

CASE HISTORY # 1

Public Relations, Advertising & Major Event Campaign

Citation Homes Real Estate Auction

The Silicon Valley area of Northern California is one of the most expensive housing markets in the United States. With inventories still high, sales of new homes had dropped to a small fraction of what they had been prior to the high tech & dot com bubble burst of 2001/02. Citation Homes, a large and respected home builder, commissioned Estey-Hoover and HRC Marketing (Hoover Related Companies) to develop an accelerated marketing plan to sell 90 new homes, averaging over ½ million dollars each, in approximately 120 days. (Citation had used Estey-Hoover for a similar program a decade earlier.) A plan, consisting of a combination of conventional selling and the largest new home live auction in U.S. history, successfully sold every property, virtually in one day.



From beginning to end, a 120-day period, Estey-Hoover developed and implemented a detailed marketing plan that included:

- ❖ Step-by-step strategic plan, checklist of needs and projects
- ❖ Marketing literature, web site creation, tools and budgets
- ❖ Press Kit preparation and distribution
- ❖ Interviews and press stories with major & local papers
- ❖ On-air, on-location television interviews
- ❖ Media recommendations and schedules
- ❖ Media negotiation and buying (papers, TV, radio, outdoor)
- ❖ Day-by-day media source response tracking system
- ❖ Toll free inquiry telephone handling system
- ❖ Four-color brochure & direct mail database coordination
- ❖ Design of ads for placement in a variety of publications
- ❖ Radio scripts and production for several radio stations
- ❖ Event site selection, registration & coordination at “Great American Theme Park”
- ❖ Coordination of a pre-auction “How to Buy” seminar
- ❖ Auction day press conference, entertainment and event staging (sound, lighting, etc.)
- ❖ Post Auction analysis, back-up buyer direct mail programs and more.

Results

During the four-week advertising period, **walk-in traffic totaled 8,939** (people visiting the model homes); nearly **80,000 visits** were made to the web site; **2,794 phone inquiries** were handled; **6,511 catalog requests** were filled; **2,384 people registered** to attend (1,088 of those were pre-qualified for loans); over **4,000 actually attended** (averaging about two people per party) with the required \$10,000 cashier’s check in hand in order to be able to bid on one of the 63 auctioned homes. The balance of the **90 homes were sold** in the conventional manner, utilizing databases built from the auction activities. Every home for auction (63) sold that day at an average price of 96% of the last asking price. The balance of the homes, sold in the conventional manner, averaged 107% of the last asking price due to the multiple number of prospective buyers presented to the builder.