



2005 Survey of Bay Area Realtors

Professional Real Estate Staging and its Impact on Bay Area Home Prices

Research conducted for
Redefine Staging by:

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CONTENTS

- I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....3
- II. BASIC TABLES.....6
 - TABLE 1: USE OF PROFESSIONAL STAGERS.....6
 - TABLE 2: LIKELIHOOD OF RECOMMENDING PROFESSIONAL STAGING.....7
 - TABLE 3: RECEPTIVITY OF HOMEOWNERS TO PROFESSIONAL STAGING.....8
 - TABLE 4: ASKING PRICE VS. SELLING PRICE.....9
 - TABLE 5: TOTAL OFFER MADE ON PROPERTY10
 - TABLE 6: TOTAL DAYS ON MARKET.....11
 - TABLE 7: COSTS OF STAGING.....12
 - TABLE 8: PERCENT OF FLOOR SPACE STAGED.....13
 - TABLE 9: EFFECTIVENESS OF STAGING.....14
 - TABLE 10: REASONS FOR NOT STAGING.....15
- III. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....16

I. Executive Summary

In August of 2005, Destination Analysts, Inc., a market research and public opinion polling company, was contracted by the San Francisco-based interior design firm Redefine Staging (www.redefinestaging.com) to conduct an online survey of Bay Area¹ realtors. The purpose of this survey was collect information from a broad-based sample of realtors to develop an understanding of aspects of the real estate staging market. A principal goal of this research was to quantify any measurable effects professional home staging has on home prices, the number of offers received by sellers, and the length of time properties spend on the market.

- **Methodology.** Destination Analysts collected a list of 1,200 realtor email addresses by examining available real estate company websites. An email invitation to take an online survey was sent to this list, with a follow-up invitation sent to non-respondents after one week. 91 of these email addresses were bad addresses. In total, 312 realtors completed the survey, a 28.1 percent response rate. Responding realtors were asked a number of questions about their services and their opinions and use of professional real estate stager. They were also asked numerous staging-related questions about the properties they had sold in the past 12 months. In total, the survey collected information on 678 property sales (282 of these were professionally staged and 396 were not). Many of this study's findings come from a comparison of the differences between these two property types.
- **Popularity of Staging.** A literature review conducted by Destination Analysts did not find comparable research on professional staging in other areas of the country. As a result, it is not possible to say how the Bay Area market compares, but it seems evident that staging is an important and widely-used sales technique in Bay Area real estate sales. Approximately 40 percent of responding realtors said that they had used the services of a professional stager in the past 12 months (Table 1, Page 6). Among realtors who had used a professional stager, most had used the services of one or two different staggers in the past 12 months.
- **Realtor Recommendations.** The survey asked realtors if they believed a property was a good candidate for staging, how likely would they be to recommend their client have the home staged. Three out of four (76%) said that they would be "Very Likely" to recommend that the home be professionally staged. Another 11 percent said that they would be "Likely" to recommend the home be staged. Only 7.8 percent said that they would be "Unlikely" or "Very Unlikely" to recommend staging to their client in they believed the home to be a good candidate (Table 2, Page 7).

¹ The San Francisco bay area is defined for the purposes of this survey as the nine county area including San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, Marin, Napa and Sonoma counties.

- **Receptivity of Homeowners.** While Bay Area realtors are enthusiastic about the use of professional stagers, they also seem to feel that homeowners are mostly receptive to hiring these professional services. 15.3 percent of responding realtors said that their clients were generally “Very Receptive” to the idea of hiring a professional stager. 30.3 percent said their clients were generally “Receptive” and 43.2 percent “Somewhat Receptive.” Only 4.5 percent of respondents said their clients were generally “Not at All Receptive” to the idea of using staging (Table 3, page 8).
- **Staging’s Impact on Sales Prices.** Our analysis compared the difference between the *asking price* and *selling price* for approximately 678 residential properties sold in the San Francisco bay area in the past 12 months. For 396 unstaged homes, the final sale price averaged \$26,632 over the asking price. By comparison, the survey collected data on 282 professionally staged properties. The average difference between asking price and selling price for these staged properties was \$81,014. Therefore, on average staging a home is associated with an increase in the final sales price of \$54,382 (Table 4, Page 9).
- **Return on Investment.** The survey found that the average cost of staging a property was \$3,305, resulting in an average return on investment for the home owner of \$16.45 per dollar spent on staging.
- **Offers Received by Homeowners.** Not only does staging impact the final sale price of residential properties, it appears to increase the number of offers received by the owner. Comparing the two types of properties (staged and unstaged); professionally staged homes received an average of 4.7 offers, while their unstaged counterparts received an average of only 3.7 offers (Table 5, Page 10).
- **Days on the Market.** Staging also appears to shorten the length of time a property remains on the market. On average, professionally staged properties in our sample stayed in the market 19 days, while their unstaged counterparts stayed on the market an average of 23 days. Hence, in the Bay Area unstaged homes stay on the market 4 days or 26% longer than professionally unstaged homes (Table 6, Page 11).
- **Average Cost of Staging.** Prices paid for staging services are diverse, and are undoubtedly affected by the demands of the project and the size of the property. This survey shows that, in the Bay Area, the average staging job costs \$3,305. Approximately 25 percent of these staging services cost over \$5,000 and about 16 percent cost under \$1000 (Table 7, Page 12).
- **Cost Per Square Foot.** Using data collected in this survey on the size of staged properties and the percent of the property’s total floor space that was staged, we estimate that the average professional staging in the Bay Area cost \$2.53 per square foot.

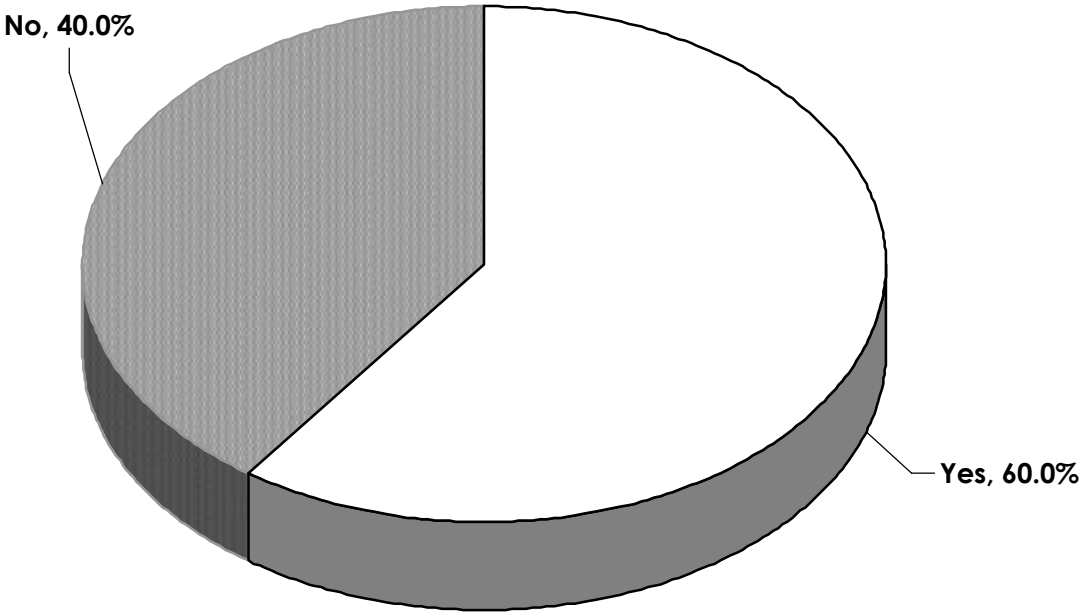
- **Full vs. Partial Staging.** The Bay Area market for staging is split almost evenly between full staging jobs and so-called partial stagings. The realtors responding to this survey said that 52.5 percent of their staged properties included more than 90 percent of the property's floor space. The remaining 47.5 percent of properties were staged to a lesser degree (Table 8, Page 13).
- **Satisfaction with Staging.** Bay Area realtors express high levels of satisfaction with the staging jobs done for their properties. When asked whether or not they felt the staging done for their project was effective at showcasing the property, 80.3 percent said the staging was "Very Effective." An additional 17.6 percent said the staging was "Effective." Only 2.1 percent said they felt "Neutral" about the staging's effectiveness. No realtors reported that a staging was either "Ineffective" or "Very Ineffective" (Table 9, Page 14).
- **Reasons for not Staging.** The realtors surveyed in this research were asked why the unstaged properties they sold were not staged. The most commonly cited reason was that the client wanted to stage the home themselves, mentioned as a reason for 28.4 percent of unstaged properties (Table 10, Page 15).

II. Basic Tables

Use of Professional Stagers

40 percent of responding realtors said that they had used the services of a professional stager in the past 12 months. Among realtors who had used a professional stager, most (78.5%) used one or two different stagers.

Table 1: Did Realtor (or clients) Use the Services of a Professional Home Stager in at Past 12 Months?

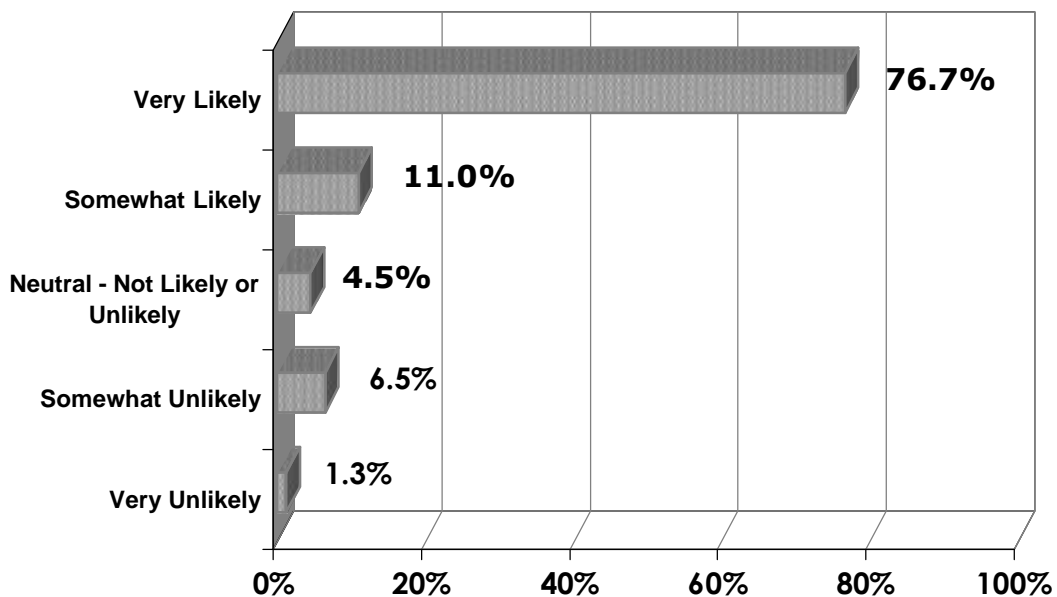


BASE: 310 Completed surveys

Likelihood of Recommending Staging

The survey asked realtors if they believed a property was a good candidate for staging, how likely would they be to recommend their client have the home staged. Three out of four (76%) said that they would be "Very Likely" to recommend that the home be professionally staged. Another 11 percent said that they would be "Likely" to recommend the home be staged. Only 7.8 percent said that they would be "Unlikely" or "Very Unlikely" to recommend staging to their client in they believed the home to be a good candidate.

Table 2: If Realtor Feels A Property is a Good Candidate for Staging, How Likely Are They to Suggest Hiring a Professional Stager?

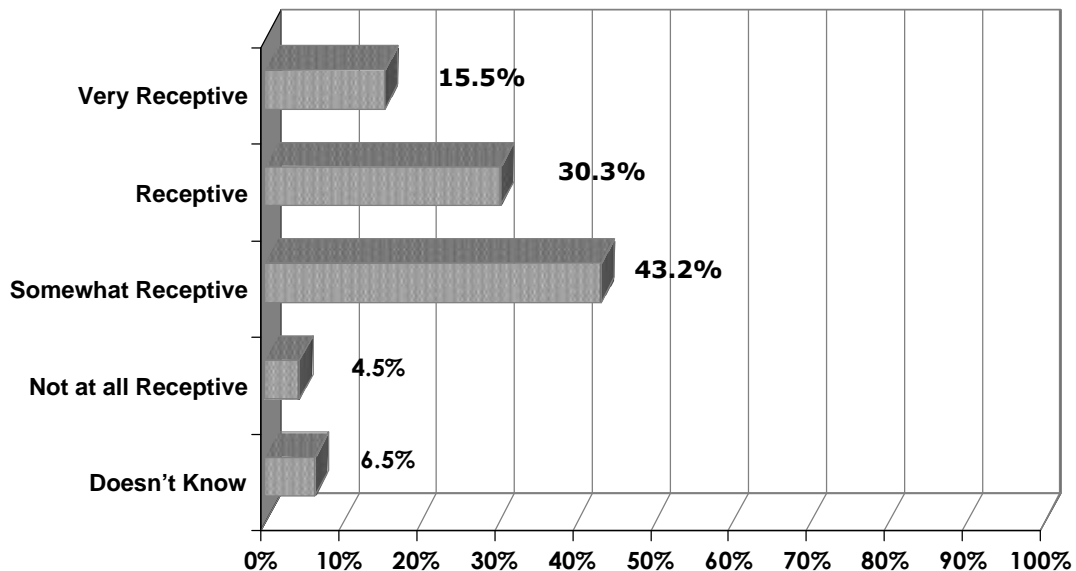


BASE: 308 Completed surveys

Receptivity of Homeowners to Staging

While realtors seem enthusiastic about the use of professional stagers, they seem also to feel that homeowners are mostly receptive to hiring these professional services. 15.3 percent of responding realtors said that their clients were generally “Very Receptive” to the idea of hiring a professional stager. 30.3 percent said their clients were generally “Receptive” and 43.2 percent “Somewhat Receptive.” Only 4.5 percent of respondents said their clients were generally “Not at All Receptive” to the idea of using staging.

Table 3: In General, How Receptive Are Realtor's Clients to Hiring a Professional Stager?



BASE: 310 Completed surveys

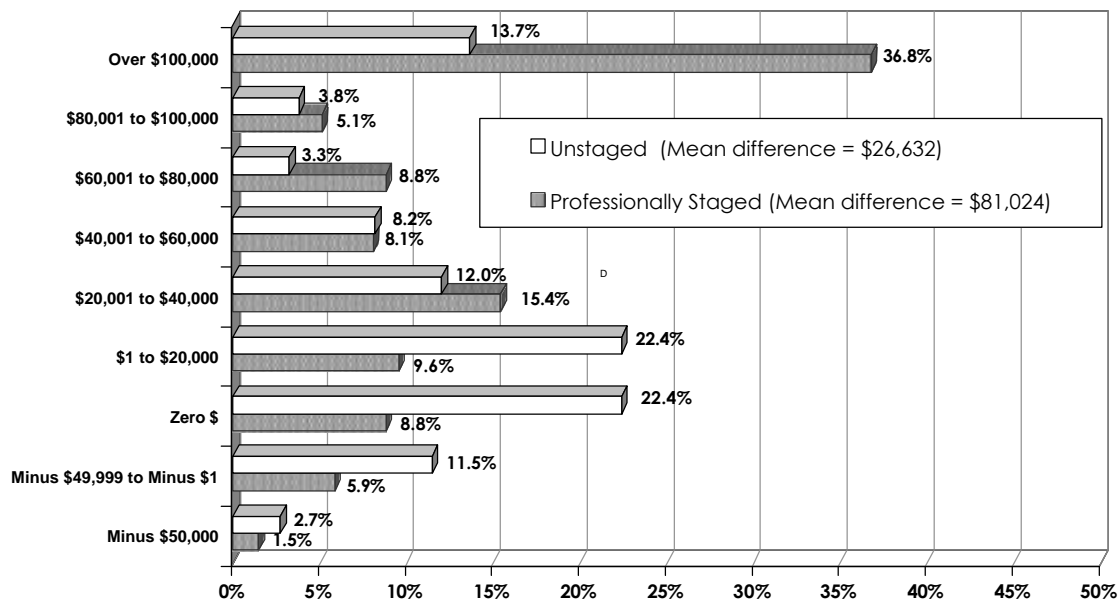
Asking Price vs. Selling Price

One of the goals of this research was to measure the impact that professionally staging a property has on the ultimate sale price. Staging a home can be expensive, and without evidence that there is a positive return on investment, will likely be a difficult decision for the home owner.

Evidence collected in this survey demonstrates that professional staging does significantly increase the sale prices residential properties. While there is no way to measure what a the final sale price of a home should be, we are able to measure the *asking price* of a property and the final *sale price* as determined by the market. Our analysis compared these two metrics for approximately 678 residential properties sold in the San Francisco bay area in the past 12 months. For 396 unstaged homes, the final sale price was on average \$26,632 over the asking price. By comparison, the survey collected data on 282 professionally staged properties. The average difference between asking price and selling price for staged properties was \$81,014. It appears that on average staging a home is associated with an increase in the final sales price of \$54,382.

It will be shown later that the average cost of staging these properties was \$3,305, resulting in a return on investment for the home owner of \$16.45 per dollar spent on staging.

Table 4: Difference between ASKING PRICE and SELLING PRICE, Professionally Staged vs. Unstaged Homes

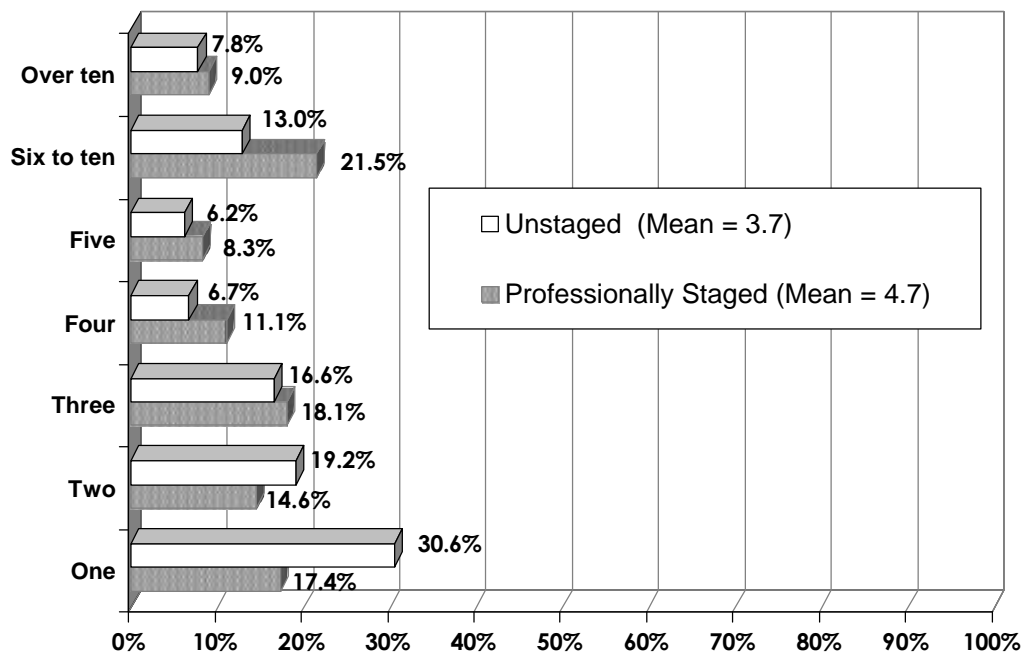


Percent of properties sold with ASK-SELL price differentials in each range.
 BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 282 professionally staged properties and 396 unstaged properties sold in the nine-county Bay Area in the past 12 months.

Total Offers Made on Property

Not only does staging impact the final sale price of residential properties, it appears to increase the number of offers received by the owner. Comparing these two types of properties; professionally staged homes received an average of 4.7 offers, while their unstaged counterparts received an average of 3.7 offers.

Table 5: Offers Made on the Property

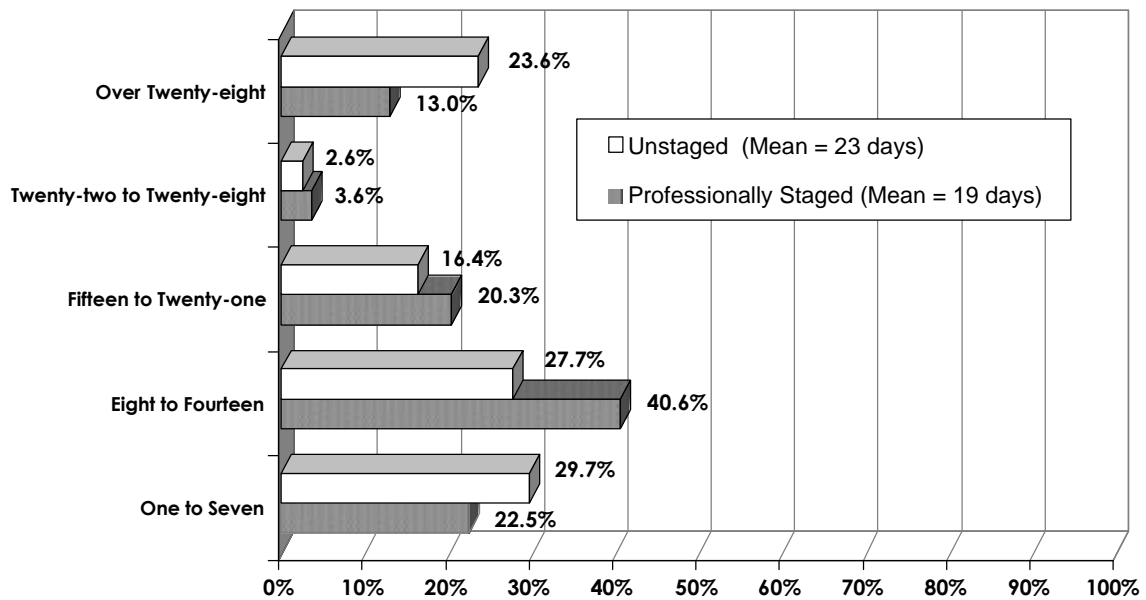


Percent of properties sold that received each number of offers.
 BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 282 professionally staged properties and 396 unstaged properties sold in the nine-county Bay Area in the past 12 months.

Total Days on the Market

Staging also appears to shorten the length of time a property remains on the market. On average, professionally staged properties in our sample stayed in the market 19 days, while their unstaged counterparts stayed on the market an average of 23 days.

Table 6: Number of Days on the Market



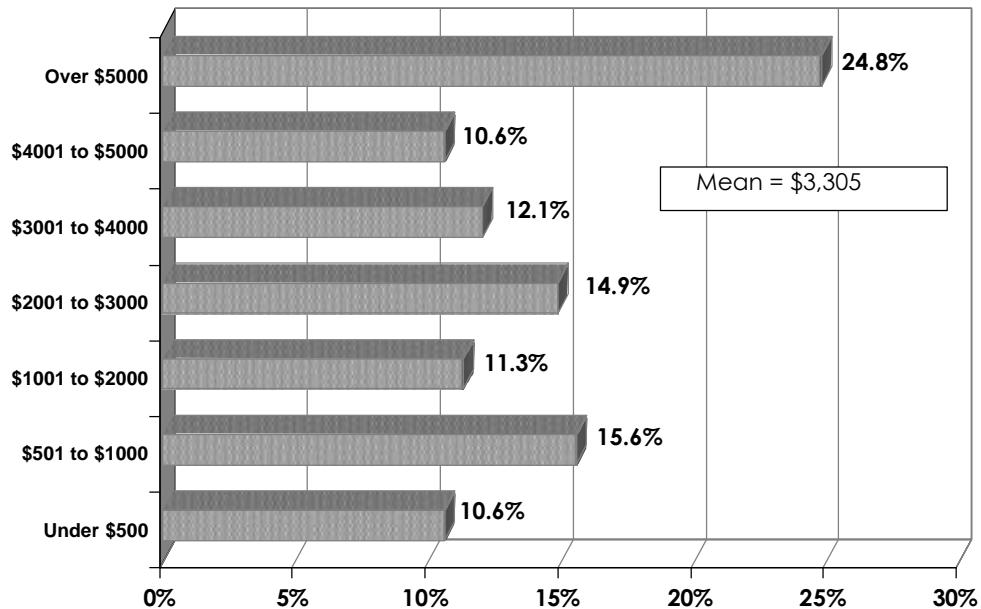
Percent of properties sold that were on the market for each number of days.
 BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 282 professionally staged properties and 396 unstaged properties sold in the nine-county Bay Area in the past 12 months.

Cost of Staging

Our survey collected data on the amount spent to hire the professional stager. Prices charged by stagers were quite diverse, and were undoubtedly affected by the demands of the project and the size of the property. The average staging job cost \$3,305. Approximately 25 percent of these staging, however, cost over \$5,000. About 16 percent cost under \$1000.

Using data collected in this survey on the size of staged properties and the percent of the property's total floor space that was staged, we estimate that the average professional staging cost \$2.53 per square foot.

Table 7: Costs of Staging the Property

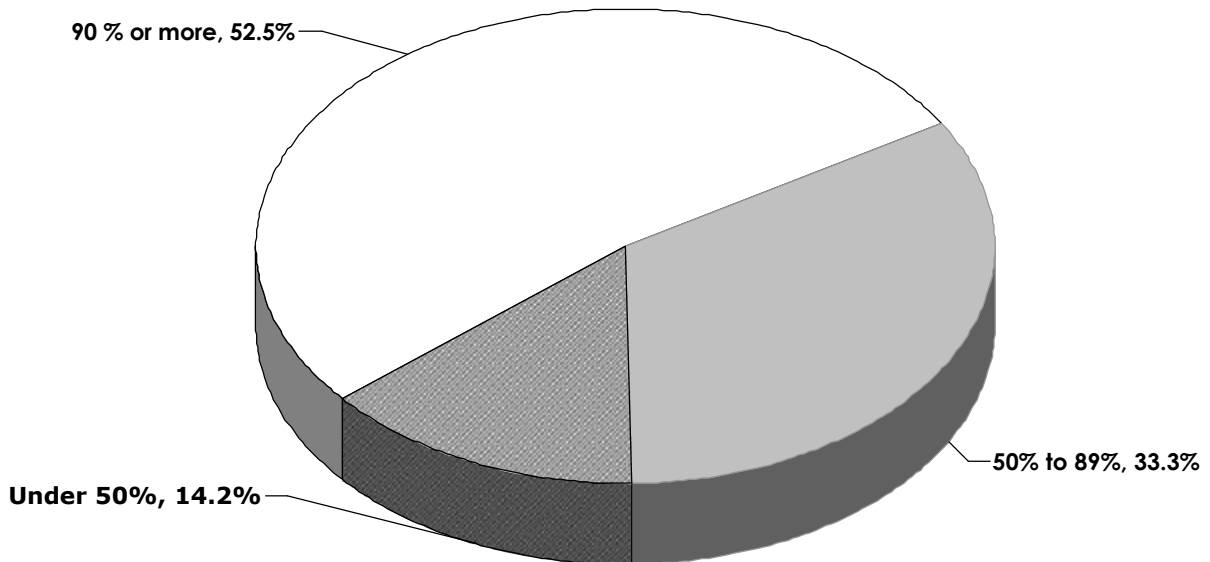


Percent of properties sold that were in each total staging cost range. As reported by the agent.
 BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 282 professionally staged properties.

Percent of Floor Space Staged

The Bay Area market for staging is split almost evenly between full staging jobs and so-called partial stagings. The realtors responding to this survey said that 52.5 percent of their staged properties included more than 90 percent of the property's floor space. The remaining 47.5 percent of properties were staged to a lesser degree.

Table 8: Percent of the Property's Floor Space Staged

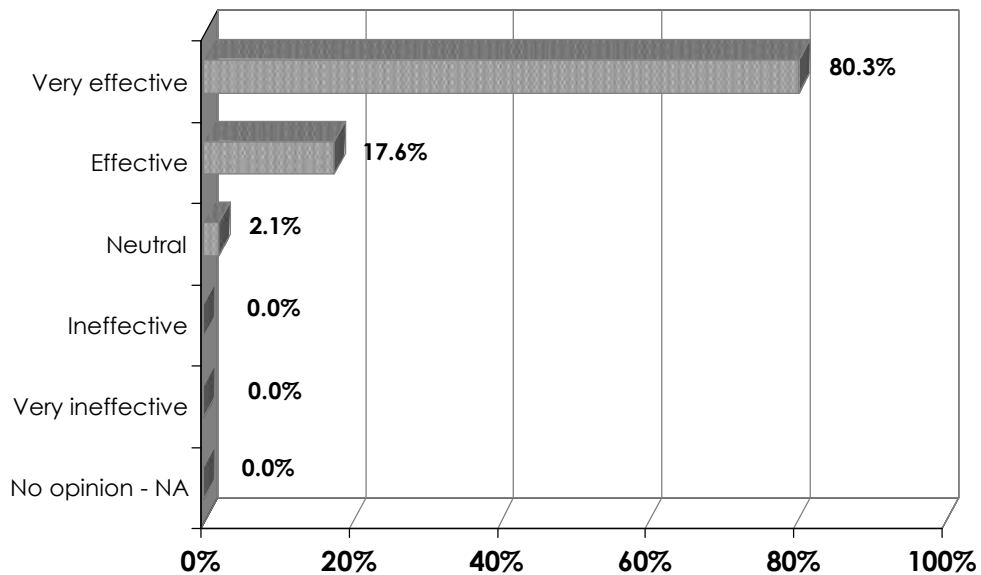


Percent of staged properties sold by percent of floor space staged. As reported by the agent.
BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 282 professionally staged properties.

Effectiveness of Staging

Bay Area realtors express high levels of satisfaction with the staging jobs done for their properties. When asked whether or not they felt the staging done for their sales was effective at showcasing the property, 80.3 percent said the staging was "Very Effective." An additional 17.6 percent said the staging was "Effective." Only 2.1 percent said they felt "Neutral" about the staging's effectiveness. No realtors reported that a staging was either "Ineffective" or "Very Ineffective."

Table 9: How Effective was the Staging at Showcasing the Property (Realtor's Opinion)

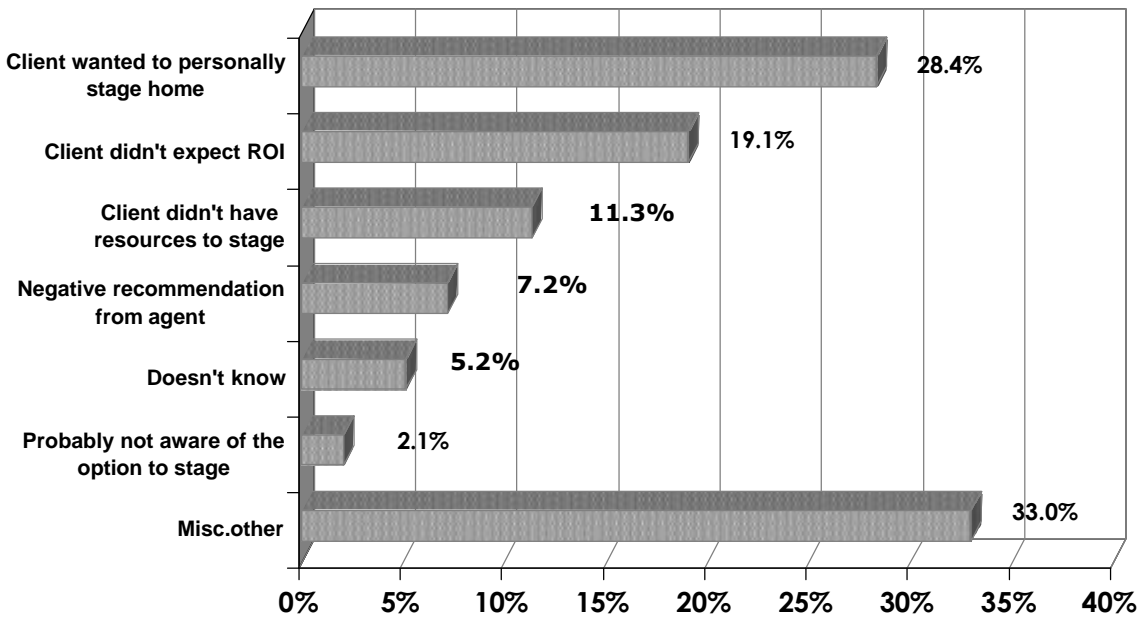


Percent of staged properties sold by realtor evaluation. As reported by the agent.
BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 282 professionally staged properties.

Reasons for Not Staging

The realtors surveyed in this research were asked why the unstaged properties they sold were not staged. The most commonly cited reason was that the client wanted to stage the home themselves, mentioned as a reason for 28.4 percent of unstaged properties.

Table 10: Reasons Home Was Not Staged



Percent of realtors saying the item was a reason the property was not staged.
BASE: Data provided by selling agents from 39% professionally staged properties.

III. Survey Questionnaire

IMPORTANT NOTE: This survey was administered online. The questionnaire contained several branches and different question sets were presented to respondents depending upon the answers they gave to specific questions. For example, the questions concerning the attributes of staged properties were not asked of realtors who had not sold any properties in the past 12 months. The questionnaire below shows all questions asked in the survey.

BAY AREA REALTOR SURVEY

Thanks for your help with this survey! This 5-minute questionnaire will ask about your use of professional stagers, your opinions about staging and your recent residential home sales.



As our way of saying thanks, we'll enter your name in a drawing for one of three (3) \$200 gift checks. All realtors completing this survey can also receive a complimentary copy of the study's results.

[Official rules](#)

Please enter the e-mail address where you received the invitation to take this survey:



Approximately how many years have you been working as a realtor?

(Click here to choose) ▼

In which Bay Area county are your sales operations based?

- Alameda
- Contra Costa
- Marin
- Napa
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
- Solano
- Sonoma
- Other

Have you (or your clients) used a professional home stager's services while selling any residential properties in the past twelve (12) months?

- Yes
- No

Next





How many different professional stagers (or staging companies) have you used in the past twelve (12) months?

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or more
- I don't know – not applicable

Next



If you feel that a property is a good candidate for staging, how likely are you to suggest that your clients hire a professional stager to stage their property?

- Very Likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neutral - not likely or unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- I don't know – not applicable

In general, how receptive are your clients to the idea of hiring a professional stager?

- Very receptive
- Receptive
- Somewhat receptive
- Not at all receptive
- I don't know – not applicable

How many residential properties have you personally sold in the San Francisco Bay Area in the past twelve (12) months?

- Zero
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5

Next





The next questions will ask you about your **THREE MOST RECENT** residential home sales -- starting with your most recent sale:

(This information will held in the strictest confidence, and will be used only to estimate group averages and the impact of professional staging on home sales.)

In which city was this property sold? (i.e. your most recent sale)

Which best describes this property?

- Single-family unit
- Multiple-family unit
- Condominium
- Tenancy in common
- Other

How many SQUARE FEET did this property have?

What was the ASKING PRICE for this property?

What was the SELLING PRICE for this property?

How many TOTAL OFFERS did your clients receive?

Approximately how many TOTAL DAYS was this property on the market?

Was this property staged for sale by a professional stager?

- Yes
- No

Next



Approximately how much was spent for this staging? \$

Which best describes the amount of the home that was staged?
(Please exclude garages and other non-living areas):

- 90% or more of the unit's total floor space was staged
- 50% to 89% of the unit's total floor space was staged
- Under %50 of the unit's total floor space was staged

In your opinion, how effective was this staging in showcasing this property?

- Very effective
- Effective
- Neutral - not effective or ineffective
- Ineffective
- Very ineffective
- No opinion - not applicable

Did you recommend that your client professionally stage this home?

- Yes
- No



Did you recommend that your client professionally stage this home?

- Yes
- No

To the best of your knowledge, why didn't your client professionally stage the home?
(Select all that apply)

- The client didn't feel their would be a return on investment
- The client was probably not aware this was an option
- I recommended that the home not be staged
- The client didn't have the resources to stage the home
- The client wanted to personally stage the home
- I don't know
- Other

Next



Would like us to e-mail you a copy of this study's findings?

- Yes
- No

Would like us enter your name in our sweepstakes drawing?

- Yes
- No

If YES to either of the above, please provide us with your contact information:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Agency	<input type="text"/>
Email address	<input type="text"/>
Phone number	<input type="text"/>

