

Open House Tips, Ideas & Best Practices

The Event Itself

- Use the open house to build your image and reputation
 - It's not just to get buyers or to sell a home
- Use the open house to provide an additional service to the seller when giving your listing presentation
- Use the open house to separate yourself from the "average" agent-go above and beyond
 - Conduct 2 types of open houses: an Exclusive Open House and a General Open house
 - Exclusive
 - For Neighbors Only
 - Use it to build your farm area
 - Make sure the homeowner is not there to prevent it from being uncomfortable
 - General
 - Open to public and buyers

Choosing a Home

- Try to pick a home in a high traffic or high visibility area
 - Don't choose a home that is hard to direct traffic
- Consider the location and condition of the home-What does it tell about you?
 - Does it represent the kind of homes you are looking to list?

Not Hosting an Open House

- If you have a Seller that is pressuring you to host an open house, but it is not an optimal candidate due to factors such as property condition, location, etc, here are some responses you can give:
 - Only 1% of homes held open sell during the event, even if the location is ideal
 - Your home is not located in a high traffic area
 - An open house would only be an inconvenience to you
 - Open houses benefit agents more than sellers
 - Your home requires a specialized buyer
 - I can focus on more productive things to sell your home faster than an open house will

Get the Word Out!

- Schedule an open house with your seller as soon as you get the listing. Put the open house information on your "Just Listed" postcards.
- Put your open house information on Postlets
- Create door knock invitations (especially for the Exclusive Open Houses)
- Mail/Email 250 invitations
- If you are putting a directional or open house sign in someone else's yard, ask permission first.
- Put a rider on the home advertising an open house on Sunday from ___ to ___ the week of your open house

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Preparation

- Have the seller clean and organize the property
- Make sure the owner leaves during the open house
- Secure or remove all valuables & medications
- Prepare a photo brochure with property schedule that shows all of the features that stand out in each room
- Bring a guest sign-in sheet and several pens
 - Always fill out the top line with faux information and fill in all fields. People will follow suit more than if blank to start with.
 - If someone does not want to sign in, tell them it is for security purposes for both you and the home owner
- Always have (appropriate) music playing at the open house to create a relaxed environment
- Turn on all interior lights
- Implement a smell technique (light candles, bake cookies, air fresheners) throughout the home
- Secure your wallet and/or purse in the refrigerator or a cabinet
- Tell another person where you are and for how long. Have them check on you when you are done with your open house.
 - Download the new security App from Moby-Free!
 - <http://www.mymoby.com/product/why-moby/realtor/>
 - Allows you to schedule the app to automatically send you “Are you ok”? It alerts your chosen contacts if you don’t respond.

Stand Apart from the other REALTORS!

- Refreshments
 - Use refreshments to make people linger (and possibly make the house smell good)
 - Partner with a start up personal catering service for high-end listings (they potentially get a new client and you stand out with buyers & the seller)
- Pick a theme (holiday, sports game, etc)
 - Football cupcakes, color theme edibles, etc
- Hand out packets/bags with information on the home/area, refreshments, etc (buy a cheap beach bag and put the items in there...more likely to keep it...put a luggage tag with your card around the strap).
- Don’t forget about the kids!
 - Bring a cheap candy or toy (think Dollar Store)
 - Bring a portable DVD player (or if the home is equipped with a TV and DVD player, have some children’s movies and have them playing so the parents can check out the home (but don’t get engrossed watching them)
- Partner with a vendor looking to grow their business that offers a service that buyers may be interested in and advertise it. Examples are:
 - A photographer looking to build their business. Advertise free family portrait session with a free 5x7 photo. The photographer gains a potential new client if they want more than one photo or like more than one photo and you get more prospective buyers attending your open house.
 - Get some “Identia-Child” kits from the local police or fire station and host an event for parents to bring their children to get registered.

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Stand Apart from the other REALTORS!, Cont.

- Have a BBQ grill out in the *front* yard and driveway. Bring a picnic table and serve food on real (but cheaper) plates (people are less likely to grab food and walk off with real plates than paper or plastic). Invite them to eat their lunch at your picnic table.
 - There are 2 small tables and folding chairs you can borrow at the office.

Interacting with Buyers/Attendees

- When someone comes to your open house, approach them and say “Hello, my name is _____, and you are?”
- “Do you live locally? Are you looking for a home? Are you working with an agent?”
- Silence and listening is more important than talking
- An idea is to give several of your business cards to attendees (once you find out they are *not* working with another Realtor) and tell them to take these cards and if they are attending another open house to hand the other Realtor your card to say they are already working with you.
 - Helps the buyer by letting them feel like they don’t have to “deal” with a salesperson at every open house. May result in them keeping your card and calling you back later.
- Assign a Pru ID# (from the Online Seller Advantage) for the property you are holding open and write this on the back of your card:
 - View this property’s info page at www.prure.com! Search Prudential ID# _____.
 - This activity will show up on the listing report summary for the sellers.

Ending the Open House

- Ensure that the home is secure
- Leave the home in the same condition as you found it
- Immediately remove all directional signs
 - Send a written thank you to those who allowed you to stake a sign (these may be potential sellers one day)
- Send thank you’s to all visitors immediately
- Call visitors the next day to see if they had any questions and follow up

We hope this info helps!