

## Faked You Out! Prop Furniture Finds a Place on Home Stage

What mannequins are to store windows, furniture is to the staging industry. It helps the less visionary among us to envision how things should look. But staging a home for sale is an expensive proposition and often not in the cards for today's home sellers.

Voila! Enter inFormed Space and its new line of fake furniture -- so named because the furniture "informs" the space. The company sells full-size beds, tables, couches and chairs made of glossy white plastic that is so light that it can be easily moved around. And a whole house full of furniture can be rented for less than half the cost of traditional staging with no minimum monthly contract. In the company's own vernacular, this stuff is a "quickie."

Just don't try to kick back on the sofa. The "nonfunctional" piece would collapse under the weight of a person, but it makes a great backdrop for a few strategically placed throw pillows. The idea, its inventors say, is to use the pieces as a backdrop for evocative props -- "a pair of work boots resting by the club chair [as pictured above], a half-full martini glass sitting on a cocktail table or a handwritten poem left haphazardly on the seat of a sofa" -- to suggest to prospective buyers what life in the space could be like. And, perhaps more important, whether their king-size bed will actually fit through the door of the bedroom.



inFormed Space

The prop furniture is made from Coroplast, the kind of corrugated plastic often used for signs and packaging materials. In addition to being strong and lightweight, it's also recyclable, so at the end of the fake furniture's useful life, it goes into the same processing streams as plastic milk cartons and detergent bottles.

Douglas Pinter is the brainchild behind the operation, and we extend kudos for recognizing the need for an economical alternative to conventional staging. And nothing sells worse than an empty house.

Tom Postillio, star of HGTV's "Selling New York" and a founding member of CORE real estate, will showcase inFormed Space in two of his New York listings -- one of them a \$13.65 million property. Just remember: Stay standing.