



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

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The market is the greatest ever to buy or sell real estate!

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For all of you out there moaning about how bad the real estate market is - stop being such a pessimist. The glass is not half empty. It is most certainly $\frac{3}{4}$ full. This is the greatest market that we will see for many years to come to buy real estate and for some to sell real estate. You heard that right - to sell real estate. Let me tell you a story of how I bought my dream home. In 1986, I bought a home for \$148,500. I found my dream home in Paxton, Mass. in 1993 and bought it for \$248,000 - at the bottom of the market. It has more than doubled in value from that time, even now, in this market. I sold my existing home for \$137,000 after I bought my move up home. So I took a 7.7% loss in value (\$11,500) on my existing home, but because I was moving up, I made out incredibly. So if you are in the position to move to a better house, this is the best time ever to do this. There are incredible deals on high-end homes. Builders and contractors, for example, are selling their own homes with many upgrades for distressed prices because the downturn in new construction has caused a substantial decrease in their income. The only problem right now is the lack of available financing for many buyers and the reliance by lenders on credit scores that are not that great for many people.

Credit scores are everything right now, so do yourself a favor and get educated about your credit score. There are many great mortgage brokers and lenders that are more than willing to sit with buyers and not only educate them about their scores but help them raise their scores. Of course, they are hoping to get your loan after that, in return.

The commercial market is still doing very well in many areas. Lending rates are still very reasonable which greatly affects values overall.

There has never been a better time to utilize any equity you have in any property to buy other real estate. But you would need a great team to ensure that you don't make mistakes. You can not be an expert in everything and making a mistake right now can be devastating. You need a good buyer's agent, someone with experience, who can be a great negotiator. You need a great home inspector or contractor to help really assess the cost of repairs that are needed. This is the biggest mistake people make. If you are going to flip the property, don't underestimate the potential holding time and cost to hold the property. You need a good appraiser, preferably someone who is affiliated with a professional appraisal organization, such as the Mass. Board of Real Estate Appraisers or the Appraisal Institute. You can not afford to overpay for a property just because you are anxious to buy something. If you can't get the right price, let it go, especially if it is not your personal residence. Staging a property for sale is extremely important right now. An appraiser can accurately help you assess your potential cash flow on an incoming producing property. Even experienced investors are overestimating rents and underestimating expenses and this is a huge mistake.

You need the right lender for the property you are buying so you may need more than one relationship with lenders. A property that is unique in any way or needs a lot of work may not be financable through a mortgage broker. However, a bank or credit union may be able to lend on the property "as is." So be careful to fully explain the property to the lender and choose wisely. Appraisers are a great source of referrals to the right type of lender.

So get educated, build a team and get out there and do something. Remember the biggest regret people have in their life is not the things they did, but those things that they did not do.

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