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Many Turning to Home Staging to Sell House



Mona Shand

Anyone who's tried to sell their house lately knows it's a buyer's market, and your house could sit on the market for a long time with no bites, but a local woman says she has the trick to give seller's a real advantage.

It's called home staging. For sale: one deluxe Livingston County home. Seven bedrooms, eight bathrooms, a gourmet granite kitchen, in all, more than six thousand square feet, every last inch custom designed. You'd think a house like this would sell in a heartbeat, but it's been on the market for more than a year with barely any interest, and the owner's already cut the price by 10 percent, so what's the problem?

Sheryl McIntyre, Coldwell Banker Schweitzer: "I need it to feel warm and cozy, I need the buyers to feel like they could move right in."

So Sheryl brought in Kathi Presutti to transform the empty house into a place buyers want to call home.

Kathi Presutti, RE: Style LLC: "People have a hard time visualizing. We say people only know what they can see, not the way things can be."

Kathi is a home stager, part decorator, part salesperson. Her goal: to "set the stage" for a family to picture themselves in the home.

Kathi Presutti: "It's important to give them a sense of scale, and to give them an idea of where they could put their belongings."

Armed with an arsenal of accessories.

Kathi Presutti: "Artwork, lots of greenery, topiaries and smaller plants, lots of candles."

And a delivery of rented furniture. Kathi gets right to work staging key areas.

Kathi Presutti: "People make up their minds in as little as 15 seconds."

The idea is to stage just enough to show the home's possibilities and highlight what buyers will see as they walk in the door, and after a long day, Kathi hopes that's what she's achieved. Those six-thousand square feet don't feel quite as cold. The living room now has much more life. It's easy to believe someone might step in that beautiful kitchen and cook a meal. The master bedroom has become a much more inviting space.

Kathi Presutti: "Kind of like women and makeup, you put on a lot to look natural, that's it with staging."

The price of staging varies, but Kathi says it runs about one half to one percent of your home's value, so for a two-hundred thousand dollar home, it might cost about \$1,500, but it's an investment Kathi says pays for itself. Her last staged home practically flew off the market.

Kathi Presutti: "I staged it on a Sunday and it sold on a Wednesday."

And she's confident this one will do the same. Kathi just staged that home a few days ago, and there have already been some interested buyers. For more information on home staging, [click here](#).



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