

In A Slow Housing Market, Quick And Easy Exterior Design Tricks Make A House A Home

(NAPSA)—The nationwide mortgage meltdown and resulting decline of the real estate market have prevented many homeowners from moving into their dream home. However, instead of moving out, many are staying put and revitalizing their existing home. By improving specific areas, a bland house can easily change into one of style and pride.

Duo Dickinson, a founder of the Congress of Residential Architecture (CORA) and award-winning architect and author, suggests a few quick tricks that can significantly change the look of your home.

- **Look up**—Whether it's an entryway, screen porch or covered patio, the most neglected outdoor space is the underside of the roof. For most homes, this area is traditionally treated as a plain, flat surface with no distinctive design element. By adding color and texture, it's possible to create a subtle yet invigorating effect that draws attention to otherwise unnoticed accents.

- **Step up**—Steps leading to the front door are often in need of repair. Although the entryway to a home is the obvious "first impression," the most attractive design can be undercut by a neglected set of steps. The combination of a beautifully crafted wood stoop with brick or stone accents or a simple but unique wrap-around step feature can greatly affect a house's curb appeal.

- **Spruce it up**—A beautiful landscape connects a house to the land around it and is used to naturally accentuate your home's exterior. Landscaping allows homeowners to take ownership of their outdoor area and demonstrate their creativity by adding



A few quick design tricks can significantly raise your home's curb appeal and value.

dramatic effects that can change season to season.

- **Mix it up**—The detail of your home's exterior—siding, color, texture, trim—provides the visual appeal that distinguishes your house from all the others. But mixing and matching aren't always the easiest tasks. The Dream Designer from Exterior Portfolio by Crane is an online design tool that enables homeowners to actually visualize the positive impact that window trim, textured siding, stone and color can have on a home's exterior. Try out your inner architect at www.exteriorportfolio.com/EP/Dream/Visualizer/index.aspx.

Investing in a new home doesn't always have to mean moving from one to the next. Maximizing your home's existing design potential is a great way to transform it into your dream home. With simple exterior enhancements, you can increase curb appeal and create a unique visual presence that your neighbors will envy.

Contact Exterior Portfolio by Crane at (800) 366-8472 for more information.