

Agent in a Box outside square

JENNIFER FORESHEW THE AUSTRALIAN JULY 30, 2013 12:00AM



University of the Sunshine Coast PhD student Ben Manning. Source: Supplied

A new online marketing and support system aims to help homeowners sell without having to pay an agent.

University of the Sunshine Coast PhD student Ben Manning has partnered with industry experts to hone his concept for Agent in a Box, which was launched in May.

The start-up business is in partnership with real estate professional Craig Heppell and IT company Datanova.

Mr Manning, 36, of Maroochydore, has worked in real estate and online marketing businesses and studied a Bachelor of Business (International Business).

He said the low-cost "ethical and effective" service gave sellers the ability to take control of the sale process.

"It really is targeted at any home seller because the full support is there so anybody can do it," Mr Manning said.

"They just have to have a little bit of confidence in themselves to go forward and to be able to talk to buyers."

Agent in a Box gives a member a free listing on its property site aushomesforsale.com.au for three months.

A \$349 option gives a member a listing on re.com.au and domain.com.au until sold and a "For Sale" sign, with all inquiries passed on to the owner by SMS or email.

A \$699 package gives a member all the requirements to do the job properly until sold, including listings on major and lesser known sites, sign and pointer signs, access to sales data pertaining to their locality from RP Data, full access to video tutorials and written material, email, online chat or phone contact with a property professional, 24/7 access to manage their listing and all buyer inquiries passed on to the owner by SMS or email.

Mr Manning said the service would suit home sellers who had experience buying and selling properties, but was open to anyone.

"If you look at the average home sale at around \$500,000 that is probably \$15,000 commission, and to be able to do that with some confidence in yourself for \$699 is an extraordinary saving."

Mr Heppell said the business was ramping up and was open to interest from potential investors.

"We provide the coaching, exposure, simple techniques and support for any homeowner, in any price range, to attract buyers, talk to them and get a great deal together without the owner being charged an arm and a leg," he said.