

HELPING NORTHERN IRELAND HOME BUYERS MAKE A SMART MOVE



Belfast Telegraph Northern Ireland Business Awards 2010 Excellence in Marketing Achievement Category

WJ Law has been designing and creating homes of quality and distinction for more than a century. Style, high specification and design integrity have been the hallmarks of our business since it was established by William John Law back in 1903. Renowned for our distinctive Country Georgian homes, we are a family owned company driven by quality, service and innovation. That innovation can be seen in the way we operate our business; the way we market our developments; and in our focus on making the most

important purchase our customers will make in their lifetime, something that is hassle-free, enjoyable and affordable.

In this submission we will demonstrate how our commitment to marketing and innovation has helped our business compete and grow during the most challenging marketing conditions for house builders in the last hundred years and built a strong foundation for future growth into the next hundred years.

THE MARKETING CONTEXT



Recent years have indeed been the most challenging for many businesses in Northern Ireland, and the local housing market in particular. The deepest recession for over 70 years has impacted on consumer confidence and increased commercial pressures in every business sector.

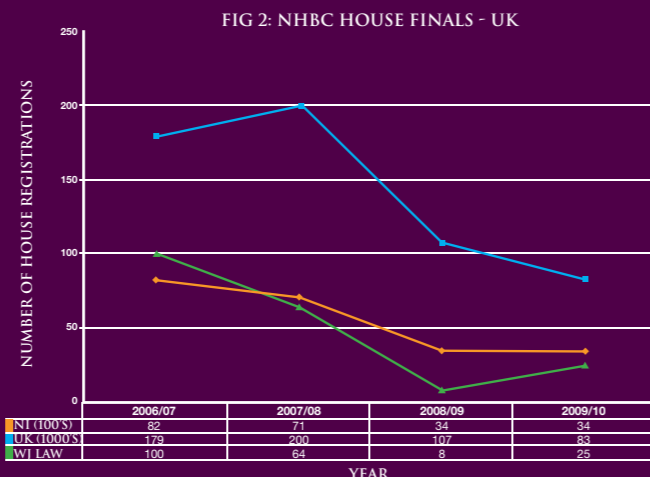
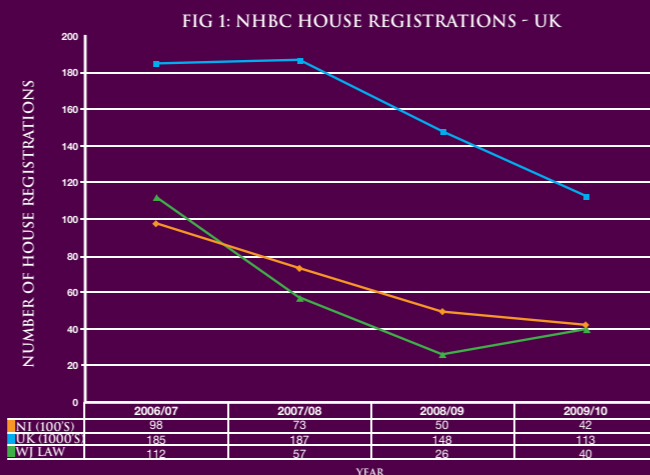
In the housing market according to National House Building Council statistics, (see Figs 1&2), house registrations fell across the UK from 187,000 in 2007/08 to 113,000 in 2009/10, a decrease of almost 40%; and house sales from 200,000 to 83,000 in the same period, a fall of almost 59%. In Northern Ireland the picture was even more dramatic with registrations down 57% from 98,000 in 2006/07 to 42,000 in 2009/10, and sales down almost 59% from 82,000 to 34,000 in the same period.

These trends were also reflected very dramatically in our own business, with registrations in 2008/09 down 77% on 2006/07 figures and sales down over 90% over the same period.

In a difficult market, our challenge was clear. Our product was good. Indeed WJ law had built a reputation for quality homes with a distinctive, timeless style that perfectly matched tradition with the needs of the modern family. Our range of homes and locations were attractive. Our prices were competitive. We had a great story to tell. What we needed to do was to communicate this to the market imaginatively and compellingly and to establish a tangible position in the market for our brand that would strongly differentiate us from the competition and attract buyers.

WIN! WIN!
 NHBC
 WINNERS NHBC BEST SITE MANAGER IN NORTHERN IRELAND
 VISIT BALLANTINE GARDEN VILLAGE AND SEE WHY
 WINNERS CEF BEST GREENFIELD SITE IN NORTHERN IRELAND
 ballantinegardenvillage.co.uk
 T. 028 9066 3030 T. 028 9266 6638
 WJ LAW

All very important, but in the prevailing market conditions this, we believed, was not enough.



Based on a number of discussions with local Agents and feedback from potential home buyers who had expressed an interest in WJ Law properties but hadn't purchased, we identified that one of the biggest barriers to home purchase, (perhaps unsurprisingly!) was finance, and in particular the cost of the deposit on a new home. The lending institutions had become increasingly risk averse and with house prices falling dramatically, the payment of deposits of £50k on many new homes had understandably become beyond the average home buyer's means.

Addressing this issue for our home buyers, we were convinced, would be the key to unlocking the market and stimulating sales. That was literally the bottom line for us. With substantial availability of homes on a number of mature developments in Banbridge, Dromore and Bangor, as well as the launch of our flagship development at Ballantine Garden Village in Lisburn and Avonmore Court in North Down, turnover had become a huge factor for us. We needed to take the initiative to kick start the market and we had to do it quickly.

BUILDING OUR BRAND. INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE.



We believed that investment in our brand was crucial to building longer term success in what was becoming an increasingly competitive and difficult market.

Clearly differentiating the WJ Law brand from competitors on the basis of design and build quality, craftsmanship, customer focus and service delivery and communicating that difference imaginatively, compellingly and consistently through an integrated approach to our marketing would significantly improve effectiveness and maximize value. There was, we believed, a tremendous opportunity in the marketplace for a brand to show leadership and to establish a position that would connect and resonate powerfully with the new home buying market. The market needed confidence and a confident brand that it could trust at a time of great uncertainty post-Lehmann Brothers, Northern Rock etc.

Working in partnership with a local design agency during late 2007/2008, we had reviewed the effectiveness of all our existing marketing materials, from our logo to print collateral, off site and on site marketing. Through the process we recognized that our brand had no clear or consistent position in the marketplace. Yes we had a good story to tell, but our communication lacked integration and our presentation did not reflect the quality of what we were producing. Based on that review we invested in the development of our logo and the establishment of a set of brand guidelines that would reflect the values that we wanted our brand to represent – quality, craftsmanship, trust, customer focus and exceptional service.

These guidelines were applied across all aspects of our marketing, from the sales brochures of each development, to press advertising, promotional materials and on site branding. We also invested significantly on our online presence with the development of the WJ Law Group website and individual micro-sites for each of our developments.

Our objective was to ensure that whenever, however, or wherever a potential buyer touched the WJ Law brand, the quality of that experience would be exceptional. To achieve this, our vision for the brand was shared with our people, both off site and on site and together we worked to deliver our brand values through everything that we did from managing the initial enquiry to helping make things go smoothly on moving in day and beyond.

The response from our people was overwhelming. We weren't just building houses now, we were making homes, and together making buying a WJ Law home something special.

The introduction of the new WJ Law brand was a significant step for us and a significant investment but we realized that to survive and indeed thrive in the marketplace both in the short term and the longer term, this investment, and continued investment, in the key building blocks of our brand was crucial.

Once we had created the foundation of our brand, its roll out was delivered through a series of innovative sales and marketing initiatives during 2009 that included:

- **New Homebuyers' Workshops** hosted by WJ Law on site at our Summerhill development in Banbridge, Ballantine Garden Village in Lisburn and Bishopshill in Dromore. These unique one day events brought together specialist interior design, tiling, kitchen and bathroom specialists and mortgage/financial advisers to help prospective homebuyers choose their new home and secure their finance in one day! Almost 1,000 people attended the Workshops, a tremendous response. They tangibly demonstrated that WJ Law didn't just build houses. They positioned us as an innovative, thoughtful partner for new home buyers.
- Our **House Price Guarantee Scheme**, guaranteed that if a purchaser bought a new WJ Law home of the same type and the same specification for a lesser price within 18 months of completion, we would refund the difference in price and the difference in Stamp Duty. This initiative again positioned us strongly in the marketplace at a time when house prices were falling daily and purchasers were reluctant to commit to sales.

HOUSE PRICE GUARANTEE SCHEME
 PEACE OF MIND FOR NEW HOME BUYERS
 If you buy a new WJ Law home now, we guarantee that if the same type of home is completed to the same specification for a lesser price within 18 months of completion, we will refund the difference.
 Plus we'll also refund the difference in Stamp Duty!
 ballantinegardenvillage.co.uk
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 HILLHALL ROAD, LISBURN
 Press Ad

BUY YOUR DREAM HOME NOW PAY IN 4 YEARS TIME
 WJ LAW
 BALLANTINE GARDEN VILLAGE
 HILLHALL ROAD, LISBURN
 LEASLY STEPS TO BUYING YOUR NEW WJ LAW HOME NOW
 1. Choose your home
 2. Complete your mortgage application
 3. Complete your purchase
 4. Move in
 5. Enjoy your new home
 6. Pay for your home over 4 years
 7. Receive your home free of charge
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SMART MOVE OFFERED NEW HOMEBUYERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE THEIR DREAM HOME AT 75% OF ITS PRICE, WITH NO DEPOSIT REQUIRED.

Through Smart Move Scheme home buyers simply reserved their new WJ Law home and completed legal by the agreed date.

- They paid only 75% of the purchase price initially.
- They paid no interest or rent on the outstanding 25% for the first 2 years.
- The outstanding 25% was paid back as 25% of the property's open market value, at any time up to resale or within 10 years, whichever is sooner.
- Their home was 100% theirs from day one.

THE SCHEME HAS PROVED TO BE A HUGE SUCCESS.

YOUR INVITATION

to our Homebuyers' Workshop

at Summerhill, Rathfriland Road, Banbridge on Saturday 3rd October 2009 from 10am - 2pm



25% deposit paid!
See inside for details.

Get a mortgage in 24hrs!
See inside for details.

Kitchen, Fireplace, Tile & Bathroom specialists, Interior Designers - are all waiting to talk to you!

summerhillbanbridge.co.uk

WJ LAW
ESTABLISHED 1988

Workshop Invitation



WE'LL PAY THE 25% DEPOSIT ON NEW HOMES AT SUMMERHILL IN OUR SMART MOVE MORTGAGE SCHEME.

SPEAK TO SPECIALIST MORTGAGE ADVISERS AND CHOOSE THE MORTGAGE THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU.

TALK TO EXPERTS ABOUT KITCHENS, FIREPLACES, TILES, BATHROOMS AND INTERIOR DESIGN. ALL TOGETHER AT OUR WORKSHOP.

WJ LAW

HELP IS HERE!

WE PAY YOUR 25% MORTGAGE DEPOSIT!

LOOK FOR SMART MOVE AT Ballantine Garden Village, Lisburn and Avonmore Court, Donaghadee



T. 028 9066 3030 T. 028 9266 6638
T. 028 9147 9393 T. 028 9145 1166

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Press Ad

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WE PAY YOUR 25% MORTGAGE DEPOSIT!

LOOK FOR SMARTMOVE AT ballantinegardenvillage.co.uk

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MAKE THE SMARTMOVE TO AVONMORE

FROM ONLY £175,000
Go to www.wjlaw.co.uk/47 to find out more.

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WJ LAW

SAVE 47% ON MORTGAGE REPAID!

48 Sheet Posters

For example, since the release of Avonmore Court in Donaghadee in Spring 2009, WJ Law has offered eighteen properties for sale at the site, with fourteen being either booked or sold.

Of those houses either sold or booked, 80% of purchasers have chosen to use the Smart Move Scheme, comprised of either first time buyers or buyers who are subject to sale. The remaining 20% of purchasers were cash purchasers and therefore did not need to use the Scheme.

Commenting on the Scheme, Victoria Murray of Pinkerton Murray the Agent for the development said:

"Avonmore Court has become a popular development that has sold well in the current economic climate, though I have no doubt in saying that if the Smart Move Scheme had not been offered to purchasers, the development would not have fourteen out of the eighteen properties released sold and I would be of the opinion that less than half of these would be sold or booked to date if the Smart Move Scheme had not been in operation."

Not only has the Smart Move Scheme encouraged sales it has also enabled Pinkerton Murray to achieve a higher completion price for WJ Law based on the average agreed price for three, four and five bedroom properties at Avonmore compared to the average agreed prices for similar properties in developments within a three mile radius (see Fig 3)".

"In every case Avonmore Court has achieved a higher selling price than competing developments. I would attribute this to several factors such as build quality, location and value for money but ultimately affordability".

Victoria Murray, Pinkerton Murray

This success has continued into 2010 with 60% of homes reserved by home buyers at our recently launched development at Rossdowan Court in Bangor opting for the Smart Move Scheme and almost 75% of enquiries about homes, choosing Smart Move.

IN FACT, IN 2009, WJ LAW SOLD 90 NEW HOMES, COMPARED TO JUST 9 IN 2008, WITH ALMOST 70% OF PURCHASERS CHOOSING THE SMART MOVE SCHEME

Fig 3: Comparable Development Property Prices



Note: Some developments do not have a full range of similar properties to Avonmore Court therefore are shown with no value

- Stonebridge Village, Conlig
- Manor Farm, Donaghadee
- Murtle Grove, Bangor
- Rockfield, Bangor
- Avonmore Court, Donaghadee

WHY WJ LAW IS THE PREMIER CANDIDATE FOR THE MARKETING EXCELLENCE AWARD 2010

- 1 We have demonstrated an innovative and structured marketing-led approach to competing in difficult commercial conditions.
- 2 We have clearly identified marketing and commercial objectives for this approach.
- 3 We have shown how that marketing approach has been extended across our entire business, imaginatively and innovatively.
- 4 We have quantifiably measured how investment in the development of our brand and marketing has had a direct influence on our commercial success.

We commend this submission to the judging panel.