

Assisting Your Clients in Making Informed Decisions about their Personal Property

As Senior Move Managers, you are often walking into homes with decades of acquired property- furniture, rugs, artwork, silver, etc. Many items may be obvious candidates for donation, such as blenders, old televisions etc., but what about paintings, jewelry, and sets of China? When your clients and their families look to you and ask should we keep or sell these items, how will you answer?

Two Ways to Prepare Yourself to Answer the Keep, Sell, (or Donate) Question:

Get Familiar with the Market and Current Selling Trends:

The current markets for personal property have changed dramatically over the past 10 years. Items that were once highly coveted (e.g. 19th century furniture and fine art) now appeal to a much smaller market. Some very strong categories of items selling today are antique Chinese pieces, contemporary art and furniture, and high-end jewelry. For example, Clars Auction Gallery recently sold a set of eight scrolls by Zhang Daqian for nearly \$3 million. Contemporary furniture designers, such as Ingrid Donat, George Nakashima, and Paul Evans are strong sellers. In Fine Art, recent and Post War works are also very strong, including artists such as Wayne Thiebaud, Andy Warhol, and Richard Diebenkorn. Finally, the market has remained strong for quality jewelry and timepieces, including Tiffany and Patek Philippe.

This summary of trends is just a snapshot. One of the best ways Senior Move Managers can stay on top of market trends is to get online and connected. Connect with auction galleries on social media to get regular updates about sales and, if possible, attend auctions or watch online to see what's selling.

Partner with local property experts:

General knowledge about trends can certainly help you approach clients to begin the process of deciding whether they should keep or sell items, but this can get tricky unless you have detailed knowledge of the market. For example, although the market for some late 19th century artists has softened, for others it has stayed strong. The good news is that you don't have to know all these things—You need trustworthy partners who have this expertise and can also support your clients.

Reaching out to a reputable auction gallery or appraiser to learn more about their services is a great way to get to know potential partners. Some regional auction houses assist clients nationally. You can also search for appraisers and auctions in your area by 1) inquiring from local antique stores and art galleries; 2) using the National Association of Auctioneers; 3) checking with estate and probate attorneys; and 4) via appraisal associations such as the [American Society of Appraisers](#), [International Society of Appraisers](#), or [National Association of Auctioneers](#). Keep in mind that many auction houses will give free verbal evaluations for a few items, while formal written appraisals have a fee. Finally, if you don't have any luck with the above resources,

another great way to connect with local partners is by visiting or joining a [local Estate Planning Council](#). Many estate planning councils have one or two property experts, and the members know how to find them if they are not at a meeting. (As a bonus, estate planning council members can also refer business to you!)

By Deric Torres, Vice President, and Mariah Oakley, Manager of Business Development

Clars Auction Gallery has been in business for over 45 years, selling fine art, furniture, automobiles, Asian art, jewelry and more to buyers all over the world. In last five years, Clars has sold over \$85 million dollars of property, and many top items have come via partnerships with Senior Move Managers. Clars is proud to be a NASMM Industry Partner. For more information on Clars, contact Mariah Oakley at Mariah@clars.com