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Luxury Real Estate Web Design: Off with Your Head!

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How would you feel if you went shopping on Rodeo Drive, Madison Avenue or in any other upscale shopping area, and the owner of the store you approached was sitting in the window, waving at you and begging you to come into the store to shop? Does the song title, “Walk on By” seem appropriate as an answer? As a luxury real estate marketing professional, you must realize that your competitors’ website is just a click away.

This is the effect that luxury real estate websites have when the agent walks across the screen and starts pitching or even when a personal welcoming video starts playing automatically on their home page. Yes, it is cool that this new technology exists. But, the effect is not only tacky it annoys website visitors who are getting more and more internet savvy by the day. The likelihood of repeat visits is very slim.

Now, take this a step further. You walk into a luxury goods store where you just want to peruse the merchandise with no particular intent to buy. You are in a “just looking” mode. Get the idea that the manager of the store follows

you around every step of the way peering over your shoulder? How soon would you be inclined to make a return visit?

This is what the effect of having your headshot on your home page now has on net savvy website visitors. We say, (to quote the queen in Alice & Wonderland) "Off with your head--your headshot, that is!"

Web visitors now want to be left alone in a self-service venue. If your website elegantly fills this need your chances of capturing the lead is significantly increased.

You have a nanosecond to make a first impression with your head shot or video. You want to make a lasting first impression. What if all of the salespeople in our luxury store stood like statues with their arms crossed smiling at you? Some photographer somewhere along the line came up with this pose, which is supposed to convey "professionalism" and it has been copied thousands of times by real estate agents all over the country. What do crossed arms mean to you with or without a smile?

The bottom line here is this:

1. Take your headshots and personal welcoming videos off your Home page and put them on your "About" page.
2. Nix the "walk-on" special effects. Think of those in their pajamas in the wee hours of the night who do not want to be startled and just want to search for their next home.
3. Relax those crossed arms. This body language does not communicate certainty. It indicates tension.

Remember: "Off with Your Head!"

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