

## Marketing Messaging

# Are You Perceived as the Resource to Help the Distressed Homeowner?

by Tricia Andreassen

**T**his column describes a personal experience I feel compelled to share, as it relates to working with homeowners in distress and facing foreclosure.

A few months ago while on our wedding anniversary vacation trip, my husband Kurt was taken to the hospital. We had just ordered breakfast and were waiting for our drinks when he said, "I am not feeling so good..." After a few moments, we realized that it was serious and we needed to call 911.

The ambulance took him to the hospital, where they ran some basic tests—they did not keep him overnight for observation. The doctor came in and shared the test results and sent us on our way and, honestly, we weren't sure what steps should have been involved at the time to make sure his heart was healthy.

After scheduling a physical with our doctor, my husband began researching these keywords on Google: "left arm numbness;" "heavy breathing with left arm tingling;" etc. Not only did this help my husband prepare for his physical, but it gave him an idea as to what tests his doctor should run.

Fast forward two weeks when Kurt said, "Tricia, I have to lie down." I immediately asked how he was feeling and he told me, "The same way I felt a couple of weeks ago." I knew right away we had to take him to the hospital. While waiting in the emergency room, they told us what to expect so that we would feel comfortable and

know we would be taken care of. I can't even describe how nervous we were, but one thing that truly helped us communicate was the research we had done online. It allowed us to ask educated questions so that we understood what we needed to be doing and what to expect.

Because of our research, we were able to talk more knowledgeably about what type of stress test was needed, what other test they could run, like a CT Cardio Score (I didn't even know what this was until I started asking questions about blockage in the veins) and such.

I really feel in my heart that this is how distressed sellers who are behind on their mortgage payments feel. They are scared. They are overwhelmed. They are afraid to go down a path that might end in more distress. Just like Kurt and I, homeowners are feeling this way when it comes to their financial and emotional stress. I do feel that financial stress is like a physical illness. You are trying to turn to someone for



help, but you also don't want to feel like you are clueless when talking with an expert. This is why having a short sale marketing strategy and a website that is built on education, resources and finding answers is truly the tipping point for a seller to understand what steps are necessary to take. This is what Kristan Cole does with her website [www.WasillaShortSales.com](http://www.WasillaShortSales.com).

When the homeowner does the research and starts realizing that there are options to avoid foreclosure, they then look to the expert who is supplying this information. Just like Kurt and I would look for a heart surgeon if that were necessary, the same applies to the homeowner facing foreclosure. They want an expert who deals with this situation and understands what is involved so he/she can help guide the homeowner out of distress. **RE**

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