



Website: www.ChasEveritt.com

| Issue: March 2009 | Editor: Berry Everitt

FROM BERRY EVERITT

We have long believed in the growing power of the internet when it comes to marketing real estate, and now we are innovating again, putting the latest Google technologies to work to translate our listings instantly into any one of 44 different languages, and to provide street and satellite mapping for potential buyers around the world.



Motivated by the prospect of the 2010 World Cup, we have already embedded the translation and mapping facilities on chaseveritt.co.za and chaseveritt.co.uk, and will phase them in on more than 100 local and regional websites over the next month.

Living in a globally interconnected world, it is our belief that the international focus that SA will enjoy as a result of the World Cup will rival the attention we enjoyed when Nelson Mandela walked free, and our goal is to ensure that Chas Everitt clients ride that wave of exposure for the next decade.

Meanwhile, we have partnered with another leading internet service provider to initiate a multiple website structure that will be marketed as eTowns.co.za and promote the sale of properties in smaller towns and rural areas.

What is more, we are also planning a facility called 'HandShake' that will allow cross marketing of competitor properties on Chas Everitt websites on an agreed reciprocal basis.

In short, we are totally committed to preserving our well-deserved reputation as SA leaders in the application of technologies that serve the interests of homebuyers and sellers as well as our agents.

Your Area Specialist:

Chas Everitt International sales agents have all the latest market information regarding local property values at their fingertips - and are committed to the highest standards of personal service when it comes to selling your home. In addition, the Chas Everitt International property group offers you, the homeowner, the best possible exposure for your property in both national and international markets. So if you are thinking of selling your home, call your nearest Chas Everitt International office today for the name of your local area specialist - or visit www.ChasEveritt.com

Every month the **Property Signpost Newsletter** will be issued to all our subscribers, filled with real estate information to help you make an informed decision, whether you are buying or selling a property.

In This Month's Newsletter:

- **New market means new strategies**
- **Tenants need to insure their own belongings**
- **The HOA: Get it right from the start**
- **Take care when using CFLs**



Email any comments to the editor:
berry@propertysignpost.co.za

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New market means new strategies

There is no doubt that a buyers' market is in full swing - and sellers need to adapt their selling strategies accordingly.



With many homes on the market, sellers should attempt to make their properties stand out from the crowd, and one way of doing this, is to "sell the deal" instead of selling just another property.

For example, if your agent suggests dropping the selling price, you could turn things around and instead of advertising the property for less, advertise that you will pay the first few months' bond repayments for your buyer.

At the end of the day, you would still only receive the discounted price for your home but at least you would have put the rest of the money to positive use by incentivising potential buyers and quite possibly achieving a faster sale.

Another incentive may be to include appliances with the home. This will probably appeal to buyers who are saving every penny for the required deposit and transfer costs. Similarly, custom-made blinds and curtains or a new carpet of the buyer's choice could be included in the deal.

If you are selling a holiday home, you could consider selling it as a furnished property, or even include extras for which you will no longer have any use, such as a beach buggy or boat.

However, the trick is to include incentives in your initial marketing plan. Your aim should be to attract as many prospective buyers as possible by offering an attractive deal - there is little marketing value in offering the incentives only when prospective buyers are already on your doorstep.

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Tenants need to insure their own belongings

Tenants often labour under the misconception that their personal belongings are covered under their landlord's insurance cover for the property.

The confusion probably arises because the insurance policy on the owner's bricks and mortar may cover damage to a tenant's belongings if that damage is caused by something that went wrong with the building itself - a burst geyser, for example.

However, damage caused by any other event, such as storms, or loss through theft, will not be covered and for that tenants have to take out their own household insurance.

But before signing up for an insurance policy, they should:

- * Get at least three quotes from different companies so that they can compare apples with apples and choose the best cover, for the most reasonable monthly premiums, and with the lowest excess payments in case of claims.

- * Be very honest about the value of the goods they are insuring - if their estimate is too high, they are going to pay higher premiums than necessary, and if too low, any claim will only be proportionally paid out.

- * Make sure what will be excluded from the cover and which items will have to be included in the all-risks section. All-risks items usually include goods that are often taken out of the home, such as cell phones, sunglasses or golf clubs.

- * Check that possessions will be covered if they often go away for work or on holiday. Some policies will not pay out if the home is unoccupied for more than 30 days a year.

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The HOA: Get it right from the start

Getting a homeowners' association (HOA) on a sound footing from the word go can go a long way to protecting value in a residential development, to the benefit of all owners.

Simple steps that need to be taken include:

- * The HOA should without delay elect a management committee, which should hire independent legal counsel to assist it in all legal matters;

- * The committee should compile and assemble all documents relating to the HOA constitution, project documents, the developer's marketing materials, financial records and all correspondence;

- * Next the property should be professionally inspected and any structural or maintenance defects immediately taken up with the developer and / or building contractor;

- * The HOA should appoint an independent accountant to audit its finances and to determine whether or not the developer has paid all required capital contributions and assessments. If not, the matter should be resolved without delay.

- * Simultaneously, the management committee should draw up a budget to cover the running and maintenance costs within its remit and create a reserve fund to cover the cost of all foreseeable repair and replacement costs.

- * The management committee should seriously consider hiring a property management company that specialises in the management of gated developments. An important benefit of such an appointment is that an external manager will be able to remain objective if any disputes arise among the members of the HOA.

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Take care when using CFLs

Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are generally welcomed as a more efficient alternative to incandescent bulbs - but environmentalists and health experts are now concerned about their long-term impact.

While the bulbs are extremely energy efficient, they contain mercury, a neurotoxin that can cause kidney and brain damage. The amount in each CFL is tiny, about 5mg - or just enough to cover the tip of a pen, but that is enough to contaminate about 30 000L of water beyond the safety limits set by international research.

What concerns environmentalists is the cumulative effect on water resources when increasing numbers of CFLs are dumped and the tubes are shattered, releasing the mercury to the environment.

On the other hand, accidental breakage of globes in homes and workplaces is what concerns health experts, who warn that mercury contamination of a home or office should be cleared by experts to prevent mercury becoming a health hazard to residents or workers.

And even intact CFLs could cause misery for people who have light-sensitive skin disorders, medical experts have warned. People with skin conditions such as lupus, eczema and psoriasis have reported that CFLs cause painful rashes, swelling and a burning sensation on their skin. The main concern is the intensity of the ultraviolet light from the low-energy bulbs.

One alternative for people with susceptible skin conditions is halogen bulbs. These resemble normal bulbs and are slightly more expensive, however they use only about 70% of the energy used by incandescent bulbs to emit the same amount of light.

Meanwhile, consumers who do switch to using CFLs are advised to take due care not to break the bulbs and to find sites that can safely dispose of them.

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