

First time home buyers, tips for hitting a grand slam

First-time home-buyers accounted for half of all the real estate market home sales in 2010, according to the National Association of Realtors. The house hunting and purchasing process can be overwhelming due to the many tasks that need to be addressed, but breaking the endeavor down into steps with your real estate agent can help make the process run more smoothly.

“While they are certainly connected, shopping around for a home and committing to the purchase are entirely different issues,” said Jim Dohr, president of Coldwell Banker Gundaker.

When searching for your ideal first home, remember the following:

- Get your finances in order. Know just how much of a down payment and mortgage you can afford before you start your search. More importantly, get pre-approved for a loan.

- Use your resources. A variety of online tools exist to help buyers with the basics. Coldwell Banker just launched a new portal on its web site (www.coldwellbanker.com) that is dedicated to first-time home-buyers. The resource center includes a mortgage calculator; affordability

radar; advice via video on selecting a home, moving, renovating, decorating, and selecting a real estate agent.

- Seek guidance. Consult your real estate agent throughout the process. Your agent is the expert, with both knowledge and experience, so they are in the perfect position to advise you on this matter. The best agents are not merely negotiators; they are trusted counselors to their clients.

Coldwell Banker Gundaker, the leading residential real estate brokerage company in St. Louis, op-

erates more than 20 offices with nearly 2,000 sales associates serving metropolitan St. Louis and east-central Missouri. Coldwell Banker Gundaker is part of NRT LLC, the nation’s largest residential real estate brokerage company. NRT, a subsidiary of Realty Corporation, operates Realty’s company-owned real estate brokerage offices.

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