

Humoring Homebuyers?

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It's not over 'til the fa—*sizeable* lady sings. That's what we've read and heard when it comes to the ailing housing market. From homeowners losing their homes nationwide, to homebuilders closing their doors, the housing market continues to be in a funk. For those homeowners, and builders struggling to survive the market, there's nothing *funny* about that. We've all seen the signage and advertisements for the LOWEST PRICE and BEST DEAL, all competing for a potential homebuyer's attention. As the advertisements all resemble each other in their messages, the condition of the housing market is intimidating for any buyer window shopping for a home.

But one builder is promoting their deals with a *direct* and *humorous* spin on the entire situation. "One of the few ways that we have to defuse some of the anxiety of the marketplace is with humor," says Bob Coolman, President of Coolman Communities. The builder is preparing to launch a new advertising campaign which includes blunt messaging: **The Housing Market STINKS!** The ad features a cartoon character surrounded by an undesirable smell – looming flies are the dead giveaway.

The Valparaiso, Indiana builder has been building homes in Porter County for decades and says the housing market is the worst he's seen in decades "We simply needed to change our approach - for pretty much every builder in the marketplace right now, it's a life and death situation, and for many, the only question is 'how long is it going to take to die?'" Coolman said.

Coolman is not ready to *die*. On the contrary, it's focusing on its ongoing ASK COOLMAN campaign. The new advertisements are the second stage of the campaign and will be posted in high traffic areas throughout Valparaiso. They're meant to draw the attention of anyone entertaining the idea of purchasing a home AND looking for a deal. The reader is directed to the playful domain –

www.getoffyouraskcoolman.com -- which leads to a *micro site* for a list of *deals* on Coolman homes, and important information educating the homebuyer.

This winter, the builder first made itself a resource for potential homebuyers, asking relevant questions about buying a home and giving the answers at their micro site -- Askcoolman.com.

The overall campaign emphasizes “It’s the Deal, not the Discount.” In other words, if you’re in the market for a home, don’t be taken by the *cheapest* house you can find, instead, be sure you know what you’re getting for your money. “We’ve reduced margins across the board, on every home we build” Coolman said. So, while the company knows it can’t offer the lowest prices – getting what you pay for-- it prides itself on building fine quality homes that are a great value – even in today’s market. Coolman homes are Green-Built and certified Five-Star (or better) Energy-Star Rated. They claim that NO ONE, in any price range, builds a better home.

Coolman’s current incentive program also makes buying one of their homes a special value. These include Coolman paying for the appraisal on your existing home, paying the first \$1000 of closing fees (provided it’s a local institution), and paying for the Comprehensive Extended Warranty on all new builds and existing homes in inventory. And that’s not all. Coolman Communities is GUARANTEEING their reduced prices on current spec and model home inventory to homebuyers. If one of their homes is purchased in a community at the reduced price, they guarantee that no one will purchase that particular model of home in the same neighborhood at a lower base price - ever. If that were to happen, Coolman will cut a check to the homebuyer for the difference.

Not only is Coolman offering GREAT DEALS, they’re encouraging homebuyers to take advantage of current interest rates. With current rates at or near all-time lows, Coolman wants prospective buyers to know those rates won’t last forever. “Waiting to get a *better deal* may cost you thousands when interest rates creep up,” Coolman warned.

Coolman is hitting hard with its advertising strategy, targeting prospective homebuyers by using various media advertising, including CineMedia – advertising in theaters. Beginning May 2nd, at the new Valparaiso Commons Theatre, movie-goers will see the Coolman advertisement in full swing. The plan is to humor the viewer enough to prompt interest in visiting the micro site for Coolman Communities offers. It's a different approach and one that Coolman is confident will draw attention and their deals will grab buyers.

Visit our Model Homes, Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4pm. For more information visit us online at www.getoffyouraskcoolman.com or to make an appointment, call Coolman Communities at 219-464-7510