



SELLERS GUIDE

let's get your home sold



ABOUT US

The Hometown Advantage Team Ryan C. Benton & Sue Sanders Rose & Womble Realty Co.

We're Ryan & Sue: a real estate duo with nearly 30 years of experience serving families from historic Williamsburg to idyllic Virginia Beach oceanfront. As Hampton Roads natives, we're so grateful to call this coastal & military community home. From the abundant outdoor adventures to the quaint boutiques and craft breweries, this is a place for endless memory making; a place for growing and raising a family. We're proud to have helped hundreds of families do exactly that.

When you join The Hometown Advantage family, you can count on us to deliver the very best service in Coastal Virginia. We'll perfectly stage your home, nail the pricing and marketing, and help you reach every single one of your real estate and financial goals. And you know what? We promise we'll make all of that happen in the smoothest, most stress-free way possible.

Consider us your trusted advisors,
tenacious negotiators, and dream
makers – your real estate family.

We cannot wait to chat!

Ryan & Sue

license

L# 0225 201014

cell

Ryan: 757-544-0383

Sue: 757-620-0846

email

rbenton@roseandwomble.com

ssanders@roseandwomble.com

website

thetownadvantage.com

instagram

@ryancbenton

@sue.sanders

facebook

@thetownadvantageteam

office

1215 Volvo Parkway

Chesapeake, VA 23320



by the numbers

The Hometown Advantage Team	Average Hampton Roads Agent
\$140,000,000 volume sold	\$9,000,000 volume sold
\$25,000,000 volume sold 2019-2020	\$1,000,000 volume sold 2019-2020
97% list to sold price ratio	90% list to sold price ratio
20 years in business	2 years in business
200+ happy families helped	45 happy families helped
140 five-star reviews	– five-star reviews

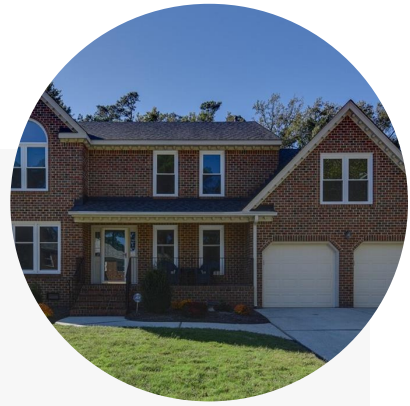
**results, not
promises.**

what our clients say

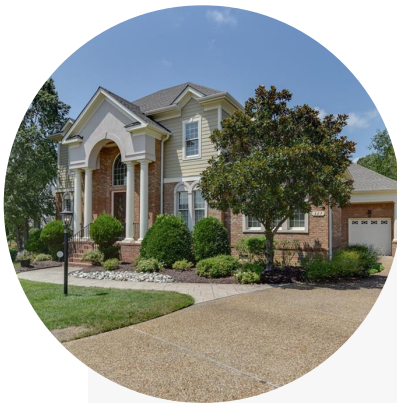
Our clients are just the best. If you asked them about us, they'd tell you we're patient, hard-working, top-notch, proactive, marketing wizards, & detail obsessed. They might make us blush and share how we've been one of our company's top producing teams for the past four years or how we're in the top 4% of Realtors in the Hampton Roads. But most importantly, they'd confide that, by the time we closed the deal, we'd become family to them.

To us, there is no higher honor.

Sue and Ryan were a pleasure to work with. They were knowledgeable and professional, while providing a personal touch to the home selling experience. I highly recommend this duo.



Jeannette F.
Chesapeake, VA
Sold in 2020
Sold in 3 days



Jim & Barbara B.
Suffolk, VA
Sold in 2020
Full Market Value

Our home was previously on the market for 14 months with a grand total of 5 showings with another agent. Sue & Ryan came highly recommended from a neighbor and so we hired them and saw an immediate increase in showing traffic and we had a contract within 8 weeks with over 14 showings. We can't emphasize how impressed we were with Sue & Ryan's attention to detail, their constant updates on the status of showings and their genuine desire to get our home sold. We wholeheartedly recommend Sue & Ryan for your next home sale.

the selling process

Let's break the home selling process down into 4 simple steps:

1 PREPARE IT

Meet with your agents
Clean, declutter, paint

2 ADVERTISE IT

Determine price
Strategic marketing

3 SHOW IT

Negotiate offers
Get under contract

4 SELL IT

Inspections + appraisals
Closing day!

"Buyers decide in the **first 8 seconds** of seeing a home if they're interested in buying it. Get out of your car, walk in their shoes and see what they see within the first 8 seconds."

- BARBARA CORCORAN



It is so important to make a great first impression once a buyer enters the home for the first time. When a potential buyer walks into a dirty home, they assume that the current owners did not take care of the property.

Most buyers will want a move-in ready property that feels like new. A long list of chores and repairs right when they move in will not be appealing and can be daunting to a potential buyer.

If needed, we contract professional cleaners and stagers to showcase your home in the best possible way.

Use the checklist on the following page to prepare your home for the market.

staging checklist

✓ CREATE A GAME PLAN

- Walk-through your home, room by room as if you are a buyer and take notes on what needs to be done prior to listing.
- Consider having a home inspector come and see if anything needs to be repaired.
- Have a yard sale and throw out anything you do not need anymore (this will make packing up to move easier, too!)

✓ REPAIRS TO CONSIDER

- Repaint and clean walls. Using light, neutral shades have been shown to be more appealing to potential buyers. In the kitchen paint baseboards, kitchen cabinets, trim, molding.
- Landscape. Add some color with flowers and shrubs Keep the lawn mowed and remove weeds.
- Upgrade lighting. Swap out old light bulbs with new brighter bulbs Add more lamps and accent lighting to brighten up darker rooms.
- Replace old appliances. When buyers know they don't need to replace appliances for years, they have a much easier time saying "yes to the address".
- Consider renewing floor finishes and replacing old carpets. Flooring is one of the first things a potential buyer will see and can make or break it for them. Cleaning or renewing your floors can result in a great return.

✓ CLEAN, CLEAN, CLEAN

- Thoroughly clean the entire home, or hire a professional cleaning company to do this
- Steam clean carpet.
- Repair all cracks and holes in walls
- Paint all bold interior walls a neutral color
- Remove any excess furniture
- Organize closets and remove any clothes not in season to show off the space in closets
- De-clutter: stow away any small appliances, knick-knacks, personal items, etc. Remember, less is more!
- Remove valuable items from home like cash or jewelry

staging checklist

✓ KITCHEN AND BATHROOMS

- Mop and polish floors
- Clean appliances and fixtures
- Clean and organize pantry, throw out any old items and show off the storage space
- Replace old caulking
- Remove all stains from sinks, toilets, showers/tubs
- Keep all toilet seat lids closed
- Stow away your personal soaps, hygiene products, medications, etc.

✓ FINISHING TOUCHES

- Switch out any lights that need to be replaced
- Throw in some fresh flowers or plants
- Remove personal photographs and items
- Don't forget to tidy up your closets and storage areas - buyers will be looking there too
- Stow away any pet or kids items
- Light a candle
- Wipe down all surfaces and declutter

✓ CURB APPEAL

- Paint the home's exterior, trim, doors, and shutters
- Power wash
- Consider sprucing up the front door with a fresh coat of paint, welcome mat and plants
- Inspect the roof
- Sweep the entryways
- Keep lawn mowed and maintained
- Clean up pet droppings
- Clean the gutters and downspouts
- Open windows, let fresh air in.
- Turn all of the lights, open the blinds

✓ CONSIDER STAGING

Staging a home is a strategic marketing tool used by sellers to help buyers imagine themselves living in your home and fall in love with their property. Staging is more than just putting a new welcome mat in front of the door and getting new throw pillows - when done correctly it can help a home sell for more money in a shorter amount of time.

83% of real estate agents said staging made it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as a future home.

40% of buyers' agents said that home staging had an effect on most buyers' view of the home.

** Statistics from the National Association of Realtors® Research Group, 2019*



PROS

- + Staging makes the listing photos look phenomenal, attracting more buyers into the home
- + Staging allows buyers to envision themselves living in your home
- + Staging has been proven to get a higher price in shorter time

CONS

- Staging can take time to set up and take down after selling
- Staging can be costly when hiring a professional stager company
- If done poorly, staging may not be in the buyers' taste

✓ PRICE IT RIGHT

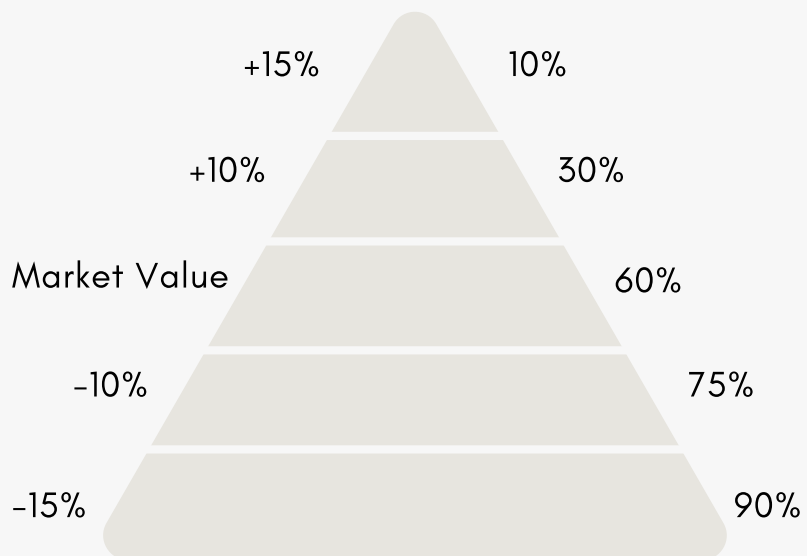
It's important to thoroughly evaluate the market to determine the market value of your home. Here's why:

- Properties that are priced right from the beginning typically sell for more in the end.
- If you price your home too high, the home will stay on the market longer. The longer a home stays on the market, the less it will be shown.
- Your property attracts the most interest when it is first listed, so it is crucial to price it correctly initially.

why pricing it right is *critical*

asking price

percent of buyers



✓ PRICE IT RIGHT

Should we price it higher just to see what happens?

Setting a very high price just to “see what we get” is never a good idea. Setting an unreasonably high price usually results in longer time on the market, which does not look good to buyers and will frustrate you. Many sellers ask about the price that Zillow or other real estate websites give for their home. These are not reliable because these sites are only taking into consideration very general demographics. Our job is to determine the perfect listing price to get your home sold for the most amount of money, in the shortest amount of time.

PROS AND CONS OF PRICING IT...



below market value

- + The home will receive high interest and a quick sale
- + You may get a multiple offer scenario, which may include offers higher than asking price
- Risk of having to sell at a lower price



at market value

- + No appraisal issues
- + Buyers and agents will recognize a fair price
- + Will appear on more relevant buyer searches



over market value

- + If you have to receive a certain amount for the home
- It will take much longer to sell
- The more days it's on the market, the worse it looks to prospects
- The home may not appraise by the buyer's lender, back to negotiations

What is my home worth?

Determining your home's market value is one very important reason to use a real estate agent. We will do a comparative market analysis (CMA) to help you set the correct listing price. We look at recent sales of comparable homes, similar homes that are under contract, and homes that are listed in the same price range of your home. Then we compare features of the homes including the size, style, number of rooms, age of the home, amenities, condition, lot size and placement, and the location or neighborhood. (Note: the tax appraiser's assessed value of your home has nothing to do with the market price.)

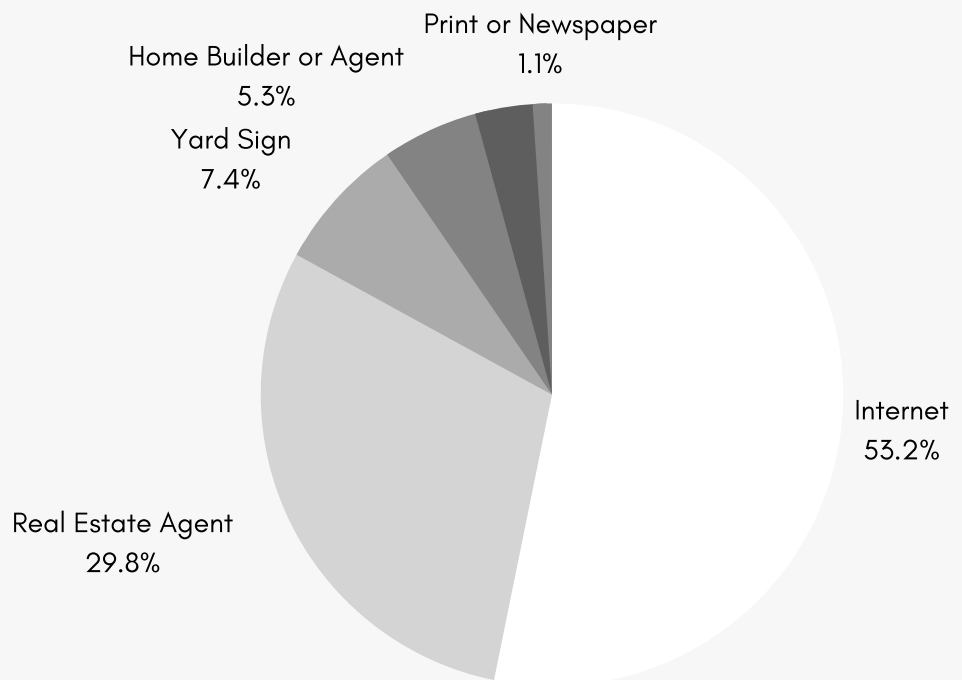
✓ STRATEGIC MARKETING

More than likely, the first place potential buyers will see your home is online. This is why we work hard to reach as many buyers as possible online, and strive to make the best impression possible through our online listings.

When it comes to online marketing, many agents will try to convince you that they have some sort of secret weapon to market your home.

The truth is, every agent's listings is syndicated by the MLS to thousands of websites automatically. If a buyer is house shopping, and your house is on the market, it is basically impossible for them to miss it. Typically, the factors that prevent a home from selling are price, the way it is inputted and the way it is displayed in the MLS.

Home Buyers are Shopping Online



Source: 2019 NAR Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends

The photos of your home directly influence whether or not a potential buyer will schedule a showing of your home or not. It is crucial that we take high quality, attractive photos of your listing showcasing the best qualities and features of your home. Because of this, we work with the top real estate photographers in the area to capture your home in the very best light. This is a service paid for by us. Never let your agent skimp on professional photos and post photos taken with a cell phone on the MLS.

HOW WILL THE SHOWING PROCESS WORK?

We will decide together on how to handle showings. We can set parameters as to the hours and days that showings are allowed, and how to notify you in advance. Homes show best when the homeowner is not present, but if this is not possible, we will work together to create the best experience for the buyer that also fits your lifestyle. Usually we use an electronic lockbox that allows buyers' agents to access your house key. These boxes also notify us any time they are opened, so no one is accessing your home without our knowledge. If you have pets in the home that need to be tended to during showings, we will work out the best way to handle them. Furthermore, we try to get feedback from each showing and pass that information back to you.



✓ QUICK SHOWING CHECKLIST

Use this showing checklist to get your home prepared for each showing.

- Remove all clutter and put away any personal items or decorations
- Remove all dishes from the sink and wipe it down
- Stow away any valuable items or take them with you
- Collect any kids or pets toys that are out
- Empty trash
- Clean bathrooms
- Spray air freshener or light a candle
- Fix and declutter exterior walkways

✓ PREPARING TO CLOSE

Once we're under contract, keep in mind that we still have to clear any contingencies on the contract before we close.

A **contingency** is when there's something that the buyer or seller needs to do for the transaction to go forward.

Some common contingencies are:

- **Inspection contingency.** If the inspection report shows that the home has issues like a damaged roof or electrical issues, the buyers may ask you to lower the price or repair the issues. If an agreement can not be reached, the buyers may back out.
- **Financing contingency.** This will be on any contract where the buyer needs to obtain a mortgage loan in order to buy your home. This is why buyers will submit a pre-approval letter with their offer, to prove that they have are capable of getting the loan, but there are still some things that need to be done before they get the "clear-to-close" from their lender.
- **Appraisal contingency.** Typically, the lender requests an appraisal is done to make sure they are paying a fair price for your home. If the appraisal value comes back lower than the price of the home, the buyers will have the ability to walk away from the deal if you don't lower the price. This is why it's so important to price your home right from the get-go.
- **Home sale contingency.** This happens when the buyer is currently trying to sell their own property. This is not as common as the other contingencies, but it does happen.



Should I offer incentives like a home warranty, closing costs, or selling agent bonus?

Incentives are something we like to consider on a case-by-case basis. There are certain circumstances where it may be smart to offer an incentive. Some incentives can be offered from the start. For example, if your home is in an area that doesn't get a lot of traffic, we may offer an incentive to agents to bring us a buyer. Or if you know the appliances are at the end of their lifetime, you may offer a home warranty to help the buyers replace them. Other incentives, like helping with closing costs, are better used during the negotiation process.

What do I need to disclose?

It's smart to disclose any issues right up front. Your buyers will have the right to inspect the home, so it's best they not be hit with bad news after going under contract. If you know of problems with the appliances, plumbing, electric, HVAC, roof, foundation, property lines, or deed, these need to be listed on the Seller's Disclosure. If there are repairs that you can have done before listing, go ahead and take care of those. Anything that cannot be remedied before listing should be considered when setting your list price.

What happens if my home doesn't appraise above the contract price?

It sometimes happens that a home does not appraise at or above the contract price. When this happens, we go back to negotiations to determine if we can save the deal by adjusting both the sales price and the terms of the contract to the satisfaction of both buyer and seller. Usually we are able to work it out and save the deal. You always have the right to refuse to lower the price to meet the appraisal, but it's usually in your best interest to try to work with the buyer to resolve the issue as the next appraisal could result in the same valuation. If you are concerned about the appraisal value, go ahead and have your home appraised before setting the listing price.

How do you negotiate multiple offers?

A multiple-offer scenario is a fun position to be in as a seller. We will help you through the negotiation process to select the right buyer- and that is not always the one with the highest offer. We need to consider how strong the offer is, whether they are offering cash or financing, how much they are financing and what type of loan they are using. How much they are offering to put in escrow and the terms of the inspection process are indications of their commitment to the deal. You may also draw on sentiment: are they buying your home as an investment or a place to raise their family?

How long will it take to sell my home?

The length of time on market will depend upon the market in your area at the time of listing and whether the home is priced realistically. We are always working to get you the highest price in the shortest time possible. On average, a home that is priced right goes under contract in a month or two. If you need to sell fast, that should be reflected in the list price.

thank you

Thank you for trusting us with the sale of your property. We pride ourselves on offering a warm, personalized, all-inclusive boutique experience. We're data driven, focusing on modern marketing to reach the widest audience for listings and working tirelessly to help you find that special place you'll call "home".

Have more questions? We're always available to help! Shoot us a text or give us a call for the quickest response. Helping our clients sell their home for top dollar and with the most ease is what we are passionate about - we're always here to answer your questions.



The Hometown Advantage Team

Ryan C. Benton: 757-544-0383

Sue Sanders: 757-620-0846

TheHometownAdvantage.com

let's get social



@instahandle



@facebookpage