

Apartment makeovers nothing like reality TV

Michelle Collins

REALITY series *The Block* is giving apartment buyers an unreal impression of what it takes to renovate an apartment.

Real estate experts say contestants are spared body corporate arguments and they haven't needed to get council approvals – something most renovators are faced with.

Rob Honeycombe, managing director of Bees Nees City Realty, said the advantage of *The Block* was that all the apartments were being renovated at once and the exterior was done for them.

"The exterior is being done for them with no committee meetings, no budget discussions or all-out brawls, and no need for encouraging or nudging of reluctant co-owners," he said.

Mr Honeycombe said a great idea for a reality show would be filming a real-life body corporate meeting. He also suggested body corporates look at borrowing to renovate, which could allow them to make a big difference to their buildings without a big increase in levies.

Mr Honeycombe said there were plenty of inner-city apartment blocks that could do with an exterior makeover.

Emily Sim, national operations manager of property management website www.apmasphere.com, said anyone renovating an apartment should understand that structural changes need to be approved.

"The producers of *The Block* should make this clear so viewers don't get an unrealistic expectation of what they can do with an apartment renovation," Ms Sim said.



RENO RUSH: Show host Scott Cam with contestants from *The Block* (left), who are renovating a run-down apartment block (above and right).



'Cattle sale' of land