

"Learn the Secrets to a Successful Private House Sale"

(An Expert Guide For UK Property Owners)

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The Big Private House Sale Question!

See how you answer this:

Q: What's your most important job when selling a house privately? A: Finding buyers!

It's so simple that many private sellers answer this incorrectly.

"Presenting my property well" or "Setting the right price" are the two most common wrong answers I hear.

Granted, these things are important but they are utterly meaningless unless you can find the buyers!

Where Are All the Buyers?

Well, chances are you're in the throws of house hunting at the moment so you probably know the answer to this already.

For the avoidance of doubt:

"The buyers are on the Internet!"

More specifically they are surfing the top 5 property portals:

Hopefully you'll agree that the figures I've just shown you are staggering - and it's just the tip of the iceberg!

There was easily in excess of 12.6 million buyers searching at these portals in Apr 2007 alone (& if we make a conservative estimate for Propertyfinder.com of 1.3m, this figure rises to nearly 14 million).

14 million pairs of eyeballs a month makes the Internet far & away the most effective property sales tool ever.

To be more accurate:

It makes Rightmove.co.uk the most effective sales tool ever because that's where 2 out of 3 of all successful home movers find their new homes.

At any one time there are 1 million properties (give or take a few) for sale & 97% of them are on one or more of the portals mentioned above.

Simply put....

If your property is not listed amongst these portals (most importantly, Rightmove.co.uk) then your property is not being marketed as effectively as it should.

Newspapers in Trouble

The success and willingness of the house buying public to embrace the Internet has been a big problem for the newspaper industry.

Before, substantial revenue was made from [estate agents](#) advertising property for sale.

So, what has the newspaper industry done about this?

Simple, they bought the property portals:

Findaproperty.com:

Is now owned by Associated Newspapers, the publishers of The Daily Mail, The Mail on Sunday, The Evening Standard and Metro.

Propertyfinder.com:

Is now half-owned by News International, the media conglomerate controlled by Rupert Murdoch.

Primelocation.com:

Was bought last year by The Daily Mail & General Holdings.

Fish4homes.co.uk:

Has been developed by four regional newspaper groups - Newsquest Media Group, Northcliffe Newspapers Group Limited, Trinity Mirror plc, Guardian Media Group Regional Newspapers.

Rightmove.co.uk:

Is the only one that doesn't have any involvement with newspapers (instead it was founded by three of the UK's largest estate agency chains - Halifax, Countrywide & Connells).

In March 2006, Rightmove plc was publicly listed on the London Stock Exchange with the three original investors each retaining a significant shareholding).

Unfortunately for the newspaper industry, Rightmove.co.uk is streets ahead of the rest and continues to dominate the house hunting market (they showcase 80% of all UK property that's for sale).

In the monthly survey of the UK's most popular websites here's how they rank:

To misquote Ray Winston, "Rightmove is the daddy!"

What's this got to do with Your Private Sale?

I'm giving you this background because it's import for you to understand why property papers still exist and why you should

not feel you're missing out by not advertising within them ("Loot" being the only notable exception).

Estate Agents widely acknowledge that the "Top 5 property portals" and "For Sale" boards (it's not uncommon for anything between 30-50% of buyer enquiries to come from boards) are the most effective marketing tools they can use to attract buyers.

Print advertising is:

- Expensive
- Ineffective
- Often out of date
- Almost resented by many estate agents

In fact, Richard Rawlings of [Insideout Communications Ltd](#) (one of the leading marketing consultants for the Estate Agency Industry) believes that 90% of the people reading the local property newspapers are not even looking to buy or sell at that time.

They are just casual followers of their local property market with a passing interest in what price their neighbour is selling for.

If that's true (and I strongly suspect it is), why don't estate agents just give-up press advertising altogether?

The reason is two-fold:

Sellers who use estate agents expect to see their property in the local paper.

The tendency is for them to feel that their estate agent is not doing his job properly unless a picture of their house shows-up in print. However, these homeowners don't appreciate just how ineffective (relative to the Internet) the local paper is as a marketing tool. Because of this, until home sellers become comfortable with not seeing an advert

in print, estate agents will have to keep providing them for fear of losing business.

All estate agents know that the local press is where most potential sellers research which agents they'll invite for a valuation.

Estate Agents are scared that if they don't have any presence in the local press, they won't be invited by potential sellers to give any valuations. They will then loose out on the opportunity to convince sellers to become their clients. Press advertising has little to do with finding buyers so please have no doubt in your mind.... One or more of the major Property Portals, a "For Sale" board (& possibly an advert in "Loot") is all you need!

Have Confidence Knowing that Private Sales Work

The reason for this is best illustrated by the actions of those companies that own the major property portals.

Their actions explain why many private sellers fail and why you can have the utmost faith that you'll be successful.

Confused? Well, let me explain.

When the property portals first started out you used to be able to sign-up with a private sale website (such as TheLittleHouseCompany, HouseWeb, HouseLadder, PropertyBroker etc..) and they would upload the details of your property onto the major portals.

The current situation is that following portals have all banned private sale websites (including the new Tesco site):

- **Rightmove.co.uk**

- **Primelocation.com**

- **Propertyfinder.co.uk**

- Findaproperty.com

I suspect this was due to pressure from (or in order to appease) estate agents who are their main clients and primary source of income (and whose interest the portals must protect).

The Internet worked too well and the public were quickly realising:

How easy it was to find buyers without the help of an agent.

How little expertise it really took to sell property.

How little it could cost to sell property.

Finally there was proof that was no need to pay £1,000's to an estate agent, and soon everyone was going to know it.

Doubtless this was very worrying for the UK's estate agents.

The revolution had started and private sale websites had to be stopped!

What does that tell you about the effectiveness of the private sale route?

What's The Situation Today?

Using one of the 200 "private sale websites" to market your property will (at best) get you onto Fish4homes (the weakest of the 5 major property portals & the only one to still allow private advertisers) and a variety of secondary marketing platforms.

That will put your property in front of about 3-4 million buyers per month.

This is good but it's not as good as an estate agent who can reach an extra 9-10 million buyers per month with their access to:

- Rightmove.co.uk

- Primelocation.com

- **Propertyfinder.co.uk**

- **Findaproperty.com**

If you were planning on selling without an estate agent I would urge you not to use any of the 200 private sale websites as your only source of Internet exposure.

You may well be under-marketing your property.

How to Market Your Property More Thoroughly than an Estate Agent

For a fraction of the cost of using a traditional estate agent, there are a limited number of services that give you access to all the major property portals and all of the important secondary portals.

That will put your property in front of about 30 million buyers and is significantly more than most estate agents can accomplish (they usually advertise with only one or two of the major portals).

It's certainly more than any private sale website can manage!

These relatively new services are collectively called "[Online Estate Agents](#)".

If you want to cut out the middlemen & save a considerable sum of money then "[Online Estate Agents](#)" provide the means to do this successfully.

Within our website we maintain a regularly updated list of the Online Estate Agents we feel provide:

- **Value for money**

- **A comprehensive & effective service**

- Excellent customer service

You can access the relevant page by clicking the link below:

[Recommended Online Estate Agents](#)

What You Need to Know About Online Estate Agents

[Online Estate Agents](#) will provide you (as a private seller) with a very robust service and it's worth taking the time to understand exactly what they are and what they do:

They are not a private sale website (they are stripped-back Estate Agencies subject to the same laws governing the behaviour of traditional estate agents).

Most offer their service on a capped fee basis of around £500+VAT or on a 0.5 - 0.75% (no sale, no fee) percentage basis.

Most are members of the National Association of Estate Agents & The Estate Agency Ombudsman Scheme.

Because these companies are stripped-back Estate Agencies they must fully comply with The Estate Agency Act 1979.

You should be prepared to conduct all the viewings.

How to Choose an Online Estate Agent

Below I have listed the features that you should be looking for when choosing an Online Estate Agent:

Your property details are inserted into all of the UK's top Property Portals (this gives you more marketing power than traditional estate agents).

You are provided with a dedicated website where your property details can be viewed by buyers.

Property details are also placed on local newspaper websites.

The company will manage all enquiries on your behalf (keeping organised is the hardest part of selling privately so it's important that you are provided with some help).

The company will arrange all viewings and call the buyer for feedback on you behalf (this saves you a lot of time & hassle).

The company offers a service whereby they will negotiate all offers on your behalf (helpful if you do not wish to negotiate with

buyers directly. Your Solicitor should also offer this service). Buyers are able to print sales particulars direct from your dedicated website.

The company will post hard copies of your property details to potential buyers upon request.

The company provides a professional grade "For Sale Board" & install it at your property (sale boards are shown to generate 30-50% of all enquires so this is essential for your sale to be successful).

The company will visit you at home to take an unlimited number of photos and measure your property for the production of floor plans (a handy service that needs to be done correctly & in accordance with the Property Misdescriptions Act 1991).

A floor plan is produced for free (floor plans are proven selling tools & something that few other private sale website includes).

A Virtual Tour of your property is produced for free (another proven selling tool).

Your property is advertised until sold at no additional cost.

If you choose an Online Estate Agent the provides all of the above you will have found yourself a robust service, one that provides you with cost savings of selling privately + the backup of estate agency staff.

One Essential Difference Between an Online Estate Agency & a Standard Private Sale Website

Unlike some of the 200 or so private sale websites out there, you cannot use an Online Estate Agency alongside a regular estate agent and hope to dodge their fee if you find your buyer online.

For all intensive purposes, Online Estate Agents are estate agents.

The rules are the same as if you appointed two high street estate agents to simultaneously market your property.

It would constitute a "Joint Sole Agency" or "Multiple Agency" agreement and you would have to pay both parties regardless of who finds your buyer.

If you want to learn more about possibly avoiding the estate

agent's fee, may I suggest that you read:

[How to Use the Internet to Sell a House Online](#)

Conclusion & Summary

We feel that [Online Estate Agency services](#) give private house sellers the best chance of successfully selling privately & saving many £1,000's.

For the money, their service is unrivalled.

This is because they provide private individuals with access to the major property portals (most notably Rightmove.co.uk), something that traditional Private Sale Websites cannot do.

For a private seller, advertising with an [Online Estate Agent](#) is the best start you can make.

However, to attract the maximum number of buyers you should consider advertising with an [Online Estate Agent](#) and one of the more popular [Private Sale Websites](#).

There is very little crossover between where [Online Estate Agent](#) & [Private Sale Websites](#) advertise, so you do not need to worry about duplicate adverts overexposing your property.

That will take the cost of selling your house up to around £600 - £650.

When you consider that it costs 1.5-2% (UK average = £4,400) of your sale price to get the same Internet exposure from an estate agent, you can see just what good value [Online Estate Agent](#) and [Private House Sale Websites](#) provide.

Along with the "pricing" & "presentation" guidance you'll find within this website, you have access to more than enough information to take control of your sale, sell for the best price & save many thousands of pounds.

Wishing you complete success with your sale,

Gavin Brazg (Editor)
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