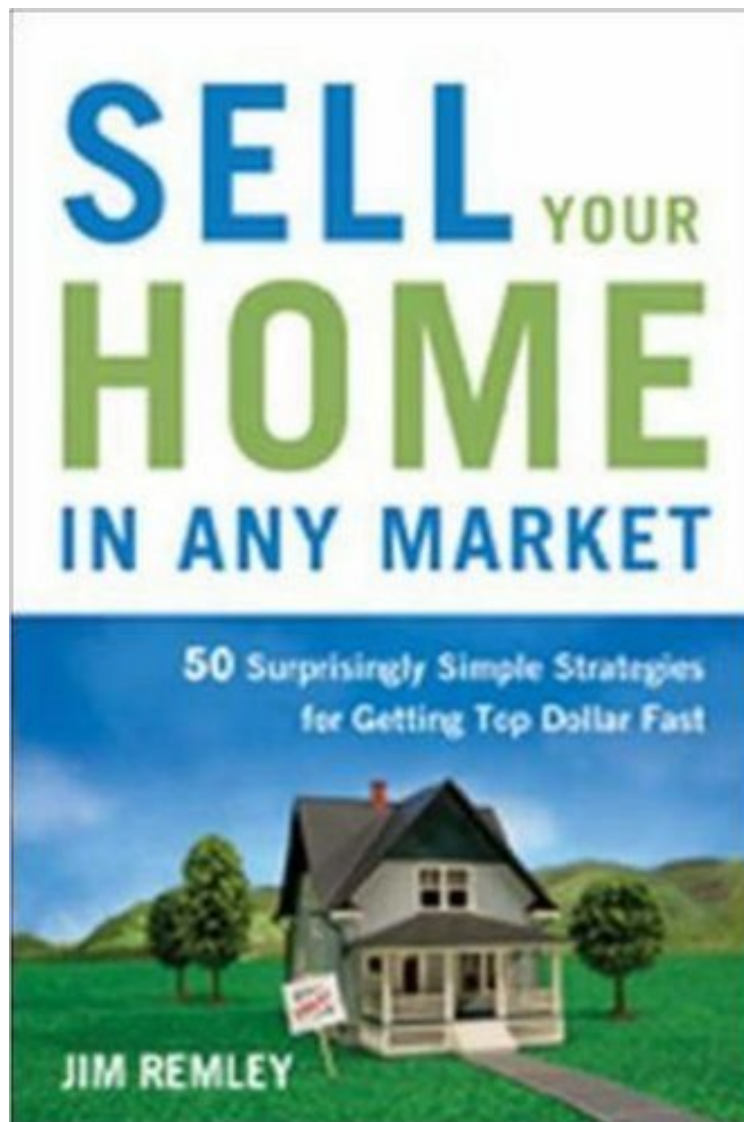


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Sell Your Home in Any Market: 50 Surprisingly Simple Strategies for Getting Top Dollar Fast

Jim Remley

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In this cooling market, homes are becoming harder to sell. But with the right strategies, sellers can greatly increase their odds of success. "Sell Your Home in Any Market" gives readers the tools, techniques, and strategies used by the best real estate marketing experts in the nation to ensure their home is positioned to sell. The book reveals 10 ways to stage a home, 5 ways to maximize showings with MLS marketing, 25 items inspectors check, 200 ways to improve curb appeal, exactly how to emphasize a home's benefits to potential buyers, and much more. Packed with priceless tips and techniques, this is a book no one selling a home should be without.

Whether your local housing market is cooling off or freezing up, this book is sure to offer your readers a little hope. Although the title sounds like a late-night infomercial, the contents are surprisingly concise and straightforward. With unwavering optimism, Remley (Make Millions Selling Real Estate), a successful industry veteran and columnist for Realty Times and Broker Agent News, attempts to outline every avenue available to today's seller, including pricing, promotion, incentives, and staging. He also offers tips on evaluating offers and managing transactions. Many useful technical details, i.e., price points and database aggregators, are also fundamentally introduced. The author demonstrates a particular knack for delivering unhappy news as when your house is overpriced in a gentle and earnest way. He includes pertinent data and cites useful web sites throughout. Geared toward the For Sale by Owner demographic, his book lacks any real evaluation criteria or advice on dealing with real estate agents. This title looks to be a forerunner on the subject of selling in a down market. Recommended for all libraries. Library Journal "intelligently-written guide for owners wanting to sell, a valuable tome at a time when selling homes is no longer so easy in many markets." -- Realtytimes.com "timely arrival in the struggling U.S. real estate market offers selling strategies from real estate professional throughout the US. -- REM: The Real Estate magazine "...pearls of wisdom..."-- Los Angeles Times real estate expert who knows the ins and outs of the market has something to offer on every page of his book -- Newsday "...information is concise and presented clearly. information is easy to grasp...it is incredibly useful. -- Columbus Dispatch About the Author Jim Remley (Sutherlin, OR) is a real estate veteran, columnist for Realty Times, and author of Make Millions Selling Real Estate (978-0-8144-7292-7) and Real Estate Presentations That Make Millions (978-0-8144-7401-3). He became an agent when he was 19 and within two years was listed in the top one percent of Realtors nationwide. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. C H A P T E R 1 The Big Decision: Is This the Right Time to Sell Your Home? As you think back over your life, you can probably remember all of the homes that you or your parents have lived in. If you're like me, you might even remember the room the places where you slept, ate, fought, played, and laughed. A home is a special place. It's more than just four walls and a roof; a home, your home, is a reflection of where you are in your life. It's a reflection of your lifestyle. This may be one reason why today nearly 70 percent of American families own a home, more than at any other time in the nation's history. What's more, according to the most recent data from the National Association of REALTORS, on average these same families will sell their current home and buy a new one in the next two to six years. Imagine that: The entire country will be selling their homes and buying new ones in the next 24 to 72 months. Why so often? For first-time homeowners, a first home, like a first car, is a temporary stop on the way to bigger and better things. The cute cottage that was once cozy, even romantic with a blushing bride, can now seem cramped with two kids climbing the walls and a retriever doing laps down the hall. Then there's the fact that as we become more successful, what we want in our home often grows with us, changing and adapting to our needs. A home office, a family room, a formal dining room, or a master bedroom suite they're all just stops on the road to living the American Dream. Likewise, as life happens, we may have a sudden need to downsize because of the loss of a job or a medical emergency, or a move may be necessary because of a job transfer, or because we need to cash in our chips because of a divorce. Table 1-1 gives the most common reasons for selling. TABLE 1-1 PRIMARY REASON FOR MAKING A HOUSING CHANGE

Home is too small 19% Neighborhood has become less desirable 13% Change in family situation 11% Move closer to job 10% Move closer to friends and family 9% Job relocation 9% Home is too large 7% Retirement 5% From National Association of REALTORS, 2006 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers. There is a psychology to selling that many sellers experience but rarely take the time to analyze. It is the process of moving from being completely satisfied, happy, and content in their present home to being dissatisfied, unhappy, and downright miserable. It doesn't happen overnight, but it does happen relatively quickly, as most of us will move on to our next casa before the warranty runs out on the new Honda parked in our driveway. So how does this process take place? Often it starts with a homeowner beginning to notice other, more desirable castles. This could be a friend's condo that has an extra bathroom or a home theater room, or maybe it's a ranchette that you notice on the way to work that has a covered porch and a picturesque view of a valley. For others, it might be as simple as picking up a real estate guide and flipping through the pages while daydreaming about how nice it would be to get out of the city. From there, it's easy for homeowners to find themselves searching the Internet, attending open houses, talking to a REALTOR, or even randomly driving through neighborhoods in search of their next address. Yes, it's interesting; almost all sellers first arrive at the doorstep of the real estate market as buyers in disguise, and while it may take months to roll this decision up a mountain of doubt, anxiety, and concern, as soon as we begin to see homes that better reflect our current lifestyle, many of us will decide that we can hardly wait to purchase our next home. Of course, unless you have won the lottery, have a trust fund, or made it big in pork bellies, in order to buy your next dream home, you will first have to sell your current residence. So hold on to your hat. It's time to park the car, put down the mouse, and close the magazine. Why? It's time to get to work selling your home!

Finding Your Pain Here is a weird but absolutely true fact: The reason you are even considering selling is because continuing to live in your current home is too painful for you. Now when I say painful, I don't mean that you go home crying every night or that something is physically hurting you, but that there is something that bothers you about your current residence. In the real estate business, we call this finding a client's pain, or what it is about your current abode that sticks in your craw enough to make you consider a move. This pain can range from extremely mild, bordering on nonexistent, to extremely irritating, and in some cases lifestyle threatening. You see, there are really two kinds of sellers in the world: the necessary seller and the optional seller (see Figure 1-1). The necessary seller has no choice but to move; it's a forced sale. For instance, the seller may have been transferred, or he may be going through a divorce, or perhaps he is entering bankruptcy. So selling is a given; it's something that he has to do because he has no choice. For these sellers, their pain level is very high; in other words, if they don't sell, bad things are going to happen. They could lose their job, they could end up living with their ex-husband or ex-wife, or they could lose their credit rating. On the other end of the spectrum is the optional seller. The optional seller is a homeowner who has made the decision to sell because she is ready for a lifestyle change. For one reason or another, she is unhappy with her current residence. This may mean that she wants to move to a new school district, she wants to live in a more modern home, or perhaps she just wants a larger space to entertain her friends and family. She doesn't have to sell; she just wants to sell. Of course, this doesn't mean that these homeowners can't be highly motivated. Often an optional seller can be so unhappy with her current living arrangements that her level of pain is extremely high. And yet, unlike the necessary seller, if for some reason she can't sell her home, nothing bad will happen, other than being frustrated, irritated, and perhaps more than a little depressed. Her world won't come crashing down. So can you see the difference? Good, because most sellers don't understand their own motivation level. I'll give you a classic example: We'll call this couple Jeff and Sally HardNose. Jeff and Sally HardNose are excited. They just got the news that Sally has been offered a huge promotion that will nearly double her pay. The only downside is that the job is in another city, which means that they will have to sell their beloved condo. Despite this, Sally accepts the new job and agrees to move immediately while Jeff stays behind to sell the condo. So what kind of sellers are Jeff and Sally? Are they best described as necessary sellers or as optional sellers? Easy question, right? They are definitely necessary sellers; their pain level is high. They need to sell quickly. But do they know that? Jeff does some research. He discovers that condos in their building are selling for between \$300,000 and \$320,000, depending on the particular unit's amenity package. After thinking about it for a couple of days, Jeff and Sally decide to begin marketing the condo at a price of \$350,000. Their reasoning is that they can always come down, but they can't go up, so it's probably best to start high. After a month of advertising, they have received only five phone calls, four from REALTORS who wanted to show the home to prospective buyers, and one from a buyer who hung up after hearing the price. Jeff decides not to work with the buyers represented by the real estate agents, since Sally is against paying a commission. So they wait. As another month passes, Jeff and Sally begin to fight over the house. They are now paying for two households' rents, two sets of utility bills, two of everything. The financial strain is taking a toll on their marriage. Still they hold out for \$350,000.