

Demand for Virtual Doorman has grown during the economic downturn

October 09, 2009 - Owners Developers & Managers

At a time when building owners are focused on lowering their operating expenses without decreasing their level of service or removing amenities from the properties, it's not surprising that Virtual Doorman (www.virtualdoorman.com) has not only emerged as a cost effective and highly efficient solution, or that the business is flourishing as a result.

We are thrilled that Virtual Doorman is growing at a time when most businesses are experiencing no growth or are even shrinking their business and staff, especially those related to the real estate and construction industries. We've experienced growth of well over 70% in revenues over the past year. We attribute this to the fact that developers/owners are looking to cut costs in this downturn, and that today's homeowners, accustomed to digital technology, feel very much at home with our high-tech system.

Developers and end-users alike give Virtual Doorman high marks for its ability to secure buildings, greet visitors and provide access, accept deliveries, and facilitate maintenance and service calls, at an affordable price. By utilizing advanced technologies and remote monitoring, Virtual Doorman offers increased convenience, heightened security and peace of mind in a simple, cost-effective solution.

We revolutionized the industry by being the first "remote doorman" system to enter the market back in 2000. We rode the development wave of the mid 2000s, attracting the attention of developers who were building luxury condos throughout Manhattan and the surrounding boroughs. And, unlike many small service companies who suffered at the onset of the downturn, we are still very much in growth mode. We continue to attract developers of new projects as well as existing rental property owners by providing their properties with the same services of a traditional doorman but at a fraction of the cost.

In fact, one of our clients, Regal Real Estate, was so impressed with the technology that they have opted to install Virtual Doorman throughout their entire 22-building Manhattan portfolio. Monthly savings of up to 75%, combined with the satisfaction level of the tenants in the first three buildings, was enough to convince them that Virtual Doorman made sense for all of their properties.

Today, over 100 buildings in the New York metro area are serviced by Virtual Doorman and the company expects this number to more than triple in the next year alone. Simultaneously, the company is expanding to other major cities and metropolitan areas throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Today's savvy homeowners and coop and condo dwellers make significant investments in their homes. Security is important to them, but a traditional doorman might not make financial sense for all properties. Virtual Doorman provides a perfect alternative for single family townhouses as well as buildings with upwards of 100 units. These homeowners, accustomed to digital technology and used

to taking care of business remotely on their handhelds and PDAs, are right at home with the Virtual Doorman system. Want to alert the command center of an important delivery that will be arriving today at 10 a.m. but you happen to be in an important meeting? Not a problem with Virtual Doorman! Simply email the Virtual Doorman and the request is handled immediately and that important package will be waiting for you when you return home. Plus, you'll receive an email notifying you of its arrival once the delivery is completed! You can even manage your guests and deliveries online using the Interactive Web Portal - the only one of its kind in the industry. Missed deliveries will be a thing of the past. Virtual Doorman's new Web Portal enables instant communication that's new, revolutionary, and practically eliminates any room for error.

With breakthroughs in technology like remote monitoring, biometrics, video analytics and home automation, today's security systems give building owners and residents a variety of options to better manage their homes. Homeowners demand real-time notification, personalization and a variety of security management options. When considering a remote/electronic doorman service the most important factors to look at are its ease of use and the assurance that it can be as effective as a live doorman. These aspects are at the core of the Virtual Doorman system and are the driving force behind the continual upgrades and feature enhancements that are a part of every release.

Colin Foster is vice president, sales and marketing for Virtual Doorman, New York, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540