

Lorraine Easton

When I decided to become a REALTOR®, I already had 20 years experience in retail for major department stores and specialty stores with areas of concentration ranging from buying and merchandising to recruiting and training. There I learned how to think outside the box in order to earn the trust of new clients and reinforce existing relationships. Organizing community events was also part of the job because community involvement is incredibly important to increase exposure and to give back.

My strong background in business, expertise in marketing, and true desire to help others transferred to real estate perfectly. That was nearly 17 years ago and I have never looked back.

The initial beginnings of my business were built from people I already knew but there was still an immediate need to begin networking. There was no Facebook or Twitter, so I spent a lot of my time getting to know people in my community through networking with some real face-to-face interactions. Face-time before 'face-timing' was a thing.

With a business that is roughly 60 percent sellers and 40 percent buyers, I never take a client for granted. Buying or selling a home is a huge investment that people make, so I do whatever it takes to make sure that I provide the kind of service that reflects that. Everyone is treated the same, regardless of the price of their home, because I don't believe in a one-size-fits-all plan for each client. Instead, I think 'if this were my home, how would I like it to be shown?' The answer would be; by focusing on the unique traits of a home and highlighting them.

Throughout the years selling homes has become a completely different game. Nowadays buyers are starting their research online, which is why I'm so diligent to focus on featuring the home through photographs, as best I can. I use two photographers and a videographer (depending on the type of home), provide staging when necessary, and/or hire a cleaning crew to make sure the home shines. Offering sellers free landscaping consultations so they can inexpensively enhance their curb appeal, is a great way to make their house really come alive in person and online in photos.

To make it safe and easy for agents to show homes in the winter, I also have a snow removal company on standby to keep the walkways and driveways clear of debris and hazards. Even calling the local papers to campaign for my listings to receive premium placement in the real estate section, is just one more thing I do to go above and beyond for my clients.

It is also important to note that my husband, Jim Easton, is a senior loan officer for US Mortgage Network with several years of experience in the mortgage industry. This provides ad-

ditional support for my business, and of course to my clients, by bridging the gap between real estate transactions and mortgage financing.

Networking and becoming skilled in working with divorced couples, has been a new venture of mine. I'm the only Realtor certified to work with Collaborative Law Divorce Attorneys in the area and have become certified in the basic training of Interdisciplinary Collaborative Process, and also in mediation. I think this sets me apart from other Realtors in the area and are all skills that assist in creating the smooth transition that I strive to give every client selling or moving.

Because 85 percent of my business stems directly from referrals, I choose to spend my marketing dollars on my clients, rather than on marketing myself. I do have professionals who create my brochures and take photographs, but this is for my client's benefit, not my own. I'm not looking for things to make my job easier, I'm only looking to do the things that will help me to better help my clients.



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When it comes to working with buyers, I pull out all the stops. Even sending personal letters to current homeowners (when I have a buyer looking to move into a specific neighborhood where there is not anything for a sale) to request a private showing to see if someone would consider selling their home. Giving buyers an edge is my top priority, and being on a continual exploration of new ways to market homes helps me accomplish this.

Next to working for RE/MAX Real Estate Solutions, which is home to some of Western Pennsylvania's most productive and accomplished Realtors, the most rewarding part of what I do is being able to help my clients sell their home at the best price with the fastest turnaround.