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*Providing Mortgages that Save
Clients Money...with the Best Deal*

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Providing Mortgages that Save Clients Money...with the Best Deal

By: Heather Navarra, The Write Type

*I*t's all about helping clients save money while making sure they get the best mortgage deal, says Bill Eves of Homeguard Funding Ltd. Based in Newmarket, Ontario, Bill has been arranging mortgages for customers since July 1978 and, based on feedback from clients, they are consistently thrilled (and occasionally surprised!) with the results he achieves. Born and raised in Newmarket, Bill still lives in the area. He graduated from Ryerson University with a degree in Business Administration, then spent eleven years as a real estate agent and owner of his own real estate company. He always enjoyed the financing aspects of his role and, with his strong industry knowledge and excellent people skills; it was a natural progression for him to move to the mortgage industry. He originally worked for Raycan Financial, and has been with Homeguard Funding since its inception over 27 years ago, along with partner Wayne Sudsbury. Since then, Bill has arranged over 7,000 mortgages, for both first-time home buyers and renewals for home owners. Homeguard promises 'The very best mortgage rates in Ontario'. Surprising to clients is that the company can often beat the best offer they receive from their bank, even though they may be a 'preferred customer'. It's not well known, but clients renewing with their bank consistently pay higher rates than new borrowers at the same moment in time.



With Homeguard's connections, clients are consistently amazed with the deals negotiated for them, even with their own bank! It's unfortunate that the public generally isn't aware of this; 85 percent of all homeowners merely sign and return their renewals. York Region homeowners can benefit by positioning themselves to negotiate with their current lender, or simply switch their mortgage to a new lender without cost. Refinancing part-way through the mortgage term represents a choice that can be considered. "We would analyze the client's current mortgage situation and advise them on the best option," says Bill. Bill has built professional relationships with over 55 lenders that enable him to locate the best match. Clients sign a privacy release so Homeguard can negotiate with lenders on their behalf.

Because of these amazing results, about 90 percent of Homeguard's business comes from repeat clients and referrals. "That's such great feedback," says Bill. "It demonstrates that people are happy and they trust me enough to look after their friends and family. It is very satisfying to have clients come back and to refer me." Real estate professionals also send Bill business, knowing that their clients will benefit. Homeguard serves clients across Canada, but focuses on the Greater Toronto Area, including York Region. Another important aspect of Homeguard's service is their quick turnaround time. When necessary, Bill can process a request in as little as four hours! This is of great benefit to clients who have found a home they'd like to purchase and need to arrange financing quickly to make the deal happen. "Many of my clients have almost come to tears of joy after being told they have qualified for a mortgage and can buy their first home."

Well recognized in the industry, Homeguard has six locations: Newmarket (head office), Mississauga, Keswick, Lindsay, and Bancroft.



About thirty employees serve clients, making Homeguard a mid-sized brokerage firm. Their head office was recently relocated to larger facilities, providing a more professional atmosphere for meeting with clients. Homeguard and its associates are members of a state-of-the-art mortgage delivery system that forwards requests to lenders, representing the latest technology. Also available at no cost in York Region is the 'Electronic Market Bid System', allowing registration of mortgage maturity dates. These systems ensure the very best renewal rate on the market.

For Bill, his role is all about service. The process of saving clients money goes hand-in-hand with getting the best deal for them, taking into consideration their unique circumstances. With his experience as a realtor, Bill's value-added personal service includes an interview to understand the needs and goals of the client. A simple example: if a client is planning to move in two years, a five-year mortgage wouldn't be appropriate, even if a higher commission might be paid

to Homeguard. Bill spends the time to explore and develop the options, providing a clear explanation of all the details. As a professional, Bill's primary focus is client satisfaction. His goal is to treat his clients so well they stay with him for life.

It's obvious Bill's approach is working. His connections in the industry are strong and contribute to his ability to serve his clients well. Over his 32 years in the business, he has gained the respect of both customers and colleagues. For the past 8 years, he has earned a place on the Presidents Club with Maple Trust (now Scotiabank), based on the dollar volume of business completed.

"The industry has changed over the years," notes Bill. "It used to be that going to a mortgage broker was a last resort, only for mortgages that were difficult to place. My goal was to change that concept." With his in-depth knowledge of how to put a deal together that focuses on obtaining the best options for the client, the results are setting the standard in the industry.

Homeguard's service also includes

their 'continuity program', where clients receive follow-up correspondence as well as reminders if their mortgage is coming due in the next 90 to 120 days. Bill is in the process of expanding this program: clients will receive mail-outs with valuable reference materials, as well as industry news and information on rates and trends. Accessible and courteous, Bill also encourages phone calls from clients at any time with questions, potentially saving long stretches on the phone with their bank listening to the ubiquitous "Your call is important to us..." voice loop. "For me, it's important to treat clients as I would like to be treated," says Bill. "My primary goal is to look out for my clients' best interests. Communication is also an important part of our business." Feedback from clients consistently describes Bill as an efficient professional through every aspect of the mortgage process. And being a people person, it's not surprising that Bill's favourite part of his role is his interaction with clients. He enjoys the continuing changes in the industry and the challenges they bring, with opportunities to find new

solutions that will benefit his clients. Homeguard's processes are supported by their professionally designed website that includes helpful resources such as a mortgage calculator and information for first-time buyers. The company advertises extensively on the radio, television and in area newspapers. Investors also play a role at Homeguard, although Bill cautions care in this regard. "Investing in mortgages is always risky, to some extent," shares Bill. "The investment is secured but values can plummet and you can lose money." Bill belongs to two mortgage broker organizations: the Independent Mortgage Brokers Association of Ontario and the Canadian Institute of Mortgage Brokers and Lenders, both providing seminars and training opportunities. Homeguard has been nominated by CMP (Canadian Mortgage Professionals) for providing the best client service from an individual office Canada wide. They'll find out next month whether they have won this coveted award. With over 32 years of experience in a job that often requires nights and weekends, it's clear that Bill loves

what he does and is dedicated to this rewarding role. Through the tenacity of their staff, Homeguard has survived various downturns in the economy over the years and has continually become stronger. Bill's goal is to maintain the same level of business from year to year and, in the coming months, he will be developing a new team and practicing the fine art of delegating. His knowledge and experience, along with his contacts in the industry, will ensure that the team continues to excel.

In the past 12 months there have been tremendous changes in the residential mortgage market in Canada. The new products that were offered including no down payment, 40 year amortizations, relaxed "stated" income requirements for the business for self employed clients, have been virtually eliminated by the Department of Finance. There has also been serious restrictions to refinancing of own homes and mortgages for investment properties as well as qualifying rates if a borrower chooses to go with less than a 5 year fixed rate or variable rate mortgage.



Photography by Tony Ejem