

Start on the right foot for successful 2012

WITH a new year upon us I felt it would be productive to provide some resolutions that you, the buying and selling public, should embrace in 2012.

Resolution 1: I will absolutely NOT place my house on the market unless I actually do seriously want to sell and understand that the price I am finally offered may not be what I hoped for. I resolve not to blame my agent for this just because he has a rather nice car manufactured in a European country renowned for its love of large glasses of beer and leather shorts.

Resolution 2: If I am selling, I will not just leave it all to the agent. I resolve to get involved, read the text in adverts and online, check the pictures and not allow awful shots to be used as the main selling tool of my house. I will question all aspects of the marketing campaign and I will listen to the agent's advice and give them a chance to explain.

Resolution 3: I will not underestimate the power of the first impression when selling. I will not leave the toilet seat up, beds will be made, scatter cushions scattered, windows will be shining, the whole place will feel clean, and there will no sign of pets other than stylish pictures of them in designer frames. I will never, ever let the Commodore's mag wheels touch a blade of grass of the frontyard ever again.

Resolution 4: As a buyer I will acknowledge that in reality my exact requirements will change during my search and I promise to be realistic with my expectations and not use the famous phrase "they must be dreaming" unless, of course, they really are.

Resolution 5: I promise to do my research and know there is no such thing as "guaran-

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teed capital growth", understand that an advertised "unique opportunity" should really read "yet another chance, since the last one yesterday" and the headline on an advert that claims "this could be the area's best buy" when no price or guide is disclosed really is pushing it!

Resolution 6: If I see a home I really like I will be prepared to pay market value and not get all upset when the sellers, who are normal, sane human beings, refuse my mad crazy and insultingly low offer. I will always try to secure the home at the right price but make sure any low offers are based on facts and market conditions or because the seller needs to sell quick. If I do make an offer under those circumstances, I resolve to act quickly and not be shocked when vendors balk at a three months settlement while I go on holiday to Fiji.

>> Andrew Winter is a real estate consumer champion and the host of Selling Houses Australia on The LifeStyle Channel. Andrew is up for Logie nomination. Vote at tvweek.ninemsn.com.au/logies