

How our signs work to sell your home...

At **BloodhoundRealty.com**, we are *all* about marketing. Marketing is not mere advertising, and marketing is not a matter of throwing things against the wall and hoping that something sticks. Sound marketing originates in a central idea of a business that drives every decision: This is who we are. In every way we can think of, we are saying, "We are not like everybody else." The name of our brokerage, Odysseus the spokesmodel bloodhound, the logo, the color scheme, the look and feel of our printed pieces, the confidential style of persuasion in our text, the repeated challenges to preconceptions about Realtor marketing – all of this is devised to call attention to the differences we bring to the table. Even the "we," which belies all the "me, me, me" of Realtor advertising. But our yard signs are our *coup de grace*.

The average Realtor yard sign is really a brokerage sign. It is red-white-and-blue, its type set much too loose in clumsy gothic sans serif faces. The phone number will often be the broker's main switchboard line, rather than the lister's cell phone, which invites lost buyer calls. The sign will normally be 18 inches wide by 12 inches deep, 216 square inches. It will say nothing about the house. The listing agent will put his name and phone number and a few features of the home on 'riders' strung beneath the broker's sign.

In contrast, the **Bloodhound** signs you see here are custom-made, one to a listing, in full color. They use ITC Clearface for the typeface, professionally set. The phone number is ours, and we never promote any other number. As to size, we think bigger is much better. The top sign is 24 inches wide by 9 inches deep – the same 216 square inches as an ordinary brokerage sign. The middle sign – bearing a giant photograph of the home and of Odysseus the Spokesmodel Bloodhound – is 24 inches wide by 36 inches deep, 864 square inches. The bottom sign is 24 inches wide by 7.5 inches deep, 180 square inches. Taken together, the three signs are 1,260 square inches, almost *six times* the size of an ordinary brokerage sign.

But that's just mechanics: A Howitzer can be as inaccurate as a sling shot. The marketing question is: What induces the buyer to stop, to call, to tour the home – to buy it?

Forever and always, Realtors have treated their yard signs like billboards. After all, the traffic is driving by, so all you can hope to do is let people know this home is for sale, right? Well, maybe. Writing a billboard that sells is a monstrous job precisely because your prospect is inherently isolated from any possible point of sale. Is that true of a

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A storied home in Story...

What matters most in an Historic Home? Surely not just the age of the home or the painstaking restoration. Is the most important factor the stories you can share with your guests about your home's place in history? This home has it all. It's eminently liveable, yet its historic beauty was never smothered by random remodeling. Best of all, it has a story that can only get better: It was owned by Terry Goddard – former Mayor of Phoenix and one day, possibly, Governor of the State of Arizona. As his fortunes rise, so will the value of this home.

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\$495,000

Our yard signs shown at one-tenth scale

potential home buyer? More significantly, isn't the information on a Realtor's sign at war with the billboard idea? Who takes down a phone number from a billboard? And who can read all those riders without stopping?

And *why* would you want to *encourage* people **not to stop**?

The purpose of a Realtor's sign *should be* to get people to stop and look at and *buy* the house. If the entire point of the exercise is to promote a fleeting visual awareness that some particular house is for sale, with no action sought or expected, then the effort is entirely wasted. On the other hand, if a Realtor's yard sign is not really a billboard, but is instead, in fact, an advertisement – then what?

Our signs are our answer. Those custom photographs *will* attract attention. On the rider, we're advertising the price in no uncertain terms. Real Estate has always been a business of secrets – "I have access to information that you can't have without paying me first" – but our practice is to be completely transparent. And yet, if you ignore that paragraph of text on the middle sign, we're not hugely different from a normal Realtor's sign: Who we are and how to contact us.

But it is that paragraph of advertising that makes all the difference. *No one* can read that while driving by – and that's the point. That paragraph is there to get people to stop. To read the sign. To read the flyer. To write down the address of the web site. Most especially to look at the home. And, ultimately, to call us to *buy* the home.

The purpose of **Bloodhound's** yard signs is to get people to stop, to look at and to *buy* the home. The purpose is advertising, not announcement. We think ordinary Realtor's signs are a form of Sales Call Reluctance – passively absolving customers from buying the product. Our signs, by contrast, are very aggressive: If you want to know what we have to say, you're going to have to stop. When you do, we're going to keep presenting until you either relent or run away. We're going to call for your action in every way we can, and we're going to call for you to act *with us*. All of this is done by passive devices – the sign, the flyers and the house itself – but the objective is always action, and *now*, not later.

Everything **Bloodhound** does is about generating activity among qualified buyers to sell your home, and this sign is one of our unique weapons. Our competitors say, "Drive on by and forget all about me." We want to say, "We are *not* like everybody else." And *that* is what marketing is for.