



APARTMENT

Volume 55, Number 1

News

Awards of EXCELLENCE 2015

& **Products and Service
SHOWCASE**



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NOMINEES & WINNERS

Service Technician 151 Units Plus

Lloyd Sanchez – 1st Lake Properties
Juan Dheming – Apartment Homes by Tonti
Prudencio Valdivia – Latter & Blum Property Management
Kevin Joseph – HRI Properties
Andrew Taylor – Priderock
Dierl Valdery – Multi Family Management
Matthew Schroeder – HRI Properties
Eddy Cruz – Apartment Homes by Tonti
Keith Victor – Latter & Blum Property Management
Larry Jordan Jr. – 1st Lake Properties

2nd Place – Keith Victor & Matthew Schroeder

1st Place – Larry Jordan Jr

Leasing 151 Units Plus

Ashley Chaisson – Asset Plus Properties
Susan Tesneary – Priderock
Joanna Gray – Apartment Homes by Tonti
Adele Lucas – 1st Lake Properties
Rachanda Hayes – Apartment Homes by Tonti

2nd Place – Susan Tesneary

1st Place – Adele Lucas

Manager 1-150 Units

Debbie Finley – HRI Properties
Christina Benjamin – 1st Lake Properties
Lilia Parks – Latter & Blum Property Management
Lisa Doucet – HRI Properties
Tiana Turner – 1st Lake Properties
Mardell Evans – Latter & Blum Property Management

2nd Place – Lilia Parks

1st Place – Debbie Finley

Manager 151 Units Plus

Brenda Wright – HRI Properties
Sion Robert – Latter & Blum Property Management
Naomi Regan – Apartment Homes by Tonti
Ercilia Becerra – 1st Lake Properties
Jamie Arabie – Property One
Jamie White – Lake Terrace Gardens
Dinah Brosset – 1st Lake Properties
Wanda Dow – Latter & Blum Property Management
Evangeline Thompson Antoino – Multi Family Management

2nd Place – Naomi Regan & Jamie White

1st Place – Ercilia Becerra

Assistant Manager 1-150 Units

Gina Mattingly – 1st Lake Properties
Terrion Lomax – HRI Properties
Sherri Tardiff – Property One
Elizabeth Marshall – 1st Lake Properties

2nd Place – Elizabeth Marshall

1st Place – Sherri Tardiff

Assistant Manager 151 Units Plus

Shelly Bryan - 1st Lake Properties
Asaya Eichaker – Lake Terrace Gardens
Latonya Borne – Priderock
Kevin Fields – Apartment Homes by Tonti
Wanda Haynes – HRI Properties
Bianca Hugle – Multi Family Management
Henry Flournoy – Latter & Blum Property Management
Sherri Nores – 1st Lake Properties
Angelica Palacio – Apartment Homes by Tonti

2nd Place – Bianca Hugle & Asaya Eichaker

1st Place – Angelica Palacio

Resident Service 1- 150 Units

Jamie Raspino – 1st Lake Properties
Jamahl Gross – Certain Property Management
Monique Coler – HRI Properties
Edgar Castaneda – 1st Lake Properties

2nd Place – Jamie Raspino

1st Place – Jamahl Gross

Resident Service 151 Units Plus

George Stewart – 1st Lake Properties
Gladys Gautreaux – Priderock
Kenneth Albers – Apartment Homes by Tonti
Janice Obayazue – Latter & Blum Property Management
Larry Chopin – 1st Lake Properties
German Castro – Apartment Homes by Tonti

2nd Place – Gladys Gautreaux

1st Place – Janice Obayazue

Service Technician 1-150 Units

Heather Clomburg – 1st Lake Properties
Miguel Rito – HRI Properties
Isidro Ramierz – Morguard
Manuel Valido – 1st Lake Properties
Ronald Ward – HRI Properties

2nd Place – Heather Clomburg

1st Place – Miguel Rito



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45 THINGS to Tweet About at Your Community

By Lindsay Schober
Zillow for Pros

Whether your social media channels are managed through your corporate office, by you and your onsite team or a combination, coming up with quality content to fuel your strategy can pose a challenge — especially on Twitter. 140 characters doesn't leave a ton of room to engage.

However, with 316 million monthly active users, the social network is rich with opportunity for your community to connect one-on-one with your residents, your city, and with influencers and others in the multifamily industry by providing them with valuable and entertaining content.

Rule of thirds

Take a minute to think about why your community is on Twitter. What is your goal? Who are your audiences, and what are they interested in? What do they need, like, want, hate and talk about? And, most importantly, how can the content shared by your community help, entertain or inspire them?

When deciding what type of content to share, consider a mix of the following:

1/3 original content: Post content that you create, like photos from events or community news. Respond to residents or other members of your larger community who tweet to you.

1/3 curated content: Share content from other sources that your audience cares about, such as your local newspaper, or cheer on the local sports teams.

1/3 educational content: Educate your audience about your product. Think about what makes your property unique, and let your community's personality and lifestyle shine through. Focus more on giving your audience a taste of what it's like to live at your property than selling an empty apartment home.

So with that, here are 45 topics to get you sharing, engaging, helping and tweeting!

Original content

Respond to comments and complaints.

Answer questions.

Share event announcements leading up to the event. Include a specific hashtag (#) so your residents can join the conversation or post their own comments.

Post photos during events or as an event recap, again using the hashtag, and encourage your residents to do the same.

Participate in well-established Twitter hashtags like #TBT (throwback Thursday). Post a photo of your community prior to a renovation or before the pool was built.

Or, have your onsite team post childhood pictures of themselves for #TBT (if they're game!).

Give your residents a boost at the beginning of the week and share an inspirational quote, Vine video or image for #MotivationMonday.

Share news about your community such as upcoming maintenance or outages.

Remind residents of disruptions to nearby transportation routes or street closures.

Remind residents about upcoming activities at your community.

Welcome a new local business to town.

Share a local event, such as a street festival or farmers market.

Congratulate an onsite team member for an accomplishment.

Join a large or trending conversation to express support or celebration (if it's appropriate for your brand).

Offer a sneak peek of a new construction project or renovation.

Make sure to show its progress throughout the project.

Ask questions or poll your audience.

Let residents know about a local restaurant week.

Wish your followers a happy holiday.

Use the National Day calendar to share silly or unique days with your residents and followers. (On that note, Happy Chocolate Chip Cookie day!)

Remind residents about voting days (or to register to vote).

Talk about local running trails or parks when the weather warms up.

Set up a specific time for residents to ask questions.

Partner with a local business to offer a discount at the shop or for a service.

Surprise residents with a pop-up activity, like hot chocolate in the lobby, and post photos.

Curated Content

Retweet an announcement about a new local business opening near your community.

Tweet about a design trend or seasonal decorating idea with a link to a respected blog.

Congratulate a local sports team.

Post an idea about hosting a barbeque with a link to the original article.

Share a video about organization tips for your home.

Talk about moving tips and tricks and share resources.

Share a story about your neighborhood.

Link to weather-safety tips for the season.

Link to a story about the best restaurants in town.

Provide information about renters insurance.

Share a local nursery's advice about starting an herb garden.

Provide home-cleaning hacks.

Educational Content

Share a blog post.


Highlight a great apartment-decorating idea.

Start a Pet-of-the-Month feature, Start a Resident-of-the-Month feature (with the selected resident's permission, of course), and share updates from them that show off your community's lifestyle.

Hold a contest for the best holiday decorations and ask residents to tag their entries with a designated hashtag. Announce the winner via Twitter.

Host a guest tweeter: Give someone from the community or a local business the reins to show a day or even a week through their eyes. Make sure they fit with your brand, and provide content guidelines.

Share an interesting nugget about your neighborhood or the history of the area.

Set up a volunteer opportunity and share the day through photos. 



Getting Emotional About Appealing to Residents

By Teddy Durgin

Digested from NAAHQ Marketing Buzz

Keeping apartment communities as close to full occupancy as possible entails determining people's needs and desires. But today's apartment owners and managers can become so focused on what lures prospective residents to their communities, they can lose sight of the relationships they should be building with current residents.

Discovering what motivates people emotionally can result in substantial increases in both new leasing and resident retention. One expert in this regard is Eric Clark, Director of Marketing at Altman Companies. What follows is our chat:

NATIONAL APARTMENT ASSOCIATION: Mr. Clark, Altman prides itself on creating what it has dubbed as an "Exceptional Living Experience." Could you expand on that? What exactly does that mean?

ERIC CLARK: It means making sure we have gone above and beyond providing four walls. We want to create a phenomenal apartment community, and that means architecturally with superior features and services. But we really try and design all of that, the functionality and the great features, to be very resident-focused. A lot of the little things that we'll do is because we don't ever want it to feel like it's a transaction. For example, we don't have traditional leasing desks or leasing offices. Everything is virtual and technology driven. It's an interactive experience. When a prospect comes into the community, if they want to apply for an apartment while touring the fitness centers, we make that possible. We have resident representatives as opposed to leasing consultants. What we've found in the typical apartment living experience, leasing consultants are focused on just that: getting the person in the door, leasing them an apartment, then washing their hands and moving on to the next lease. For us, the reason we renamed them "resident representatives" and provide training tailored to that is we want there to be a hospitality focus. We care just as much and possibly more once they have moved in than just getting them to sign their name on a piece of paper.

NAA: How do you show that you care?

EC: There are a lot of resident events. There is a program that we've created for the residents that includes community discounts, special offers, preferred partnerships. There are the dry-cleaning services, the door-to-door trash, pet walking and other community services that we have created partnerships with. So once someone moves in, they are able to go and create relationships. Our resident representatives are there the whole time to consistently check in on existing residents and be of service whenever possible.

NAA: Can you be more specific?

EC: We have a very unique floor plan that we typically go to market with that is designed to create Altman's Exceptional Living Experience. It's a private-entry floor plan model, so it's not a breezeway product. We also talked about the behavioral psychology that we used to train our associates so they are able to read their prospects and their residents to better respond and better address their needs and wants, neutralize situations as they occur, and deliver a lot more of an emotional sales process that we have found to be more effective than the traditional sales process of: "OK, here is the apartment, here's what it costs, and here's where you sign."

NAA: How do you gauge what residents' emotional needs are? Do you do a lot of surveying? Are there focus groups?

EC: We do a couple of different things. We do a lot of market research before we go into any submarket. We develop unique customer personas or audience profiles for every community that we develop. We'll do that based on existing data. Sometimes, we'll also go in and create focus groups to really understand what that market looks like. We'll talk to the local businesses. Sometimes we'll work with local PR firms, and we create these "personalities" of who we believe the ideal audience members are going to be.

NAA: Do you think our industry is getting away from apartment communities forming emotional bonds with their residents, especially in today's high-tech world? Are we losing a bit of the personal touch?

EC: Absolutely. It can all become very formulaic. As much as we focus on understanding the mentality, we also are moving away from a lot of the traditional marketing that takes place in the industry. We rely less and less on the ILSs. We rely very little, if at all, on anything print. We're going digital, but we're also going high touch. And we are using that emotional understanding to translate that into a digital environment. ▲

Fair Housing Act Receives Significant Overhaul

By Laura Kusisto

Digested from "New HUD Rules Take Aim at Segregated Housing" The Wall Street Journal

Following the nationwide headlines of racial turmoil in Baltimore and Ferguson, Mo., the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is planning significant changes to the Fair Housing Act that would require cities to report on neighborhood segregation or risk losing federal funding.

The Fair Housing Act was originally drafted to prevent the practice of redlining — i.e., restricting African-Americans to certain neighborhoods to ensure segregation. But advocates for more stringent fair-housing practices say enforcement has been inconsistent, if even existent, and so historically black, low-income areas have remained such.

The Washington Post provides an excellent example of how certain neighborhoods in Chicago have changed minimally over decades. The hope with this new regulation is that those in lower-income areas will gain access to better schools and quality of life through more integrated neighborhoods.

"This is a very thoughtful attempt by HUD to come up with a rule that gives some teeth to a small provision of the Fair Housing Act," Amy Glassman, of counsel at Ballard Spahr LLP, told The Wall Street Journal. [A](#)

Those who oppose the new changes are complaining of social engineering and instead favor continuing to allow integration to take its course naturally rather than forcing it. And counties such as Westchester in New York have already experienced funding withdrawals and legal battles as a result of misappropriated funding.

Time will tell if the results fit the expectations of the new provisions.





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Rent Growth and Occupancy Down, But Strong

By Stephanie McCleskey

Digested from "Apartment Data Shows Strongest Post-Recession October" AxioMetrics

National annual effective rent growth dropped month over month in October, but October 2015 was the best October since the Great Recession. Occupancy rates also were down month over month, but they were up year over year.

Effective rent growth dropped below 5 percent for the first time since January to 4.88 percent — a 32-basis-point decrease from September. But the dip represents a cyclical trend that has occurred for year-to-date effective rent growth during this time frame for the last five years. And year over year, effective rent growth, which was at 4.3 percent in October 2014 and 3 percent in October 2013, continues to improve.

Portland, Ore.; Oakland, Calif.; and San Jose, Calif., continue to remain strong performers, with effective rent growth of 12.4 percent, 12.3 percent and 8.1 percent, respectively. Growth has also been strong elsewhere, with Sacramento, San Diego and San Francisco experiencing rent growth of at least 8 percent.

Occupancy rates dipped slightly in October as well, from 95.3 percent in September to 95.1 percent. But they, too, remain higher than October metrics in post-recession years. ▲

THE HOTTEST MULTIFAMILY AMENITIES

By Katie Dixon

Quartz is the new granite. So said a panel of multifamily-housing leaders who gathered recently at a conference in San Antonio, Texas, to discuss trends in Class-A building amenities.

Robert Hunt, executive vice president at development, construction and management company Embrey, said quartz countertops, which cost 50 percent more than granite, will now be the premium finish in Embrey buildings, and granite will be the standard.

Other popular high-end amenities, according to panel members, include the following:

Golf simulators. Embrey is adding this \$50,000 perk to some of its buildings.

Rooftop terraces. This amenity is now standard in Class-A buildings, said Hailey Ghalib, managing director of USAA Real Estate. Taking it a step further, she said USAA is adding a wood-burning pizza oven to a rooftop terrace at a Brooklyn, N.Y., development.

Pet yards. Constructing a 10-square-foot dog run can add \$150 to monthly rent, said Will Balthrope, executive director of IPA Management. ▲



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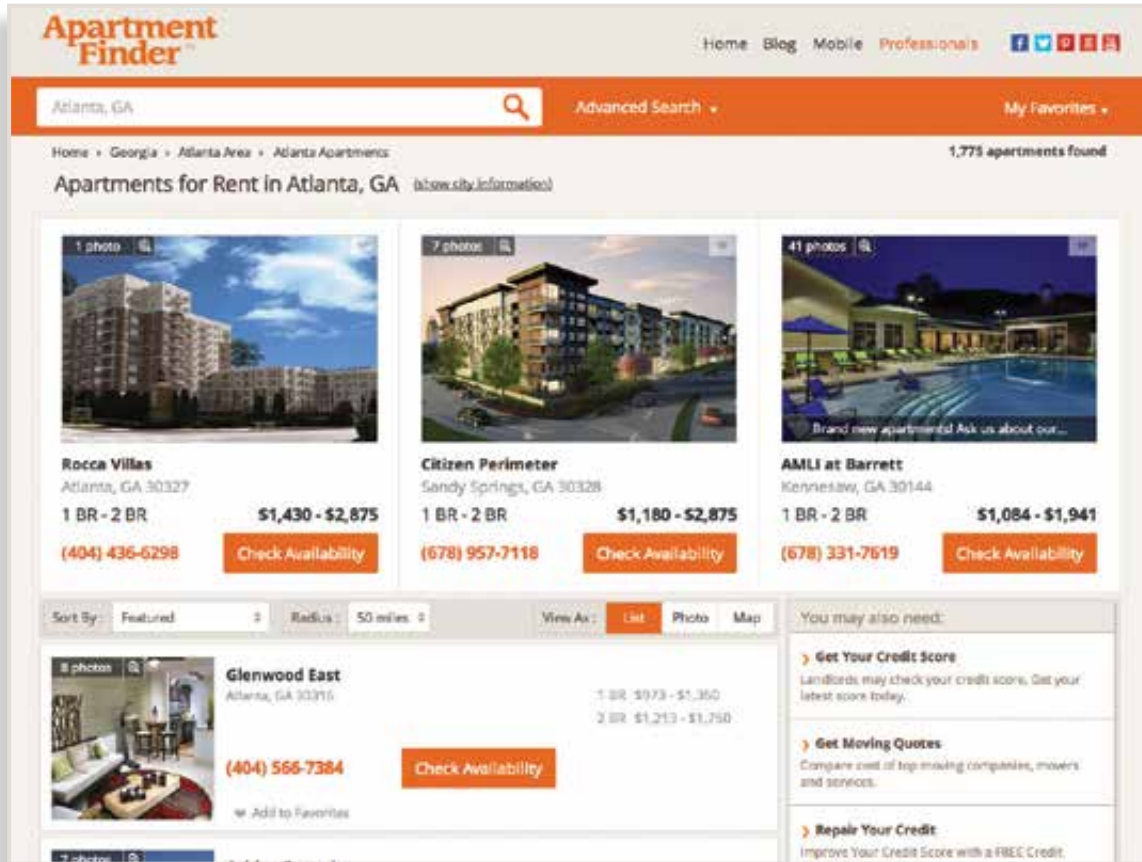
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DOES SEX SELL APARTMENTS?

By the NAA Marketing Community
Digested from NAA Marketing Buzz

Whether you're stuck in a rut and need some new ideas, or want to gauge the opinions of other experts, multifamily housing professionals are turning to the NAA Marketing Community on NAA Connect for help.

After Lime Apartments, based in Minneapolis recently made headlines with their new marketing campaign featuring suggestive advertising lines such as, "Tarts Welcome" and, "I don't remember her name... but her apartment ..."

"How edgy is too edgy," asked Lauren Curley, Marketing Director for Landmark Property Services, to the NAA Marketing Community on NAA Connect.

For the most part, members of the NAA Marketing Community agreed that while campaigns like "Tarts" might be unconventional and eye-catching, they would not go over well in their respective markets.

"There are other ways to catch the attention of people in this [demographic] that are much less likely to offend (and I think there is a high chance for offense in the 'using sex' route—which means chasing away potential customers)" said Meagan Walker, a Leasing Consultant at Chamber Ridge Apartment Homes in Carrboro, N.C. "I've had a great response to Craigslist ads that make some sort of pop culture reference. For example, a 'Zombie Apocalypse' ad that advertised our great storage capability... resulted in way 'above' average traffic."

Curley, the original poster, decided to test sexier Craigslist ads in her market. "We are using edgier titles... and then offsetting it with a 'joke' within the body of the ad," she says.

One specific ad they tested contained the phrase, "You can ride it," to grab the attention of Craigslist prospects. In the body of the ad it says, "...the bus stops right outside our door. What did you think we meant?"

The results? One community in which Curley tested these ads saw a 29 percent increase in phone calls from Craigslist ads using the edgier model.

For more of the pros and cons to this marketing angle, join the full conversation today on the NAA Connect Forum. [▲](#)

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Tuesday, January 12

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Location: Country Inn & Suites

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Cost: \$25/person

Rent Path Leasing Class

Thursday, January 14th, 10am–12pm

Location: Cort Furniture

Instructor: Rent Path

2 CEC for all NAA Designations

Cost: \$25/person

Leadership Class

Wednesday, January 20, 10–11:30am

Location: Best Western Landmark

Instructor: National Speaker Heather Blume

2 CEC for all NAA Designations

Cost: TBA

February

Luncheon

Thursday, February 18 11:30am–1:30pm

Location: 5 Happiness

Cost: \$29/person Speaker: TBA

March

HVAC

Tuesday, March 22, 10am–12pm

Location: TBA

Instructor: Rolando Sandoval w/1st Lake

Cost \$25/person

April

Seafood Extravaganza

Thursday, April 7, 6–10pm

Location: Best Western Landmark

Cost: \$37/person

Fair Housing

Tuesday, April 12th.

Two Classes, 10am–12pm or 2–4pm

Location: Best Western Landmark

Instructor: Jackie Ramstedt

2 CEC for all NAA Designations

Cost: \$45/person

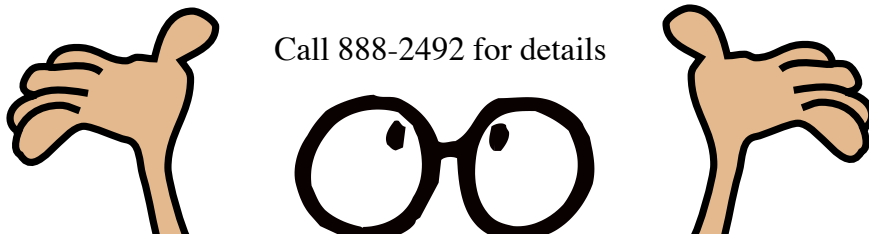
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– 504-835-1687

Landscaping

Lobb-Alexis – 504-471-0044
Louisiana Landscape – 504-391-1800
Mullin Landscape Associates
– 504-275-6617
Southern Cuts – 985-645-7630
Thrive of Louisiana – 504-453-3633

Laundry Service

Coinmach/Mac-Gray – 800-535-7327 /
504-813-8789
Commercial Coin & Laundry
– 850-932-8348
Pierce Commercial Maytag
– 985-626-7852

Maintenance Product & Service

HD Supply – 504-884-2460
Ideal Appliance – 504-888-4232
Johnstone Supply – 504-733-1495

Multifamily Housing Software

On-Site.com – 832-341-8490

On Site Security Service & Security Alarms

South Louisiana Security Patrol
– 504-915-5586
Vinson Guard Service – 504-529-2260

Painting Companies & Painters

Behr Paint – 985-510-0515
BLP Mobile Paint – 504-834-5455
Helm Paint & Supply – 504-419-4029
Sherwin Williams Paint – 504-461-0728

Pest Control & Bug Specialist

DA Exterminating – 504-888-4941
Orkin – 504-464-0073

Pet & Playground Equipment

Pet & Playground Products
– 866-398-3992

Plumbing

Dr. Pipe Plumbing – 504-833-7072
Roto Rooter – 504-329-9772

Pool Furniture

Crimson Casual – 205-486-5102

Pool Care

Pool Sure – 985-413-9949

Resident Screening

Core Logic / SafeRent – 615-595-7337
Landlord Shield – 618-283-7055
On-Site – 408-795-4220

Resurfacing

Surface Connection – 504-231-1871
Quality Resurfacing – 504-432-9495

Roofing & Supplies

Independent Roofing Systems
– 601-922-4301

Storage

Elmwood Self Storage – 504-737-7676

Telecommunications & Cable Service

AT&T – 504-830-1993
Cox Communications Multi Dwelling
Units – 504-358-6870

Multifamily Housing Software

On-Site.com – 408-795-4220

Utility Management – Submetering

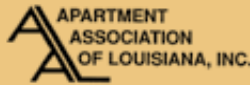
Apex Billing - 813-625-2504
Econserve, LLC713 – 662-3220
Submeter One – 888-768-7577



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