

BY GARRY UPTON

Over the course of 2009, this space will identify opportunities within customers' homes that you may not have observed in the past. The opportunities are based on a recent homeowner survey conducted by Decision Analyst, Inc.

## Are real estate companies looking for help in selling homes beyond the usual methods?

We succeed in business because we find customers who have a need or desire for the products and services we provide. The HVACR business relies on finding and serving those people. In this economy, segmenting your customer groups can help you develop affordable outreach and marketing for key customer groups.

So, who do you market to? Homeowners, of course. Who else? What about realty companies? Their sales of pre-owned homes are definitely in need of help. Could you be the help they're looking for?

Decision Analyst has discovered that new homeowners who are the least satisfied with the central HVAC systems live in existing homes they bought in the past two years. Significant numbers of this group have a need for a better


central HVAC system.

- Among new homeowners who purchased a pre-owned home, only 40% are satisfied with the home's central HVAC system.
- 63% of homeowners who purchased a newly-constructed home are satisfied with the home's central HVAC system.
- Among all homeowners, less than half — 48% — are satisfied with the comfort they achieve with the home's existing HVAC system.

1. Have you approached local real estate offices to offer your services? Could they sell more if they had a plan that included an updated, upgraded central system (rolled into the mortgage) with the homes they offer? Could your approach be looked on as a boon to their business?

2. Do you track home sales? Do you call on new homeowners buying an

existing home to offer your services? Planned service for this group would be a great place to begin. This is a great group to find and market to.

During economic difficulty, success will belong to those who can creatively look at the market and single out specific subgroups of interest. Those groups should already perceive they need the specific services and products you sell. Our research tells us that this group, more than most other homeowner groups, already perceive the need. This group of homeowners (6 in 10 are less than totally satisfied with their central system) are currently underserved in your community. What others have you identified? What are you doing with them? 

Garry Upton, of Decision Analyst, Inc., shares his interpretations of its American Home Comfort Study of homeowners, and explores what customers look for in HVAC contractors. To learn more about this study, or to purchase it, contact Garry at [gupton@decisionanalyst.com](mailto:gupton@decisionanalyst.com).