



Buyer Beware: Real Estate Valuation Websites

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*H*eadlines in real estate industry publications recently read: “Zillow.com Shown The Door At National Convention”. If you’re not already familiar with zillow.com, it’s a property evaluation site. You type in your address and zillow.com gives you an approximate value of your home as well as all of your neighbors.

The biggest challenge with zillow.com is its lack of accuracy. They make no bones about the fact that they don’t expect to be 100% accurate. They acknowledge a 3-5% differential.

The danger here is that sellers and buyers actually believe the valuations.

If you go on the Internet to search for homes, you can find a picture of a beautiful exterior that shouts to your heart, “Buy me! I’m the home for you.” But then you go there, and it’s in a neighborhood that you truly don’t like. It happens all the time.

This is why it’s so important to get off the Internet, see the property, feel the property, and picture yourself living there.

Something else many people don’t know is that zillow.com’s valuations change frequently. If you track your own property, you’ll see it goes up and down like a jumping bean. Sure, real value can change from week to week—but not with the frequency you’ll find on zillow.com.

The final problem with zillow.com is severe inaccuracies. I’ve seen 5-bedroom houses

show up as 2-bedroom houses. And I have seen 2 bedroom homes show up as 5 bedroom homes. The point is that the information is just not as accurate as it needs to be.

Buyer beware. Get off the internet and get looking at the homes that may be right for you. Seller beware, never trust an online valuation of your home...ever!

The only accurate method for determining the correct assessment of a home you’re either buying or selling is to have me find the information for you and for me to do a number of different analysis for you. I would do a property analysis, a neighborhood analysis and most important I would do this in person, live and only after I had viewed your home you were selling or analyzed the home you wanted to buy. I know how to find all the right numbers—from square footage to recent sales to neighborhood fluctuations and zoning issues. These are the important and critical factors in determining true value. Factors that no internet site could ever provide.

Don’t bet your buying and selling future on a website that pulls numbers from the sky. Be smart and allow a true professional to help you determine the correct value for your home.

Any questions? Give me a call at (360) 692-6102. I’m very familiar with your neighborhood and will be happy to talk to you about selling prices there. You may be surprised to find out what similar homes to yours are actually selling for—and how quickly.


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