

SMART MONEY

# Colour me for comfort

Michelle Collins

HOMEOWNERS' love affair with white and other neutral colours when decorating could be hurting their chances of selling their home.

The danger is that in trying to create a crisp, fresh look, sellers are getting rid of the touches that make their house feel like a home.

Rob Honeycombe from Bees Neees Realty said it was no longer just ceilings these days that were white but so were the walls, tiles, furniture and appliances.

The result was a look that could be described in ads as "crisp" and as a "clean canvas" for the new owners to put their individual touch on.

The risk though was it also made it difficult for many potential buyers to imagine themselves living in the house.

"Home buyers do have a desire to live in a magically clean, clinical and ordered world," Mr Honeycombe said.

"But what about some personally too? To me a favourite chair, even a slightly worn and out of fashion one, says I like sitting here. A rubble of toys - tidy though - says this is a family home and a sauce-spotted recipe book says this is a kitchen where you'll love cooking."

"Clean and tidy, yes. Und cluttered and with a sense of space, definitely. But for our money we say a home is a home. When you go to sell or rent your property don't be afraid to show some of your personality."

Real estate agents also recommend sellers clean up before an open house, get rid of clutter and finish off any unfinished maintenance jobs such as repairing leaking taps.

PRDnationwide Mackay real estate agent Kayleigh Brewster also suggests playing soothing music during the open house.

"In my experience, quiet calming music is always a good way of making people feel relaxed and at home," she said.

"Also something to entertain the children such as colouring books or puzzles while parents look around the house is a plus."

PRDnationwide Coolangatta/Tweed's Tony Maher said it was important to not only clean up your own house but to also look at the streetscape.

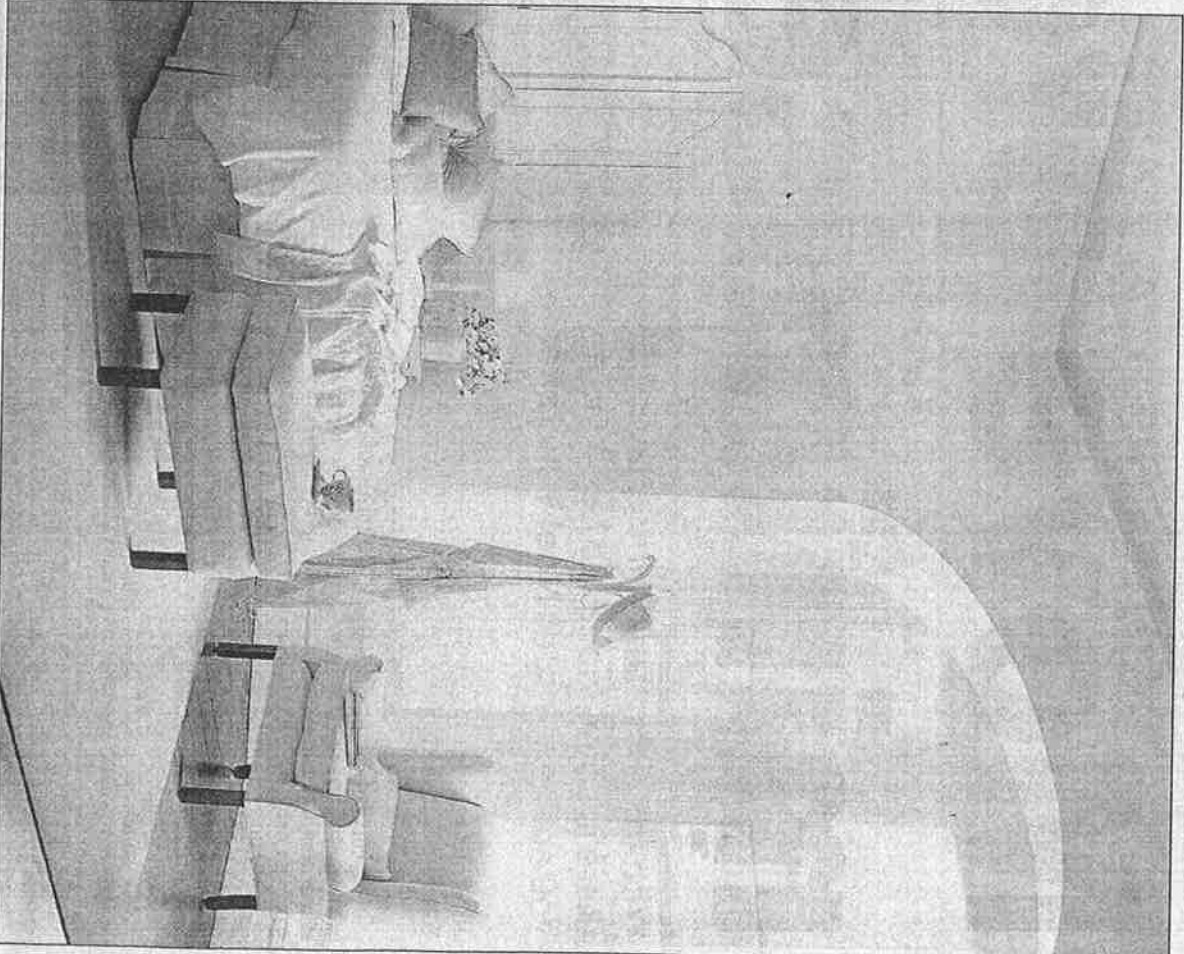
"Buyers make an assessment of your home long before they arrive," he said. "Their impression of the homes in your street as they drive along will influence their initial impression of your home."

"It is generally the smallest things that are the most obvious to potential buyers."

"The greatest no-no of all is the proliferation of junk mail littering the street in your neighbours driveways."

"If necessary wander down the street and pick it up yourself and throw it in the bin."

"You will be amazed what a difference what a small thing like that can make to the street appeal of your property."



BRIGHT IDEAS: Adding colour to a house can create a more homely feel.

WAGS

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