

If your home is priced correctly, the more potential buyers that know your home is for sale, the greater your chances of selling it within your budgeted time frame. So, don't be afraid to invest a little of the real estate commission money you may be saving into advertising. Below you will find a partial list of items readers of newspaper ads want to know. They are listed in priority order. This list is based on information provided by the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. We feel the items with an asterisk (*) should always be included in your ad and the balance should be included on the *Information Sheet* you make available to potential buyers.

1. **Location*** (city, area of town and address).
You want people to be able to drive by.
2. **Price*** is very important. You do not want to spend sales time with people who can not afford your home.
3. Number of **Bedrooms***.
4. **Condition** of home and lot.
5. **Convenience** to shopping areas, schools, churches, etc.)
6. **Construction & Style*** of your home (Brick, Aluminum, Wood etc.) (Ranch, split level, story and 1/2, colonial, tudor, etc.)
7. **Age** of Home
8. Is there a **Fireplace** and where is it located?
9. Type of **Heating and Cooling**.
10. Facts on the **Kitchen**. Is it new and what appliances are in it.
11. **Lower Level** and game or recreation room?
12. **Garage** size.
13. Number and size of closets Where are they?
14. The **Lot Size** and Zoning information.
15. Number of **Bathrooms***.
16. **When*** you will be holding an Open House (date and time).
17. Your **Telephone Number**.
18. **What** makes your home special? (from your *Property Information Worksheet*)
19. **Built-ins** such as appliances, bookcases or anything else.
20. **Patio**, deck and other outdoor facilities.

It is highly recommended that you hold an Open House on a non-holiday weekend. Place your ad at least one week in advance in the Open House section of the paper. Run the ad as often as possible before and including the days of the Open House.

By placing the ad well in advance of the Open House, you are giving people an opportunity to drive by your home, pick up one of your Information Sheets and decide whether or not they want to come through your home. Remember, your objective is to try to limit the traffic that comes through your home to informed, interested potential buyers only.

When you create your ad, think of what you would like to know if you were looking to buy a home like yours. Emphasize those items that you think are important with larger print. Below are some samples:

Royal Oak

Open House SAT/SUN 1 - 4
442 Glenwood Ave. East of
Woodward off 13 mile. 2-1/2
bath, 3 bedroom brick ranch
close to schools. Open floor
plan, family room, central air,
fireplace updated kitchen, and
much more. (248)555-1212

\$169,900

Downtown Royal Oak

Open House SAT/SUN 1 - 4
\$169,000. 3 bedrm, 2-1/2 bath,
Aluminum 2 story. Updated
Kitchen, new furnace, fenced
yard, fireplace, finished lower
level. Just two blocks South
of Main West of 4th., 442
Glenwood (248)555-1212.

Excellent Condition

9 Steps to Ad Success

1. Does It Start with a Bang?

One of the biggest complaints we hear from home buyer surveys is, "After a short time all the ads sound alike." The listing should start with a 'benefit' headline. Surveys tell us that 80% of prospective home buyers scan the headline first. "For Large Family," "Starter Home" attract two opposite prospects but can give you the attention-striker needed to bring you the pre-qualified prospect. Other attention getting devices are possible through style, such as border type, white space, and indenting the headline left or right.

2. Is the Ad Written to the buyer's Viewpoint?

"Our best listing" or "Owner says sell" are turnoffs. Speak to the prospective buyer. "Your family will enjoy the warmth of this floor to ceiling stone fireplace." "You will enjoy practicing your culinary expertise in this complete kitchen." Put the prospects into the picture. Let them see themselves enjoying the benefits this property has to offer.

3. Have You Used the Strongest Appeals to Their Maximum?

Ask yourself what is the single most significant feature of this home? How will it benefit the new buyer? Have I told it all? Remember, "the more you tell, the more you sell!"

4. What are the Secondary Appeals?

Have I Used emotional Appeals?

"Location" is the number one item for most prospects. This is followed by the secondary feature concerning location, "proximity to." Mention the added plus of closeness to schools, work, churches, shopping, and do so with emotional appeals. "Safety for your children on the cul de sac," "3 blocks from grade school," "More time with your loved ones with shopping just 3 minutes away." It's important to remember, in addition, that the same feature can be used to appeal to different "inner urges."

5. Have you Selected and Qualified the Prospect?

Too many real estate people make the mistake of writing too general an ad and losing readers. Remember the perfect ad brings only one response. Zero in on the demographics using age, education, and lifestyle for maximum results.

6. Does the 'Ad Clearly Describe the Offer With Full Details?

In years past, the brokers would say, "Leave something out, so the prospects will call!" In today's age of consumerism, nothing could be farther from the truth. With the federal government requiring that every minute ingredient be listed on a box of cereal or a loaf of bread, the buyer of today expects it to be in the ad or the property doesn't have it!

Have someone else, who has seen the property, review the ad without telling the location. If he can't identify the exact property, try again or you may be wasting your time and money. The prospect should be able to form a complete picture of the property, its amenities and surroundings.

7. Have You Edited Weak Words, Trite Phrases, Used Strong Words & Benefit Phrases?

Make your ad strong and complete but not overwhelming! Use persuasive words, and use them as often as possible. Avoid trite statements like, "This won't last long." Some people think its going to fall over.

8. Does it Make It easy for the Buyer to contact You?

Our best telephone inquiries have often resulted in answers like, "I'm sorry he or she is out" or "I'm not sure what property that is" or, "Sorry, she's busy now, can you call back?"

What turnoffs! Make sure you and your support people have sufficient information on all ads to answer positively and reassuringly. Informed secretaries and other salespeople can help you provide a positive reaction. "Thank you for calling on this excellent home." (Avoid referring to buyers about listings. That's the seller's viewpoint.) "Ms. Thomas, who is our expert on this property, is now closing on another property, may I have her call you back as soon as she is free?" Wow! What a difference; inferred success plus a prompt promise of recall.

'Always use the salesperson's name whenever possible Remember, you're a professional and your "qualified prospect" wants to talk to you.

9. Did You Ask for Them to Call You Now?

Action-inducing statements can help get prompt responses: "Call Now for the first appointment" to "this prime property that will sell quickly."

Tie the action statement to the property, its features and benefits whenever possible to insure an immediate appointment rather than the feeling "That sounds good, I'll call tomorrow" syndrome.

EVERY AD I WRITE MUST SAY:

This property is good for you

Because it has these features

Which benefit you in this way

See how easy it is to buy.

-Prof. John Crawford,
Michigan State University

