

cotty.

CLIENT GUIDE

FOR CLIENTS

# Seller's Guide

NEW YORK

Price, presentation, and the close.

SARAH COTTY

2026



## INTRO

---

# So you are selling.

First time or not, the sale feels larger than it is. This is the sequence, and the decisions that actually change the result.

I am a licensed associate broker at SERHANT. I work in New York City and Florida. I negotiate, I price off the comps, and I photograph a home when the pictures need to tell the truth.

You are not hiring a logo. You are hiring someone who will listen to the goal, price and present the apartment against that goal, and stay through the closing.

The studios and the listing tools are at the end. They are how a listing gets seen. They are not a substitute for the price and the photographs.

Sarah

# Contents

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| Introduction            | 02 |
| Why you are selling     | 04 |
| Choosing an agent       | 05 |
| Before it is listed     | 06 |
| How we market it        | 07 |
| Offers                  | 08 |
| If it is not selling    | 09 |
| Contract and closing    | 10 |
| Who else is in the deal | 11 |
| What the firm adds      | 12 |

# Why you are selling.

Start here. The reason comes back every time we have a decision to make. Price, timing, whether to wait.

## You are moving.

Then the question is timing. Sell while you are still in the apartment, or after you are out.

If you sell while you are packing, know that a sale can move faster than a move. Buyers put deadlines on offers and ask for closings that do not match a moving truck. If you sell after you are gone, the home is empty. Empty photographs worse, and you may need staging. I can run that from here. You should not have to.

## You are choosing the moment.

Demand is up, supply is thin, and you could stay. Then the question is the number you need, not the mood of the market.

Do the math before we list. What you want to net, after the costs on the buyer's guide closing page. I will show you the range the comps support. That range is what makes a later call, stay on the market or take it off, a decision instead of a feeling.

# Hiring the agent.

You can sell without one. A lot of sellers, including agents, still hire one for the work and the people. Experience is not the same from desk to desk. You should be comfortable with the person, and the interview should settle the expectations.

## Ask yourself

What do I need on time, cost, and net? How involved do I want to be? What do I actually value in an agent? Who do I already trust to make an introduction?

## Ask the agent

How long have you been doing this? Have you sold in my building or on my block? How many listings are you on right now? How do showings work? How will you market it? Show me a negotiation, not a slogan.

## The listing agreement

Once you choose someone, you will get a listing agreement. You both sign it. It sets compensation, how long the exclusive lasts, and how the home will be marketed.

A lot of the language is standard. It can be changed to fit the apartment and the goal. Read it. Ask about anything you would not want to discover at the closing table.

# Before we list.

This is the heavy step, and it is one of the few that changes both whether it sells and for how much. Done well, it supports a stronger offer. Done poorly, it invites a low one.

## Clear it, clean it, fix it.

Almost everything personal goes. Photographs, toys, the objects that make it yours. Furniture that is worn out, or so specific it fights the room, goes too.

Then a real clean. Every surface. A crew is worth it. After that, turn things on. Appliances, faucets, heat, cooling. A buyer who finds no hot water, or a dead burner, is done with the apartment before the second room.

## The photograph.

Buyers want to understand the rooms, not inherit your taste. Paint does more than people expect. Enough furniture to read the scale, and no more.

A stager can make the rooms look considered. If you do not want that spend, virtual staging is a real option. I will tell you which one the apartment needs, and I have people to call.

# How it goes to market.

Pictures first. A phone photo is not the listing. Tell me what has to come through: the light, the view, a detail in the architecture. The first impression is the photograph.

Then we sit down on the plan. Open houses and private showings, the price, and where it will actually appear. Listing sites, a print buy if one is worth it, and social. I will say which of those this apartment earns.

If the home has a story, tell me early. A history only helps if it is in the marketing on purpose, not as a footnote after the first weekend.

# When they come in.

The first offer feels like a verdict. It is one buyer. The next one can be higher or lower. Read each on its own.

## Under the ask

Disappointing, and ordinary. Buyers try. We decide whether to counter, and at what number, against the goal you set at the start.

## At the ask, or over it

An offer at the ask does not promise a bidding war. You may get more. You may not. Go back to why you listed.

An offer over the ask usually means there is already competition and the new buyers have been told. That is where the negotiation can clear the number you first wrote down. It is not a law.

## Cash and financing

Cash means the buyer is using money they have. Financing means a bank is in the deal. Cash takes mortgage denial off the table.

Cash removes the risk that a bank says no. It does not win by itself. A low cash number can lose to a financed offer with a clean file and a better price. We compare the whole offer.

# If it is not selling.

Low offers, or none. The price can be wrong. The market can be quiet. The right buyers may not be seeing it. I should be able to tell you which one it is, and what to change.

A price cut, a pause, or a new staging are all real options. The reason you listed is what decides it. I will say what I would do. You decide.

# Contract, then closing.

Once you accept, the contract goes out and the details get negotiated. Move-in date. Which appliances and which pieces of furniture stay. Who pays a flip tax. Who pays which closing cost. Lawyers do this part. If you do not have one, I will introduce you to one.

## Appraisal

A licensed appraiser, hired by the buyer or the buyer's lender, inspects the home and gives a value. That number can restart the negotiation. It can also end the deal if a financed buyer cannot borrow against it.

## Closing

You transfer the home and you get paid. Most sellers need to sign the closing documents and pay their closing costs. The buyer gets a final walk-through to confirm the repairs and the furniture you agreed to leave are actually there.

# Who else is in this.

## Agents

Licensed, on both sides. Advice, negotiation, marketing, showings. Paid on commission.

## Stagers

Furniture, art, and light, used to make the rooms readable. They do this for a living.

## Photographers

The job is space and light, so the home reads as large as it is and as calm as it can.

## Lawyers

In New York they draft, negotiate, and handle the transfer. You need one.

## Appraisers

Hired by the buyer or the lender. Their number is an opinion of value from more than one factor, and the bank treats it as real.

# What sits behind the listing.

## SERHANT. ADX

The technology side. It is built to put a listing in front of a specific buyer, not only the people who happen to be scrolling that day.

## SERHANT. Studios

In-house marketing and production. The films and the photographs, made for the listing rather than borrowed from a template.

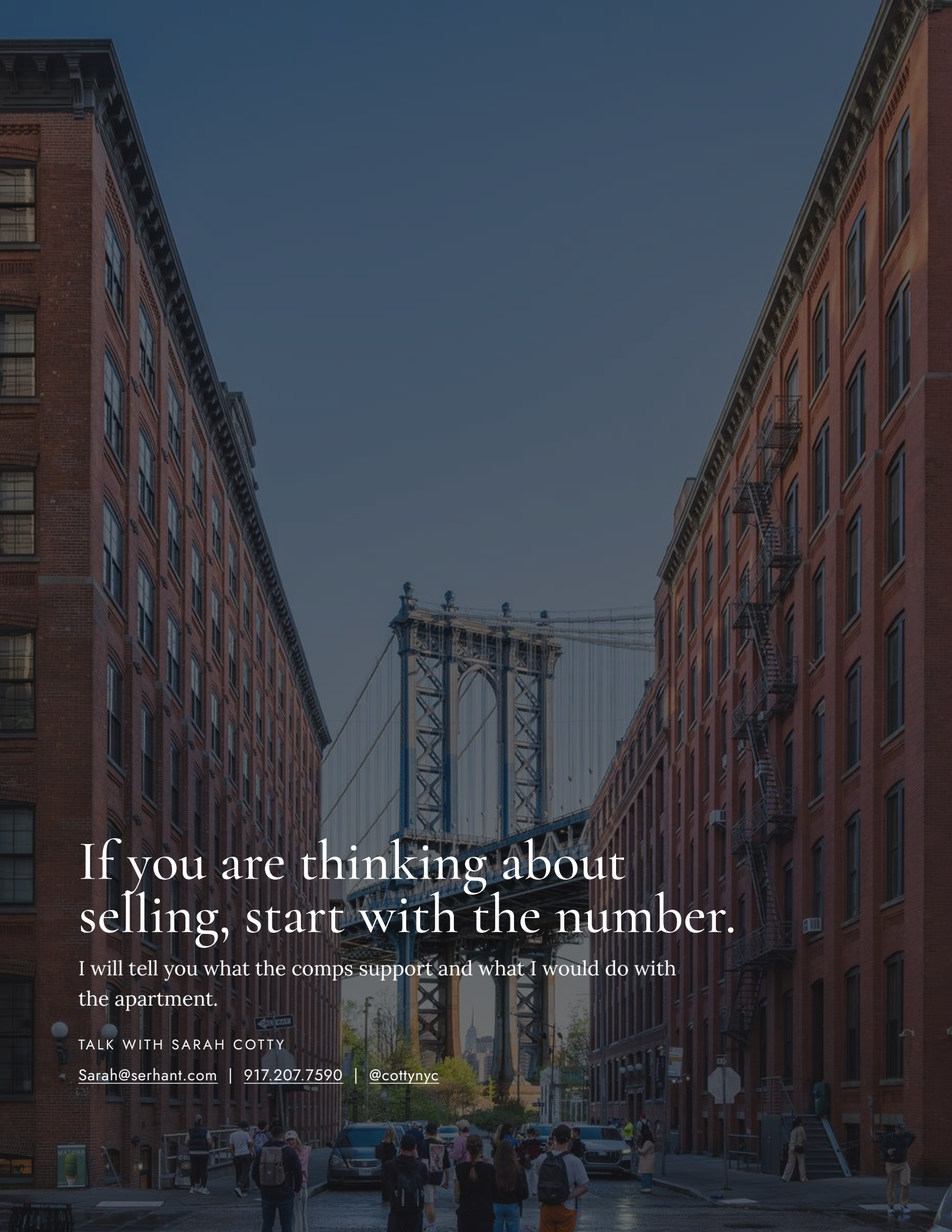
## SERHANT. ID Lab

The group that writes the listing as its own thing. The idea is that the apartment gets an identity, not a paragraph that could sit on any door.

## Where to look

The live firm is [serhant.com](https://serhant.com) and [@serhant](https://twitter.com/serhant). I will tell you which of the tools above this apartment actually needs.

The brokerage desk is [hello@serhant.com](mailto:hello@serhant.com) and [646.480.7665](tel:646.480.7665).



# If you are thinking about selling, start with the number.

I will tell you what the comps support and what I would do with the apartment.

TALK WITH SARAH COTTY

[Sarah@serhant.com](mailto:Sarah@serhant.com) | [917.207.7590](tel:917.207.7590) | [@cottynyc](https://www.instagram.com/cottynyc)