



Start building from the warmth of your home.

By Greg Vreeland, President
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Last week in this column, I explained how to use the World Wide Web to prepare your self financial to purchase a new home. And now that you have your “financial house” in order and you are seriously thinking about buying a new home, you may be unsure where to start. Well, the solution could be as simple as going back to your personal computer. Assuming you have Internet access, a wealth of information that will help you in the home buying process is right at your fingertips.

The National Association of Home Builders' web site, www.nahb.org, has a detailed guide to buying a new home, tips on selecting and working with a home builder and much more in the “For Consumers” section. You’ll also find news and information about events, issues and legislation that affect homeownership and housing affordability. Additionally, the NAHB Web site features the Housing Opportunity Index, which rates housing affordability in about 200 major markets on a quarterly basis. This is of particular interest as the Dayton area compares very favorably to other areas of the country.

Locally, the Home Builders Association of Dayton will be launching a new site in the first quarter of 2008. The site will contain information on local communities and builders, as well as pertinent links to other local organizations and sites. Follow this column in the future for more information.

Another excellent source of home buying information is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development web site www.hud.gov. Here you can find consumer information on buying, owning, renting, fair housing and much more, including FHA low downpayment mortgage insurance for home buyers.

Fannie Mae operates www.homepath.com, where you can find several mortgage calculators to help you determine what your monthly payments might be or how much you can afford to spend for a home. And if you're not sure that homeownership is the right course for you to pursue, you will find information that can help you evaluate your options.

Freddie Mac's site, www.freddiemac.com, also includes useful mortgage calculators, information about home buying and a consumer home inspection kit that can be printed from the site.

Numerous U.S. government publications on housing subjects ranging from different types of mortgages to selling your existing home, residential energy efficiency and the home buying process are available at www.pueblo.gsa.gov.

As you discovered last week, one of the most important aspects of the home buying process is financing, and the nation's mortgage providers have taken full advantage of the Internet in their marketing efforts. Through a simple search, you can find numerous sites where rates are posted daily so you can compare terms and select the mortgage that best suits your needs. On some of these sites, it is possible to apply for a mortgage online.

These are just a few of the many online resources available to you as you begin your search for a new home. With a little time and the assistance of any of the popular Web search engines, you can find a wealth of information to make the process easier and more comprehensive.

Happy home building!