

The Role of Curb Appeal in Fast Sales

How First Impressions Can Make or Break a Sale



When it comes to selling a home, first impressions matter. Curb appeal — how a home looks from the street — plays a crucial role in attracting buyers and securing quick sales. A well-maintained exterior can draw in potential buyers, while a neglected one may turn them away before they even step inside. Here's why curb appeal is so important and how you can enhance your home's exterior for a faster sale.

THE POWER OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Curb appeal sets the tone for the entire home-buying experience. When potential buyers pull up to a property, the exterior is the first thing they see, and it can shape their perception of the home before they even walk through the door. A clean, well-kept front yard, fresh paint and tidy landscaping create a positive impression, signaling that the home is well-maintained inside as well. On the other hand, overgrown lawns, peeling paint or a cluttered porch can suggest neglect, causing buyers to hesitate.

LOW-COST IMPROVEMENTS WITH BIG IMPACT

Improving curb appeal doesn't have to break the bank. Small, cost-effective upgrades can make a significant difference in how your home looks. Start by power washing your driveway, sidewalks and exterior walls to remove dirt and grime. Repainting the front door in a bold, welcoming color can also add visual appeal. Simple landscaping tasks like trimming hedges, mowing the lawn and planting seasonal flowers can give your yard a fresh, polished look.

LIGHTING MATTERS

Outdoor lighting is an often-overlooked element of curb appeal, but it plays a crucial role in showcasing your home. Strategically placed lighting can highlight architectural features, illuminate pathways and create a warm, inviting atmosphere. Solar-powered pathway lights are an affordable way to improve both aesthetics and safety. Make sure all exterior lights, including porch and garage fixtures, are in working order before listing your home.

CREATING AN INVITING ENTRANCE

The front entrance is the focal point of your home's exterior, so it's important to make it as welcoming as possible. Replacing an old doormat, cleaning windows and updating house numbers are quick fixes that can enhance the overall appearance. Adding potted plants or a seasonal wreath can create a more inviting entrance that encourages buyers to come inside and take a closer look.

FASTER SALES, BETTER OFFERS

Homes with strong curb appeal tend to sell faster than those without it. Buyers are more likely to schedule a showing or make an offer on a home that catches their eye right away. In a competitive market, great curb appeal can give your property the edge it needs to stand out from similar listings. Investing time and effort into improving your home's exterior can pay off with a quicker sale and potentially a higher offer. In real estate, first impressions are everything. By enhancing your home's curb appeal, you can attract more buyers, speed up the selling process and ensure your property stands out in the market.

Real Estate Trends

Growth In Clark County Fastest in State

If you think things are changing and growing quickly around here, you're right. Clark County grew faster than any other county in Washington from April 2020 to April 2024, growing by 6.3%, according to the just-issued annual report from the Washington Center for Real Estate Research (WCRER).

Population growth statewide, and predictions for future growth, have led our state's Dept. of Commerce to conclude that Washington will need 1.1 million additional housing units by the year 2044. How will Clark County be able to accommodate its share of the million-plus units? You've no doubt noticed that much of the new development is more dense than the classic, suburban growth that used to be standard in our county. You know: large lots and single-level homes. Now, smaller lots, ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units-like an apartment in the basement or above the garage), and more plexes and apartments are being permitted.

Regular readers of this column know that mortgage interest rates are a huge influence on the volume of real estate transactions, both refinancing and purchase/sales. I don't want to cause too much eye-rolling, but will simply point out that, in the WCRER's chart of interest rates since 1972, the current rates are mostly below the historical average of 8%. Yes, since 2000, the rates have been lower than that average, but when you compare today's rates to the 18% rate of 1982, the rates don't look that bad. Call your loan officer for current rates.

The sum of new construction plus interest rates will eventually address the math problem that is housing affordability. It is getting harder for a homebuyer with a median income to buy a house with a median price. Solving this problem is the key to keeping the American Dream of homeownership alive. People that rent instead of buying a home will be shut out of the wealth-building that comes from paying monthly payments based on a 2024 figure instead of a monthly rent amount that goes up every year.

Finally, a repeat reminder: identity theft and wire fraud continue to be huge issues in the title insurance and escrow world. Don't be offended if your title company does more "vetting" than before, to make sure you are really the person you claim to be. With electronically signed documents and transactions where you may never meet in person the Realtor you sign a Listing Agreement with, fraudsters are ramping up their attempts to get paid before someone realizes they've been scammed. We're always a little suspicious and suggest you should be, too. Call us direct if you receive anything suspicious, like a change in where you are to wire funds!

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REAL ESTATE 101



Boost Curb Appeal for a Faster Sale

Investing in your home's curb appeal can significantly impact its selling potential. Focus on simple improvements like maintaining the lawn, adding fresh paint to the front door and ensuring the exterior is clean and well-lit. These efforts can attract more potential buyers and potentially lead to a quicker sale at a better price.

HOMEWISE GLOSSARY

Curb Appeal: The attractiveness of a property when viewed from the street or sidewalk. Curb appeal encompasses various elements including landscaping, exterior paint, cleanliness and overall maintenance. Strong curb appeal can make a positive first impression on potential buyers, potentially increasing a home's marketability and value.

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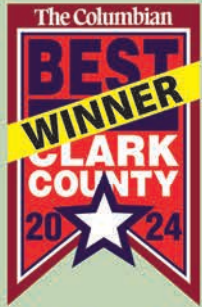
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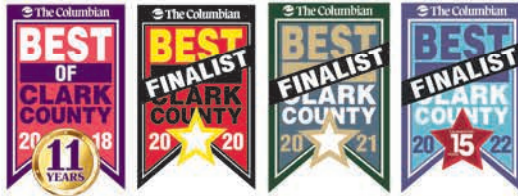
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The Newsday Crossword
Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
GROWING APART: Explained at 123-Down
by Gary M. Larson

ACROSS	DOWN	
1 Flavorful	1 Mariner's chart	
6 British bars	2 Take to the sky	
10 Reins in	3 Oceanic thief	
15 Music score symbol	4 "It's me"	
19 Poland Spring competitor	5 CSI evidence	
20 Irish pop singer	6 Mexican money	
21 Run ___ of (clash with)	7 Not trendy at all	
22 Comedian Carvey		
23 TSA officer		
25 Snarky encouragement, perhaps		
27 Goat call		
28 Laundromat, e.g.		
30 Scandinavian chain		
31 Fawn's mother		
32 Athens' region		
35 Largest citrus fruit		
38 French boyfriend		
40 Annoyance		
41 A Williams sister		
43 Causing dread		
44 Set afire, as food		
48 Endless time		
50 [per the original]		
53 Pants, so to speak		
54 Took an extra base against		
55 Thai neighbor		
58 Nephew of Cain		
60 Wide of the mark		
62 Monte Rosa or Nadelhorn		
65 ___ Martin (007 auto)		
67 Charge in court		
70 Start of a farewell		
71 Dior fashion creation		
73 Venerable toy wagon brand		
76 <i>Persona non grata</i>		
77 Extremely evil		
79 Drum of India		
80 Beekeeper		
83 Mystery writing award		
85 Brown shade		
86 Poor grade		
87 Bicyclist's rash boast		
90 Brown shades		
92 "Amazing!"		
93 Airport business		
95 Despicable		
97 Walk with swagger		
100 It's needed to produce pewter		
102 Boy to find in children's books		
106 Southeast Asian island		
107 Exhausted		
109 Disconnect, as a Bluetooth device		
110 Hangout for NCOs		
111 "Jabberwocky" start		
115 Not-for-profit reporting app		
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118 Post-wash peg		
122 Within reach, as a goal		
125 Gospel singer Winans		
126 Have in common		
127 Catch a wave		
128 Venerated villager		
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8 Barely, at racetracks		
9 Biblical dancer		
10 Baseball great Ripken		
11 ET's transport		
12 Roasted, on French menus		
13 Entertain on the street		
14 Plumlike fruit		
15 450 in Roman numerals		
16 Estée of makeup		
17 Concert bonus		
18 Spy's passport, perhaps		
24 Color TV pioneer		
26 Aspect of an issue		
29 Jewelry designer Elsa		
33 Prospective parents' option: Abbr.		
34 Boston hoopster		
36 Oscar actor Jared		
37 First-year law student		
39 Barn bundle		
42 Mars alias		
43 "Completed!"		
45 "___ we there yet?"		
46 Virtuous		
47 Grand Canyon beast		
49 Immediately		
50 Chair accessory		
51 Physically fit		
52 Circle of friends		
54 Chinese zodiac animal		
55 Beetle with spots		
56 Everything left		
57 Do business		
59 Justice Sotomayor		
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You don't want to be snowed in or experience a sudden power failure only to realize that you need some crucial item. Start preparing in the fall when the demand for these things isn't so high, and you might save a little money, too.

STAYING WARM

Make your home winter-ready by ensuring that you have enough cozy items like extra blankets, thick jackets, hats, gloves and space heaters. Consider installing a programmable thermostat to maintain the perfect indoor temps. You'll be inside more as conditions turn colder, so consider a purifier to improve the air quality in your home. If you have fireplaces or wood-burning stoves, stock up on properly seasoned firewood. If you rely on other fuel sources, purchase an amount that's adequate to last throughout the winter.



LOSING POWER

Unfortunately, winter storms can lead to power failures. To avoid being caught off guard, create an emergency kit in advance. Include essential items such as batteries, flashlights, a first aid kit, a battery-powered radio and plenty of bottled water. Stack your pantry with non-perishable food items. If your area suffers from prolonged outages, consider purchasing a generator as a backup power source.

STAYING HEALTHY

Fall and winter typically bring an increased risk of colds, flu and other illnesses. Take necessary precautions like practicing good hygiene, staying current on your vaccinations, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle to help minimize your chances of getting sick. Update and fill

your prescriptions and keep an ample supply of over-the-counter medications to alleviate common symptoms — including cough syrup, fever reducers and sore throat lozenges.

GETTING READY

If you live in a place with harsher winters, stock up on all the essential snow removal tools like snow shovels, de-icing agents and ice scrapers. Regularly inspect and maintain your tools to ensure they are in optimal working condition. Maintain a winter car kit, with emergency items such as extra blankets, an ice scraper, jumper cables, a flashlight, shovel and non-perishable snacks. Get ready for the cold with a new patio heater. Depending on how much you get, purchasing a snow blower might make sense.

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You can contact crossword puzzle editor Stanley Newman at www.StanXwords.com. 11/03/24

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