

Why Realty Options of the Florida Keys?

In today's world we are now considered an Independent Real Estate Office. We have our Broker who is the owner in house on a daily basis, to oversee all transactions and he meets the majority of the customers face to face, which creates a stronger personal relationship between the customers and our office.

We find that that working in an office that has the owner involved on a daily basis runs much smoother than having a manager. Decisions for contract situations, marketing and day to day business are quickly resolved; there is no waiting for an answer to be passed down through the ranks. The agents also tend to work closer together in harmony towards a common goal to *get our listings sold*.

We have the *Option* to tailor our listings to our customers needs, not keeping them to the strict confines of a standard listing contract. *Our company mission statement* is to keep our clients happy and to work in their best interest. If for any reason a customer is unhappy with our service we prefer to release them from any obligation that they may have to work with us, than to keep them bound to a contract. Our work ethic and our commitment is to provide outstanding service. We will deliver what we promise; we will return your phone calls/e-mails in a timely manner and put your family's needs first. Our goal is for you to have a hassle free experience. Thanks to our commitment, the majority of our new clients are referrals from satisfied clients

Many of our sales associates are long time keys residents. Most are licensed as brokers with years of real estate, sales and business management experience. Some have partners that own local businesses. We all have a long time relationship of working together over the years, completing many transactions together which has creates a real team that works together!

Mortgage Services in House gives our buyers the *Options* to choose from over 80 discount lenders, some with cash back offers. This helps them to purchase your property. This also gives us the agents a better insight on pre qualifications and loan commitments that are brought to us by outside lenders or Real Estate agents.

We Looked at the Differences, You Should Too!

After working for 3 large Franchise Real Estate Brokers we have come to find out that they all seem to have the same views on operation of a Real Estate Office. *The mission statement* starts out to be that they want to be the *best* real estate company, and really ends up being that they want to be the company that *makes the most money*. This all breaks down to numbers on the company level and down to dollars at the consumer's expense. The philosophy is to get listings at any cost, the office with the most listings has the most market share and the most market share wins!

Mission Statements. So what starts out to be we want to be the Best Real Estate company ends up being training factories for new agents, who have come into the business only to make a lot of money. They are trained to say that they work for the best company that sells the most homes and of course they deserve a higher commission because they have so much more to offer.

I have yet to go to a training class where the agents are taught that they are in the People Business and that they are there to provide a service to their clients, and that they should do their job to the best of their ability with their client's best interest in mind.

Do you really get more? What we found is that all the big franchise will provide free to the agent besides training, will be company block ads in a magazine or newspaper, and the company internet website to advertise their listings. These advertisements are usually written by administrators or receptionists who also choose the pictures for the ads from their files. Calls on these ads will be directed to the main office or a floor person, not the agent that has the listing. Leads generated from the web site will go through a lead router system that sends the leads out to agents on a rotational system. We have found that some of the calls on our properties were given to an agent that was sometimes 50 miles away from our office.

So it really boils down to the agent! A successful agent has to have their own consistent marketing plan, with monthly advertising in major magazines, direct mail outs and an exceptional website. The website needs to be kept current with new listings and related real estate information. It is most important to have a good SEO, which is a must because even the best web site is not a lot of help if it can't be found. Most agents cannot afford these programs which is why less than 20% of the agents do 80% of the business.

Sellers Guarantee is a tool used to get your listing. One of the guarantee's they make is that they will release your listing at any time if you are unhappy. This is easier said than done. Some brokers will want to charge you a fee; others will want to switch you to another agent. They may also offer you a conditional withdrawal which means that you can't relist with another broker until you fulfill the term of your original listing contract. Either way it will be most difficult to have your listing released from the broker.

Company Awards and large offices go hand in hand, and we all like to get recognition for our hard work. Misty and I have certainly received more than our share of awards wherever we worked. We have come to realize at first hand that this creates an adverse affect on the agents. Instead of creating a team of agents, the office ends up with small cliques of agents basically working as individuals and not cooperating with each other. Some agents will go so far as to *steer a deal out of the office* to keep the other agents production lower just to keep them from winning a monthly award. This affects the seller who could have been paid considerably more from the buyer who didn't get a chance. *Sad but true!*