

Five Ways That Using the Internet Can Maximize Your Building's Potential by Mark H. Langer

It has become apparent that a number of different types of businesses are turning to the Internet in an attempt to elevate profits, minimize labor time, and attract new customers. Whether it is paying monthly bills online, shopping for the latest fashion trends, or communicating with business associates through email, the Internet has become a revolutionary tool in accomplishing daily routines on the schedule and in the comfort of our own choosing.

Through the creation of a website, owners can decrease the life span of their next vacancy, and improve communications with their current tenants.

Like any other business, apartment owners, too, can utilize the power of the Internet to increase their monthly income, while simultaneously freeing up more time from their daily management routines. Through the creation of a website, owners can decrease the life span of their next vacancy, and improve communications with their current tenants.

Here are just five reasons why many owners are deciding to turn to the web for the apartment complexes:

1. Filtering. A website allows you to give perspective tenants a preview of your available unit through illustration (exterior and interior photos), along with documenting move-in requirements (i.e. pet policy, security deposit amount, and amenities). Some landlords have also implemented "virtual tours" where a simulated tour can be viewed online.

2. Convenience. By offering a web address, renters now have the power to take a look at your property on their own time. While open houses offer tenants a full inspection of your vacancy, a website offers apartment seekers the opportunity to take a quick look at your property from a school library, an office cubicle, or from the confines of their current home.

3. Branching Out. Have you ever received a call from out of town and wished you had had a better method to describe your vacant unit other than a generic description given over the phone? Remember that with a website, your vacancies can be viewed across the nation. By continuing to advertise with free online rental services (like the one AOA currently offers), and by having an attractive website, you can allure some of these desirable out of town tenants who are least likely to price compare and more likely to be decisive when it comes to taking your unit or not.

4. Better Communication. Although you will always have to maintain a contact number were renters can reach you in an emergency, it is usually a more stress-free environment when tenants use email to notify management of minor problems and maintenance requests. Many owners have created websites that contain "frequently asked questions" for common inquiries and "emergency contacts" for gas and water leaks so tenants can get immediate answers when management is temporarily unavailable. Another reason why communication is improved, is because tenants are more straight-to-the-point in emails. How many times has one of your tenants called you to voice a "quick problem" that subsequently led to a ten-minute complaint? Typing requires much more effort than a message, leaving tenants to be brief and concise when voicing their concerns.

5. The world is flat again. Whether you are ready or not to accept the massive influence the Internet has had all across the globe, the fact still remains that the majority of businesses are turning to the web to enhance their operations. While you're out today, take a look around at the companies you do business with, the places you shop, or the financial institutions and service providers to which you make monthly payments. You will notice that each has most likely incorporated the Internet in their efforts to maximize their potential growth with current and new clients.

The Internet revolution is not coming. It has already arrived. The only question now is if you and your business are ready to join in.

Mark H. Langer of Langer & Associates has owned, brokers, and manages apartments in Los Angeles. His company currently provides Property Management services in West Los Angeles, along with offering affordable and effective web designs for apartment owners. For more information, you can reach Mark at (310) 271-1109 or at mark@langerproperties.com.