

SUPER BOWL XL COUNTDOWN

Builders make play for home sales

■ Metro companies draft big game into marketing pitches in hopes they can energize lagging market.

By R.J. KING
The Detroit News

DETROIT — Hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues will be the obvious beneficiaries when thousands of football fans descend on Detroit for Super Bowl XL in February.

But home builders?

While most of the 100,000-plus visitors expected for the Super Bowl won't be tempted to spend their cash on a pricey new house or condo, builders and marketing experts say the intense interest in the game, billed as the world's largest one-day sporting event, can boost sales among local buyers.



Centurion Place, near Ferry and Beaubien streets in Detroit, will offer \$350,000 condos.

Lerman Corp.

So builders plan to host open houses during Super Bowl week, offer a tour of upscale homes in partnership with the Somerset Collection in Troy and dole out freebies like plasma screen televisions to people who go ahead and buy that new Tudor or colonial.

Mailers are going out to prospective buyers, telling them that if they act fast, they can be in their new homes before the Feb. 5 game.

"You can take advantage of all the people peering at Metro Detroit in the two weeks leading up to the game," said Jeff Stoltzman, a marketing professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. "It creates urgency. It puts people in a good mood. It's exciting."

"I don't think home builders will rack up huge sales because of the Super Bowl, but if they are smart and make great presenta-

tions, they will move some homes."

Builders Julio Bateau and Joel D. Lerman are racing to complete a luxury home near the Detroit Institute of Arts on Woodward Avenue to show off during the two weeks leading up to the game.

The model home will be the first of about 50 attached condos that will be offered at an average

Please see Builders, Page 4D