



The Power of Photography

REALTORS know that selling a home effectively is all about marketing it well – and a savvy marketing plan includes great photographs of your home. According to the National Association of Realtors in the U.S., people who search for houses on the Internet rank photographs as the number one most useful tool in determining which houses they want to visit. So REALTORS know that it's well worth putting some serious time and effort into making sure a listing includes excellent photos of the home.

Taking clear, well-composed shots of both the exterior and interior of your home takes some serious skill. Knowing how to light a room, which angle to shoot from, and which is the best time of day to take photos are all important factors. Some REALTORS have taken photography courses and have invested in high-quality camera equipment to better serve their clients. Other REALTORS have developed relationships with professional real estate photographers and may offer those services to their sellers.

A professional photographer knows how to highlight your home's assets. He or she brings sophisticated camera equipment, including specialized lenses to help shoot into small spaces or at unusual angles. An experienced photographer knows which angle to shoot from to show your home in the best possible light, and which rooms to focus on.

Of course, for great photographs, it's essential to begin with a well-presented house. A clean and tidy room, free of clutter, will always photograph better than one filled with knickknacks and stacks of paper. Make sure the outdoor spaces look well-tended: mow the lawn, trim shrubs and trees, weed the garden and touch up faded or peeling paint, because the front exterior shot is a great lead-in to the listing. Your REALTOR may suggest hiring a professional home stager to prepare the house for photography.

In addition to still photographs, your REALTOR might suggest having a virtual tour of your home created. (Many of those professional real-estate photography firms also make virtual tours.) A virtual tour consists of a series of panoramic photographs that have been digitally stitched together to form a 360-degree view of a room. Some virtual tours use video technology instead of still photographs. A virtual tour offers online viewers the experience of walking into a room in your house and turning around in a circle to see the entire space. You can showcase multiple rooms, or highlight just one.

A REALTOR can place up to ten photos on your MLS® listing to help advertise your home to their colleagues, as well as to the public, who can view the listing and all its associated photos on www.mls.ca and www.OttawaRealEstate.org. Virtual tours can also be directly linked from an MLS® listing. The expression "a picture is worth a thousand words" is clichéd for a reason: it's true. Making a good impression through photographs and virtual tours is a great way to entice potential buyers to come check out the real thing.

Readers are encouraged to send questions to: jean@labellephoto.com