

# Homeowners' Information Package

*Prepared by:*

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# **“A La Ordene” Or “At Your Service”**

A number of years ago on a trip to Venezuela, Val and I would hear “a la ordene” said many times a day. It was used after we ordered a meal, got a hotel room or just thanked someone for accommodating something we wanted. We knew it meant “at your service” but it took a special circumstance to show us what it really meant.

Venezuela’s bus system can take you almost anywhere in the country. We used it to travel throughout the country and within the cities. On arriving in Caracas we asked for directions to a particular bus to continue on our journey. A lady was kind enough to say “I’ll take you to the bus”. We hurried through the streets of Caracas, as its population of five million people and a reputation for crime had made us nervous.

Over a kilometer later, the lady lead us to the bus we were seeking. We thanked her for her help and she said “a la ordene”, as we had heard many times before. As we parted, I asked which bus she was taking and where she was heading from here. Her response was not what we expected. The previous bus terminal we had been brought from was her destination.

Without any thought to her own time and only a desire to help a stranger she had gone over a kilometer out of her way to help us find our way. After all that she had simply said **“a la ordene” - “At Your Service”**.

We have taken **“At Your Service”** as our desire to help you in your move as this lady had helped us in our journey.

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# FAIR MARKET VALUE

How to sell your home for the...  
**BEST PRICE**, in the  
**SHORTEST TIME**, with the  
**MOST FAVORABLE TERMS**  
and **CONDITIONS**?

By pricing it right...**INITIALLY!**

## Major Factors Affecting Values

- ◆ Supply and demand
- ◆ Seasonal markets
- ◆ Mortgage market
- ◆ Conditions
- ◆ Political actions
- ◆ Location, location, location

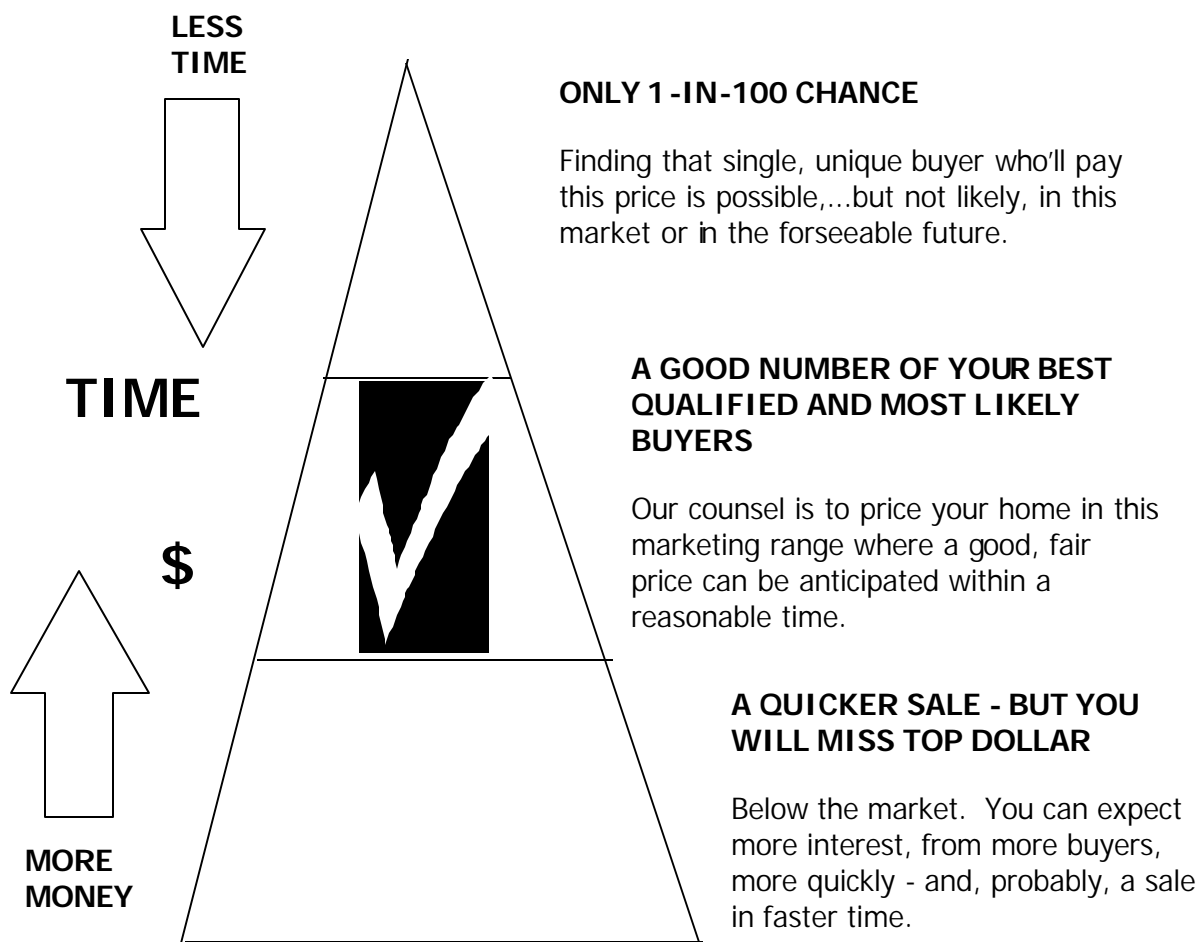
## Methods of Evaluation

- ◆ **Market Value Approach**  
(Comparable property sales)
- ◆ **Income Approach**  
(Investment or income producing properties)
- ◆ **Cost Approach**  
(Most useful on new properties when replacement values are readily determinable)

*We'll do it right! My Comprehensive Market Analysis will consider the factors above and lead us to listing your property right...from the beginning.*

*Pricing it Right...at the Beginning!*

**FOR THE BEST PRICE  
IN A REASONABLE PERIOD...**



*A well-priced listing is the most important factor in marketing the property for top price. Naturally, listing a property too low will preclude the opportunity for getting top dollar. On the other hand, setting the price too high discourages showings and tends to eliminate the most likely buyers from viewing the property.*

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# PREPARING YOU AND YOUR HOME FOR SALE

- ◆ **We will tour your home together.**  
I need to develop a solid understanding and appreciation of what your home will offer to a prospective buyer. It's your home; no one knows its features better. So please know that I will be soliciting your input to develop a superior and effective marketing plan.
- ◆ **Prepare a first class, comprehensive comparative market analysis of your home.**  
I will professionally determine the most likely selling price range for your property, within a reasonable time period in today's market. When applicable, I will review potential problem areas, and suggest improvements which will enhance the salability of your home.
- ◆ **Review properties that will be in direct competition with you.**  
All homes are unique; I will review how each home is similar — and how it is dissimilar — to your home so that I can factually evaluate your market position.
- ◆ **Familiarize you with homes like yours which have recently sold.**  
People may ask anything for their homes. However, the prices for which these homes actually sell are of paramount importance in establishing a realistic range within which your home may be expected to sell.
- ◆ **Work with you to develop a listing price designed to attract top price, in the shortest period, with the least inconvenience to you.**  
I will consider direct competition in the market, your own immediate plans and needs, seasonality, buyer vs. seller markets, and pricing practices in this market.
- ◆ **Provide you with a written Estimate of Seller's Equity**  
I will identify all of the usual charges and expenses which you can expect to incur during the selling process.
- ◆ **Explain marketing customs, showing procedures and selling practices.**  
There is much for us to review and I want you to be knowledgeable and comfortable during the marketing period. We'll talk about everything from when the sign is posted, to the appointment procedure, to the MLS tour, to the presentation of a sales contract to you.
- ◆ **Discuss the various financing alternative available to a typical buyer**  
There is a myriad of financing options available today. We'll discuss Adjustable and Fixed rate option, cap rates, balloons, etc., so that you'll be perfectly knowledgeable when the contract to purchase is presented to you.
- ◆ **Assist in finding a home in your new location**  
If you are staying in the area, I will help you. If you're moving away, I will, at your request, consult our national relocation network and have a competent broker contact you from that location.

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# GETTING YOUR HOME READY

## Inside

### **CLEAN! CLEAN!**

Have the carpet shampooed; wax the floors, wash the walls, windows, blinds, drapes and lighting fixtures. Consider engaging a cleaning service, recognizing that it is a justified moving expense.

### **KITCHEN AND BATHROOMS**

Clear off counter tops. Leave your canisters and little else. Maximize the available counter space. These rooms should be gleaming. If unsightly, have the tub re-caulked and remove mineral deposits and grime from the shower walls. Clean the stove, microwave and refrigerator.

### **PRIMARY STORAGE AREAS**

Like the garbage, it's time has come to be liberated. Remember, you can do it now and benefit with a more attractive home on the market, or you can do it several months from now, in the process of moving, when there is no advantage. Do it now.

### **REPAIRS**

Identify and repair dripping faucets, sticking or creaking doors, etc. When people see areas of disrepair they begin to wonder whether there may be other unseen problems.

### **CLOSETS**

Remove out of season clothing. Organize your clothing and the shoes on the floor. Remove all clutter from cabinets and closets.

### **FURNITURE**

The less furniture, the larger a room appears to be.

### **A LIGHT APPEARANCE**

As a rule, do everything to lighten the appearance of the home. Raise the blinds, open the drapes and use light colors. Repaint any room beginning to look shabby.

## Outside

*Walk the property with a pad and pencil. List anything that you think is less than satisfactory without regard to cost or time. You can review the list afterwards to determine what you can and can't repair.*

**THE HOUSE** Take a close look as you walk the property. Clean anything that looks unkempt or dirty; repair or replace anything that looks loose, dingy, rusted or broken. Make sure the door bell works. Replace a tired-looking mail box; clean the exterior light fixtures and wash the windows. Try to spot hanging or rusty gutters, crooked antenna, loose shingles or shutters.

**THE YARD** Turn and weed the beds; trim the trees and shrubs. Lay in ground cover. Mend the fence, fix the gate latch. Pick up litter. Consider a landscaping or lawn service.

**OUTDOOR FURNITURE** Examine and spot paint your outdoor furniture. If it's rusty or un-repairable, consider disposing of the pieces.

**FRONT ENTRY** It's the first thing your buyers see as they stand and wait for the door to open. It's worth the extra effort to spruce it up.

**THE GARAGE** The time has come. Discard virtually everything in the garage that hasn't been used for a year. Wash it down.

**Think in terms of a home that is sparkling clean, uncluttered and spacious.**

# SELLER'S CHECKLIST

PLEASE PROVIDE ME THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

## DOCUMENTS

- Property survey
- Most recent property tax bill
- Zoning certificate
- Recent mortgage statement
- Lender's name, address, phone, contact person, mortgage account number, and present balance.
- If there are other loans/mortgages against the property, supply same information as above.
- If the property is held in trust, provide name of trustee, trust account number and contact information.
- Gas bills
- Water bills
- Hydro bills
- Your attorney's name, address, and phone number
- House keys and other keys as required (ie. garage)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

- Your work number
- Spouse work number
- Voice mail on home phone
- Cell phone numbers
- Lake phone number
- Other phone numbers
- Fax number if available
- Brochures/information about your property
- Attractive, exterior photos of home in other seasons, if available
- Your thoughts on special features of your home or community
- Personal property which may be included in the sale - whatever you feel might have special marketing value to the average buyer

## FOR CONDOMINIUM OR TOWNHOUSES

- Association Declaration and By-laws
- Condominium Disclosure Statement
- Most recent financial statement

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## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Promoting and Attracting Buyers for Your Home

- ◆ **Prepare a detailed marketing plan**  
I will produce a Schedule of Events, outline those marketing steps mutually agreed upon, as well as a plan to keep you regularly informed of our progress.
- ◆ **Consolidate the features and attractions of your home**  
I'll prepare a listing sheet summary, describing your home in detail, which will be used as a basis for advertising, and to provide information to prospective purchasers and our cooperating brokers.
- ◆ **Communicate the availability of your home to our company sales staff**  
All of our associates have ready inventories of buyers. One of my associates may be working with your buyer right now.
- ◆ **Professional "FOR SALE" sign to be posted immediately**  
Instant notification to all that the sale of your home is in professional hands.
- ◆ **Have your home's exterior professionally photographed**  
For advertising and promotional purposes through the Winnipeg Real Estate Board.
- ◆ **Submission of your home to the Multiple Listing Service**  
The sale of your home will be managed by me, but all area brokers will be advised of your home's availability.
- ◆ **Notification to your neighbours**  
I'll send announcements to your neighbours announcing that your home is being professionally managed. I will solicit their interest and that of their friends and acquaintances.
- ◆ **Follow-up on all showings**  
I will contact all showings to establish interest, receive valuable feedback and to encourage offers on your behalf.
- ◆ **Maintain a viable advertising program**  
Your home will be included in a special advertising program assuring you of broad and continuing exposure in area media.
- ◆ **Keep in touch with you regularly**  
I will be in contact with you regularly to review changing conditions, adjustments to the marketing program and to provide meaningful feedback from prospects and showing agents.
- ◆ **Work diligently to find a suitable buyer for you**  
You may be assured that I will be working for you...and for you, continually, until your home is **SOLD**.

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# PREPARING FOR A SHOWING

HOMES TEND TO SELL MORE QUICKLY

AND FOR HIGHER PRICES

WHEN THEY SHOW THEIR BEST!

*It's very important that your home shows well. We're also aware that it can't always be perfect. After all, you and your family must live there, too. Develop a routine that will allow you to pick up and be prepared to show in a reasonable period without duress...a 45 minute countdown, for example. This means that certain things must be done in advance. For example, beds should be made up first thing in the morning and dirty dishes placed in the dishwasher after use so that you needn't rush around tending to this matter at the last moment. This way, you can prepare for each showing in an organized, un-hassled routine.*

## **BEFORE EACH SHOWING...**

**PICK UP EVERY ROOM** Check counters, floors, halls, and stairs. Straighten up or remove newspapers, magazines, mail, toys, clothing, recreation gear, snack glasses and dishes.

**TURN ON ALL LIGHTS** Even those in closets and storage rooms. Electric lights have an amazing capability for creating an illusion of lightness, airiness, and largeness.

**OPEN ALL DRAPES, SHADES, AND BLINDS** Do all that you can to create a bright and light ambiance. **THE BEDROOMS** Make up the beds, neatly and attractively, in the morning. This is a job you don't want to have to do when you learn that the buyers will be there within the hour.

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**THE KITCHEN** Be sure all countertops are clear and "squeaky clean". Wipe down appliances. Be sure all dishes are in the dishwasher or cleaned and put away. The sink should be clear and clean.

**CLEAN AIR** Keep air fresheners in closets, bathrooms and kitchen. Be especially careful to keep kitchen aromas: fresh coffee brewing or a cinnamon coffee cake baking in the oven, as they have a lasting, inviting effect.

**MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC** Perhaps you can't have something baking in the oven every time, but soft, pleasant background music may be very effective.

**FIREPLACE** A warm, cozy fire may be just the extra touch that turns the trick.

**AIR CONDITIONING** If the weather is warm and sultry, have it operating.

**THE BATHROOMS** Keep a set of fresh, attractive towels in each room that you can change instantly.

**THE ENTRYWAY** It's the **first and last impression** that your buyers will have of your home — make it a good one! Check it regularly for sharpness.

**Prepare well for your showings! Set the stage to make the best impression on each prospective buyer.**

# "THE SHOWING"

*Everything is going to be fine. The agent has called in advance and you have made your last minute preparations as indicated in "Preparing For a Showing".*

**RELAX** There is nothing more to do. Pick up a magazine while you are waiting. Try to be understanding; the agent may have several home showings scheduled and he or she may be a bit early or late. It's very difficult to be perfectly precise.

**THE DOG** Keep fido away. Pet lovers will be distracted by your fun pet. For those who do not have pets, it may be bothersome.

**CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD** This is a new experience for the kids. Naturally, they are excited, but they will disturb the professional flow of the showing. Ask them to remain away from the agent and buyers, to go outside, or to watch TV.

**DING DONG** Answer the door as you would for any welcome guest. The agent will take care of the introductions. If there is a situation that needs mentioning, perhaps a sick child in the second bedroom, do so now. You may invite the agent to begin showing the home and then you may excuse yourself.

**LOW PROFILE** Discreetly remain away from the buyers. As helpful as you wish to be, your presence will be intimidating. They need to be able to discuss the home freely with one another. And the agent needs to learn from the buyers how they are responding to your home. Your presence can limit that free communication.

**WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?** Read a magazine; watch a TV program; take a walk outside; continue with a chore. Pick a room and settle down. When they stop to preview that room, you may leave, but it's not really necessary. After all, they don't want to feel that they are chasing you around the house. If there's a room that you should try not to be in, it would be the kitchen since buyers, generally, spend more time there as they evaluate appliances, counter space, cabinets, etc.

## **CONVERSING WITH THE BUYERS**

If you are asked a question about the neighborhood, schools, etc., by all means answer pleasantly. However, avoid becoming engaged in a conversation. Questions regarding terms of sale should be referred to the agent. If the agent is a cooperating broker and does not have the answers, advise him or her that I, your agent, will contact him/her.

**INCLUSIONS** The listing sheet should clearly identify items that are included and excluded in the offered property. Don't initiate conversations about other personal property that you may be interested in negotiating. It rarely is a deal clincher, but may be distracting. And, besides, there will be time to discuss this at the offer stage.

**LET THE "PRO" WORK** As much as you love your home, don't be tempted into doing the agent's job. He or she has been working with the buyers and should know what is important to them. Whether the agent mentions your new refrigerator now, or after they leave, is in his/her hands.

**You've done all that you can. Now, relax as we do our job.  
Soon, I'll be calling you to say  
"Congratulations...we have an offer to present to you."**

# WHEN AN OFFER IS MADE

## 1. **PRESENTING THE OFFER**

Presuming that the offer to purchase your home is generated by an agent other than myself, I will contact you immediately to arrange a meeting. The timing may be inopportune, but it's usually best to meet as soon as possible to consider the contract. Please note that when I call you to arrange for the presentation, I will not be aware of the terms of the offer. However, I will present the offer to you in person and we will review all of the terms and conditions at that time.

## 2. **THREE OPTIONS TO CONSIDER**

- A. Accept the offer exactly as presented...and your home is SOLD!
- B. Make a counter proposal — Propose changes to the offer, i.e. price, personal property, closing or possession dates, etc., so that it is acceptable to you.
- C. Reject the offer.

## 3. **DELIVERY OF THE CONTRACT**

A copy of the finalized contract will be delivered to both buyer and seller by their respective real estate agents. All pertinent legal documents can be delivered to your attorney, if you desire.

## 4. **FINALIZING ALL CONDITIONS**

- A. If the contract states that financing will be provided by a lender, it is the buyer's responsibility to make an application for the mortgage loan as soon as possible. The buyer will have a set number of days to procure the loan, as stated in the contract. The lending institution will verify the buyer's credit, work records, and determine his ability to meet the monthly obligations. Since your buyer's mortgage loan is to be secured by the house itself, the

lending institution will assign an appraiser to visit your home to determine that its value is enough to secure the loan that they are making to your buyer. When all the information is received, the mortgage loan underwriter will either approve or disapprove the loan.

- B. After the loan is approved, more legal work is necessary, though you will have very little involvement. The land title will be searched, title insurance will be ordered and an updated survey of the property may need to be ordered (at the buyer's expense). If the property is a condominium, your Association may have to be contacted.
- C. Keys will be delivered to the buyer at the closing, or whenever possession of the property has been agreed upon.
- D. At closing, all documents finalizing the sale will be signed by all parties and all funds will be disbursed.

## **MY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**My responsibilities are not fulfilled until the transaction is completed.**

- A. I will follow the progress of **all** steps mentioned so I may keep you abreast of developments.
- B. I will do everything in my power to work with your mortgagee, accountant, lawyer, etc. to ensure a timely and highly satisfactory settlement for you.

# Concluding the Sale for You

- Promptly present all written contracts to you**  
You can be assured that I will contact you immediately when a signed offer is received. We will meet at your earliest convenience.
- Review the contracts with you**  
Consistent with legal limitations, I will review the contract's terms with you. I will advise you whether specific terms and/or contingencies are ordinary and realizable in the current market. I will specifically want to review the applicability and availability of financing that your buyer is seeking.
- Calculate a revised Estimate of Seller's Equity**  
Based upon the contract's terms, I will re-evaluate your expected expenses and net proceeds from the sale, were you to accept this contract.
- Negotiate competently on your behalf**  
I will do my very best to ensure the execution of a binding, legal contract that represents your best interests and which is completely agreeable to you.

# Following Through After the Sale

- Prepare and process all documents for which I may be responsible**  
I will promptly prepare, retain, and distribute any required documents.
- Cooperate fully with your attorney, accountant, or other counselors**  
You need only advise me and I will dutifully communicate and work with your representatives.
- Responsibly account for earnest or security funds**  
We will agree to hold these funds, in compliance with the laws of this province, on your behalf to ensure contract compliance by your buyer.
- Help arrange financing for your buyer, if necessary**  
Many times, I become aware of attractive financing programs. If requested, I will provide the buyer's cooperating broker financing information that may help to satisfy the mortgage contingency more quickly and safely.
- Follow-up and ensure that all contract contingencies and terms are satisfied in a timely manner; report deviations or exceptions**  
I maintain a calendar of pertinent activities which I review regularly to monitor contract compliance. I will advise you as to the status of these events.
- Retain a permanent record of the contract**  
We will maintain a file of all pertinent documents for a reasonable period.

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# LAWYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

## PURCHASER'S LAWYER

**Main Responsibility: To make sure client obtains title and possession.**

Review offer for compliance and proper execution. eg. Check re: Mortgage Assumption permitted, Prepayment privileges, Purchasers' description on title.

Search title and check taxes.

Contact clients - letter or phone.

Letter to Vendor's lawyer, stating Purchasers' description on title.

Survey Certificate. Check if available from Vendor's lawyer? Is it recent? Obtain a new one? Zoning information?

Prepare mortgage documents (sometimes done by Mortgage's lawyer).

Statement of Financial Particulars - an estimate of the funds Purchaser will require; considers: cash, mortgage, insurance fee, commitment fee, appraisal fee, interest adjustment.

**Purchaser arrives** and signs mortgage documents. Explains mortgage, statement of financial particulars, and the necessity/particulars of fire insurance **(2 to 4 weeks before possession date).**

Purchaser provides lawyer with certified cheque or bank draft for full amount **(1 to 2 days before possession or earlier for early possession).**

Letter sent "In Trust" to Vendor's lawyer, with cheque or draft, asking for T/L, other documents, keys and vacant possession.

## VENDOR'S LAWYER

**Main Responsibility: To see that his/her client gets paid.**

Review offer for compliance, proper execution and commissions.

Search title and check taxes.

Contact clients re: survey certificate, zoning memo, tax bill available.

Letter to Purchaser's lawyer, forwarding survey, zoning and tax papers.

Prepare Statement of Adjustments (S/A) - Accounting explanation re: components of the purchase price and factors increasing or decreasing it.

Prepare Declaration as to Possession (D/P) - a sworn document verifying: no liens or judgements, that taxes have been paid, vendor is resident of Canada, etc.

Prepare Statement of Financial Particulars (S/FP) - an estimate of how much money the Vendor will net.

Transfer of Land (T/L) - changes title at Land Titles Office. To be signed by Vendor and includes Dower Act Consent.

**Vendor arrives** and signs T/L, D/P, and Statutory Declaration - a sworn document stating that Vendor is not a person of a similar name experiencing financial difficulty. **Vendor advised not to release keys until OK'd by lawyer.**

Letter sent "In Trust" to Purchaser's lawyer with T/L, D/P, S/A, Survey, Zoning and Tax Information.

Funds are held "in Trust" (often an interest bearing account) until a new title comes out in the Purchaser's name(s), and then released to Vendors.



# *To My Clients*

*Our homes are lifetime investments coupled with strong personal ties. Selling a home ranks among my clients' most important life experiences and I approach this task with sensitivity, concern and professional competence.*

*Over and over, I find that my policy of conducting a diligently prepared market analysis of the property and reviewing it in detail with the owner reduces the time spent on trial and error and leads to a faster sale, at a better price and with less inconvenience to my seller.*

*Thank you for this opportunity. My presentation is a measure of the quality of service which you can expect from me until your home is sold.*

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