

Scottsdale Real Estate Sales Increasingly Driven by Internet Technology

As technology makes more of an impact on people's lives, home buyers and sellers in the Phoenix and Scottsdale area expect their agents to have a website and answer their e-mail. But are agents listening?

Scottsdale Arizona, Aug 23,2005 – Real Estate agents are seeing an increased demand for “less traditional” communications with their clients; namely e-mail and websites. The numbers overwhelmingly indicate a changing trend in how real estate consumers start looking for a home, first contact an agent, and even close the deal.

This has not gone unnoticed by some area realtors. According to Scottsdale, Arizona realtor Echo Farrell, answering e-mail is becoming almost as prevalent as answering the phone. “I would say I get new contacts almost every day via e-mail” states Farrell “they find my website, look at a few houses I have on there, they read about me, and then they contact me. And they expect an e-mail in return.”

According to a report issued by the California Association of Realtors in March 2005, almost two-thirds of first-time home buyers used the Internet as a first step in finding a home. Combine that with the fact that, according to internet usage tracking website internetworldstats.com, almost 70 percent of the US population uses the internet, and you have the foundation for industry-shaking trends.

But are realtors as a whole listening? Remember, this is a profession still largely populated by the generation that came of age before personal computers. While no hard data exists on how many real estate agents use e-mail regularly, it isn't hard to find a real estate consumer frustrated by a tech-illiterate agent. Just ask anyone who has bought or sold a home recently.

“I'm a writer who works online” says home buyer Dan Furman “I don't have time for endless telephone tag. Just answer my e-mail, please.” Furman further elaborated on how inept some agents were: “I was stunned that the first two agents I tried could not answer e-mail on a timely basis. Neither one had any idea how to send me a link or an attachment. I find that inexcusable.”

Farrell agrees. “When today's consumer looks to buy or sell a home, many first go to the internet to see 'what's out there'. Then, when they find something that interests them, they send an e-mail. And many of them continually want to communicate via e-mail. If I don't respond in kind, I'm not playing the game on their level.”

Farrell has taken things a step further by launching an extensive interactive website, www.azsonorahomes.com. Her site shows homes, allows consumers to search the MLS listings, and even includes a video message from Echo herself. It communicates to potential clients that she's not only technology proficient, but way ahead of the curve.

Just what clients in 2005 expect.