

# HOME BUYING HINTS

## Home Buyers And Sellers Are Going Online

(NAPSA)—Technology is changing how Americans buy and sell homes in unexpected ways, including how they work with real estate agents and brokers. That's a key finding of one of the largest surveys of real estate consumers ever conducted.

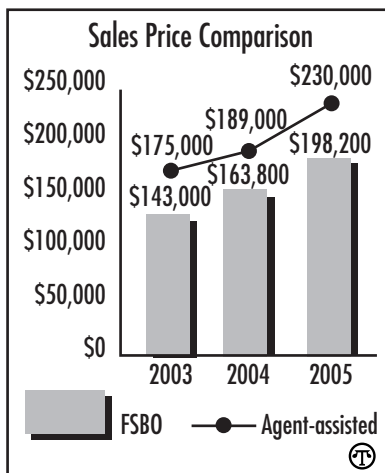
According to the study, conducted by the National Association of Realtors, nine out of 10 home buyers use a real estate agent in the search process, but use of the Internet to search for a home has risen dramatically over time, from only 2 percent of buyers in 1995 to 77 percent in 2005. The next largest source of information for buyers is a yard sign, mentioned by 71 percent of buyers.

The 2005 National Association of Realtors (NAR) Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers, based on more than 7,800 responses to a questionnaire, is the latest in a series of surveys evaluating various characteristics of home buyers and sellers.

NAR President Thomas M. Stevens from Vienna, Va., said the findings underscore the complexity of the home-buying process. "Buyers who use the Internet in searching for a home are more likely to use a real estate agent than non-Internet users, and consumers rely on professionals to provide context, negotiate the transaction and help with the paperwork," said Stevens.

The study also shows that it may pay for a seller to rely on a real estate agent. The median home price for sellers who use an agent is 16 percent higher than the price of a home sold directly by an owner.

The Web site Realtor.com was the most popular Internet resource, used by 54 percent of buyers, followed by multiple listing service (MLS) Web sites, real



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estate company sites and real estate agent Web sites.

Typical buyers walked through nine properties, searched eight weeks to buy a home and moved 12 miles from their previous residence. Typical sellers placed their home on the market for four weeks, had lived in it for six years, moved 15 miles to their new residence and previously owned three homes.

The most important factor in choosing an agent was reputation, according to 41 percent of home buyers, followed by an agent's knowledge of the neighborhood, 24 percent. Fifty-seven percent of sellers said reputation was the most important factor.

The National Association of Realtors is America's largest trade association, representing more than 1.2 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

To learn more, visit the Web site at [www.realtor.org](http://www.realtor.org).