

PROPERTY NEWS

Ideas to help you when you're Buying or Selling

GONE IN 24 HRS



**“Annangrove home sold for
\$200,000 more than the
owners thought possible.”**

STEPHEN LORD

Agent Pulls Out All Presentation Stops And Owner Reaps Rewards . . . Details P3

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House 2 Home
Realty

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LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Readers,

The strength of the real estate market in the past 12 to 18 months has dramatically increased the opportunities for a whole new segment of mums and dads to become investors.

Market activity has pushed up home values and the higher the values go, the more equity you have in your home, and the more borrowing power.

The equity is the difference between what you owe on your home and its value.

With the lowest interest rates in 60 years and predictions that the market will continue to grow, perhaps you should come and see us to find out if you are in a position to buy your first investment property.

Kind regards,

Stephen Lord
Principal



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Finding the RIGHT home

Tips for navigating the house hunting trail



Sometimes it's hard to see the wood for the trees when you're house hunting.

Rather than looking at everything, however, it's a good idea to narrow down your search before you start, by deciding what's important to you.

Location

For example, will your life be easier if you are within walking distance of work, schools, shops, transport or other amenities? If these are crucial factors, you can narrow down your search.

If your purpose in buying is to have an asset that you can sell at a profit in a few years, location is also a vital factor in your purchase. The old saying about the advantages of buying "the worst house in the best street rather than the best house in the worst street" has been tried and proved true over time.

List

Making a list about what you really want in a home can save lots of time when you're looking. It also helps to note down what you like and don't like about living in your current home and location. This assists in focusing on what you really want from your new home. Then, when you're looking, check your list against the features of the homes you inspect and see if they tick all or most of the required boxes.

Loan

The best way to break your heart when house hunting is to find the house you want, only to learn you can't secure the required finance. Find out first how much you will be able to borrow, and don't be tempted to look at properties outside that range. This saves time and disappointment when you're on the house hunting trail.

Presentation Was Everything

House To Home Realty Principal, Stephen Lord, was always convinced he could realise several hundred thousand dollars more than the owner's expectations for 7 Joylyn Rd Annangrove and left no stone unturned to prove the point.

"The owner had already moved out, leaving the home partly furnished and definitely in need of work. Despite the state, I immediately saw it as a \$1.35m home, compared to the owner's \$1.2m estimate," Stephen recalls.

He convinced the owner that they both needed to do some work, but assured him on the basis of his 28 years' experience that the effort would be rewarded.

Stephen organised cleaners, handy men, window cleaners and even a property stylist. Then they hired furniture with a view to decorating the property to a "show home" standard.

He admits it was a big call, to commit an owner to added expense and effort - a call that many agents would never have made.

"But it's all about knowing your market, your buyers and your profession. My job is to advise my clients how to get the best possible value for their property. And that's exactly the position we took," Stephen said.

When the first Open Day dawned the weather was more than bleak. It poured from the moment the signs went into the ground.

Despite this, powerful marketing utilising professional photos of the transformed home attracted 23 groups - about 50 to 60 people in total.

"The bulk of them were ready buyers with offers and none could believe how



**Cleaners,
Handymen,
Stylists Worked
Their Magic**

well the property presented.

"We received an offer that afternoon and, with negotiating, we had an agreed price and a signed contract by 11am the next day."

Stephen said vendors could learn much from this exercise, particularly:

- Ensure you have an agent who works with you and is prepared to recommend ways to increase your return.
- Ensure the agent not only knows the market, but can identify your particular buyers.
- When it comes to the negotiation stage you want an agent able to determine how much the buyer has to spend and why they made the offer they did.

- Lastly, your agent needs to appreciate that the old adage "the first buyer is the best" only rings true if he or she is the best for the vendor. If the first buyer is not at high market value, you can always get that low price again.

What did the owner think about the sale of his home?

"I can't believe it, we got \$200,000 more than what I thought we would get," said David a delighted vendor.

Stephen Lord, who has lived in the Baulkham Hills area all of his life, says that he can not recall a stronger seller's market.

Nationally the average time a property is on the market is at record lows. During the final quarter of 2013 29.5% of all houses and 37.5% of all units sold nationally, transacted at a price which was at, or higher than, the original list price.

If you want to cash in on this booming local market, contact Stephen Lord today on 0412 260 022 to arrange a personal inspection and ensure you are getting the maximum return.



Would you like to have your home sold by the best in the business?

Stephen Lord has a proven record of success and an impressive portfolio of clients who are totally satisfied by his outstanding level of service.

Ph 02 8883 3553 or 0412 260 022
www.h2hrealty.com.au

Improve and market for big property profits



With availability of rental properties at an all time low and the situation not expected to improve for years to come there are opportunities for landlords to maximise their returns as never before.

For the first time in many years expenditure on improvements to rental properties, and even money spent on their marketing, can generate real returns rather than a mere tax advantage.

Investors have long known that property improvements can bring two or threefold returns when selling, but now the market is right for a whole new approach to rental properties.

Whenever the rental vacancy rate drops below a benchmark of around 3% the rents cycle swings in favour of the property owner. Nationwide now the vacancy rate is way below that level with some markets almost at crisis point.

Economists are predicting that this situation will not change in the near future as it is endemic of a national housing shortage.

Government building incentives so far have failed to make an appreciable impact on this shortage which is across the board from Government stocks to the private sector.

This situation has created an opportunity for owners who are now able to make improvements that will not only increase the value of their property, but

Ideas to help maximise your rent returns

increase the rents, giving both long and short term gains.

And with the building industry relatively quiet there is no shortage of tradesmen ready, willing and able to slash and burn their charges.

But what to do? Where to start? What improvements will give the best return? Sure, you could go all out and add another bedroom - a surefire way to increase the rental return. But that's a high cost that will take a while to amortise.

The clever approach is to look at ways to cost effectively increase the desirability and livability of your property.

A new benchtop in the kitchen, perhaps some splashbacks and cupboard doors, is a good way to start.

Maybe you could add a BBQ for an outdoor entertaining area and a verandah

extension or even a new deck is not expensive if you approach it the right way.

Even the bathroom can be given a whole new look with a new vanity and shower.

In all of these things the trick is not to shop where you would for your own home, but to shop smart at factory outlets, seconds stores and even via online stores and auctions.

Throughout the process, from planning to shopping and installation, don't lose sight of the fact that you are aiming to make the place desirable.

When you are done, talk to your agent about marketing. Good photos (not a few happy snaps), well thought out copy and the right approach will paint a picture of your rental property that will in itself justify adding another \$50 a week to the rent.

Your other consideration with your improvements and your marketing is the target market - aim for young professionals in an upper demographic.

Looking to rent your property?

Let us take the worry out of renting your property with one phone call

Speak to any local and they will tell you that House 2 Home Realty, Principal, Stephen Lord has a track record of providing quality service and understanding when it comes to successfully managing rental properties.

Please phone 0412 260 022 to secure your new tenant today!