

Aspects that an agent will know that the internet won't

 By [Adrian Goslett](#)

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Statistically, nine out of ten homebuyers will make use of the internet during their home search process. This is because technology has made the process far more streamlined and buyers are able to wade through masses of information with relative ease. Online property search portals are an excellent place for homebuyers to start looking for a home, but there are certain aspects regarding the buying and selling process that a real estate professional will know that can't be found online.

Pricing a home according to the market

While it is possible to get a general idea of the property prices in an area, setting a fair market-related price requires in-depth, working knowledge of the area and current market conditions. A real estate professional will consider several factors when setting an asking price, such as local and national market trends, suburb demand, neighbourhood development activity and the latest buyer preferences, to name a few. Although there will be an average price per square metre in a certain area, each and every home is unique and will need to be priced accordingly based on its distinctive offering.

Another aspect that agents can assist with is comparison shopping. While a homebuyer may be able to compare certain elements online, there will be factors that an agent will be able to help with and provide some guidance. A consultation with a real estate agent can be an invaluable tool, as they will be able to point out elements and make suggestions about things that the buyer may have otherwise missed. A professional, objective opinion will help the buyer to make the right investment decision.

Offline marketing

Even though online marketing and social media have become an intricate and valuable part of the property marketing process, there is still a place for the more traditional marketing methods in today's trading environment. A reputable, professional real estate agent will have a network of contacts, experience and market knowledge to successfully round out their marketing plan to ensure the property is exposed to the right target market.

On the other side of the coin, buyers will benefit from using an agent because they will be able to tap into their network and find out about suitable properties before they are even listed online.

Key pointers during the process

Finding the right home is only one step in the process to becoming a homeowner. It is possible for a buyer to find a home that they love while searching online, but what happens after that? An agent will be able to guide the buyer through the process of applying for a bond, dealing with conveyancing attorneys, finding a home inspector or providing advice on what to do should the inspector find any issues with the property.

Negotiation

Real estate agents are skilled, experienced negotiators, which is valuable when trying to reach a fair price for a property that is either being bought or sold. While a website will be able to provide an estimate of how much a home should cost, it won't be able to evaluate whether that is indeed a good deal or not.

An experienced real estate professional from a reputable brand will be able to provide the buyer and seller with a wealth of knowledge that they will not be able to get elsewhere. While there is a great deal of information online, there are still some things that require a more personal touch.

ABOUT ADRIAN GOSLETT

Adrian Goslett is CEO and regional director of RE/MAX Southern Africa. He joined RE/MAX Southern Africa in 2005 as a franchise development consultant, supporting various regions and offices. Throughout his career at RE/MAX he has held various positions. In 2010, after successfully leading 160 offices and over 1500 agents in six countries through the worst years real estate has ever seen in South Africa in 30 years, Goslett was appointed as CEO of RE/MAX Southern Africa.

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