2003. They are listed from the highest to lowest returns on investment:

HomeGain® surveyed nearly 1,000 real estate agents in each of the U.S. regions. All agents might not necessarily agree on the same pre-sale strategy. See "% of agents recommending" column above. Differences of opinions may vary based on the climate of the market, region of the country or condition of the home in question. The percentage of agents that agree on the positive impact of a particular pre-sale activity is summarized here.

The following is a summary of the results of HomeGain's 2009 national survey, based on the 12 areas of home improvement identified by real estate agents in HomeGain's original survey in 2003. They are listed from the highest to lowest returns on investment:

Home Improvement Project	Average Cost	Home Price Increase	Return on Investment*	% of Agents Recommending
Clean and De-clutter	\$100 - \$200	\$1500 - \$2000	872%	98%
Home Staging	\$300 - \$400	\$1500 - \$2000	586%	82%
Lighten and Brighten	\$200 - \$300	\$1000 - \$1500	572%	95%
Landscape Front/Back Yards	\$300 - \$400	\$1500 - \$2000	473%	94%
Repair Plumbing	\$300 - \$400	\$1000 - \$1500	327%	88%
Update Electrical	\$300 - \$400	\$1000 - \$1500	309%	89%
Replace or Shampoo Carpets	\$400 - \$500	\$1000 - \$1500	295%	97%
Paint Interior Walls	\$500 - \$750	\$1500 - \$2000	250%	94%
Repair Damaged Floors	\$500 - \$750	\$1500 - \$2000	250%	91%
Update Kitchen	\$1000 - \$1500	\$2000 - \$3000	237%	69%
Paint Outside of Home	\$750 - \$1000	\$1500 - \$2000	201%	81%
Update Bathroom	\$750 - \$1000	\$1000 - \$1500	172%	70%

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The average cost of home staging in the HomeGain® study is reflective of what REALTORS® said they think it will cost a seller to stage on their own. Projections are higher when a professional home stager is hired.



## **Key Things to Consider When Hiring a Professional Stager**

by Michelle Minch, Moving Mountains Design

- Have they done work in the seller's area? It is important for stagers to do their homework and understand the market in the neighborhood they are staging. Since staging is marketing they need to be able to effectively stage the property for the types of people or families that are looking to buy in that neighborhood.
- Understand the rates and fees. It is important for home owners to fully understand exactly what they are getting and to be clear about their expectations. Make sure to read and understand the stager's contract. If you don't understand something ask for clarification.
- You get what you pay for. Interview 2 or 3 stagers. BEWARE of stagers that come in with a bid that is much lower than the rest. They may be quoting a low price just to get the job. When they do that the quality of the job may often suffer. They may use less than acceptable furnishing and not do the project justice.
- Does the stager's portfolio display a wide range of styles, or do all the homes look the same? Make sure the stager is capable of, and has access to furnishings and accessories, that present the home in a manner that accentuates its architectural style.
- Ask if the stager rents furniture from another source or owns the furniture he or she will be using. Make sure the furniture the stager uses is appropriate to the style of your home and not just what he or she happens to have in inventory at that time.
- Ask if all the photos in a stager's portfolio are of their own work. All photos should show that stager's work and not be part of a group class project from a training program.
- Ask for references, including phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses. Check those references and ask whether they would hire that stager again.
- Does the stager have business insurance and what does it cover and how does it work?



## What To Expect When Working with a Professional Stager

A professional stager should make your selling and moving experience LESS stressful. Professional stagers will be able to give you advice on what items need to be addressed in order to properly prepare your home for sale.

If you have a budget, then a professional stager will be able to tell you where to invest your dollars for the best return. They will be able to make recommendations on everything from paint choices to knowing when to replace or update items and knowing what stays and what should be packed up.

Professional stagers should never make you feel bad about your personal taste or insult your belongings, style, lifestyle etc.

## Is Your Professional Stager a Member of RESA?

If they are, they have access to discounts to help you in your moving process. Ask them for information on the following services.



# BEKINS



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Find a Professional Stager  
Real Estate Staging Association®

[www.RealEstateStagingAssociation.com](http://www.RealEstateStagingAssociation.com)

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