



Home Buyers Relocation Services....Quick Reference Guide:



The only “Exclusive Buyers Office” and the only office specializing in relocations in SW Illinois:

Representing only buyers; never sellers

- Absolute impartiality in the market
- No conflicts of interests
- No “dual agency” (“representing” both sides)

Specializing in relocations into SW Illinois

- Because it is a great relocation tool
- Relocating families are a “vulnerable class”

Supporting a totally different level of service:

- Buyers become “clients” instead of “customers”
- Agents become “consultants”, not “salespersons”
- See: “15 Differences”



In our 17th year...have served 2600+ buyer-families, not a single seller. Not a single complaint has ever been filed against us in any agency, including Realty Regulatory Agencies and the Better Business Bureau.

Offices in Edwardsville and O’fallon...relating to all the best relocation venues of SW Illinois.

Awards: Various from “National Association of Exclusive Buyer Agents” - Merrill has been President and Board member of this national organization, with many awards.
Significant Production Awards, annual realtor recognition
Independent “Outstanding Realtor” (top 5% surveyed) awards from **St. Louis Magazine**;
Denise Carter-2006-2007
Nancy Jo Mitchell-2006-2007
Paul Ottwein-2005 and 2006-2007
“Hall of Fame”; Real Estate Buyers Agent Council—Merrill Ottwein in 2005.
Most of us have ABR designations; Merrill and Debbie CRS; Merrill ABRM, CEBA

Recognition: See “Testimonials” in Library, all web sites; absolutely unsolicited statements:

- *“The most satisfying consumer experience of our lives, bar none!”* (Scott Curran, USAF)
- *“Wow...what a pleasure it was dealing with these people!”* (Keith Ratay, Boeing)
- *“Your company’s strategy of representing only the buyer is a great service to people moving into an unfamiliar area. I have never been more comfortable.”* (Tim McGraw)
- *“Having experienced less, we appreciate just how far your firm soars above the rest.”* (Dave and Jana Henderson, Sigma Aldrich)
- The concept of exclusive buyer representation has been endorsed by: The Consumer Federation of America, Common Cause (Ralph Nader), AARP, and many others.

Service: Have served all of the major companies on both sides of the river. Illinois: SIUE, Conoco-Phillips, Granite City Steel, Robinson Steel, Olin, Cooper B-Line; Spartan Metals, Pfizer, hospitals and dozens of smaller companies.
Missouri: Boeing, Emerson, Anheuser-Busch, Peabody, Purina, Sigma Aldrich, Monsanto, Mallinckrodt, American Airlines, Barnes-Jewish, Washington U., St. Louis U., McCarthy, and many smaller companies.
Scott Air Force Base: Over 1100 of our families were active military, or connected with the military.

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Defining the Differences

The *Home Buyers AdvantEDGE* Program, (The "Differences" = Your Advantage!)

These 15 differences we identify as The *Home Buyers AdvantEDGE*!

- 1. No Company Listings!** Our company's policy foundation is that we never serve sellers, and haven't taken a single listing in almost 15 years! That's almost an act of heresy in the real estate brokerage business, but it's our cornerstone; enabling and enhancing all of the other buyer-friendly facets of our practice. It's also the reality as well as the perception of ultimate buyer loyalty, and confidence in the integrity of the whole process.
- 2. Direct Access To Our MLS!** We finally have the ability to put you directly in touch with all for-sale-homes in the Multiple Listing Service database. For a long time, we've promoted direct consumer access to these once-closely-guarded files, and now we have browsers on three of our major sites that do that. Be sure to read the "Introduction" and the "Tips" before using...just once! This access supports a whole new kind of partnership between home buyers and agents.
- 3. Extraordinary Information!** We consider our body of information one of our greatest contributions to your relocation process. *Objective*, in-depth information is critical to wise buying decisions. Note the emphasis on "objective". Because we serve only one side of the transaction, you should be able to trust the information you get from us...so let's say "Extraordinary *Trustworthy* Information"! And that's long before you get to town, or even meet us. Two new internet sites accumulate and deliver it openly...OfallonHomes.com and EdwardsvilleHomes.com.
- 4. A Team Approach!** Most Real Estate Brokerage companies assign one agent to a client and from then on, that one person is the one and only contact, a relationship often jealously guarded. Here, although we do appoint one person as having primary responsibility to coordinate the whole process, the entire office becomes your "teammates" in the relocation process. Everyone's resources and experiences are therefore available and coverage of duty is seamless. In fact, we look upon the overall relationship as "teaming" with you. And so with that, experience and dedication are constant.
- 5. More Options!** This is an incredible paradox! Although we have NO listings of our own, we actually have more to offer than do traditional real estate firms. First we have everything ALL of them have, (access to the same MLS, pre-owned and new-builds,) but we work hard at non-listed properties...for-sale-by-owners, and builder inventory that might not be listed, (where it still costs no more to have us involved.) Traditional firms have difficulty with these offerings because it conflicts with their duties to their seller clients. We aggressively pursue them. One of the most significant, near-secret sources....former clients!.
- 6. Absolute Market Objectivity!** Because we have no listings, we can present every single option with absolute impartiality. We have no ties to any listings...no incentives to "push" any of them. This is the most frequently mentioned "benefit" in our service surveys, by far....confidence in the whole.
- 7. Specialization!** Specialization is a fact of our culture in many fields, and has recognized general benefits. In our case, it means we always view every event from the buyers' viewpoint. It means getting a lot of specialized tools tuned to support our constant mission...maximizing the buyers' benefits. It means we get better and better at what we do because we do it all the time and constantly look for ways to make it even better. And when it doesn't cost more to use us, it's like buying a custom suit for off-the-rack prices.

8. Relocation Emphasis! Exclusive representation is an incredible support tool for families in transition, because of the trustworthy nature of our information, and the absolute objectivity of the options we present. And we love this segment of the business. So, we've additionally focused on relocation specialization, perfecting the special timing and hosting requirements and information delivery systems....the only such firm so specializing in southwest Illinois. Of course we belong to the Employee Relocation Council, both the national organization and the St. Louis chapter.

9. Broad Geographical Relevance! Because of our relocation emphasis, we've developed relationships with ALL of the good relocation venues in SW Illinois, and can access all with equal ease, still with total impartiality. Vacating the traditional vertical integration with just a community or two, we've developed this neat horizontal relationship with the best relocation targets in all of southwest Illinois, (and almost automatically in the luxury end of the markets.) Clients as well as relocation companies and company sponsors like this capability...again, the only such firm in southwest Illinois.

10. Primary Attention to Resale! The longer we're in practice, the more we believe that the greatest monetary benefit we give our clients is when they resell the home we help them buy! In the traditional real estate world, unless the buyer insists on resale-analysis, this most-important buying goal is often simply overlooked in the quest to "get it sold". Just one minute after closing is "too late" to do much about incurable problems. Our data indicates more than twice the appreciation and half the days on market when compared to city by city averages....significant differences.

11. A Competitive Advantage! More often than not, in the better markets, we find ourselves in competition with other buyers, especially when we "pick cherries"...look for the better properties. We hate losing! So we're prepared, with your help, to compete successfully. A bit complex, but the "Homework" article..."Competing In a Tight Market", explains how we approach it.

12. A Super Service Mindset! We've got the most marvelous tool for home buyer support developed since the MLS...and that's "exclusive representation". But it doesn't stand alone...we still need to know the markets, the business, and have our attitude tuned to maximize the benefits...always...using all of the tools available. (But we truly don't see how "super service" can consistently be delivered without the cornerstone of exclusive buyer representation!)

13. The "Cheers" Of the Real Estate Community! If exclusive representation is the cornerstone however, then the mortar must be attention to the "soft side" of relocations...the human side. We find that we relate to people as much as property, and intend family-like hospitality. Whatever anxieties and concerns exist, we intend to replace them with comfort, control, convenience and confidence....making the whole a pleasant adventure with an always-successful result.

14. Value Added Service! Nobody likes to spend money unwisely, and everyone wants something of value in return for his expenditures. Few events of life are worse than leaving a transaction feeling cheated. Here, you should have the confidence that you've made the very best decisions from among complete options, and that you've gotten real value for your money...as current-speak suggests, that you've gotten "value added service". Previous clients consistently say that!

15. No Hustle! Everybody hates a "hustle"...decisions forced before their time. We won't do that here....ever. A page in our "Wiser Buyer Guidebook" describes our "We Won't Do Pledge". And "hustling" is at the top of that list. (We title it, "Buying Your Castle Without a Hassle"...patterned after "Buy No Wine Before Its Time", a bit weaker, but....well you get the idea!)