

A successful reno requires a team effort



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DESIGN
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Have you ever looked at your kitchen or bathroom and wished they functioned better, or were bigger, more updated? That's how it all starts.

Thoughts turn into dreams, dreams give way to research and inspiration. Next you find yourself looking at designer's and contractor's websites, and establishing a realistic budget.

Intimidating as the process may seem at the outset, working with the right team can help get you through it, and ensure you get it right.

Sure, I'd like to say it's all about the design but it really is a team effort between your designer, contractor and the pros needed, depending on the scope of your project.

The right designer will listen to your ideas, clarify the vision, determine the scope of work with you, draw up a plan and recommend contractors

for the job. Or, maybe you've hired a contractor (after interviewing several and getting quotes) and they may recommend a designer.

Either way, you're going to have a lot of questions and together the team will help you set realistic goals to move forward.

In the GTA, we're fortunate enough to have high standards set to help homeowners on everything from the building code, to the quality of your renovator.

BILD (the Building Industry and Land Development Association) is the voice of the professional renovation industry. It's professional renovators abide by the RenoMark Code of Conduct. When you see the logo, you can be confident in your renovation professional.

You may wonder if your little bathroom renovation is going to require permits, an engineer, an architect, etc. Your contractor and designer will recommend those services depending on the whether you're adding an addition, or just taking a wall out, whatever the scope

of work entails. That's when you're getting into legalities so it's important to do it right.

Your project will have to comply with Health and Safety requirements. Did you know if you hire a general contractor, they will be responsible to the Ministry of Labour to manage the safety and reporting requirements. If you hire two or more people to oversee the project, you, the homeowner are responsible.

Getting a plan on paper is very important. Your designer's firm will produce detailed, computer aided design (CAD) drawings for the trades to follow. It's an added expense, but an important step to getting the details correct.

What else can you do to get ready?

1. Dream. Look at Houzz, Pinterest, designer's and contractor's bathroom and kitchen company's websites and get inspired.

2. Design. Book a consultation with a designer who will help interpret what you want, and create CAD drawings that you can take to a

contractor/builder.

3. Details. Have an idea for finishes and fixtures so your team can get a true estimate of costs, and plan the plumbing, lighting and electrical aspects of your project.

4. Due Diligence. Interview contractors, educate yourself on the process so you too, are aware of your responsibilities throughout the renovation. Be available during the process to answer any concerns or questions or to make a quick decision.

5. De-clutter. Plan where everything will go during the renovation process. It will get messy so protect your property.

6. Come to the International Centre for the GTA Home & Reno Show, on now. Today at noon I'll be moderating a discussion with builders and renovators about redoing kitchens and bathrooms, come and learn all you can from the pros and get inspired about renovating and what you need to know.

The show is on all weekend, including Family Day on Monday from 10 a.m..

Hope to see you there!



Designer Jane Lockhart, on site this week planning the tile layout for a renovation project.

— Jane Lockhart
is a celebrity designer,
TV personality and

leading expert in
the world of design. Visit
www.janelockhart.com.

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New trend saving home buyers and sellers thousands

Justo is bringing fairness to residential real estate

Many real estate agents give their clients a gift at closing, something for the new home: Gift cards to buy decor, furniture, even washers and dryers. But when Megan Russell and her husband Jeremy purchased their \$1,050,000 home last November, they received a far greater present from their agent: a little over \$13,000 in cash.

The windfall wasn't actually a gift, but rather cash-back courtesy of their agents, Justo Inc. Brokerage, a new real estate concept that's disrupting the residential real estate market in the GTA.

"We met with a few different agents first, but they all seemed dismissive of the listings we were interested in and kept pushing their own listing on us," said Russell. "But with Justo, our agent really seemed invested

in finding us the perfect house, and she didn't try to push us to spend more. It was really a pleasure, and the cash back was the cherry on top."

This is the type of experience Justo is striving for with all of its customers, based on its mission, which is evident even in the name: Derived from the Latin word meaning "just" and "righteous," Justo aims to bring fairness and transparency into an industry that has, until recently, been shrouded in secrecy.

"Years ago, customers didn't have access to online listings or data on other properties, but technology has made this information infinitely more accessible to buyers and sellers. Yet despite these and other advances in technology, the standard commission model remains the same as 20 years ago. This is unfair to our clients," said Daphne De Groot, Justo's co-founder and CEO. "By

leveraging existing technologies and working to create new ones we're able to work far more efficiently, freeing up time and money, both of which we're able to pass on to our clients."

This means sharing their commission with their buyers 50/50. In addition to the cash back bonus, Justo also pays for their buyers' home inspections, and lawyer fees*.

This philosophy applies equally to sellers as well. When listing with Justo, clients pay only 1.25 per cent in listing commissions — half the amount typically charged by other brokerages. On an average GTA home, that's over \$12,000 in savings. And as with Justo buyers, sellers listing with the firm can cancel their agreement at any point in the process.

Further, Justo's all-inclusive model means that the brokerage covers the costs of staging, professional photography,

3D virtual tours, MLS listings and traditional marketing to their clients. This saves sellers several thousand dollars more, while helping to maximize the potential price of the home. These are all critical services that usually fall on the customer to source and pay for.

It's all part of Justo's commitment to not only bring fairness to the transaction cost, but to provide outstanding service to its clients. Justo's licensed, experienced agents are people who believe in the mission, are tired of the status quo and want to be a part of the Amazon or Uber for real estate.

The brokerage takes care of lead generation, so its agents can focus exclusively on delivering outstanding customer service (part of their compensation is even based on client satisfaction), rather than spending the lion's share of their time on business development and personal

marketing. Additionally, agents are assigned set territories, ensuring they are experts in their given neighbourhoods who are able to use that expertise to the customer's benefit.

Overall, Torontonians are rapidly turning to Justo's new model. The company can significantly lower the costs of buying and selling a property — while still making sure their clients get the best possible deals.

"We really believed the industry was due for a reset, and that Torontonians could benefit from our vision," said Vicki Schmidt, Justo Broker of Record.

In a city whose real estate is among the top 10 most expensive in the world, it's time for buyers and sellers to get a much-needed break, and be given the care and service they deserve.

Learn more:
• Justo.ca



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Justo aims to bring fairness and transparency into an industry that has been shrouded in secrecy.

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