Realtor’s ‘Not-Haunted’ for-sale signs draw laughs, boos

For Houston-based Realtor Ellis Young, a traditional “For Sale” sign just won’t do. Instead, Young likes to add uncanny and hilarious phrases — the latest being, “Not Haunted.”

Young’s latest listing in Manvel, Texas, is a 3,600-square-foot home with four bedrooms, three and a half baths and a private backyard — all features that should draw in potential buyers with no problem.

Ellis Young’s “Not Haunted” listing, 3223 Spring Ridge Dr., Manvel, TX 77578

Young, who is with Realty One Group-Lone Star, and his sellers thought the “Not Haunted” sign would, at most, draw in curious buyers and, at the very least, give passersby something to laugh at.

But Young got a little more than he bargained for when a couple neighbors wrote a Facebook post calling Young “unprofessional,” and then sent the post to ABC 13 in Houston.

“You can’t do it the same old way. You’ve got to spice it up. You’ve got to look different. You’ve got to keep it fun,” Young explained to ABC 13.

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Young told Inman he got the idea from his sign maker, who serves clients in Louisiana. There, the sign maker said, real estate agents use “Not Haunted” signs as a serious marketing tactic, so he jokingly asked Young if he’d like to start using them.

“I was like, shoot, let’s do it — let’s roll with it,” said Young with his Texas twang.

Young’s “Harvey Tested” sign. (Credit: Ellis Young)

He put out the first “Not Haunted” sign six months ago, and he has a few other signs in the rotation, such as “Gluten-Free House,” “Harvey Tested,” “Room For Activities,” “Free VCR with Purchase” and “Backyard Included.”

Young’s “Harvey Tested” sign. (Credit: Ellis Young)

His favorite sign is “Room For Activities,” a reference to a scene in the movie “Step Brothers,” where Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly’s characters build a makeshift bunk bed and excitedly declare, “So much room for activities!”

The jokes don't stop with his signs — Young's car reads: "Voted 13th most attractive realty team in the Pearland area," which he says is ironic since there aren't even 13 realty teams in the area.

Although some don't understand his humor, Young says he's not stopping anytime soon, and he'd rather be authentic to himself — something that helped him earn a Houston Association of Realtors Top 20 Under 40 award last year.

"Just be yourself," Young said. "It's cliche, but that's what it is. Find a brokerage that allows you to be who you want to be. If you're genuine, people tend to gravitate toward that versus someone who is scripted."

View news coverage of the "Not Haunted" sign here, courtesy of local Houston news channel ABC13.

Email Marian McPherson

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