



Residents not as engaged as you'd like? Try these tips - by Chris Ulep

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Even thriving rental communities can stand to benefit from more positive property reviews, less turnover and highly engaged residents. If this is something you've struggled with in the past, there are ways you can boost engagement and see your efforts reflected in your bottom line. After all, happy tenants tend to stay put longer and provide your most stable source of income.

Help renters keep their space organized

The longer people live in one place, the more stuff they're likely to accumulate. And if their living

space gets too cluttered, they might think about moving to a bigger place. However, if you can provide tools that help renters get more out of limited space, you might be able to retain residents for longer.

One popular way to do this is through modular closet systems, which have seen an increase in popularity since 2020. These modular closets let renters arrange the closet in a way that suits their organizational needs.

Offer flexible space

Renters appreciate the ability to adapt their living space to a variety of needs. While this is a longstanding perk of homeownership, in recent years, two-thirds of renters say flexible space is important or extremely important to them. Think of flex spaces like multipurpose rooms but for apartments: entertainment rooms, offices, study areas, reading nooks, etc. can be set up according to individual taste and need.

Allow short-term leases

With the rise of remote work, there's an increased demand for short-term leases. People who work from home may not be tied down to one location. Shorter leases (e.g., six-month terms) are particularly appealing to remote workers or those in transition. But you can even go beyond simple six-month leases with a rental housing membership program — similar to a vacation club.

Invest in smart tech

Technology that adds convenience or drives savings can be a major selling point for renters of all ages. Smart thermostats, leak detection software, water-saving features, solar panels and smart locks are all examples of smart tech renters like.

Even property management software, which tenants use to pay rent and make maintenance requests online, is an exciting benefit for many renters. Whatever you offer, make sure you promote all amenities in your marketing. Talk about them in your resident newsletter, website, email, social media and any other place you send communications.

Do more to accommodate pets

One-third of renters live with a pet or service animal. If your community allows pets, don't skip this one as part of your resident engagement strategy. Pet-friendly rental housing has been shown to boost resident retention.

Utilize outdoor space

Outdoor amenities are a great resident engagement idea. The exact nature of the amenity will depend on the region as well as the community. In the southeast and Texas, renters have a strong interest in community pools. In high-density metro areas, renters are more interested in rooftop spaces with barbecue grills.

Send texts when appropriate

Texts have a roughly 98% open rate, making them an extremely effective way to communicate with

renters. You can use texts to share reminders about community-wide projects or emergency situations that require moment-by-moment updates. Make sure you give the recipient a chance to opt-in first, of course.

Some property management solutions such as Yardi Breeze Premier can accommodate two-way texting. Every correspondence is stored online for reference or legal purposes. That way, you're never scrambling to remember whether you sent an important due date or friendly reminder.

Be transparent

Transparency always matters, but it matters most of all during difficult conversations. For instance, it's important to know how to write a rent increase notice in a way that states the facts without driving renters away.

Tenant portals give renters instant access to key documents and information. Portals also keep owners in the loop and help foster trust and transparency. In addition, making rules, regulations and other agreements visible and easily accessible can help reduce misunderstandings and improve the safety of your entire community. With software like Yardi Breeze and Yardi Breeze Premier, you can securely store permanent records of all documents and communications in the cloud for your office as well as your residents.

Where to get more ideas

It's important to have a resident engagement strategy that matches the needs of your community. You can offer organization tools, flexible spaces, smart technology and outdoor amenities all you want, but if you're not giving people what they actually want, it might be all for naught. So, conduct annual or semi-annual resident satisfaction surveys. Use that feedback to improve your residents' living experience.

Not sure where to start? Ask your community! That's almost always the best place to start.

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