

The “Amazon Effect” Reaches into Charlottesville Neighborhood Choices

Amazon—or, more precisely, the Amazon phenomenon—is bound to have an increasing impact on Charlottesville residential neighborhood preferences. The connection hasn’t yet been widely acknowledged, but it’s hard to deny the logic behind it.

The connection I’m pointing to isn’t the web behemoth’s rumored expansion into real estate. That was quietly floated last summer—and just as quickly abandoned. Without ceremony, Amazon had debuted a “*Hire a Realtor*” page under a “Coming soon” blurb—but took it down the next day. The Seattle retailer has been mum about the reason for the misfire—but it could well be its use without permission of the NAR’s “REALTOR[®]” designation (it’s a registered trademark).

Nor does a prediction of an increasing “Amazon effect” on neighborhood preferences have anything to do with its Echo smart speaker or Alexa personal assistant software. Asking for real estate help from Alexa simply hasn’t caught on, possibly because her response to other requests lacks the kind of human connection most folks demand when seeking professional help on important matters. A couple of weeks ago, Echo-Alexa suffered a black eye when some of its speakers started giggling for no apparent reason. The result of hearing someone suddenly laughing from another room was described as “spooky,” “unnerving,” and “frightening.” Not what you’re looking for in a real estate agent!

The “Amazon effect” that may ultimately affect Charlottesville residential neighborhood preferences is the same one that has made its Amazon Prime membership so popular: free delivery. Last week’s announcement that Toys’R’Us will shutter its 735 stores is evidence that even the *New York Times* had to acknowledge: retail shopping “in the Age of Amazon” is undergoing a sea change. Further proof comes with the daily increase in the number of online merchants who find it necessary to compete by offering free shipping.

House hunters may assume that size, style, and price are the most important factors in choosing their next home, but neighborhood qualities weigh in, too—in fact, they often precede the other factors. Ultimately, it’s predictable that any neighborhood’s proximity to desirable shopping outlets—something that used to be a definite selling point—may all but disappear from consideration.

As the web wins over more and more shop-from-home adherents, that factor in the *location location location* equation may go the way of the horse and buggy especially in the suburbs which have largely been designed around “box mart” urban centers and large parking lots. What won’t disappear is the value of being able to count on an experienced (and human) real estate professional when buying or selling Charlottesville homes. Call me anytime!



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Born and raised in the Shenandoah Valley of Central Virginia, I love everything outdoors. Most of my free time is spent hiking, rock climbing, playing water sports, or cooking out on the back deck with friends. As a child, my parents built me with the core values of a southern gentleman. Trust starts with honesty and honesty builds integrity. I'm a technology guru! One of my favorite hobbies is restoring old homes in depressed neighborhoods to meet the needs of our generation today. My mission is to build a career worth having, a business worth owning, and a life worth living. Being GREEN® is more than just the resource efficiency of your home. It's a lifestyle choice! Let's discuss how to minimize your carbon footprint in everyday life by simplifying your daily commute, decreasing your household energy costs, and boosting the efficiency and sustainability of your daily routine!

I'm an Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®) with the National Association of Realtors. Which means I have extensive training to help walk you through the home buying process from start to finish. From lenders and home inspectors to mortgage agents and closing companies, together we will find the best home for your family's needs!

As an e-PRO®, I can show your home to over 500 million visitors today. And you don't even need to vacuum! Curb appeal isn't just about looking good from the street. It's about looking good from the digital highway!

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