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Cindy B! focuses on customer satisfaction

By Chris Charlson
Contributor

FORT WRIGHT— Location, Location, location may be the three words most commonly Associated with Realtors.

But for Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce's Emerging 30 company Cindy B!, those words might as well be success, success, success.

The Fort Wright-based Realtor landed on the list for the second consecutive year by offering a choice of commission plans with licensed "seller only" or "buyer only" specialists who focus on the needs of their clients.

From 2003 to 2004, the company posted a 10 percent increase in unit sales and revenue, something owner Cindy Brouillette said is quite an accomplishment in what has recently become a volatile industry.

"I found the 2004 market to be inconsistent and unpredictable, especially since September 2004, primarily because of insecurity about employment and jobs," she said. "A much higher percentage of our 2004 listings were the result of employment layoffs."

Brouillette credits a crack staff who average well above average



Brouillette

sales with the continued success of the company. While many agents average six home sales per year, Brouillette said her agents average 42, a number unheard of in the industry. She explained offering sellers a variety of commission plans based on the services they receive allowed agents to tailor the experience to each individual client. A combination of cutting edge technology, tenacious agents and a variety of new loan options helped boost the company to a banner year.

"With an abundance of new and creative finance programs, it seemed that anyone who was gainfully employed with reasonable credit that wanted to buy a house could realize this dream," she said.

Last year, Brouillette personally placed over 1,000 calls to each buyer or seller who listed with the company to monitor the level of service they received. She said while most clients were pleased, some had insightful comments that helped her identify weaknesses in

training and procedure. The experience led Brouillette and her staff to implement an annual Peer Satisfaction Survey that lets employees rate others on how they could increase their attributes as coworkers. Brouillette also reorganized the office, doing away with supervisor positions that prohibited staff to work as peers.

"We modeled our company organizational structure after a physician practice," she said. "While highly skilled physicians may 'consult' with one another, they ultimately make their own decisions and take responsibility for those decisions."

While the number of employees has remained fairly constant from last year, Brouillette says she plans to add two more buyer specialists and a bilingual specialist to accommodate the growing Spanish speaking community. As for the coming year, Brouillette plans to continue slow & steady growth, focusing on the company's strong image and referral business.

"While there are many factors that explain our continued success, the primary reason is that the word is spreading that we effectively get results," she said.

About the 'Emerging 30'

This is one of a series of "Emerging 30" businesses honored by the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. To qualify for Emerging 30:

- Businesses must be established for at least three years.
- Businesses must be headquartered in Boone, Kenton or Campbell counties or Northern Kentucky Chamber members.
- Businesses need to average at least a 15 percent growth in revenues during the past 3 years.
- Businesses must exceed \$250,000 in revenue with fewer than 150 employees.

"This has created a demand for our service among sellers, and listings are where our business begins. About 35 percent of our listing sales last year were for sellers who had been listed with another company who couldn't get their home sold. After coming to Cindy B! Realtors, many of these same sellers found their homes sold within weeks."