

Readers' Choice Awards 2013

Your Investment Property's sixth annual Readers' Choice Awards offered our readers the chance to nominate their most trusted advisors and agents. This year, we asked our six winners to share their secrets to success, and they haven't let us down...

Property professionals are much more than just that. They are trusted advisors whose support and knowledge are important for even the most experienced of investors. And who better to judge their outstanding service than *Your Investment Property's* enthusiastic readership?

Our 2013 batch consisted of countless nominations, and the final outcome proved extremely close and difficult to determine. Property experts from all over Australia were considered and ultimately judged on the quality of our readers' responses. Many of our readers have put a great deal of effort into expressing their appreciation for the hard work and professionalism that came their way.

The six different categories included buyer's agent, property investment advisor, tax specialist, mortgage broker, real estate agent and property manager. If

there's one consistent theme that ran through our winners, it's that they all displayed an unwavering commitment to the success of their clients.

Your Investment Property has been fortunate enough to share the stories of all our winners, as they detail their extraordinary journeys and offer advice to investors of all experience levels.

SIX lucky voters have each won a prize pack worth over \$3,000, including:

- 12-month HomeSource Access membership
- 12-month platinum membership of NMD Data
- 3-month full membership of Real Estate Investar
- My Knowledge access from Real Estate Investar
- Selection of myrpdata reports from RP Data
- 12-month subscription to *Your Investment Property*, including a special report pack

Congratulations to Ryan Ng, Simon King, Simon Webb, Sandi Brown, Adele Rogers and Kevin Foley

BUYER'S AGENT OF THE YEAR

Cate Bakos

Empower Wealth



What is your buyer's agent experience?

My career history is unique, to say the least. I graduated as an industrial chemist. I found my skills in sales and marketing at Dulux. I cut my teeth in property 10 years ago (and upset my parents quite a bit to leave corporate for real estate), and time as a mortgage broker gave me enough cash flow expertise to realise my dream and launch a buyer's advocacy business. I have been working as an advocate, property investment advisor and director here at Empower Wealth for almost three years. The most vital experience I have had, though, has been as an investor. I embarked on my own property journey when I was 21 and haven't looked back.

How does it feel to win this award?

I'm really humbled. A client of mine nominated me without any warning or hint, and it's been particularly thrilling knowing that I sourced and purchased their property for them before I met them in person. The mere fact that they trusted me to do so, flew here and saw the property and then felt compelled to nominate me means more than any other style of nomination. This award is particularly special – I'm a regular contributor to



YIP, and I remember immersing myself in the publication when I was a younger investor, and I gleaned so much.

What's the best purchasing advice to follow?

Don't listen to your heart or go with your gut feel if it's an investment. There should be way more science to any significant purchasing decision. Be methodical, considered, commercial and unemotional. I've seen buyers convince themselves that holiday houses are great investment choices, or worse, high-rise apartments in oversupplied areas for their son/daughter to reside in. If you are taking advice from an 'expert', make sure they are independent to the transaction and not taking commission as a representative of the seller.

How do you achieve your best results for clients?

I think that the best results I've achieved for clients have been through working my good agent relationships, introducing clients to off-market properties and staying close to the action so that I can get all of the good background information in preparation for a property showdown. Obviously I work out who I like to work with and who I choose to avoid, but I make sure that I have a great relationship within each office at every opportunity.

What readers said:

"Earlier this year, Cate helped us secure an investment property in Ballarat. Not only was she highly professional; she took the time to understand our circumstances and aspirations. She was in constant communication with us, and at all times open, honest and frank. Given we live in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and were buying sight unseen, this was really reassuring. In the end, Cate found us a great property with strong rental yield and in a location we're confident will see strong capital growth. From our initial phone conversation to finding the right property, to settlement, to a chance meeting to inspect the house long after her official duties had ended, Cate left us with something invaluable: the confidence to invest, and to invest again and again. We are truly grateful for this."

– Simon King

RUNNER-UP

Paul Wilson

We Find Houses

