

5 Ways You're Sabotaging Your Home Sale

■ Home sellers want to get their house off the market as soon as possible - and you can't blame them. But these mistakes are getting in the way.

Brian O'Connell Sep 3, 2016 2:00 PM EDT

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You'd think that with interest rates low, for-sale homes wouldn't be sitting on the market all that long - no matter how eager buyers waiting to snap one up with 30-year fixed mortgage rates at 3.6% this week, according to [BankingMyWay.com](#).

But homes aren't moving as fast as one might expect.

According to [Realtor.com](#), the average U.S. home for sale is spending 65 days on the market. That's a good number, but not a great one, and there may be an underlying reason why homes aren't selling faster.

"In a sellers' market with low interest rates for buyers, it's hard to believe there are many homes sitting for so long without an offer," states John Lazenby, president of the Orlando Regional Realtor Association. So, if your house isn't selling in this hot market, could you be to blame?"

Specifically, **homeowners** can get in their own way on a home sale in multiple, deal-killing ways - and *TheStreet* has asked industry experts to target five of the worst.

Over estimating the home's value - "A home that's overpriced based on the owner's belief rather than a true market value can discourage buyers from even viewing the home, especially during the crucial two-week period following listing," says Lazenby. He advises homesellers to tap into their realtor's pricing database to arrive at an "appropriate" listing price.

Not taking care of needed repairs - Failing to make repairs, especially small, inexpensive honey-do jobs that contribute to the overall feel of the home, can cost homesellers, Lazenby adds. "Making as many repairs as your budget allows will pay off when potential buyers are not put off by the amount of time or money they would need to bring the home up to speed," he says.

Ignoring "incurable" defects - Home flaws like a location under an airport flight path are called "incurable defects," says Colby Sambrotto, real estate expert and president of SRealty in New York. "There's nothing to be done except offset the defect with other attributes," he notes. "For instance, you might show how you have installed extra-soundproofed windows on the side of the house facing a highway, or how an unsightly water tower actually isn't in view from the living room. Don't try to ignore or dismiss the incurable defects. Instead, work with buyers to help them see how the defect hasn't diminished the experience of living in the house."

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Not leveraging photos and online images - Real estate sales are technology driven now, says Matt Parker, author of *Real Estate Smart: The New Home Buying Guide* and a real estate professional in Seattle. Professional online photos can increase your sales price from \$3,400 to \$11,200, according to Redfin. "If you get cheap on photos, you are gambling with the home sale," the company states.

Not staging their homes - "From my experience in the business, homeowners' biggest mistakes are not being willing to be flexible on their asking price, and not preparing their home for showings," says Dan Padgett, a realtor with Century 21 J.J. Laufer, in Highland

ark, N.J.. Padgett says he can't stress enough how many sellers he's worked with who don't wish to "stage" their home, whatsoever. "I'm talking free things like taking family pictures off their walls, making their beds and tidying up the living areas, cleaning up the kitchen and putting away dirty bowls and plates, among other moves," he says. "Prospective buyers are about to make the biggest purchase of their lives, the least you can do is tidy up around your own home before showings."

You can also go wrong by getting key information incorrect in listing forms, such as the home's square footage, and including misinformation about the local school district can also stop a potential sale in its tracks.

Don't let that happen to you, Great American Homeseller. Thousands - perhaps tens of thousands - of dollars can be squandered by ignoring the issues above. That's a shame, given that buyers will hand you the cash willingly if you act accordingly.

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