

Thinking of Selling your Home?



8 IMPORTANT THINGS EVERY HOME SELLER NEEDS TO CONSIDER



Bellchambers
PROPERTY

WELCOME TO A BETTER WAY OF SELLING

Selling your home is a big decision. When you decide now is the right time to sell your home you will be presented with an ever growing list of things to consider and choices to make. The most important decision during this process starts at the beginning - choosing the right real estate agency to represent you and your home.

Lets start by saying there are a lot of good real estate agents around today. The trouble is there are also a lot of average real estate agents around today also. However, selecting the right Real Estate Agent isn't just a simple case of finding a good person. Even the good real estate agents are limited by the systems and strategies they are required to use by their employer. A good agent working in a business that has poor strategies will not get you a great result.

There may seem like there is a lot of choice with real estate agencies, you have big franchised chains, down to small independents. However most real estate agencies are the same. When you look under the hood of your typical real estate agency they all do the same thing.

Typical real estate strategies focus on just one thing - getting a sale. At first glance there doesn't seem to be anything wrong with that. However, wouldn't getting the highest possible price for that property be a better goal to aim for?

At Bellchambers Property our goal is simple. Our goal is to get you the highest possible price for the sale of your home. It's a simple goal however its not a simple task.

In order to achieve the highest possible price for the sale of your home you need to adopt strategies different to that of your typical real estate agency. Sure, we use a lot of the same tools as the typical agencies however we use them in more effective ways to achieve our goal of obtaining the highest possible price for your home.

Are you wanting to just sell your home?
or
Are you wanting to sell your home for the highest
possible price?

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is designed to provide potential home sellers, like yourself, with some valuable information to consider prior to listing your home with any real estate agent.

Selecting the right real estate agent to partner with is by far the most important choice you need to make. Getting this wrong can cost you tens of thousands of dollars. You only get one opportunity to sell your home so please take your time to ensure you consider these 8 questions before selecting your real estate agent.

This booklet will give you some powerful questions to ask any potential real estate agent you are interviewing. The questions we will cover are:

- 1. Who will I be dealing with throughout the entire process?**
- 2. What makes you different to every other Real Estate Agent?**
- 3. Where will you promote my property and how?**
- 4. How much do I pay if the property doesn't sell?**
- 5. How do you conduct property inspections?**
- 6. What do you think our property should be listed for?**
- 7. How does your fee compare to your value?**
- 8. What sort of guarantee will you offer?**

By asking these questions of potential real estate agents you will be provided with all the information you need to ensure you select the right real estate agent to represent you and your property.

OUR STORY

Deciding now is the right time to sell your home is a big decision. Once you've made that decision the most important choice you will make in the entire sale process is which agent you team up with. Partnering with the wrong agent can literally cost you tens of thousands of dollars. I know that from personal experience and this is the major reason Jo & I decided to establish our own real estate office in Innes Park.

Here is our story and what we experienced when looking for a property to buy in the area:



Jo, myself and our two children made the decision to move to the area after spending over 12 months travelling around Queensland living full time in a caravan (that's a whole story in itself that I won't get into here!). We all fell in love with the region and decided this is where we wanted to live for the long term.

We soon began looking for properties to buy and this is where things started to get interesting. Everyday we were either looking at new listings on RealEstate.com.au or doing drive-by's to check out properties and areas we weren't familiar with. One of the biggest issues we had was getting a response from an agent when reaching out for more information.

There just seemed to be a lack of interest from the agents when you are a buyer looking to buy a home and that really didn't make any sense to us. You see I had been a real estate agent on the Gold Coast prior to us travelling. I worked with a company that strived to change the perception of the real estate industry by upholding extremely high standards.

One of the things we were very good at was communication and getting back to everyone as soon as humanly possible. So when we were making contact with various real estate agents here when looking to buy our new home I couldn't comprehend the amount of agents that simply wouldn't return calls or respond to texts or emails.

The questionable behaviour didn't stop there though unfortunately. The list of issues from the broad range of real estate agents we dealt with grew nearly every day. One agent in particular began our inspection with:

"I know the property is listed at high \$700,000's however the owners are going through a nasty separation (the husband had an affair) and the wife is now living in the home by herself and she can't afford to live here. I know for a fact if you place a offer with any number starting with a 7, I can get the deal done".

We hadn't even walked through the front door! This agent was supposed to be working for the home sellers. This start to an inspection absolutely astounded us.

Why would an agent tell a potential buyer that information? The only reason we could think was that he was simply wanting to get a sale (at any price) to get his commission cheque.

This goes against everything I believe a real estate agent should be doing. The real estate company I worked for had a very simple but very powerful set of criteria when deciding whether a strategy should be implemented into their 'tool kit' as a professional real estate agency.

The criteria every strategy had to pass was:

Is it Ethical and is it Effective?

When you base every decision on that question you end up with a strategy unlike any other in the typical real estate industry. This is what we have based Bellchambers Property upon.

Everything we do at Bellchambers Property meets that criteria. Everything we do is also intentional and everything ties back to our sole objective - to get the highest possible price for the sale of your home.

High on my list of ineffective strategies used when going to market with a property is not disclosing a sale price for the property.

This is my number one pet hate because it simply doesn't provide the home seller with any negotiation power (and you will find out later in this booklet how crucial negotiation is in the sale of any property). It screams desperation and draws out a lot of bargain hunters looking to capitalise on the situation. Worse than that a survey published on realestate.com.au states:

"72% of buyers said they would skip over properties that didn't include a price".

Why would you use a strategy like this to sell a property? It simply doesn't make sense in my mind and isn't setting the property up to be sold for its highest possible price when 72% of the potential buyers instantly dismiss it.

Another tactic we came across during our search for our new home was being asked to send any offers we wanted to make to the agent via text. On the surface that doesn't sound like a big deal right?

I have a few issues with this tactic however.

The reason real estate agents ask you to simply text them is purely because it is convenient for the agent. Like most industries, technology is providing a lot of opportunities for real estate agents to operate more efficiently.

Trust me, I don't have a problem with working efficiently and using technology to do so. What I do have a problem with is using technology to simply make it easier for the real estate agent without considering the consequences to the home seller.

We were asked to do exactly that when making an offer on our new home.

Was it easy for us to submit our offer - **yes**.

Was it easy for the agent to receive our offer - **most definitely**.

Did it make us want to submit our highest possible price on this offer - **not at all!**

Importantly, prior to making that offer we were told the owners of the property were investors from Sydney (a dentist) and they were sold this property believing they could rent it out for much higher than was the case.

They purchased it 12 months prior and had multiple tenants in that time. The investment just didn't meet their original expectations so were keen to sell it. It was listed as "Offers Invited" and we were also told they had rejected an offer of \$768,000.

Jo & I were prepared to pay \$790,000 for this property (it was very run down and needed a lot of work). We were also told that the only other people looking at the property at the time had decided it was too much work and we were "not competing against anyone" to purchase the home.

We did what most people do in that situation and started our offer lower than we were willing to pay. \$20,000 lower in fact. The day we made this offer was a Friday (the relevance of this will make sense soon). We spent the rest of the afternoon going over the likely responses we thought we might get from the agent.

We both determined that the most likely outcome was the buyers would say no and to counter offer with a higher price. We went over the numbers again and once again agreed that the highest price we would pay was \$790,000.

The return response from the agent took a lot longer than we thought and our minds started to imagine all the possible scenarios that could play out. We were starting to think that we weren't going to get this one as we had missed out of a few by this stage (not that the agent knew this). Like a lot of serious home buyers we had the alerts on realestate.com.au notifying us of any new listings in our search area. I came across one that I thought would be a great property for us to check out, it was open tomorrow also.

Later that afternoon/evening we got a call from the agent telling us that he had presented our offer to the owner and told them that it was our final offer and we weren't prepared to pay any more. He told the owners this is the best price you are going to get for the property and the owners reluctantly agreed to our offer.

We couldn't believe our luck. After months of searching we finally found a property and we got it for far less than we were prepared to pay.

\$20,000 less in fact.

To some people that might not sound like a lot of money, but think how long it would take you to save \$20,000 cash right now and it puts it into perspective.

Remember, at this stage our offer had simply been made via text. A non-binding offer that either party could have easily walked away from at the time. The agent said they wouldn't get the contract to us until Monday as it was already after close of business on Friday. I thought agents worked weekends?

The relevance of this is I found a property that was open the next day that I thought was a great option to consider. Luckily, for the owners of our property, Jo had now set her heart on our new home and didn't want to take a look at any more. If, hypothetically speaking, we went to that new open home the next day and fell in love with it, we could have made an offer on that property and walked away from our current offer.

We didn't. But in my time as a real estate agent I have seen it happen. That is a risk with consequences far too high for my liking.

CONCLUSION

So, why am I telling you our story? I'm telling you this because unfortunately our experience isn't unique or unusual. I've heard many similar stories over my years in real estate and I can't help but feel for the owners of these properties. These owners employed their agents to work for THEM, not the buyers.

There are a lot of lessons to be learned from our story. The issues were:

Poor In-Effective pricing strategy - Offers Invited

- Over-looked by 72% of buyers
- Limited competition
- Appears desperate
- Begins the negotiation from a position of weakness

Disclosure of Owners Position

- Knew they weren't getting the return they wanted/needed
- Knew they were keen to sell
- Knew they rejected \$768,000

Disclosure of Competition

- Advised no one else was interested at this point

All of these factors contributed to the owners of our home not getting the highest possible price for their property. They lost out on at least \$20,000 because of the In-Effective strategies used by the real estate agency and the agent themselves.

By selecting an agent that adopted Ethical & Effective strategies the outcome for these homeowners could have been much better.

An effective list price could have opened up a whole new group of potential buyers (72% more).

An effective buyer strategy would have ensured we knew nothing about the owners personal situation or the lack of competition and additionally, the agent would have known more about our personal situation.

An effective negotiation strategy would have ensured that we as the buyers, paid the absolute most we were prepared to pay for the home.

A sense of urgency would have ensured the buyers (Jo & I) were committed to their offer and weren't able to consider other alternatives prior to contracts being completed.

A BETTER WAY TO SELL

The strategies we use at Bellchambers Property were developed from a number of sources, my years of experience selling homes, our personal home buying and home selling experiences and also my time working with one of Australia's leading real estate training organisations.

We have adopted the mindset of Ethical & Effective and only implement strategies that we believe are in the best interests of the home sellers.

Bellchambers Property Company Values

1. **Highest Sale Price is our No. 1 Priority**
2. **Client First** - every interaction has to be considered from the client's perspective. Is it in their best interest?
3. **Honesty Always** - always be upfront and honest.
4. **Team work is Paramount** - working together for the Highest Sale Price
5. **We Own our Mistakes** - mistakes happen from time to time but we own them and make them right as soon as possible.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Who will I be dealing with throughout the entire process?

It is important to know who will be representing your property from the very outset to the final day of settlement.

A lot of agencies boast about having a large team with offices all over the country. It's not the number of people in the team that is important, it's who (and how) will be dealing with potential buyers throughout the entire process that is important.

Will calls be taken by administration staff that aren't trained in negotiation? Who can take buyers through your home and/or conduct the open homes? What about building and pest inspections and pre-settlement inspections?

Some large agencies use sales associates for what seem like simple tasks like opening the home for a building and pest inspection. This is fraught with danger. Contracts on properties can very easily fall through by an in-experienced agent or associate assisting with building and pest inspections. Be sure that the person you employ to represent your property actually represents your property along every step of the process.

2. What makes you different to every other Real Estate Agent?

In simple terms selling a house is easy. You can take some photos, put it on a few websites, open it up to buyers and get a sale. That will usually get you a sale. However, selling your home for the highest possible price is a different ballgame altogether.

You need an agency on your side that has designed their systems from the ground up to achieve one sole purpose - Getting You the Highest Possible Price.

What systems and processes does their Agency use to ensure you are able to sell your home for the highest possible price?

If the real estate agent you are speaking to doesn't work for an agency that prioritises getting you the maximum sale price then what are they doing?

Are they adopting technology to get you the highest price or to make their lives simpler?

Are they wanting you to pay for large marketing budgets to promote themselves and their agency (as well as your home).

Is the Agent an Expert in Negotiation?

Ask 10 real estate agents if they are good negotiators - all 10 will say yes.

Ask the same 10 agent if they negotiate face to face - only the best will say YES!

3. Where will you promote my property and how?

In the past, buyers of properties used to work with real estate agents to find the right home. These days buyers are finding the properties themselves using online portals (the most popular in Queensland being realestate.com.au).

Have you heard of the term Vendor Paid Advertising (VPA)? VPA is when the real estate agent has you, the home seller, pay for the marketing upfront (or on finance). It is a common practice for home sellers to pay for marketing at the start of the listing campaign. It is common, but not necessarily in the best interests of the home seller.

Are you aware that some large real estate chains give out awards for agents who sell the most VPA each year. Why would an agency care about how much VPA is sold? It's because the advertising the home sellers are paying for is promoting the actual real estate agent and their agency just as much as they are promoting your home.

A lot of real estate agents boast about getting properties in front of thousands & thousands of people. That would be great if all of those thousands of people were all looking to buy a property in your area.

The key to marketing is getting your property in front of the right people, people that are actually looking (and able) to buy a property now. This can be done cost effectively yet still provide you with a great outcome.

The Marketing Handcuffs

When you are talked into paying thousands of dollars up front but don't get the service or results you were promised it is very hard to walk away from that poor performing agent as it feels like you have just wasted all that money spent on marketing for no result. Typical real estate agencies bank on you feeling that way and use it as a form of hand-cuffs to keep you signed up and expect you to accept the best offer they can come up with.

4. How much do I pay if the property doesn't sell?

This is a very important question. If you list your home with an agent and the property doesn't sell for any number of reasons, how much will you lose?

You could have been misled into believing you could get an insanely high irresistible price for the sale of your home yet to find out that your gut feeling was right and that that high price wasn't achievable. What happens to the money spent on marketing then? How much are you going to get back? I think we all know the answer to that question don't we. However, how much promotion has that agent and their office received from the marketing spend?

We believe you shouldn't pay anything until the job is done. At Bellchambers Property, we put our money where our mouth is', and back our appraisal estimates. If we can't achieve the price we said we could then you don't pay a cent - guaranteed.

5. How do you conduct property inspections?

A majority of agents will tell you they set the open home times at the beginning of the campaign and publish them on realestate.com.au straight away. What strategy do they have for when open home times actually get published online?

It might seem like a simple thing to point out but this can make a huge difference in the negotiation of your property.

Is there a plan for when people want to view your home outside of the designated open homes? Do they want to bring people through any day and at any time?

6. What do you think our property should be listed for?

The two most common lies told in real estate are in the pricing of properties. One is obvious but hard to walk away from. This lie is referred to as 'buying the listing'. It's when the agent quotes a sale price that they know the seller wants but knowing too well that it isn't achievable. This strategy then involves the agent conditioning the home sellers down to a price that is more realistic after the property has been sitting on the market for a few weeks due to the price being too high and the majority of the time the seller ends up with an undersold home.

The second lie is less obvious. When the owners expectations are too high, rather than having the honest conversation with the home sellers, the agent will use a strategy that either doesn't put a price on the property, or a vague range to keep the sellers happy to 'win' the listing.

If you ask 5 real estate agents to value your home you will likely get 5 varying results. The question to ask is who determines the final sale price of your home? Is it you, your agent, your neighbours, that random Facebook follower or the person willing to offer you a contract (the buyer)? The key to remember is what strategies does that agent have that they can use to maximise the end result.

There is a huge risk in setting your listing price too high. It might sound great but if it is unrealistic then the buyers will know this also.

The best possible scenario when listing your home for sale is to have multiple people interested in buying your home. If you set the list price too high you will eliminate a lot of the buyers as no-one pays more than they think the home is worth.

7. How does your fee compare to your value?

It's easy to select the real estate agent that quotes the highest sale price and offers the lowest fee. If all real estate agencies were the same and did exactly the same thing then this approach would be valid.

However, the real question is how does their fee compare to the value they bring? Are they the same as everyone else or do they have unique systems and processes in place to maximise the sale price of your home. How much could the additional \$20,000 in your bank account compare to the difference in fees being charged?

8. What sort of guarantee will you offer?

This is an interesting one. How many real estate agencies do you know that will Guarantee their sales agents will do what they said they would do? We know of one! At Bellchambers Property we provide you with a written guarantee that we will do what we say we will do and get you the price we said we could get. If we can't then you can walk away from the agreement at absolutely no charge. We believe in our systems and processes so much that we are prepared to Guarantee we will do what we say.

How many other agencies are prepared to do the same?

We have one sole objective: Getting You The Highest Possible Price for Your Home

It's as simple as that.

We believe we have A Better Way to Sell your home.

And we are prepared to Guarantee it!

ABOUT SCOTT

Scott has had a varied range of careers since joining the Air Force at 18 years of age. These careers have included Financial Planning, a Printing business, Health Food stores and of course, Real Estate sales.

Real Estate was always something he wanted to try and was fortunate to be provided the opportunity whilst living on the Gold Coast.

It was everything and more that he had hoped it to be and quickly became the number 1 sales person for the Gold Coast office with that company.



Scott attribute's his success in real estate to his down to earth personality and 'non-salesy' approach.

"People know when they are being sold to and no-one likes that feeling. Treating people respectfully and honestly will always provide better outcomes for all involved"

Scott took a break from real estate sales when he & Jo had their second baby. It was something that he always intended to return to but that period of time was to focus on family.

Fast forward a couple of years and the real estate company he used to work for reached out with an opportunity. That company had purchased on of Australia's best real estate training organisations and asked if Scott could come back in a sales role.

"Coming back to the team that I had worked for and being around the group of professional real estate agents across the country re-ignited that spark for real estate sales".

The training focus of Ethical & Effective still felt right to Scott, there is no other way to conduct business as far as he is concerned. With their personal experience in purchasing a home in Innes Park it quickly became clear to Scott and Jo what their next business venture was going to be. The creation of Bellchambers Property has been a labour of love. Being able to design a business from the ground up that focuses purely on the best outcomes for the clients has been very rewarding.

A Better Way to Sell



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