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Go-big upgrades that can help a lingering home sell at last

(BPT) - Everyone knows spring and summer are the best months in which to sell a home. If your house has lingered on the market, you may be eager to find ways to freshen its appeal for potential buyers. Perhaps you're even ready to go big and invest in upgrades that will improve the home's value, curb appeal and interior allure so much that potential buyers just won't be able to walk away from it.

If you're at that point, first figure out how much you can reasonably invest. Will the improvement increase your home value enough to allow you to recoup its cost? Maybe not, but if your priority is a faster sale, return on investment might have a different meaning for you.

Next, look at areas of your home where improvements will have the biggest impact - spots that are the least appealing or those that have the most appeal. Upgrading a less-than-great room can bring it up to snuff, but upgrading a good room could make it absolutely smashing. For example, painting a small bathroom in a bright color could make that cramped space feel bigger. Adding a skylight to your kitchen, bath, or other area in your home however, will really make a splash with abundant natural light and fresh air.

Here's a room-by-room game plan for high-impact upgrades that could make buyers fall in love with your home:

Anywhere

Buyers are, universally, looking for beauty and value. Any improvement that gives both can directly impact your ability to sell your home. Adding a skylight is a great way to enhance a home's visual appeal, livability and energy efficiency while improving indoor air quality by introducing much needed fresh air into the home.

Natural light can make a small room look bigger and brighter, and create a more healthful environment. Adding a traditional or tubular skylight to any room in the house brings more natural light into your home. Plus, Energy Star-qualified, solar-powered fresh-air skylights, like those made by Velux America, can provide fresh air through cost-efficient passive ventilation to reduce humidity and stale air, and heating, cooling and lighting costs. Add remote-controlled, solar powered blinds, and you can boost a skylight's energy efficiency by 39 percent, Velux states.

Finally, this is one high impact investment that can actually put cash back in your pocket. Installation of energy-efficient no leak solar powered fresh air skylights and blinds can qualify you for up to a 30 percent federal tax credit on the -products and installation costs. Visit www.veluxusa.com to learn more and calculate your tax credit for new or replacement skylights.

Kitchen and bathroom

Any Realtor will tell you great kitchens and bathrooms can sell a house. If yours are only so-so, they could be what's standing in the way of getting an offer. If you've already done the basics - cleaning and decluttering, repainting and replacing dated cabinet hardware - it may be time to pull out the big guns.

New appliances and fixtures will cost you a few thousand, but can go a long way toward wooing buyers. New appliances look great, are more energy-efficient, and provide buyers the peace of mind knowing they won't face repair or replacement costs any time soon. New fixtures such as rainfall shower heads and touch-free faucets add an element of luxury to the most common bathroom.

Adding a tile backsplash or new wood-look laminate flooring in the kitchen, and new tile floor in the bath can also create a big impact - and for less money if you do the work yourself. Replacing lower-quality or older countertops is also an eye-catching upgrade. The trick is to find the improvement that will have the biggest visual impact in your space.

Living room/family

When buyers enter your home, chances are the living room or family room will be one of the first rooms they see. Their impression of that room can set the tone for how they perceive the rest of the house. Again, assuming you've done the basics - painting, window treatments and accessories - a major upgrade in this room can have a winning impact.

If your home already has a fireplace, take a close look at it. What can you do to make it more appealing? Does it need a new facade? Larger gas logs or a better blower? Can you upgrade the mantel? If your home lacks a fireplace, adding one can be a great selling point. It's possible to add a gas fireplace for less than \$5,000 in most homes. Adding a gas insert to a wood-burning fireplace is even cheaper.

ARTICLE IMAGE(S)



Caption



Caption

Word Count:

772

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