

Critical Information

When you are selling your home, the most valuable exposure is through the MLS database. It's 50 times as important as whatever is in second place. Serious home buyers do not want to waste time. They know how to find a home: Get an agent to show them MLS-listed homes. It is a lot quicker than attending open houses or chasing real estate signs. That is why well over 90% of all homes are sold this way.

No, your listing agent will not personally find your buyer. This means that the **information** entered into the MLS computer is critical to your success! Your listing agent is your *connection* to the buyer and computer literacy is one of the most important factors in putting your home's best foot forward.

Get your home's MLS information sheet from your agent. Review it carefully, recognizing that some of the data is entered automatically by the system, and some is selected from "pick lists." Other information is entered by "lookup" functions, which are preferred over manual data entry. The "Remarks" are entered entirely by your agent.

- Look at the obvious items first. Accuracy of information; correct spelling; use of English instead of "Realtor-eze" (real people read these printouts too). Are the directions correct? Do the comments make sense? Do they make the reader want to visit the home?
- Next, look for included information that is not important and serves only to dilute the important items.
- Look for information that raises negative questions: Is "new sump pump" really a feature? Why did the old one wear out? Overuse? Your home has a new water heater? Great, but this raises questions about the furnace? How old is it? And what about the age of the roof? Most resale buyers do not need to be reminded that they are not buying a brand-new home. That is what home inspectors and one-year warranties are for.
- Is your home priced on a round number, for example, \$600,000 not \$599,999? A little-known advantage will be gained by pricing

exactly on round numbers. You're not selling clothing, groceries, gasoline, or a used car. The home selling market is uniquely driven by the MLS computer. By pricing on a round number you will get a few more visitors and sell a bit faster. This pricing tactic will provide you a competitive edge over most sellers. For detailed information on this, click [here](#).

- Review the "Compensation" section and ask your agent whether a competitive commission is being offered to entice other agents to show and sell *your* home.
- Look at the entry in the "Parking" section. The entry for a garage can be tricky.
- Check the "Zip Code." The correct Zip code can determine whether agents find your home in their search. In addition, the Zip code determines whether your home gets world-wide Internet exposure. The Zip code field is automatically filled by the computer, but sometimes needs to be changed by your agent.

There are a few more critical items that will be hard for you to check. Ask your agent to double check them:

- Also, the MLS system requires that street names be entered without the "street" or "road" etc. An error here means that agents searching for a home on your street will not find your home for sale. If street, road, or any other data bit appears twice in your address, you have a problem for sure.
- There are important decisions involved in filling the "Subdiv/Neigh" and "Style" fields. Discuss these with your agent.

There are many, many more ways to go wrong. But you get the picture, your agent must think like a computer in order to enter your home in a manner that will maximize the number of times it issues forth in other agents' searches. And when your page does pop out of the computer, the information there needs to say "come visit me." Like life, there is no substitute for experience and good judgment.
