



INDUSTRY NEWS

Less buying stress

WHILE a housing price crash is yet to be seen – (and highly unlikely according to local property experts) – COVID-19 has forced some big changes in the sector.

Nervous sellers withdrew their properties from the market, making the selection more limited; and open houses and even private inspections became more fraught, with many vendors keen to protect their homes from potentially infected visitors.

The whole experience has served to highlight the value of a buyer agents for those looking for a property, says experienced buyer's representative Michael Murray (pictured above).

First up is deep local knowledge, Michael says: "There's been an upsurge in city people seeking a tree change or even hobby farm in the region.

"That's a minefield for an outsider, but a buyer's agent is familiar with all the pitfalls – location, climate, development plans – and can save a lot of heartache."

Then there's access, Michael says.

"My company, Byron Property Search, has excellent relationships with all the major agencies who know we have qualified buyers who won't waste their time and who will make the deal as easy and stress-free as possible."

There's access, or inside knowledge of another kind too, especially valuable in these times of isolation, and that's to "off-market" deals – properties that aren't on the real estate listings websites that most people use.

"Lots of deals happen without ever having an open for inspection, perhaps because the vendor values discretion or privacy but increasingly now because of social distancing: they don't want strangers traipsing through their homes."

They may have taken their property off the market for the time being, Michael says, but would be open to a personal inquiry from him.

"We have a host of long-term personal relationships in the area," he says.

That also helps with the buyer's agent function role that has always existed – negotiation.

"Buyers often have a stressful, tedious and confusing experience negotiating the purchase," Michael says.

"I save them all that and bring objectivity, insight and transparency.

"It all adds a degree of certainty to the experience – pure gold in these strange and volatile times."