Property Management Newsletter

August 2017

LJ Hooker wins industry accolades

LJ Hooker took home three major honours at a leading real estate industry awards ceremony recently.

For the second year in a row, LJ Hooker won the Digital Presence of the Year title at the Real Estate Business Awards held at Sydney's International Convention Centre.

The award represents the real estate network or agency that maximised and expanded their digital footprint throughout 2016.

With a digitally savvy marketplace, LJ Hooker has been creating innovations and online products which make all aspects of property information gathering easy and rewarding for customers and clients.

LJ Hooker Chairman, L Janusz Hooker, accepted the award on behalf of the network saying the success of LJ Hooker could be put down to the company's unrelenting commitment to innovation to drive business growth and provide seamless customer experiences.

"An effective digital footprint has never been more important than in today's market," Mr Hooker said.

"We've adopted a strong focus on utilising advanced digital and social strategies to allow our clients to better connect with the modern consumer. This is progressively in the online space."

LJ Hooker also took out the award for best Training & Education Program and Principal of the Year – Regional for LJ Hooker Nerang Principal, Shane Colquhoun.

Best Training & Education Program acknowledges the network that is providing its members with the most effective and diverse training programs relevant to today's real estate professional.

"LJ Hooker is a company that understands the needs of today's savvy landlords and tenants and we have adapted the way we operate better reflect this," said LJ Hooker Network Chief, Graeme Hyde.

LJ Hooker's network was also recognised for its expertise in property management, being announced as a finalist in three categories including:

- Property Management Business of the Year: (5 or less property managers) - **LJ Hooker Freshwater**
- Property Management Business of the Year: (6 or more property managers) - **LJ Hooker Sunnybank Hills**
- Property Manager of the Year (Regional) - **Mellissa Gibson, LJ Hooker Cessnock | Kurri Kurri**

The LJ Hooker Foundation

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Census shines light on demographic trends

Census data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics this year provides important information for investors anticipating future trends in Australia housing.

Separate houses continued to account for the largest proportion of Australian homes. However, separate houses decreased from 76% of households in 2011 to 73% in 2016. Semi-detached, row housing, town houses, flats and apartments increased to make up just over one-quarter of housing (26%).

Australian households

The 2016 Census counted almost 10 million dwellings across Australia. The vast majority of dwellings counted (8.9 million) were private households that had people living in them on Census night.

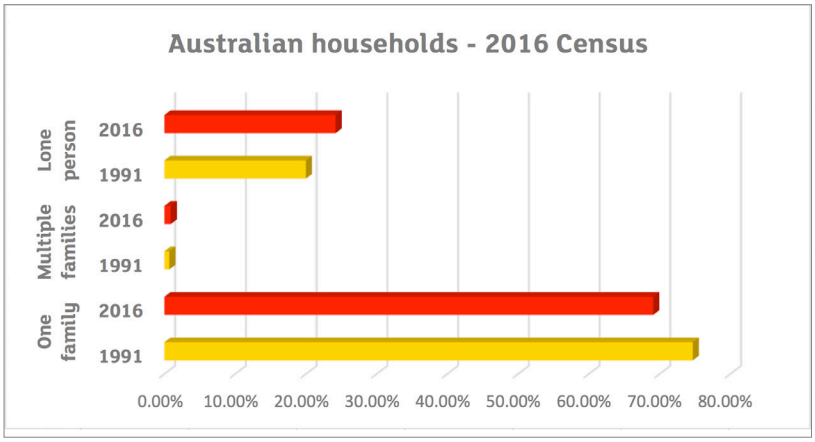
More than two-thirds of these households (69%) had one family living in them. Despite remaining the most commonly reported type of household, the proportion of one family households has continued to decrease in the last 25 years. In 1991 one family households made up three-quarters of Australian households.

Where Australians live

The 2016 Census counted 23.4 million people living in Australia, an increase of 8.8% since the 2011 Census. Australia's population has more than doubled in the 50 years since the 1966 Census, which counted 11.6 million people. The Census does not count Australians who were overseas at the time of the Census; however, these are included in the official population estimates which are updated every five years after the Census.

What we live in

- Separate houses – 72.9%
- Semi-detached / terrace houses – 12.7%
- Flats or apartments – 13.1%
- Caravans – 0.3%



Planning to invest

Investing in property continues to be a solid investment option with positive year-on-year growth levels across Australia. Investing in property, if done correctly, can deliver strong returns for Australian investors.

Here are some tips on how to make a wise property investment.

- Property should be viewed as a long-term growth asset. The focus should be on finding a property that meets key selection criteria such as being in proximity to infrastructure including transport and shops.
- Don't borrow more than you can comfortably repay. Give yourself a buffer so that if there are future rate rises you will be able to afford the increase in your mortgage repayments.
- If you are buying to rent out the property, then buy where rental demand is high.

Pay attention to the settlement process

When you're buying an investment property, the process doesn't simply end with finding a property that suits your portfolio or yield requirements. The settlement process is very important, yet often overlooked by purchasers.

It is highly recommended to appoint a settlement agent or solicitor to facilitate your settlement, and whom you are comfortable with.

In appointing or choosing a settlement agent it is not recommended to go on price alone. If you think it is expensive to hire a good settlement agent, it can be even more expensive to hire a bad one.

There is a recommended maximum fee schedule that settlement agents use .When negotiating your settlement fee, understand that this fee will be for creating and co-ordinating documentation and settlement; there will be other registration fees and statutory costs that you must budget for. At the time of engaging your settlement agent, ask for a fully detailed quote to ensure you budget for all costs.

A good settlement agent will act as the conduit co-ordinating communication between you, the real estate agent and the financier to ensure all conditions to the contract are finalised and that settlement happens on time.

Above all, complete thorough research, understand all the processes involved, and shop around to find a settlement agent or solicitor you are comfortable with.

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