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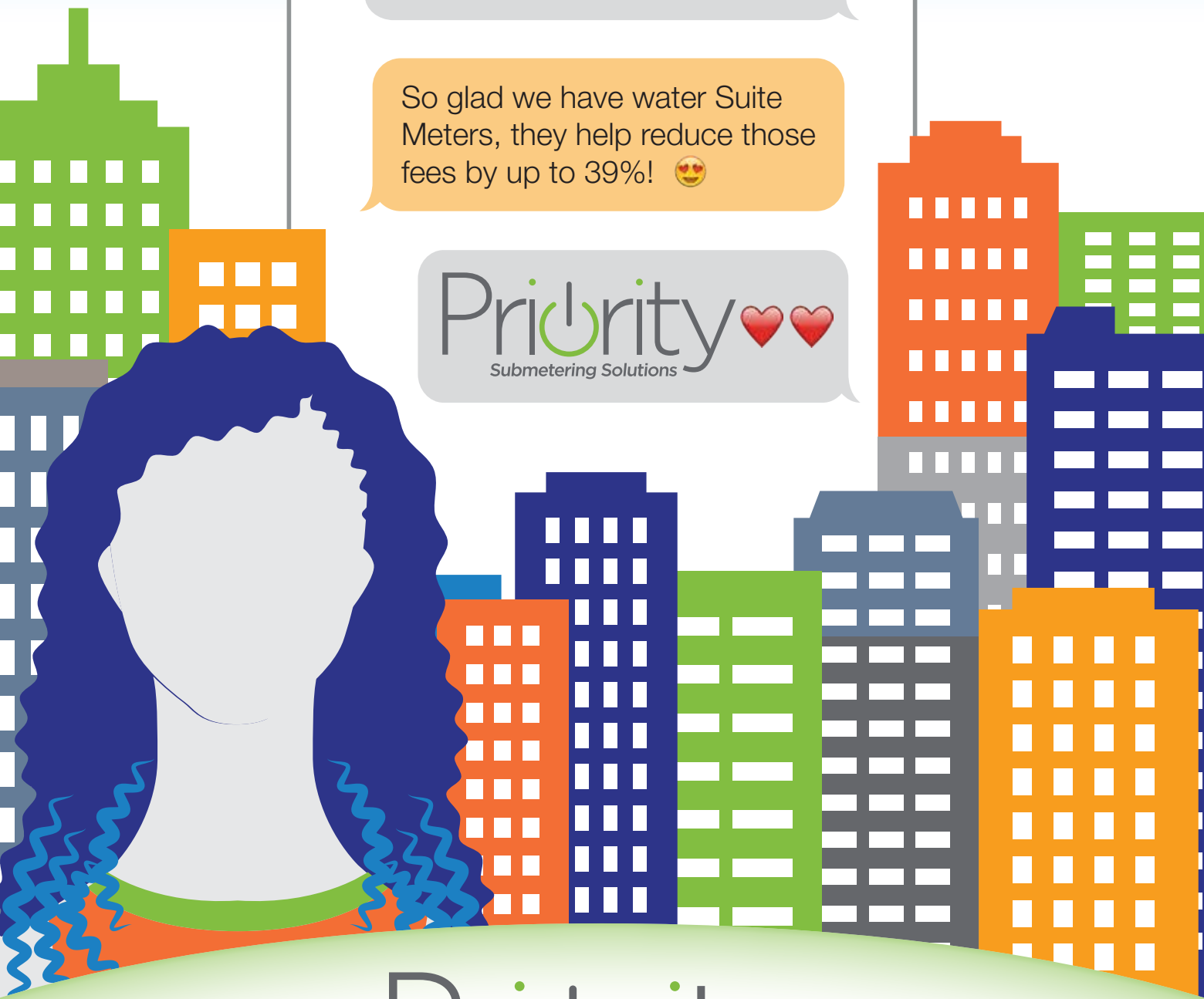
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FRPO'S FAIR EXCHANGE OF  
RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS

The voice of the Federation of  
Rental-housing Providers of Ontario

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A PUBLICATION OF:



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# REFLECTIONS OF THE YEAR THAT WAS

It's hard to believe that we are approaching year end and this will be our last issue of 2016. I will have rounded out my first year as Editor and I have to admit I've really enjoyed writing for FE and putting content together for our membership. We have made many changes to FE and will continue to refine this publication based on member feedback and the evolving needs of the industry.

As we look back on the last 12 months, we've highlighted housing policy, industry events, best practices from service providers as well as several 2015 MAC Award winners. We've seen our membership grow substantially this year bringing on new housing providers and supplier members, which strengthens the voice of the association. Our government relations team have been engaged in more consultation sessions than ever before. The Certified Rental Building Program continues to increase in size as potential renters recognize the benefits of living in a certified building and look to sustainability. Interest in the MAC Awards continues to trend upwards and the quality of the submissions exceeds years past.

There are many things to be proud of as an industry over the last year. We saw our members warmly welcome thousands of Syrian refugees and help them to adjust to their new homes. FRPO members raised \$60,000 for Interval House through our annual golf tournament. These funds will be used to support women and children who have suffered abuse and provide the programming that they require to start over. The Spring Hope Food Drive continues to bring in hundreds of thousands of pounds of food to stock local food banks in over 35 communities in the province. We also saw our members spring to action following the devastating fires in Fort McMurray. Members provided discounts to evacuees, held fundraisers and even created a housing registry for the victims to more easily track down new housing.

While there are still many unknowns facing the rental housing sector, such as licensing, climate change policy, the affordable housing strategy and possible changes in oversight to the municipal planning process, FRPO will continue to engage both the industry and government to find practical solutions as we look to 2017. It is more important than ever for us to be at the table and working with other groups and agencies to develop fair policy around these topics and issues. It is unlikely that housing is a headline that will go away any time soon.

As 2016 comes to a close, many will reflect on the year's achievements, failures and their goals for the next 12 months, both personally and professionally. It's the time to celebrate accomplishments, acknowledge the lessons learned and start 2017 with a renewed outlook. The upcoming holidays will hopefully give us all a break from the work week, allow us to spend time with our loved ones and motivate us to challenge ourselves in the year ahead.

In closing, we at FRPO couldn't be more proud of our industry. Our members continue to work diligently in our communities, delivering high quality rental housing to millions of Ontarians and providing the service that residents deserve when living in a professionally managed building. Looking forward, we know that our determination and commitment to housing will enable us to take on new challenges effectively in the years to come.

From all of us at FRPO, we wish you a joyous holiday season filled with love, laughs and lots of rest. All the best in 2017 and see you back here in January.

## LYNZI MICHAL

Editor, FE magazine

Director of Membership & Marketing, FRPO



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# UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS

JAN  
01

## CMHC RENTAL MARKET SURVEY BREAKFAST

January/February 2017

This event will take place in January/February 2017. The membership will be notified once the date is finalized for this very popular event. CMHC will provide the findings in both Ontario and the Toronto region from the 2016 Rental Market Survey.

MAY  
03

## SPRINGFEST

May 3

Register now for Springfest admission. Springfest is free and limited to 1,700 qualified property managers, building owners, developers, facility managers, plant engineers, multi-residential board of directors, building operations and maintenance staff responsible for office, industrial, condominium, apartment, medical, educational, retail, and institutional buildings. Find out more at [www.springfesttoronto.com](http://www.springfesttoronto.com)

JUN  
06

## CFAA RENTAL HOUSING CONFERENCE

June 6-8

Westin Prince Hotel, Toronto

This event will take place June 6-8th and is being held at the Westin Prince Hotel in Toronto. Talks by keynote speakers including Benjamin Tal, as well as more than 60 landlords, consultants, rental suppliers, and other experts in 30+ sessions! Please visit [www.cfaa-fcapi.org](http://www.cfaa-fcapi.org) for more information. Early bird rates available!

JUN  
21

## NAA EDUCATION CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION

June 21-24

Registration is OPEN! It's time to Apartmentalize, which means taking your career, your company and your residents' experience to the next level. Achieve greater success in all three areas by joining us in Atlanta to attend the apartment industry's premiere event - the 2017 NAA Education Conference & Exposition. Learn from world-class speakers and industry experts, network with nearly 10,000 of your peers, and get access to innovative products and services from over 450 top suppliers. Get Focused. Get Inspired. Get Going. Find more information at [www.educonf.naahq.org](http://www.educonf.naahq.org)

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**SCOTT ANDERSON**  
President & CEO, FRPO

## THE YEAR OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Moving the industry forward

**T**he year 2016 has been, without a doubt, one of the most intensive years to date in the association's 30-year history. From launching new membership programs, to rolling out more accredited buildings in the Certified Rental Building program, and engaging with government at an unprecedented pace, FRPO has been at the centre of everything that has been supporting and impacting the rental housing industry in Ontario.

The staff team at FRPO has risen to the challenge to seek out new and innovative ways to continually improve how we deliver services, and to enhance the programming in our events, seminars and information products offered throughout the year. I am extremely proud of the team's efforts, and continue to be amazed at the effectiveness of what they do.

Our key themes throughout 2016 have been to continually demonstrate how the rental housing industry is committed to continuous improvement, supporting sustainable communities, and demonstrating a willingness to innovate and be forward thinking. From the design of our events and training, to our approach to policy and advocacy work with government, we ensure that our focus is always on where we need to go, not only where we feel we can. While this has taken a lot of commitment and energy, we


are seeing the traction that this has generated to the benefit of the entire industry.

Our investment eight years ago in developing the Certified Rental Building program has allowed us to further our public image and brand as a responsible industry that is committed to quality and continuous improvement. Through these collective efforts we have been able to significantly influence perceptions and thinking at the municipal level when examining the need for government oversight and intervention. Our recent work with the City of Toronto on the licensing file is but one example where we have made significant progress in injecting more realistic perspectives in options being considered by decision makers. The government of British Columbia recognized late last year the merits of our CRB program and opted to support the adoption of FRPO's best in class standards program rather than build their own government-run standards regime. This is just one example of why getting out front of an issue is critical—it allows you to better control your own fate, rather than have it controlled for you.

Our strategies with the Ontario government these past couple of years resulted in an unprecedented level of information exchange and consultation with the industry. We have never before seen this level of opportunity to directly engage in the development of

policy options and provide our own evidence and advice on how to improve outcomes for tenants, the economy as a whole, and planning for the future. Now I am the first to admit that what we have seen so far is far from perfect, and definitely not consistent across all of the industry's issues, but what I can say is that we have never been invited to the table with government on nine different initiatives over a period of nine months.

Most recently, it was announced that the new Minister of Housing's mandate includes a commitment to setting up a dedicated industry partner's table with the rental housing industry to engage directly on improving overall outcomes—this has never been done before, and came about through our engagement efforts and strategy to find a new way to advance our goals and objectives. More details will be available on this soon, but for now this is a significant step forward for FRPO and the industry, with a hope that a more prosperous future lies ahead.

These outcomes would never be possible without the ongoing support and commitment of FRPO's members, and on behalf of the entire FRPO team and board of directors, I want to say thank you. I am looking forward to continuing to champion further progress in 2017 for the betterment of the entire rental housing industry. 





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# AFTER THE DUST SETTLES

Avoiding multi-tenant abatement claims

BY JOE HOFFER, COHEN HIGHLEY LLP

**R**esidential landlords who do major renovations and repairs that in turn cause inconvenience and disruption to tenants' use of their apartments invariably invite tenant claims for compensation. It is common for a group of tenants to consolidate their claims in a manner similar to a class action, and to seek substantial abatements of rent based on the contention that the landlord was in breach of the statutory obligation prohibiting "interference with tenants' reasonable enjoyment" of their rental units. The key to successfully defending against such claims is to prove to the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) that the carrying out of the work was done in a reasonable manner and that the application should therefore be dismissed.

Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, 2006 (RTA), and until relatively recently, a landlord would automatically be exposed to liability to pay abatements of rent in any situation where tenants were inconvenienced as a result of disruptive repair work. Landlords doing balcony work; window or roof replacement; riser replacements; comprehensive building envelope work; boiler replacement; and parking garage remediation will, by default, "interfere" with tenants' use and enjoyment of their rental units. The work is noisy, dusty, and oftentimes prevents tenants from using features of their tenancy, such as a parking space, or their balconies, or for those on shift work, a decent day's sleep. Courts had previously ruled that, regardless of the legal obligation imposed by the RTA forcing



landlords to do such work, if the work caused tenants inconvenience, then they were entitled to a rent abatement.

The Federation of Rental Housing Providers of Ontario (FRPO) and other landlord associations threatened to challenge the legality of the conflict inherent in the RTA between a law that forces landlords to "maintain and repair" and at the same time makes it unlawful to "interfere" with tenants' use and enjoyment. It is impossible to "maintain and repair" major apartment building components without "interference"

with tenants' use, and it is arguably unconstitutional to force landlords to break the law by maintaining their properties. FRPO also asserted that in the absence of regulatory relief from financial liability, the work would not get done unless abatements could be recovered in an Above Guideline Rent Increase (AGI) application. Remediation and upgrading of existing rental housing stock is an important legislative priority so the Province has created regulatory relief for landlords, provided a legal test of "reasonableness" is met.



Most multi-tenant applications based on landlord “interference” are brought after the work is finished, but the landlord has filed an AGI to recover the capital costs of the work and the tenants seek to offset any increase with an abatement order from the LTB. Landlords who have failed to plan for the risk and consequences of a multi-tenant application do so at their financial peril.

### THE RTA “LEGAL TEST” WHICH EXONERATES LANDLORDS FROM LIABILITY

Section 8 of Ontario Regulation 519/06 articulates the key legal test landlords must meet to be exonerated from legal liability for tenant inconvenience. If the landlord has done major repairs, maintenance or capital improvements, and the work is “carried out in a reasonable manner,” then the Board is prohibited from making a finding that the landlord has substantially interfered with tenants’ enjoyment of their tenancy, even if as a practical matter there was substantial disruption to tenants’ use and enjoyment of their tenancy.

So what is “reasonable” in the context of the “carrying out of the work?” Compliance with, and adherence to, professional industry standards is a hallmark of reasonableness.

**1. Before the work begins:** Landlords who retain a professional engineer to assess building conditions and make recommendations based on the Condition Assessment will satisfy a preliminary requirement to show that the work was properly mandated. If the landlord then retains or employs professionals (ie: an Engineer, Architect, designated construction professionals) to prepare and commission tenders based on industry specifications and to review and recommend successful bidders, this will show that the scope of the work was appropriate, “necessary”, and initiated consistent with professional standards. Some landlords will have construction professionals on staff, but most are likely (and expected) to use third party professionals for major projects. If work is planned to improve “curb appeal” of the building, the Landlord should consult with a legal advisor for the best strategy to avoid liability.

**2. Retaining the contractor and monitoring the work:** Most contracts for major remedial work are negotiated and implemented using standard, industry construction agreements (i.e. the Canadian Construction Documents

Committee [CCDC] Stipulated Price Contract) and other agreements which are specialized for the work to be done (i.e. elevator cab or boiler replacement and upgrades). The contractor responsible for meeting the contract specifications will usually be an “independent contractor” who, for WSIB, licensing, and other regulatory purposes, has full control of the work site and full responsibility for hiring and firing employees doing the work. The landlord’s role is restricted to monitoring contract compliance to ensure that the work is carried out in accordance with the technical specifications in the tender/contract documents and that the work is completed within the time frames specified in the contract. This monitoring role is usually delegated to an agent or employee of the landlord, such as an engineer or other qualified consultant.

**3. Ensuring the work is “carried out” reasonably:** If there are no deficiencies in compliance or performance with the contract, including meeting projected time lines for completion, then the legal test to exonerate the landlord from liability is met. If there are performance delays (which often happens in cases involving remedial concrete repairs, or manufacturing delays as often happens with balcony railings) then there is potential liability. Delays which are caused by the conduct of third parties or which are otherwise beyond the landlord’s control (weather, labour disruptions) should not attract liability. Detailed progress reports from the project coordinator, engineer or other supervisory staff constitute excellent evidence and proof of valid reasons why the duration of work may exceed projected time lines, thereby avoiding liability.

**4. Tenant communications are vital:** While not a necessary component of the legal test, a key strategy for mitigating risk is for the landlord to ensure that tenants are given advance notice of the nature of work to be done; its likely impact on tenants’ use and enjoyment of their rental units; projected timelines and reasons why projected timelines may not be met; and, recommendations to minimize adverse impacts from the work (i.e. assisting elderly residents in removing material from balconies, providing “quiet rooms” for use by stay-at-home residents). Ongoing tenant communication reporting on progress

and changes to timelines are also helpful, not just for residents, but also in satisfying an LTB Member that the landlord is acting reasonably during the course of the work. Labour costs incurred for these items are recoverable in an AGI as long as they are properly documented.

**5. Dealing with “unreasonable” contract performance:** Not all contractors are perfect. On more than one occasion landlords have had to deal with contractors cutting corners and failing to meet performance standards required by the contract. Work can be substantially delayed due to contractor deficiencies, which are identified by the landlord’s consultants and which must then be corrected. Such delays heighten the risk of a successful multi-tenant application based on the contention that the “carrying out of the work” was unreasonable. In our view, if the landlord can prove that the added delay and inconvenience is the result of contractor deficiencies, and this is usually documented in the progress reports of the landlord’s engineer or other supervisory consultant, then the Landlord should not be held liable. The RTA (s. 29) states that there is liability if the interference is caused by the “Landlord, superintendent, or agent of the landlord.” Independent contractors are not “agents of the landlord” and consequently, if the landlord can prove that the independent contractor is responsible for excessive interference, the landlord should not be held liable.

In summary, what the RTA imposes on landlords is an obligation to act professionally and reasonably in carrying out major repairs, renovations and replacements at residential complexes. The legislation recognizes that there can be unforeseen circumstances which delay completion of projects and result in a backlash from residents; however, it also provides an opportunity for landlords to escape liability, provided the reasons for delay are properly documented. Landlords who follow the steps outlined above, including professionally planning and documenting the process before the shovel goes in the ground, will avoid financial liability to tenants after the dust settles and the AGI is filed. 🏡

*Joe Hoffer is a Partner with Cohen Highley LLP. Cohen Highley’s Residential Tenancies Group has successfully processed AGIs for thousands of rental units in the GTA, while ensuring that Landlords have avoided liability to pay rent abatements.*





# REAL SUSTAINABILITY

The key ingredient for multifamily living

BY NADINE GUDZ, DIRECTOR, SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

**S**ince the 2008–2009 recession, construction rates for multifamily dwellings have recovered at a faster pace than those for single-family homes—increasing in four of the five years following the recession, per research from Canadian Megatrends. This data confirms that multifamily dwellings are here to stay, surpassing new construction of single-family homes in 2010 and peaking in 2013 with the highest number of new units since 1977.

Overwhelmingly, the demographics of residents who live in these units skews toward much younger generations. The key to keeping this audience engaged is understanding what they care about and delivering against it in a meaningful way.

According to a Nielsen study, today's young home seekers are more green-minded than any generation before them. They're looking for more than just energy savings, low-flow toilets and LEED certification. Their

concerns are deeper. They care about green supply chains – operationally, financially and environmentally. By integrating sustainability practices into building design and choosing truly sustainable products and materials, developers and architects can provide the sustainable living environment that today's renters, and their future tenants, are seeking.

Along with being more green-minded than ever, today's renters are willing to back up this preference by paying more for it. A



recent survey from the National Multifamily Housing Council revealed that renters will pay more to live in sustainably designed apartments. In fact, survey respondents said that they would be willing to pay an extra \$32.64 a month just to live in a space with a “green building” certification, such as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

Developers must take note of these increasingly popular preferences and market toward them to continue engaging new consumers. Forty-three percent of survey respondents indicated that they want to see information online about sustainable features within an apartment, confirming that apartment owners must focus their marketing efforts to the preferences of today’s green-minded renter.

One way to do this is by incorporating sustainable products and design into the apartment’s interior. For instance, Interface, the world’s largest manufacturer of modular carpet tile and a leader in sustainable business, creates products with sustainability as its core goal. For more than 20 years, the company has been at the forefront of integrating sustainability into its business with its bold and innovative Mission Zero – Interface’s goal to eliminating any negative impact it has on the environment by the year 2020.

This commitment has driven significant sustainability progress for Interface:

- 84% of the energy Interface uses globally is renewable (96% in the Americas)
- 91% reduction in waste to landfill

Developers must take note of these increasingly popular preferences and market toward them to continue engaging new consumers.

- 50% of all raw materials used are recycled or bio-based
- 92% reduction of GHG emissions from baseline footnote needed? 1996?
- 50% product carbon footprint reduction

Interface has incorporated sustainability into every facet of its business, from manufacturing to product design. For example, it has diverted 150,000 tons of carpet and carpet scraps from landfills since 1994 through its ReEntry™ program. And the company’s Net-Works Initiative partnership, a model of inclusive business is designed to tackle the growing environmental problem of discarded fishing nets in developing-world vulnerable coastal communities, has led to the collection of more than 100 tons of nets, which are then recycled to create yarn for its carpet tiles. Key point here is social impact and the creation of community-based banks.

Furthermore, Interface is creating environmentally-friendly products that are not only good for the environment, but also good for the people who encounter them. This philosophy is highlighted through its commitment to biophilic design, an ethos, practice and design approach that recognizes how human beings have a connection with nature that affects their overall well-being

and productivity. Incorporating biophilic design into spaces is one of many ways to create more sustainable and healthy living environments for residents.

Although Interface is on its way to achieving its Mission Zero goals of eliminating its environmental impact by 2020, the company recently launched a new mission – Climate Take Back – focused on creating a path for Interface and others to reverse global warming, not just reduce carbon emissions.

Just as Interface is more than carpet, multifamily properties are more than brick and mortar. Any company and industry can become restorative through the power of influence. Developers, architects, and designers can provide a beautiful, sustainable, and restorative place for people to live while driving profits for their business. Via transparency and a life cycle approach; encouraging low carbon products and implementing a biophilic design approach are two good places to start. ■■

*Interface is proud to provide FRPO members exclusive pricing on their carpet tile products ensuring easy maintenance and replacement. By definition, Interface is the world’s largest designer and maker of carpet tile. Ray Anderson founded Interface in 1973 because he believed in the global potential of carpet tile. From mill to management, vision has always been the rule—not the exception.*



# BROADENING YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Why industry associations should be an important part of your sales and marketing strategy

BY MARY ONGARO



**W**e are fast approaching the end of the year, and for most of us, this time will consist of budgets, trade shows, galas and festive gatherings. This is the time to build new relationships with prospective clients and renew old relationships with existing clients.

Industry associations should be an important part of your sales and marketing strategy. Your associations can be of great help in this area of business, and potentially save you hours of legwork, phone calls and surfing the internet to find out who it is you need to meet. It's also important to show your support for the industry you work in. Associations help fund new programs and education, develop policy and improve operating conditions for your customers.

Who do we need to meet and how do we go about meeting them? To get the biggest bang for your networking dollar, you need to make sure your face, company image and your message, gets in front of the right people on an ongoing basis. Each year our

associations host numerous functions that give us the opportunity to 'meet and greet' the people we want to conduct business with. However, our associations can only help us so much. We need to take an active role in engaging in the opportunities they give us.

As a supplier member of FRPO, I know I need to get in front of my client pool—both existing and potential—every chance I get. This is where associations can play an important role. The social functions that are held annually help to put my company and myself in front of the people I need to see or meet. Make no mistake, attending social functions is a key marketing strategy for any company. The networking I do at these events increases my company's exposure and helps provide me with new leads that might be hard to obtain otherwise. While not a golfer, I volunteer my time to help with the annual golf tournaments of various associations. This puts me in eyesight of, and gives me the opportunity to talk to the people I want to.

The spring and fall socials are always great events to catch up with existing and prospective clients. They give you a chance to not only meet up with property manager/owner members as well as other suppliers. Never discount other supplier members at a function, they know people you don't and vice versa. They too can help open doors for you and provide introductions. Joint ventures and referrals will benefit you and other corporate and associate members. Attending social events, and trade shows will help you stay current on the trends in your area of expertise and will help you gather important information that can easily give you a leg up on your competition. Exhibiting at the association trade shows or participating on an educational panel are valuable touchpoints. Volunteering at association events gives you the opportunity to meet many attendees, not just those at your table or part of your foursome.

Meeting prospective clients at a function (be it a seminar, social or gala) is only the first step of relationship building. What you



do after the function will determine if you were successful or not. Follow up on all leads, and if you did not get their contact information, call your association team member for assistance. Most associations produce a membership directory so this can also be a valuable source of prospects and/or contact information.

Don't hesitate to ask the staff at your association to help you. Staff can introduce you to prospective clients in numerous ways. Become a sponsor at an event, join a committee, attend seminars or other events offered by your local associations. Attending seminars that may not be directly related to your business, again provides an opportunity for you to be seen by potential clients. These type of events also help to increase your industry knowledge and give you a better understanding of the environment that your clients work in. Take advantage of marketing opportunities by advertising in your association's magazines or newsletters. All of these steps offer a perfect opportunity to build relationships with prospective clients while supporting your association publications. Many of these publications look to members to help provide educational content, so write an article and help update other members on new products or services and best practices.

It really comes down to this: the more you give, the more you get. Continued involvement in your association provides you the opportunity to stay in the forefront of people's minds and shows your commitment to the industry.

#### WHY SHOULD WE SPONSOR AND/OR ATTEND NETWORKING EVENTS, OR VOLUNTEER ON COMMITTEES?

**Involvement = Action**

**Action = Results**

- These events provide us with an excellent opportunity to build and maintain business relationships and brand our products and services.
- When confronted with a room full of people from our industry, we are bound to discuss what is happening in our target market areas. We will learn what new trends our prospective clients are looking for and we will discuss tried and true practices.
- We will connect with the leaders in our industry. Networking and social events provide us with an environment in which we can feel confident to approach prospective clients.

- Events will have you leaving with new ideas, new contacts and a renewed sense of motivation.
- Volunteering at one of the many charitable organizations that our associations support, you may be surprised by how many of our industry leaders will be there as well.
- Joining a committee will open doors to the people you need to meet and see to grow your business while supporting the association's directives.

Support your associations. See you at the next function! 📈

*Mary Ongaro is the President of Absolute Ventilation and a long standing FRPO Member. Absolute Ventilation provides insuite dryer, bathroom exhaust vent cleaning, make up air shaft cleaning, laundry room dryer exhaust vent cleaning and HVAC duct cleaning.*



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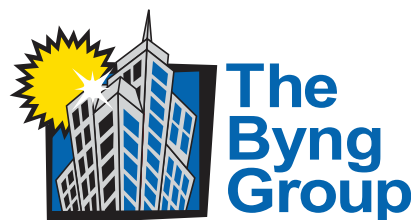
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# FINDING THE RIGHT TENANT

How pricing audits and mystery shops can be an important part of an effective leasing strategy

BY KIM REID

**T**oday's incredibly competitive housing market has been a landlord's dream, leading to exceptionally low vacancy rates as many tenants choose to keep renting instead of trying to buy a pricey home.

But no matter how 'hot' the rental market becomes, vacancies still occur. Those companies who have developed an outstanding leasing experience and who have done their 'homework' through pricing audits and mystery shops will find it easy to fill their vacancies quickly, with the ideal tenant.

## IT ALL STARTS WITH THE RESEARCH

To be competitive, you have to know what your competition is doing. In the rental market, gaining that competitive edge starts with conducting a market survey, also known as a pricing audit. Pricing audits allow companies to compare their rental costs and building amenities with other apartments in the same region. However, although pricing audits can give you important quantitative data, it's equally critical to have qualitative information as well.

Management thinker Peter Drucker is often quoted as saying that "you can't manage what you can't measure." Mystery shopping is an ideal strategy to measure the intangible aspects of your business and easily helps you to identify opportunities for improvement. Similar to a pricing audit, a mystery shop compares your building with other local competitors, but in this case it's the knowledge and customer service of staff that is also being evaluated. It's important to share the results of a mystery shop with your staff and discuss both the positive results, as well as the areas of concern. Most businesses typically notice a dramatic improvement following a mystery shop.

Having your own staff conduct a mystery shop in their own neighbourhood can be extremely useful in helping you to figure out what differentiates you from your

competitors. Combining both these tools (a pricing audit and a mystery shop) offers a comprehensive, unbiased, and realistic view of a company's leasing experience.

## TURNING KNOWLEDGE INTO TENANTS

So you've done your pricing audits and mystery shops and know the strengths and weaknesses of your business. Now it's time to use this information to ensure you are offering a superior leasing experience.

First and foremost, attracting and keeping good tenants is about relationships. People rent apartments from those they like, know, and trust and not from those they feel are trying to "sell" them on a home that does not meet their needs.

In order to build these relationships, your staff should have certain fundamental skills and training. Customers can quickly determine if their business matters. For starters, they should have...

- **Excellent telephone and online communication skills.** Is the phone answered and does it rarely go to voice mail? Has your company established timeframes for when voice mails and emails must be returned? Are your staff aware of and meeting these expectations?
- **The know-how to properly show a unit.** Does the staff member know the type of apartment the customer is looking

for before the showing? Is the unit 'rent ready'? How knowledgeable are staff about the entire move-in and rental experience? Are they able to pick up on the customer's 'body language' about the unit, and politely inquire about what the customer likes and does not like?

- **Closing skills.** Has the customer filled out an application for the apartment? If not, have staff found out why and do they have a plan for follow-up?

Once the tenant does move in, continuing to offer great customer service is integral. Research shows that acquiring a new customer is anywhere from five to 25 times more expensive than retaining an existing one. What's more, highly satisfied residents can often be your best source for new ones.

Ultimately, the goal of sales and customer service for rental housing providers must be to "stop selling and start helping." Your prospect has a problem; they need a new home. Coincidentally, you likely have something available. It's your job to show them why your company is the one that can open the door to the perfect apartment they will love to call home for years to come. 📞

*Taeus Group provides training programs, which include: leasing, customer service excellence, communication skills, understanding AODA, and Human Rights and Privacy Legislation.*



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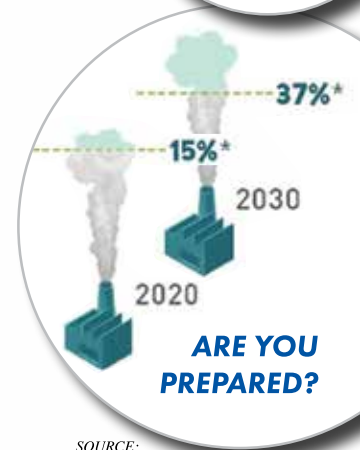
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# LAST YEAR'S MAC AWARD CRB WINNER

Oxford Properties continues on its winning ways as it moves forward to lead the industry in sustainability excellence

BY TED WHITEHEAD, DIRECTOR OF CERTIFICATION

**A**t the 2015 MAC Awards, Oxford Properties became the first recipient of the Certified Rental Building (CRB) Member Award (under 15 buildings). As a founding member in the CRB program, Oxford Properties has long had a dedicated focus on continued excellence in the quality of service and the quality of apartment product they provide to the many thousands of residents who make their home with them.

"Being the first-ever winner of the CRB member award at last year's MAC awards was truly an honour for Oxford Properties and for all our staff," states Andrew Lowe, Director Residential Real Estate. "We have a strong focus on excellence and quality in everything we do at Oxford Properties, so being the first award winner against so many worthy recipients is recognition that we are on the tight track."

While never taking their eye off the quality CRB focus, Oxford Properties is now zeroed in on creating Sustainability Excellence, in the multi-res industry, by embracing the CRB program's new Living GREEN Together™ standards. Many business scholars lament that the pursuit of any area of business excellence always starts with clear organizational vision. Oxford publically states its vision for all to view.

Those same scholars will then go to advise that highly successful organizations engage and empower their people to be an active participant in sharing that vision.

A recent employee survey indicated that over 74% of employees are actively engaged in working towards Oxford Properties' sustainability vision.

Bert Steenburgh, General Manager Residential Real Estate states, "Having a clear vision of where we were headed, we then looked for the best industry



certification options available that would address the uniqueness of the multi-res industry space and worked with our culture. The CRB program's "Living GREEN Together™" (LGT) environmental standards fit our needs the best."

Daniela Agnoletto, Project Manager Sustainability adds, "The LGT standards recognize the fact that we house hundreds of people and their households in each of our buildings. We firmly believe that if we do not successfully engage our frontline employees, and actively involve our residents in greening our apartment communities then we are not demonstrating our commitment to our vision of sustainability excellence. The CRB program's LGT standards provide us with the framework to move to this next step."

At the request of Oxford Properties, the CRB program was asked to research

multi-res industry best practices and provide some insights to Oxford's Multi-Res Leadership team for Ontario. "The goal was to help us understand the next steps to creating sustainability excellence, and to build on the momentum we have generated to date," states Steenburgh.

On Friday, October 14, Ted Whitehead, CRB Director of Certification, and Deb Cohen of PSN Solutions presented a series of best practice findings and tips to an enthusiastic group from the Oxford property management team. The presentation topic was "Vision, Commitment, Engagement" and the presentation itself delved into best practice findings on how to engage residents through impacting positive behaviour change. At the end of the presentation, the audience members participated in the first-ever, CRB Living GREEN Together Survivor's Challenge Game.



Recognizing that measurement and results are often the true tests of performance, Oxford has also teamed up with the CRB team to pilot the Living GREEN Together™ Site Verification/Audit Project. Anthony Mota, Property Manager, for Oxford's Goldengate complex, quickly volunteered his apartment community (over 600 units) to be first up for the audit project. "We are working diligently to engage our residents to act responsibly, and to keep our Goldengate community green and safe," states Mota. "We have an active resident environmental committee and

support their efforts to encourage others living in our complex to live green and keep our community clean. The audit showed us we are on the right track, but still have some work to do."

It is easy to see why Oxford Properties and their staff excel at what they do... in keeping with CRB's often-stated slogan it is evident they live it – *"We Say What We Do, and Do What We Say"*

#### BEST PRACTICES RESEARCH

*"Unlike most organizational change that takes place, sustainability demands an understanding of societal change agenda!" (Embedding Sustainability in Organizational Culture – A Systematic Review of the Body of Knowledge) – Completed by Network for Business Sustainability.*

As we researched best practices in multi-res sustainability leadership across North America, it became evident that a majority of the industry's efforts to date have been focused on making material changes to the physical plant that provides basic services to the residents, i.e. HVAC (heating & cooling), lighting (LED), water consumption, (toilets, energy efficient laundry appliances,

etc.). Undoubtedly, these efforts have been driven by the continued rise in utility costs across North American communities and the need to reduce consumption wherever prudent and possible. There is some evidence now that the industry is beginning to be maxed out on current technologies that are available to them to reduce energy and water consumption and that make business sense to employ.

*"In sustainability too often we mistake our initial steps to the final steps in our strategy because we do not have a vision of what is possible, and a road map of how we get there"*

The very nature of industry in a continued rising utility cost environment will always drive our members to seek out new products and technologies. With this in mind, our research led us to a best practices area where there is still a major opportunity to impact multi-res consumption rates through "resident engagement and involvement practices". Largely still in its infancy across Ontario, Canada, and North America, it does present a unique opportunity to lower the environmental operating footprint within a multi-res community. 🌱

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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A BETTER FUTURE

National Housing Strategy may yield good results for Ontario rental providers

BY JOHN DICKIE, CFAA PRESIDENT

**T**he Liberal Government is committed to bringing in a National Housing Strategy in Canada, through the consultation CMHC has conducted. On November 22, Minister Duclos, the Minister responsible for housing, is to release a report on "What We Heard". The strategy itself will be announced in pieces in the 2017 federal Budget, and in later related strategies, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy. As each piece is announced, the related programs will receive spending envelopes.

A number of social housing providers came together to create the National Housing Collaborative (NHC) to provide input into the National Housing Strategy. CFAA and the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) joined the NHC, but were concerned about being swamped by the number of social housing providers who were participating in the NHC sessions. In fact, the NHC recommendations turned out to be better than we had hoped.

## IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY THROUGH DIRECT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

CFAA was delighted to endorse the NHC recommendation that the governments establish a Canada-wide portable housing benefit with rent maximums that vary by city, and funding to the tune of \$1.2B per year (after a phase-in period.) That portable housing benefit program would be open to renters of most age groups and provide a significant benefit, especially in high-rent

areas, such as Toronto and Ottawa. It would also use an affordability target of 30% for families (which is standard), and 40% for single person households, which is a reform CFAA has been advocating for years.

## INCREASING RENTAL HOUSING SUPPLY

Instead of merely promoting more social housing construction, the NHC is recommending low-interest loans for repairs to existing private rental housing, and for new construction of affordable rental units, whether by the private or for-profit sector. The NHC also recommends an equity fund to enable the private sector to achieve market rates of return while providing some affordable rental units.

That development funding may be an excellent tool for the market because it is adapted to the provision of some low rent units within large development projects. More and more such inclusion will be demanded by municipalities through inclusionary zoning, and having a funding source will make the required inclusion less costly for rental developers, which is good for them and for low-income tenants.

## OTHER ISSUES

The NHC proposal is for modest funding to support social housing transformation (\$40M over five years), and for continued support for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) subsidies and capital repairs in social housing.

The NHC proposes increased funding

to seek to prevent homelessness, and to support people who become homeless to be re-housed quickly.

Thanks in part to the opposition by CFAA within the NHC, there is no pitch from the NHC for subsidies for low-income people to buy houses. The NHC submission is available at [nhc-cpl.ca](http://nhc-cpl.ca).

## CFAA'S SUBMISSIONS TO THE NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

CFAA supported the NHC proposals and also made additional or alternate proposals for the National Housing Strategy. CFAA's submission is available at [cfaa-fcapi.org](http://cfaa-fcapi.org). We will make further submissions as the government works out program details in the directions it chooses to pursue.

Overall, CFAA is very pleased with the submission which has been made by the National Housing Collaborative, and the positive response we have received from government about CFAA's own proposals. We are also more optimistic than we have ever been about the result of the National Housing Strategy consultation.

As rental housing providers in Ontario, you should feel free to let your MP or MPP know you support a portable housing benefit in a National Housing Strategy for Canada. 🏠

*FRPO is a member of the Canadian Federation of Apartment Associations, the sole national organization representing the interests of Canada's \$480 billion rental housing industry, which houses more than nine million Canadians.*



# EMBRACING INSTAGRAM

How to engage residents using visual content



BY KERIE KERSTATTER

It's crucial for property management professionals to find innovative ways to connect with prospects and generate business, and social media is a powerful tool to help. When comparing the major social media platforms, there are a few key differentiators. Facebook is more visual, personal, and explanatory—ideal for establishing your property as a helpful resource and engaging with residents. Twitter tends to be more succinct and efficient, allowing properties to pass along news and make connections within a larger community of businesses.

Alas, we arrive at Instagram, a social network that's widely popular among the millennial demographic (not to mention the upcoming Generation Z). Instagram mimics Facebook from the standpoint that our focus shifts back to resident engagement. It has a single function (picture-sharing), which makes it highly visual and a great platform for conveying the personality of your resident community.

## INSTAGRAM - THE BASICS

With Instagram, users have several formatting options for editing pictures. Colour treatments, called "filters" can be applied to photos to make them more artistic and visually interesting. Again, users can be individuals or organizations. Similar to Facebook, users can favourite or comment on pictures, as well as tag other users.

Driven by the freedom to format, as well as a quick-scrolling mobile platform, Instagram is among the most interactive social networks. For multifamily properties, it's an excellent tool for branding and resident engagement.

## USES FOR INSTAGRAM

### Sharing visual updates

Think visually. When it comes to your everyday resident communications, consider how can you create visual interest. Are you opening the pool this weekend? Post an inviting picture! Are you prepping for a resident event? Show them! Are there cupcakes in the lobby, or amenities your residents aren't taking advantage of? Make sure you're sharing the imagery. Before you start, however, you need to ask yourself what tone or personality you want to convey, and which property features you want to highlight.

### Engaging with new and existing residents

Seeing as millennials are already on Instagram, engaging with them there is easy. Inviting your residents to participate in an Instagram contest is perhaps the simplest way to do so. Create a call-to-action for your residents to submit pictures: "Share your poolside pictures this month for a chance to win a gift card!" Offer an incentive for

participation. Establish a timeline. Keep in mind that when participants share pictures of your property on Instagram, those photos also appear on the newsfeed of their followers. A well-planned Instagram contest has great potential to generate awareness of your property to relevant audiences. The Instagram platform presents several opportunities for marketing your multifamily property, you've just got to think visually! 📱

*Kerie Kerstetter is the Director of Content Strategy for Canonball, a digital marketing agency in Dallas that specializes in both multifamily and mixed-use development.*

*Originally published in Property Management Insider*



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# INDUSTRY TREND-SPOTTING

Housing tour highlights from Dallas, Texas

BY SCOTT ANDISON

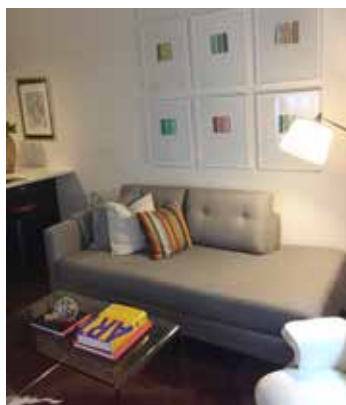
**O**n October 5th & 6th, FRPO's fifth annual Housing Tour headed down to Dallas, Texas to learn about the latest trends and experiences in the Dallas rental housing market.

Thanks to the tremendous assistance of the Greater Dallas Apartment Association, we had the opportunity to visit four

excellent rental properties hosted by Olympus Property, Gables Residential, Alpha Barnes Real Estate Services, and Windsor Communities. We extend a big thank you to the management and staff of these companies who could not have been better hosts to our group.

On the tour, delegates had the opportunity to see the latest in finishings,

amenity space design and programming, use of the latest technology, and various approaches in leasing activities and promotion efforts. At each location, attendees had the unique opportunity to talk to building staff and management executives about everything from leasing practices to capital construction cost and planning approval issues. Members who





attended the tour found this type of personal interaction with on-site staff extremely valuable to gain a better understanding about the unique circumstances of each multifamily community.

FRPO members were very pleased to have been joined at the networking dinner by representatives of the National Apartment Association, the Texas Apartment

Association, and of course our local host Kin Oldham, the Executive Director of the Greater Dallas Apartment Association. This show of support by our American counterparts was greatly appreciated by all of us in attendance.

Thank you again to everyone who attended the Dallas Tour, and we hope to see everyone back on our next housing tour excursion in 2017! 🍷



## Four reasons to start marketing with video

By Steven Chester

Since the brain processes visuals 60,000 times faster than the time it takes for it to process text, and 65 per cent of the population are visual learners, it's time to start thinking about video marketing.

Here are four insights that tell you why:

- **Sixty per cent of traffic on YouTube is search-driven.** That means most users aren't visiting YouTube to see what latest cat video is trending on the homepage. They're looking for information.
- **Native video on Twitter drives 2.5 times more engagement** than a standard post.
- **Facebook video posts have 135 per cent more engagement** than photo posts. Facebook is going toe-to-toe with YouTube. No longer is it effective to post that YouTube video link on your Facebook page – Facebook wants that video content for itself. You can benefit from this battle by posting directly to both platforms.
- **Videos on Instagram offer two times more engagement** and comments than photo posts. Video views have also grown 350 per cent over an eight-month period on this platform.

So, how do you source content that others want to see? Keep in mind that businesses put too much focus on themselves rather than what their audience wants to hear. What problems can you solve to position your business as a thought leader? Try to answer frequently asked questions by searching community hubs, blogs, LinkedIn Groups and competitor sites.

*Steven Chester is the Digital Media Director of MediaEdge Communications. With 15 years' experience in cross-platform communications, Steven helps companies expand their reach through social media and other digital initiatives. To contact him directly, email [gosocial@mediaedge.ca](mailto:gosocial@mediaedge.ca).*



# UNDERSTANDING YOUR EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLAN

New biologic drugs are effective, but expensive

BY JENN POIRIER, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES

**T**he pharmaceutical industry has made significant strides in developing new drugs that better combat diseases. Many of these new drugs are 'biologic' drugs. Biologic drugs provide superior treatment options for serious and rare illnesses, including cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, and diabetes. And while they are the fastest growing area in pharmaceutical development, they are also extremely expensive.

Remicade, for example, is a biologic used to treat several illnesses, including Crohn's disease, and costs approximately \$28,000 to \$35,000 annually to treat one plan member. For most employers, a biologic will be the drug upon which the most plan dollars are spent. They are driven by cost, not by volume of claims. While many plans have an annual individual threshold of \$10,000 before stop-loss or large amount pooling takes effect, that \$10,000 (or more if there are multiple employees on biologics) may be unaffordable.

Biologics are generally not available through your local pharmacy. They require more management, vigilance and support than conventional prescription drugs. They are often administered through infusion at a hospital, clinic or by a specialty drug provider, such as Bayshore Medical.

## COST CONTAINMENT

The reality is, employee benefit plans were not meant to cover these kinds of claims. Carriers are doing what they can to reduce costs, such as requiring employees to go through a prior authorization process to ensure that lower cost medications have been tried first.

## SEBS

Generic drugs have made a huge impact in reducing the cost of mainstream drug therapies (once patents expire) but biologics are different for each patient and generics are not an option. The biologic equivalent to generic drugs is developed once the



innovator brand patents have expired. These are known as Subsequent Entry Biologics or SEBs. While generic drugs are bioequivalent to the initial brand drugs, SEBs are only bio similar. SEBS, therefore, must go through a development process and have to be approved by Health Canada, as do the innovator brands. They are not interchangeable like generics. Though they too are expensive, SEBs actually represents a cost saving over the innovator brand.

Some insurance carriers have negotiated cost reductions with various manufacturers. The cost savings have an impact on the amounts paid out by stop-loss insurance and large amount pooling, thus saving the insurance carriers money and thereby reducing rates. However, the impact on the employer, who still needs to pay the first \$10,000, is negligible. The most effective options involve looking to alternate funding sources, such as provincial or industry programs.

## ASSOCIUM SPECIALTY DRUG PROGRAM

Our goal is to eliminate or, at least, substantially reduce the cost of biologics from benefits plans and for employees where possible. There are options; all of which involve the affected employees joining the provincial plan (Trillium, in Ontario).

### 1. Cap the maximum on the drug plan

This involves setting a maximum amount that the plan will pay for an individual's total annual drug claims. This amount could be \$4,000 or \$5,000 dollars. The balance of the cost would then be picked up by the provincial plan but not until

the employee has satisfied the Trillium out-of-pocket deductible (based on 4% of net family household income). This could cost the employee more than if the plan remained at full reimbursement.

### 2. Apply co-payment to Trillium deductible

Where a plan has an employee co-pay (20% for example) it may not take long for an employee to satisfy the provincial plan deductible. Once satisfied, the provincial plan will take on the entire balance for the year.

### 3. The ASSOCIUM Specialty Drug Program

(Excluding Biologic class from an employer's plan) This option is unique to ASSOCIUM Benefits. We have identified 75 drugs that currently fall within that category (although new ones will be added over time). Bayshore Specialty Rx has been chosen as our preferred provider to assist employees by offering a seamless approach to funding options, dispensing, and treatment, as required. The drugs are excluded from the plan formulary and alternative sources of funding apply. The cost will no longer be covered by employee drug cards. Once an employee (or dependent) is set up on our program, they may remain with the program even if they are no longer with their current employer. ■■

*Biologic drugs are becoming a significant cost to employee benefit plans. Please contact ASSOCIUM for more details regarding the ASSOCIUM Specialty Drug Program or other plan options at [jpoirier@associum.com](mailto:jpoirier@associum.com).*



# FROM VACANT TO FULL

Four advertising tips to fill your suites fast

BY AMANDA PEREIRA, 4RENT.CA

**L**andlords and property managers share a number of similarities, and differences—from the types of rentals managed, to service areas, to the number of parties involved. But there is one resounding stress the two entities share: filling vacancies.

Nowadays, the advertising methods used to advertise rental properties are vastly different from the methods employed twenty years ago. Gone are the days of listing a property with a basic description hoping that'll secure you an excellent tenant. Moreover, the blurry photos with the low resolution don't cut it anymore.

If you're scratching your head trying to figure out how to rectify your situation and get those vacancies filled — don't worry. We've compiled this list of tips and tricks to get your rental and lease agreements signed, and properties filled.

## 1. Keep it clean and advertise only one building per listing

While this may not initially seem like the most cost-effective approach, it is in the long run. When you cram as many properties as you can on one page, rent seekers can become overwhelmed and struggle to focus.

## 2. Grab their attention

The average renter spends a meagre two seconds looking at a listing, so it's imperative to maximize your space appropriately and not make them look elsewhere. Utilizing visual and keyword counts. Now is the time to either take high-resolution images or hire a professional to do it for you. Is your building in a great location? These are key things to highlight on as they create an emotional response to your ad, and ultimately, get you calls.

## 3. Less is more, so keep it simple

This can seem like a double conundrum. When you are creating your ad copy, it is imperative to be descriptive, but also concise. Focus on the important details of your property, such as location, and key features, like renovated suites and attractive price points.

## 4. Use frequency and repetition

It's easy to throw in the towel after running your advertisement the first time and only garnering a few calls. But did you know marketing experts say that it can take up to two to three times before a renter will make a decision? There is value in repetition, and repetition is what gets you from vacant to occupied. While it can seem like a daunting and time-consuming task, with

the proper advertising and marketing methods, these tips are sure to secure you the number of tenants you need to fill your empty spaces. 📈

*For almost a decade, 4Rent has been connecting apartment hunters with property managers, simplifying the apartment searching process. We offer unique marketing solutions that marry print with web and get your vacancies filled.*



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# THAT HOSPITALITY TOUCH

Transforming the apartment experience through resort-style features and amenities

BY TIM BLACKWELL

Imagine soaking in the flicker of a fire pit surrounded by deep blue water in a shallow pool. Your perch is on a plump, elegant lounge in a pergola-covered patio just a few feet away. The flames dance atop the rippling cool water as the sun dips behind the horizon. Soft music plays in the background, offering a soothing respite from the outside world. Fluffy towels await nearby, just in case you want to take a dip. But, first, a sip from a cool drink. The plastic umbrella is optional.

Sound like a restful evening at a world-class resort? You bet, but multifamily housing designers believe the same setting can be a part of today's apartment living. Architects who create upscale communities in city centres are incorporating a resort-style feel into their designs so renters can escape in their own backyards.

## APARTMENTS FORTIFIED WITH RESORT-STYLE AMENITIES

The experiences aren't limited to elegantly crafted pools and patios, but extend

throughout the property and into units that are intended to create an exciting retreat at the end of a day's work. Spaces for concierge-type services like package delivery and dog walking, plus after-hours wine parties and techy fitness centres beckon apartment residents to stay a while.

It's all a part of attracting and retaining residents through an amenity-fortified lifestyle that doesn't stop when the sun goes down. Architects are taking a page right out of the hospitality industry handbook to enhance the appeal of urban living.

"It's the cold towels, fresh towels, water bottles and things like that for the resident that really steps it up," said Erik O. Earnshaw, a partner at BGO Architects in Addison, Texas. "It's that hospitality touch to it. It's a little bit more on the management side, but the accolades that it will bring to the development will help ensure to get you a little more rent or retention."

Earnshaw doesn't put a return on investment for such a business model but says many of the projects he and fellow

architects shared earlier this year at a multifamily conference are what residents want today in upscale apartment living.

While unit accommodations are important, residents desire around-the-clock, accessible community spaces where living is extended beyond the apartment. Common areas should invite residents to kick back and relax.

## SMALLER, INTIMATE GATHERING SPACES AND CONCIERGE SERVICES

David W. Hensley, founding principal at Hensley Lamkin Rachel, Inc., has spent numerous hours scouring hotels and resorts to understand how spaces can be used to create more inclusiveness.

Trips to hotels in California, New York, Seattle and Portland revealed how the hospitality industry views common area usage. What he learned was how large common areas were divided into smaller spaces to create a very personal feel. Examples included screened, see-through walls, and how placement of a bookcase or fireplace provides division without complete confinement.



In a hotel, Hensley said, guests typically don't meet people in their rooms but choose to gather in larger communal areas that feel more intimate. Smaller seating areas designed for four people, and a wine or coffee bar that accommodates a dozen or so help create that ambiance.

"It was really about designing a series of smaller gathering spaces that were more intimate," he said, adding that areas near the elevator lobby are perfect so residents can come down and greet people. From there, they can take a short walk and relax in a seating area, watch TV and listen to music before venturing out.

He also noted how hotels designed common areas to be multifunctional, and how properties should incorporate that approach for resident entrances, lobbies and seating.

For instance, the lobby at an apartment community has traditionally been open to residents only during business hours, when the leasing staff was present. But Hensley says other uses are possible for the tables,

chairs and sofas well beyond five o'clock.

"We've got to make it function like a hotel concierge and seating, and let's let it get used in an evening and close off a minimum amount of area so that we don't lose that much square footage after hours," he said. "That led us into how does it get used. Is it a coffee bar or not? Is it TV area? Is it concierge type service for cleaning and packages?"

HLR Architects began integrating 24-hour accessible package delivery space into its designs to accommodate growing demand by residents. It's been a win for management, he said, because properties no longer have to dedicate staff for handling resident packages.

"Integrating this concierge-type, after-hours self-service with after-hours space, it was this whole transformation of how we use the lobby, and the seating, the lighting and the coffee bar, and how people meet as a gathering space to go out," Hensley said. "So many more of our buildings are in Uptown, Downtown or in walkable communities."

### 'URBAN SPLASH' CHANGING THE WAY POOLS ARE USED

Earnshaw calls today's pools "urban splash," an extension from the lazy river concept popular in student housing. While they are still for playing, swimming laps and cooling off, pools are an eye-pleasing gathering spot where residents can relax semi-privately or socialize.

Pools are getting larger, and so are the seating areas surrounding them. Water features and lighting are deployed to create an experience that tickles the senses and encourages a restful afternoon or evening waterside.

The same is true for other apartment amenities, like fitness rooms and sports attractions. Some are being designed for semi-private use, and others like simulated golf centers are positioned in the open so that passersby can catch a curious glance at their neighbor's swing.

Spacing these amenities throughout the property offers greater opportunities for residents to participate and explore, rather than going to one congested area for all.

"For many years, you've seen swimming pools empty, seen a lot of amenities in the

fitness spaces, not so much empty but at peak hours half full," Earnshaw said. "But we're seeing more people use it, but we are creating enough different locations within the building whether it's the dog park, the swimming pool, rooftop decks or game rooms. We don't always try to put them exactly together and connected, but actually distribute them throughout the development so there ends up being different nodes for contemplation and also gathering and so forth."

### RESIDENTS EXPECT GREATER AMENITIES FOR THE PRICES THEY'RE PAYING

In the last three or four years, HLR Architects has designed about a dozen properties in Dallas and Seattle with a resort-style theme. The results have been encouraging, although there has been a learning curve at some of the properties on how to effectively use the spaces.

HLR Architects learned to guide the properties on how to best use the amenity space to create a welcoming feel, Hensley said. Working with management to properly furnish or finish out new spaces has helped boost appeal so residents fully utilize them.

"We said you have to spend a little bit of time here, you have to use a tile floor not concrete floor, you have to use a brick or painted wall, not a hardy panel," he said. "You have to have a good couch and TV, then it's successfully used. We make sure we give them clues in terms of finishes and furnishings."

If effectively done, the prospects of a vacation-like experience sells, especially where people gather, Earnshaw said. Coffee bars and free java, happy hours, wine tastings and other services and offerings typical of a getaway destination are important to enhancing today's resident experience, even if factored into the rent. With rents in city centres commanding some hefty prices, residents expect more, he said. "Those type of added amenities are almost required by the resident today for the rent they are paying." ■

*Originally published in Property Management Insider*



# AFTER TRAGEDY STRIKES

Marketing properties stigmatized by a catastrophic event

BY SHERYL ERENBERG

**E**very marketing person's nightmare is a tragic event that hits the media and gets prolonged negative exposure. At one apartment community in Southeast Ontario, there were multiple events that stigmatized the property for years and presented formidable challenges to the management and leasing team.

First came the murder of a tenant. He was bludgeoned to death with a tire iron in his apartment. The crime was not random given the absence of forced entry. Police believe he knew his attacker and that drugs may have been the motive.

The media coverage spanned about a week and then fizzled (without an arrest being made). Advertising efforts were suspended for two to three weeks, during which traffic only declined slightly. The profile of prospects to this moderately priced complex was about 60% new immigrants and 40% locals.

The following fall, a fire occurred in the 4th floor electrical room at that same apartment community, spreading more than 10 storeys and causing an evacuation that lasted more than three months. During this time, tenants could not return to their homes.

Emergency teams from the city and the property manager sprang into action—the former to meet the immediate housing needs of more than 1,000 people, and the latter to co-ordinate the reconstruction of the building and communicate with the media and tenants (who were resettled into shelters, motels and elsewhere).

Hoping to retain those displaced tenants, the communication strategy focused on construction progress reports and when

tenants could return to their homes. In the end, less than one percent of the 282 displaced tenants had content insurance and many asked to be released from their leases.

When the day finally arrived for tenants to move back into their apartments, a third of the units were vacant, either by legitimate legal notice or because the tenants had disappeared.

## THE MARKETING STRATEGY WAS THREE PRONGED:

1. Entice previous tenants with a variety of incentives, such as rent-free periods, free laundry cards, waiving LMR, allowance for food lost when refrigerators had to be replaced, and an aggressive Tenant Referral Program;
2. Add value by offering free social and recreational programs on site to tenants. This initiative was already in the formative stages at the time of the fire and was implemented almost immediately after the reconstruction.
3. Highlight newly replaced building components: lobby, corridors, elevators, mechanical and electrical systems, suite doors and refrigerators.

The key to equalizing the steady flow of negative media in the months following tenants' return to the building, was the ability to generate good news stories. The new Community Room on the ground floor of the building provided many such opportunities: a Homework Club, Computer Centre, Mother Goose Program, Summer Camp and vegetable garden plots were some of

the early offerings and were extremely well received. All were free to tenants.

Just as rental office traffic was beginning to improve, the mother of the murder victim announced that she would be leading a candle-light vigil at the building to commemorate the anniversary and increase public awareness in hopes that it would lead to an arrest. The event was moved to the periphery of the grounds but received widespread print and electronic media coverage in the winter of the following year that slowed the pace of rentals once again.

## RAMPING UP THE ADVERTISING EFFORTS

Heading into the spring, advertising in all media was doubled. New building signage [at sidewalk and directional to office] and the addition of banners and premium positions on existing ILS sites resulted in a 25% increase in traffic. The Tenant Referral Program, reinforced quarterly, accounted for 18 deals in total.

Finally, after 10 months of aggressive advertising, combined with a strong public relations campaign and on-site social programming, the vacancy rate reached the City's average of seven percent. ■■

*Sheryl Erenberg and Associates provides marketing services including feasibility studies, lease-up campaigns for new rental communities, and repositioning programs for underperforming rental buildings. The company is the leading provider of training programs for leasing professionals in Ontario.*

*Credit to: Brandon Communications, Toronto, for their exceptional crisis management and media relations; and to Madhouse Advertising, Toronto for their wildly successful ad campaign.*

# THE POWER OF VISUAL STORYTELLING

Insights from Hollyburn Properties

BY KATRINA MAY, PR & COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST



Last year, Hollyburn Properties was recognized as an innovator in multi-family by receiving the coveted 2015 FRPO MAC Award for Advertising Excellence. This award distinguishes an exceptional marketing campaign in the rental housing industry, and receiving it represented a milestone and honour for the Vancouver-based company.

Hollyburn harnessed the power of video and, more importantly, personal video testimonials, in creating an authentic, compelling and shareable visual story focusing on community engagement.

The Hollyburn Dream Vacation Contest was born of the company's commitment to providing residents with a unique rental living experience, developing a close-knit, family-like atmosphere, and to celebrating customer and brand loyalty. The Hollyburn marketing team created a contest that would encourage new and long-standing residents to engage with the company culture and online community, as well as collect priceless video content in the form of self-submitted video testimonials. The prize was a complimentary trip for two to Cancun, Mexico, valued at \$5,000.

Ultimately, Hollyburn sought to leverage happy residents and great customer service

experiences to create an approachable lifestyle campaign. Hollyburn achieved this by tapping into two of today's most powerful marketing tools – video and personal testimonials or reviews. With this campaign, Hollyburn compiled a series of positive video testimonials, sharing emotionally compelling short stories online representing what their residents love about living with Hollyburn, and why Hollyburn rental communities are unique.

In order to encourage resident participation, Hollyburn did the following:

- Created their own contest video, filmed in-house, to demonstrate how simple and easy it could be
- E-mailed residents with regular contest updates
- Shared submissions on social media as they came in
- Brought data-enabled iPads to resident appreciation BBQ's to assist residents with filming on-site
- Handed out contest flyers and posters with the contest website and more information
- Engaged resident managers to encourage and assist their residents to enter

Hollyburn received over 300 contest entries, 25% of which were submitted on the very



last day. The results were amazing video testimonials with incredibly high production value and creativity. It was clear from the original musical scores to the time-lapse videos, that Hollyburn residents had a lot of fun participating in the contest. The entire Hollyburn team was involved in determining the grand prize winner, boosting internal morale, instilling workplace pride, and inspiring them to continually strive for customer service excellence. Overall, the contest also increased unique Hollyburn website visits, YouTube video views, and social media followers and engagement from both residents and employees.

The Dream Vacation Contest was successful because Hollyburn was able to engage with residents and prospects in a fun and unique way, to grow their online presence, to build a sense of community and to reward customer loyalty all while generating authentic, shareable video content. It is clear these days that companies of all sizes, in all industries, are using the power of video to tell their stories to the world. 📺

*Hollyburn Properties is a Canadian family-owned and operated rental management and development company established 41 years ago. Hollyburn currently manages and operates 85 rental communities nationwide, with over 5,300 suites in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Ottawa. Hollyburn recently completed Bridgewater in North Vancouver, a new purpose-built rental building offering 130 pet-friendly suites.*

# THE SCIENCE OF REVENUE MANAGEMENT

How predictive analysis is leading the evolution of apartment pricing

BY TIM BLACKWELL

**T**he modern age of the apartment industry is looking a little like America's favourite pastime. New advances in revenue management, driven by data science remind many of the sabermetrics now prevalent in baseball. You may recall the story in 2002 of how Oakland A's general manager Billy Beane, facing a low budget and the loss of three superstars from a playoff team, signed new players who were rather pedestrian but had high probabilities of reaching base. The A's maintained their competitive edge and returned to the post-season without breaking the bank.

## REVENUE MANAGEMENT AND APARTMENT PRICING

Rich Hughes, RealPage, Inc.'s, Head of Data Science, says a similarly systemic approach to revenue management will help the multifamily win the pennant. Instead of targeting a few thoroughbreds who hit for percentage, though, the audience is much broader.

RealPage's data science group digs into the numbers and analyzes millions and millions of individuals applying for apartments every day to drive YieldStar, its revenue management system. The solution, which utilizes data and trends to formulate effective rents, is the latest in the evolution of apartment pricing.

"It's probably the frontier for revenue management going forward," Hughes said.

Predictive analysis leaves in the dust more traditional pricing practices of the multifamily industry over the last three decades. The solution factors in various conditions—occupancy rates, rent rates and other data, based on resident behaviour—to automatically recommend a price.

Setting rents have evolved from a similar mold of revenue management that the airline industry discovered in the early 1980s – to use analytics to predict consumer behavior to optimize revenue from inventory. Initially,

apartments set prices once a year and offered concessions if units weren't moving.

Revolutionary amenity-based pricing followed, generating higher rents for more desirable units. For example, an apartment that overlooked the pool or was more conveniently located on the property commanded more rent than others. Next was pricing based on periodic manual analysis, enabling properties to adjust prices throughout the year as market conditions dictated.

About the same time, revenue management started to include comps in its pricing based on market surveys.

The solutions each had merit, but they have been lapped by new technology that now helps build a better apartment team.

Today's pitch on revenue management is building a better apartment team

Today, effective revenue management digs deeper, making it more of a numbers game that enables property managers to approach rents scientifically.

RealPage has the industry's largest lease-transaction database, which delivers real-time pricing strategies that balance shifting supply and demand factors. Hughes's data science team compares data that help forecast changes in new lease trends based on seasonality, which enables properties to calculate precise renewal offers or rents.

David Danish, Director of Advisory Services for YieldStar, says such an approach is important to identifying risks associated with some residents who, for example, have completed their contracted lease term and may be considering vacating.

"When someone's lease becomes month to month, they are no longer on a long term lease contract like other residents," he said. "Their lease term has become undefined, therefore it's hard to measure when that lease is going to end to help you manage expirations, to help you decide how to price a new lease."

Predictive analysis through the study


of resident behavior factors in duration of month-to-month leases and original lease terms to make a price recommendation. The metrics also help to identify if there is any risk in occupancy associated with having residents on month-to-month leases.

"If you have a building with 300 units and one or two residents are on a month-to-month lease, that doesn't really influence your pricing that much," Danish said. "But if 10-15 or more are on a month-to-month lease, you need to acknowledge that they could provide notice at any given moment. That rent needs to be accounted for."

Right revenue management solution as easy as a game of catch

Hughes said the right solution for revenue management will more effectively predict supply and demand. On the supply side, a good solution should predict whether people will actually renew or break the lease. On the demand side, traffic originations, what guests are saying and other information help create inputs for setting more accurate pricing. Kortney Balas, Director of Revenue Management and Business Systems at JVM Realty Corp., says using data science in determining pricing has been a highly effective tool for the multifamily real estate investment and property management company headquartered in Oak Brook, Ill.

"What the model will do is it looks at your demand," she said. "If you're in a down market or not doing quite as well, it's going to reduce that price a little bit when you have demand forecasted, which allows you to get a couple of apartment homes off your shelf, and ride the revenue wave back up. When it's in a high market and you have demand forecasted, what will happen is the pricing will continue to push, and it will push to limits you would never do manually."

Almost as easily as a game of catch. 

*Originally published in Property Management Insider*



# SUPERIOR QUALITY GUARANTEED



## First Certified Rental Building launches in Sault Ste. Marie

On September 29th, 2016, FRPO launched its Certified Rental Building™ (CRB) Program in Sault Ste. Marie at Pine Allard's apartment community at 751 Pine Street. Pine Allard Properties has been providing high quality rental-housing for Sault Ste. Marie renters for over 30 years. The owners also own and manage Willow Properties in Sault Ste. Marie, and have certified this building under the CRB program.

"We are so very pleased to be the first apartment communities to receive official CRB quality 'certification' status in Sault Ste. Marie for our residents, particularly on our 30th anniversary," said Pieter Sigmundt, Owner, Pine Allard Properties. "The CRB program supports our employees' ongoing efforts and personal commitment to deliver superior quality rental properties and service to our current residents, as well as assuring prospective tenants in Sault Ste. Marie that our apartment communities are professionally run in professionally managed buildings they can call home."

Dignitaries invited to the event included Susan Myers, Ward 2 City Councillor and Chair of the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Corporation Board of Directors and Mr. Jeff Barban, Manager, Social Housing Division, Sault Ste. Marie.

"I'd like to congratulate Pine Allard Properties on obtaining the Certified Rental Building designation from FRPO. It's great to see this company taking extra initiatives to offer quality rental housing to their tenants," said Susan Myers, Ward 2 City Councillor.

Ingrid Tanner, General Manager – Pine Allard Properties explained, "The CRB program supports our ongoing efforts and commitment to deliver superior quality rental properties to current residents, and assures prospective tenants in Sault Ste. Marie that our apartment communities are professionally run and are well-managed



*Celebrating the Pine Allard Properties launch of the first Certified Rental Buildings in Sault Ste. Marie, ON are (l-r) Jeff Barban, Sault Ste. Marie Acting Commissioner, Social Services; Pine Allard Manager of Housing Services; Kristina Lauesen, FRPO Vice President Government & Industry Affairs Relations; Pieter Sigmundt, Owner and Ingrid Tanner, General Manager, Pine Allard Properties; Sault Ste. Marie Ward 2 Councillor Susan Myers; Ted Whitehead, FRPO Director of Certification.*

buildings they can call home."

For a multi-residential apartment building to qualify as a Certified Rental Building it must meet the five mandatory requirements of the Program:

1. Adhere to the Program's mandatory Standards of Practice, covering the areas of building operations, resident management practices, human resource management, property risk management, and environmental operations.
2. Have identified staff successfully complete the training and education components of the program.
3. Abide by FRPO's and the Program's Member Code of Conduct.
4. Successfully comply with a mandatory independent audit process (the program's auditor is J.D. Power).
5. Market and identify their building as Certified Rental Building to prospective renters.

The CRB program is the first quality assurance program in North America,



designed specifically for tenants to identify which buildings and landlords provide quality service and well-run, well-managed, environmentally friendly buildings. Since the Program's initial launch, the CRB Program has certified over 107,000 suites in over 1,000 buildings across Ontario. 🌱

*Property Managers and Owners looking to enroll their buildings in CRB program should contact Ted Whitehead, Director of Certification at [twhitehead@frpo.org](mailto:twhitehead@frpo.org) or call 416 385-1100 ext. 27 for more information.*

# THE LAWS OF ADVERTISING

What *not* to do in your next marketing campaign

BY DOUGLAS H. LEVITT, LL.B.

**M**ost people think of the world of advertising as a fun and free-spirited place. A place where creative juices flow and anything is possible. The reality is, advertising is a highly regulated area governed by the common law, as well as by a number of different statutes and regulatory bodies. As a lawyer, my aim is to provide you with a high-level understanding of some of the laws that most impact rental ads—including human rights laws and the laws that pertain to misleading advertising.

## HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS

The Human Rights Code (the “Code”) provides that everyone has the right to equal treatment in housing without discrimination because of 16 stipulated grounds, including race, family status, and the receipt of public assistance. This right is broadly defined and would prohibit a landlord from advertising a unit in such a way that would exclude people on the basis of one of these 16 grounds.

For example, landlords cannot directly discriminate in advertising by marketing the residential complex as being an “adult building” (which is arguably discrimination on the basis of family status) or by advertising that tenants “must provide proof of employment” (which is arguably discrimination on the basis of the receipt of public assistance). Further, landlords cannot indirectly discriminate in

advertising by describing selling features of a unit that have the unintended consequence of excluding people on a Code-protected ground. For example, advertising a unit as being “ideal for a quiet couple” may discourage and, therefore, effectively exclude families with young children from applying (which is arguably discrimination on the basis of family status). Alternatively, advertising a unit as being “perfect for a professional” may effectively exclude people who receive ODSP (which is arguably discrimination on the basis of the receipt of public assistance).

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (the “OHRC”) has published a guide entitled “Writing a fair rental housing ad (fact sheet)” to assist landlords in avoiding human rights violations in the course of advertising units. The guide can be found online at <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/writing-fair-rental-housing-ad-fact-sheet>. In the guide, the OHRC suggests that landlords should focus on the unit and not the “ideal” tenant. To this end, the OHRC suggests that, when advertising units, landlords provide information about the unit, and describe nearby services that may appeal to tenants.

The OHRC also provides the following example of the “right” and “wrong” way to advertise:

**The wrong way:** “Ideal for a single professional.”

**The right way:** “Bright, cozy bachelor

basement apartment, new kitchen cabinets, full bath, access to storage locker, shared laundry in friendly 5-unit building. \$750 per month including hydro and heat. On two bus routes, close to university, park, shops, community centre.”

Finally, it should be noted that the consequences of breaching the Code can be serious. If a person successfully brings a legal proceeding against a landlord for a breach of the Code, that person can be awarded significant monetary compensation. Moreover, it is an offence under the Code to breach the right to equal treatment in housing. Conviction for this offence can result in a fine of up to \$25,000.00.

## ADVERTISING LAWS

There are many different laws and statutes that regulate or impact advertising. These laws are, in large part, designed to protect the public against misleading advertising. The principle statute that governs misleading advertising is the Competition Act (the “CA”). The CA provides that, for advertising to be misleading, it must contain a representation that: (i) has been made to the public; (ii) promotes a product or business interest; and (iii) is false or misleading in a “material” respect (material in the sense that it is likely to influence a consumer’s behavior or purchasing).



Under the CA, misleading advertising can be prosecuted as a “reviewable practice” by the Competition Tribunal or the courts or, in very serious cases, as a criminal offence. In either case, the penalties that can be imposed on an advertiser are significant. In addition to the foregoing, the CA allows a person who has suffered damage as a result of misleading advertising to initiate legal proceedings against the advertiser to, among other things, obtain compensation.

### THE DON'TS

Having said all that, to avoid costly legal proceedings, there are some definite “don’ts” that a landlord can take from a review of the foregoing laws, including the following:

- **don’t** focus on the “ideal” tenant;
- **don’t** exclude applicants on Code-related grounds;
- **don’t** include inaccurate, deceptive or misleading representations in an ad;
- **don’t** omit relevant information from an ad thereby rendering the ad misleading (e.g., an ad that offers a “free flat screen TV” for renting a unit that neglects to say that the offer is only applicable to the renting of the penthouse); and
- **don’t** unfairly discredit or disparage other landlords with whom you are competing for tenants. 🏠

*Douglas H. Levitt is a senior partner at the law firm of Horlick Levitt Di Lella LLP. HORLICK LEVITT DI LELLA LLP has extensive experience advising and representing landlords. This allows us to provide comprehensive services with respect to property acquisition and disposal, financing, construction, conversion of residential properties, property management, employment, contracts, leasing and litigation & dispute resolution.*

*Disclaimer: This article is provided for information purposes only, and is not legal advice. To ensure that you are obtaining accurate advice for your specific matter, you should seek the assistance of a licenced and qualified legal professional.*

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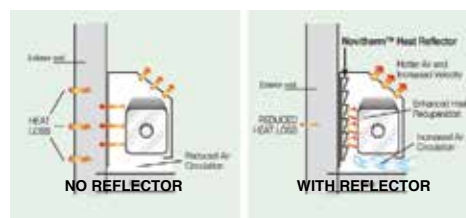
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# BOOSTING YOUR ONLINE BRAND

Top five things to consider when redesigning your website

BY TODD NISHIMURA, VERTICA  
RESIDENT SERVICES

In the last ten years, our world has experienced pivotal changes which can largely be attributed to technology. The internet has continued to grow in reach, prominence and sophistication with the smartphone being the ubiquitous tool to help our lives.

As a consequence, the property management industry has also experienced a shift in how business is conducted. Today's renter is more sophisticated and more technologically savvy than ever before. And with the resurgence of purpose-built rental in major markets across Canada, the brand of the property manager becomes increasingly important. Competition is no longer just the other apartment buildings in the neighbourhood, it now includes that brand new condominium for sale or for rent.

We now live in an age where information is readily at a consumer's fingertips, where educated and motivated renters know just as much about your property as your leasing consultants. With the access to information being critical to the rental decision and the importance of brand on the rise, your company's interactions with the consumer are more important than ever. And the consumer's introduction to your brand is more than likely through your website. What do you need to do to create a lasting first impression?

## ARE YOU MAKING IT EASY FOR THE PROSPECT TO FIND INFORMATION?

Outside of the standard information that you need to communicate – images, floorplans, rental rates – what you decide to include on your site is ultimately up to you. But just make sure that you're making it as easy as possible for the prospect to access that information. It sounds obvious, but recall your own experiences on the web when it was difficult to find what you needed. How did you feel about the company when this happened? Probably frustrated and maybe even less willing to



give that company your business. So don't alienate your renters with a sub-par navigation experience. Before you launch it, test it out with your team, friends and family. Assign tasks and have them search for certain information. Was it easy? If yes, great. If no, you may need to rethink your website's design.

## ARE YOU MAKING IT EASY FOR THE PROSPECT TO CONTACT YOU?

The name of the game is to lease up your building and reduce vacancies. But you can't do that unless you can generate awareness for your property and convert that awareness to interest. Make sure that you have multiple ways for the prospect to contact you. Why only show your property's phone number once? Have it appear strategically throughout your site. Include numerous ways for the prospect to email you. Allow for access to your social media platforms. Get the prospect to act!

## IS YOUR SITE DYNAMIC?

Put simply, a dynamic website is one that looks the same to your prospect regardless of how it is being viewed. Consumers search for information in a number of different ways and different times of the day. With a dynamic website, your content will look the same and your customer will have the same experience with your brand whether they view it on a desktop computer, tablet or smartphone. This is becoming more and more standard, but the takeaway is to be aware of how your content will look on different platforms. That image that looks

great when you look at your site on a desktop may look really tiny on a smartphone.

## IS YOUR WEBSITE AN EXTENSION OF YOUR BRAND?

In creating your website, make sure that it aligned with your brand. At Vertica, our focus is on providing the best customer experience, not only in the rental process but as a resident too. To that end, we have strived to create a site that puts the prospect/resident first by ensuring that they can get the information they need in the fewest clicks or by offering numerous ways to contact us.

## DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH PICTURES?

Prospective renters want to see what your community looks like. Can they see themselves living in your building? A picture really does say a thousand words, and how well your property shows on your website will play a huge part in whether or not a prospect decides to rent with you. So don't scrimp on photography – there's no such thing as too few images of what you have to offer.

By keeping these tips in mind, your new website can help expose your property to a wider audience in order to reduce vacancy and promote your brand. 📈

*Todd Nishimura is Director, Marketing and Leasing at Vertica Resident Services. A wholly-owned subsidiary of GWL Realty Advisors, Vertica manages a national portfolio of award winning properties, dedicated to providing its residents with personal, professional and responsive service. Vertica Resident Services is the proud recipient of the 2015 FRPO/MAC Award for Best Corporate Website.*

# A RECOGNIZED INDUSTRY LEADER

Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. named one of Canada's fastest-growing companies



**C**anadian Business and PROFIT ranked Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. Number 29 on the 28th annual PROFIT 500, the definitive ranking of Canada's Fastest-Growing Companies.

The prestigious achievement reinforces that Wyse is unique – a dominant submetering and utility management company that places its client relationships first.

Wyse made the 2016 PROFIT 500 list with five-year revenue growth of 2,604%. The company's focus to empower clients with the most innovative programs in the industry has driven remarkable results for building owners, developers and property managers across Canada.

"The entire Wyse team is laser focused on delivering to our customers the most effective submetering programs available in North America," said Ian Stewart, Co-CEO of Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. "We could not be more pleased to have been acknowledged as a Canadian high growth story as it validates the innovative and fiercely customer-centric work taking place daily at Wyse by an incredible group of individuals doing extraordinary things."

"Wyse has been built by an exceptional team of dedicated, innovative and responsive professionals," said Peter Mills, Co-CEO of Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. "Our leadership in submetering and utility expense management services in Canada is a direct result of a clear vision, delivered with precision through a commitment to our customers. The overwhelming response from clients has accelerated us to become Canada's trusted submetering partner."

"Companies become a part of the PROFIT 500 through innovative thinking, smart strategy and sheer grit," said James Cowan, Editor-in-chief of PROFIT and Canadian Business. "These firms demonstrate what Canadian entrepreneurs can achieve, both at home and across the globe." 🏡

*Published in the October issue of Canadian Business and at PROFITguide.com, the PROFIT 500 ranks Canadian businesses by their five-year revenue growth.*



# LUNCHING AND LEARNING

Insight from an expert panel

**F**RPPO and CMHC recently held a lunch and learn that focused on the "How, What, Where, Who and Why" of purpose built rental. This event highlighted the competitiveness of the apartment landscape as well as the challenges faced by developers when embarking on a new project.

Our panel consisted of Paula Gasparro of CMHC as moderator, Jack Winberg of the Rockport Group, Martin Tovey from Minto, Cary Green of Verdiroc Corporation and Scott Andison representing FRPO. Our panelists provided an overview of recent and current projects and addressed questions such as:

- What is happening on the new construction front and where are developers choosing to build?
- Who's building and how are they making the numbers work?
- What are the anticipated rental rates and what are developers concerned about?

The insight provided by our panel was very valuable in identifying issues at both municipal and provincial levels that are creating obstacles to increasing the supply of purpose built rental. They also provided best practice advice to those who are considering new developments in order to reduce challenges during the planning and construction process. We thank CMHC for sponsoring this event and our panelists for their candor and expert opinions. 🏡



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