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HOME STAGING THE HOTTEST TREND IN A SIZZLING MARKET

With new developments selling out hours after the first units are released, and homes consistently selling for more than asking price, it's clear that Vancouver is experiencing a real estate boom.

Still, even in hot neighbourhoods, some homes languish on the market for months. What's the difference between a quick, profitable sale and a long, slow, real estate nightmare?

The answer is often "home staging" – a hot new trend that's literally changing the way successful realtors and home sellers show homes.

Home staging is a simple way to easily prepare any home to appeal to potential buyers. Unlike redecorating, which simply makes a home a beautiful space to live in, home staging focuses on the experience of the viewer. Redecorating a home makes it an ideal space for the homeowner; staging allows viewers to imagine themselves actually living in the home.

It's a strategy developers have used for decades to create show homes – and it's why those new developments sell out so fast, no matter what the price. With buyers clearly ready to spend, savvy sellers are using home staging to ensure a quick sale – or even start a bidding war.

Take, for example, the case of Louise Nerberka and Bowie Gilmour, whose Shaughnessey home recently sold for a whopping \$50,000 over asking price in only one week

"We obtained multiple offers in the first week of marketing," Nerberka said. "This was certainly our fastest and easiest sale of a home."

With such an impressive result, it's easy to think this may be an isolated case. But Michael McNamara of Revamp Home Staging says it's not uncommon for his clients to accept offers of \$50,000 over asking price – or even more.

"Our clients are consistently provoking multiple offers and extracting top dollar from their homes," McNamara said. "We recently staged a home for a couple in North Vancouver who accepted an offer \$52,000 over asking price within two days of their first open house – and it was even a holiday weekend."

Of course, while \$50,000 is mighty nice, homeowners also say they are thrilled not to have to live with months of open houses and disruptive viewings.

"The best part was only one showing, then back to normal," said Christie McConkey, whose Revamp-staged home near UBC recently sold for \$50,000 over asking price in only two hours. "Whatever normal is!"

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About Revamp Home Staging:

Revamp Home Staging has been operating in the Lower Mainland since 2003. Revamp founders Michael McNamara and Rien Sharma draw on a broad background of staging experiences. Originally from Australia, McNamara spent many years working with home staging companies in the Melbourne market. Sharma, with a background in interior design, brings the creative flair to Revamp, creating inspiring

interiors in the staged homes.

Revamp's offices are in West Vancouver, with warehousing operations in Richmond. Testimonials from many of the satisfied realtors and homeowners they have worked with, and home staging tips for anyone considering selling a home, can be found on their web site: www.RevampConcepts.com