

SOUND OFF *Cathy Carrano*

How do I know if I am listing my home at the right price?

This is the easy answer: If your house is getting showings, repeat showings, and offers, it's priced correctly.

In reality, there is a lot more to it.

An experienced Realtor will help you to understand the comps.

I like to first look at properties that have recently sold. The more recent, the better. Same market area and same neighborhood, ideally. Square footage is important in determining value, as are amenities, the style of the home, number of bedrooms

and baths, etc.

More than ever, the degree of updating plays a huge role in valuation. Today's buyers are looking for turn-key ready properties.

It is also important to talk with a Realtor who has been inside these properties.

Something that is often overlooked, especially by the "Zillow approach" of analyzing data alone, is the home's layout. Floor plan issues are often expensive or impossible to correct.

"Location, location, location." It's still true. And it is still important to actually visit compara-

ble properties.

A map view will show that a property is in a desirable area, but only visiting in person will tell you whether the yard borders a ravine, overlooks a parking lot, or has a retaining wall in need of costly repair.

These factors should also be considered when comparing properties that are currently on the market or under contract. Similarly, much can be learned from properties that have been on the market but did not sell.

An astute understanding of the current, local real estate market is essential. Is the market

heating up? How important is timing?

In some markets, the school system is a key driver. Buyers with children may time their search and purchase based on the school calendar. In these areas, you may miss the important spring market if you delay listing your home.

Pricing is a vital component to selling, so talk to an experienced real estate professional to get it right.

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