



Sunday Column

By Lorena Peña, 2018 Chairman

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An open and shut case?

Some agents and sellers think holding an open house is valuable, while some don't. The debate is understandable—there are good arguments on both sides of the table. If you and your San Antonio area REALTOR® decide to hold an open house, here are some things you should know going in.

Get out

It may seem counter-intuitive, but you shouldn't be around during your open house. You may know more about the house than anyone, but visitors will not feel comfortable if you, the homeowner, are hovering. They may hasten to leave and will definitely talk about the house less—neither of these are good things.

Also, you want buyers and other agents talking with your agent—not you. In fact, you should leave the house any time a potential buyer or a buyer representative is there. Trust me. Leave. Let your REALTOR® handle the open house.

And take your pets with you

Your pets are part of the family, right? Well, the family won't be at the open house, so neither should they.

They're just looking

Not everyone who shows up is a serious buyer. Some of the people may be other sellers—in other words, your competition. Others may be curious neighbors. Many will be REALTORS®.

Make it cleaner

Your house should be clean, staged, and de-cluttered as soon as you put it on the market, but if you hold an open house, you're going to have to really clean—perhaps even hire a professional service. It may not be clean after the open house because of all the foot traffic, but it's got to start out that way.

Lock it up

When your house goes on the market, you put your valuables somewhere secure and out of sight. This goes double during an open house.

Sell the location, location, location

Spend some time putting together things you like about your neighborhood—things that might not fit on a listing flier or aren't evident on a map. Is there a great restaurant or other local business nearby? What about proximity to parks, shopping, public transportation or other area amenities? Give the information to your REALTOR® and let him sell the neighborhood, too.

Appeal to their senses

You may consider some techniques to appeal to visitors' senses, like mild candles, flowers, and calming music. It's also a good idea to open all shades, drapes, and blinds—people want a bright, airy house.

Making the case

Some sellers and real estate professionals think that open houses are a waste of time, but they have certainly worked in the past or they would have long been abandoned as a viable method for selling a home. And really, why would you ignore any method that might possibly work?

One of the biggest arguments in favor of holding an open house is that it's another opportunity to increase the visibility of your home—so what if it's just REALTORS® and neighbors who attend? REALTORS® have clients, and your neighbors have friends and family who may want to move to the area.

Another advantage may be to get some fresh eyes on the property. Getting feedback from as many people as possible is a good thing. Your San Antonio area REALTOR® should take note of the comments and pass them on to you.

For more information on buying or selling your home visit SABOR.com and use a San Antonio area REALTOR®.

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