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News To Move You Forward

Brought to you by Jill Scheppler, Bob McManus, Nicole Ellis & Angie Domine

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Are Robots Really Taking Over Retail?

Since 1977, when R2D2 first showed up in the theater, it seems that robots have become commonplace. They now vacuum our floors, assemble our cars, monitor our homes, and even perform surgery. Indeed, our world is becoming more automated.

But what does this mean to us in our everyday lives? We order pizza from our computers, withdraw cash from an ATM that never sleeps, and push buttons on our phones in the hope of reaching a real person. A recent *Vancouver Sun* article claims, “Such automation has become so common that Starbucks is taking steps to make sure the process doesn’t feel so, well, robotic.”

When it comes to shopping, robots are becoming an integral part of the experience. *Forbes* reports that robots make buying groceries a lot easier with on-demand shopping. Lowe’s is testing a “LoweBot” that helps shoppers find what they’re looking for in their cavernous stores, and many companies are actually “training” robots to assume a customer service role.

Best Buy is testing “Chloe,” a robot that retrieves products from the shelves. According to *TechEmergence*, “Customers can use touch screens in the store to pick out merchandise they want, such as earbuds, movies, video games, or other accessories. Shoppers can then watch the arm navigate the shelves to retrieve their products.”

No, it’s not about reducing staff. The hope is that robots will streamline the customer experience and make us all more efficient and happier shoppers. May the force be with them.

Want to Sell Your Home Fast? Get My Free Guide



Preparing your home for sale can make the difference between getting the price you want – or ending up disappointed.

Discover some easy things you can do by requesting my free guide, “50 Tips to Prepare Your Home for a Speedy, Top-Price Sale.”

Just call me at 715-387-1122 and I’ll send it right out to you.

Create Sharp Interiors: Avoid These Decorating Disasters

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and that saying rings true for how one chooses to decorate one’s home. Therefore, one person’s love of leopard print could be another person’s decorating disaster. If you are looking to sell your home this year, change up or avoid these top five no-nos.

Wall-to-wall carpeting. Having wall-to-wall carpet is the number one no-no. According to Jonathan Scott of the famed Property Brothers, no one is looking to buy a house with carpet—which can hold many of life’s unsavory side effects like dirt, stains, and hair.

Mirrored walls. In theory, this decorating idea should make a small space appear larger. However, according to Scott, the effect can actually make your room look like an ‘80s dance hall. Let the dance hall die and opt for full-length mirrors instead.

Clutter. When it comes to decorating to sell, less is almost always more. Be particularly picky about the foyer, since this provides the initial impression of the interior. Keep shoes, winterwear, bags, and other daily-use items organized and out of sight. Rearrange or remove furniture and décor throughout the home to make each room appear as spacious and inviting as possible.

Loud wallpaper. Although wallpaper can add that pop of color that a room desperately needs, a loud or dizzying pattern can turn off buyers. If you want to add appealing hues, stick with paint.

White on white. Although beautiful, the color white is not realistic when it comes to life’s many mishaps. Realtor.com recommends that homeowners gravitate toward rich shades such as rust browns, black, and forest green.

News To Move You Forward

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Do You Need a Property Manager?

If you already own a rental property, or you're looking to get into the business, the idea of having to deal with tenants and managing the property might be daunting.

But that's where property managers step in.

A credible property manager will take over the responsibilities that rental owners might not want to handle. This could include surveying the market and area to determine a reasonable and competitive rate to charge for rent. Property managers can also help you sell a home by generating solid leads through a variety of channels, including social media, advertising, and the multiple listing service.

Once your property has caught the eye of prospective tenants, the property manager can help you vet the tenants to make sure any potential renters will be responsible and reliable. Once the tenants have been screened and approved and have moved in, property managers will even be able to protect you from potential lawsuits by

staying up to date on your city's laws, rules, and regulations to make sure you're in the clear.

From there, they'll be able to take over the less desirable parts of property management, like handling emergency repairs, creating monthly expenditure reports, taking care of important tax filings, and performing home visits. Given the wide range of services that property managers provide, you might now be wondering how much they charge. Fees vary widely depending on where you live, but most managers will charge one month's rent to secure a tenant and then charge a monthly fee to manage the property.

As with all things related to buying and renting property, you'll want to make sure you do your research before hiring a property manager. But once you find one that is experienced and dependable, you might be amazed by the peace of mind their services can bring.

Your real estate agent can assist by recommending a reputable company.

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

Why hasn't my home sold?

If you're in a hot market, and your sign out front still doesn't bear the much-desired "sold" banner, it's probably for one of three reasons.

First and foremost is price. Have you priced it realistically? Work with a real estate agent who knows your area and can recommend a reasonable price based on comparable sales and your home's condition.

The second common reason is condition. Is your kitchen outdated? Does your exterior need a paint job? If your home needs work, you should reflect this in the price or complete the necessary work.

The third factor relates to how you show your home. Remember, you want to make a dazzling first impression. Make sure your home is in top condition for showings. Turn on lights, open blinds, declutter, deodorize and vacate the premises during showings. Present buyers with a bright, clean, and inviting space they'll fall in love with.

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News To Move You Forward is brought to you free by:

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