



Residential Marketing Made Easy

Stay up-to-date on the latest marketing tips and trends with this easy-to-follow guide.



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Today, Marketing Matters More Than Ever

With competitors a keystroke away, it's more important than ever to ensure you're putting your best foot forward. We've compiled several of our blogs into this eBook to help your team create a positive first impression with prospects and tenants.

For even more tips on how to make a marketing impact, follow our blog:
[RentManager.com/Blog](https://rentmanager.com/blog)

For more information on Rent Manager's comprehensive features, visit **[RentManager.com](https://rentmanager.com)**, or give us a call at 800-669-0871.





4 Tips For Creating a Rebranding Plan

Strategic marketing and branding can make the difference between a thriving property and lasting vacancies. But like everything else, your brand needs a refresh every so often. While it requires some upfront cost and time, rebranding can ensure you're attracting the right prospects while laying the ground work for higher occupancy rates and increased tenant satisfaction and retention.

We've compiled tips on the next page to help you start your re-branding process.



Pick the Right Time

Significant changes, like upcoming capital improvements or purchasing a new property, present the perfect opportunity to update your brand. New features are a great selling point to catch the eye of a new resident! If you just purchased a new property, you will want to spend time updating its branding to reflect its new ownership. This is especially important in cases where the previous owners had a poor reputation. With reviews playing such an important factor in how potential residents view your property, getting in front of a bad reputation is critical. Rebranding is one way to assure current and future residents that “this isn’t who we are any more” and distance yourself from old, unflattering reviews.

Set Goals

Create a list of goals for what you want to achieve with your new marketing efforts and how you will measure your success. Take a good, hard look at where you are now, and where you need to be when it comes to crucial metrics like occupancy and resident retention. How can your property reach a new audience of prospects? What strategies and tools will you need to implement to make that happen? Goals can be a road map to show where you are going, so take time to establish them at the beginning of your rebranding process.

Communicate with Current Residents

While much of your rebranding process will focus on looking ahead, don’t forget about your current residents. Help existing renters feel included in your changes by sending out a survey to get feedback on which amenities and facets of your property are important to them. Use this data to see what drew your tenants to your property in the first place, what is keeping them at your community, and which areas you might want to focus on as you rebrand. When you settle on your new look and feel, be sure to share the improved vision of your property with your residents.

Get Connected

Depending on your budget, there are many tools available to get your new message out to your target audience. Google Ad placement, geotargeting, and geofencing all help you reach groups in specific areas or businesses. These specific marketing placements can help you reach a new group of prospective renters that your old brand strategy left behind, or who may not have been open to your past marketing tactics.

As your property grows and changes, so will your branding and marketing goals.

To compete in an ever-changing industry, *consider reevaluating your brand from time to time.*



A Property Manager's Guide to Social Media

From marketing vacant units, to showcasing what life's like in your community, to keeping your current residents updated; social media is a great, cost-efficient way for property managers to build a reputable online presence that's reflective of their business.

Nearly everyone is on social media in some capacity nowadays. The key is finding which platform best suits your business goals and provides access to your target audience. Each social media platform offers different features and benefits. We will introduce the four major social platforms—Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter—and review general tips that are applicable for all platforms so that you can better optimize your strategy.



Stay on target

Although there will be an overlap, each social media platform has its own unique audience. Tailor and target your messaging for the audience that's consuming it. Finding the right voice is imperative to the success of your efforts.

Consistency is key

Each platform has its own algorithm and requirements; establishing a consistent schedule will be essential for your posting strategy. Finding what days and times your audience is most active on each social channel and how often you need to post will help boost engagement and ensure your content is seen.

Pay attention to trends

A trending topic in the industry is a great way to join a larger conversation. Local and world news is also crucial to stay up-to-date on, as you will want to be considerate of your content.

Visuals are vital

It's proven that including images and videos in your posts will draw more engagement. When scrolling through their feed, a viewer is more likely to stop and watch a visually appealing video or read a concise graphic vs. plain-text posts.

Facebook

With the ability to reach more than two billion people, chat directly with followers, and share any type of media, Facebook is a must have for companies of all sizes. Facebook's audience is broad, with a user age range of 13–65+, though the most frequent users fall between the ages of 30–49.

While still maintaining a professional demeanor, Facebook provides a more relaxed environment that is meant for videos, photos, gifs, and yes... maybe even a cat video. Some great content suggestions include:

- Interior decorating tips
- Articles regarding local news
- Community event information
- High-quality photos and videos of your units and property

Facebook also provides the ability to create groups that can serve as a more direct way to communicate information to your residents.

Instagram

The goal on Instagram is to provide a brand “experience” to followers that tells a larger story through visual communication. With the right combination of images and videos—built around an effective posting schedule—businesses can establish an intentional and curated feed for their audience. Instagram stories are also a great way to engage with followers, provide additional details, and create an open line of communication through direct messaging.

Keywords have also become an important aspect of Instagram—replacing the emphasis on hashtags. Brands can become more discoverable by including the right keywords and phrases in their captions. Still including 3-5 hashtags of relevant topics can also help ensure your content is seen by a like-minded audience. User demographics show this platform is more popular with younger generations, and only 35% of people 30–64 are using it. Content suggestions for your Instagram audience include:

- Showcasing the lifestyle of your community through images and reels
- Sharing employee spotlights so your tenants can get to know your staff
- Promoting engagement through weekly polls and questions

Twitter

Considered a miniature blogging platform, Twitter is all about sharing your thoughts in real-time. The 280-character count keeps messages concise and direct. Although, if you're looking to share lengthier posts, a subscription to Twitter Blue will allow up to 4,000 characters per tweet and provide a verified check mark for your account.

Focused on timely content, Twitter has become the place to get news with trending topics and hashtag conversations. It's a great platform to keep your community updated with short posts, quick news, links to external sites, as well as delivering an additional customer service resource through Direct Message. With that being said, the average life of a tweet is 23 minutes, therefore Twitter will require more frequent posting while still maintaining quality content. Retweeting local news, tags from residents, or other relatable content is a great way to stay engaged, but require less content creation on your part. Thirty-eight percent of Twitter users are between the ages of 18–29 and more likely reside in an urban or suburban area.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the online equivalent of a professional networking event. Pages are extended resumes that generally include backgrounds, interests, education, and professional skills. As the most business-oriented platform, LinkedIn is great for building a brand, connecting with experts in a particular field, and generating new business leads. For property management specifically, you likely won't be promoting your property to potential tenants, but owners and operators may certainly be searching for details about your business on this platform. LinkedIn is also a great resource for keeping tabs on industry trends and to engage with like-minded property management professionals.

User demographics for LinkedIn show the platform is most popular with people between the ages of 35–55. Generally, a more professional and direct tone is used when writing posts on LinkedIn. To engage in larger professional conversations, try sharing your own organic thoughts using keywords or a hashtag, commenting on your connection's posts, and sharing topics you find relevant for your audience.



Social media is here to stay and will continue to be part of our everyday lives. Adopting the best platforms for your business and embracing creative content *will establish your brand online in no time.*



Tips and Tools for Better Real Estate Photography

Eye-catching photography is a must-have for property-management marketing and websites. Renters spend more than half of their online search looking at the images of potential homes, so it needs to be an area of focus for property managers.

"I'm a property manager, not a photographer." We hear you. That's why we're providing some essential tips and tools you can use to take beautiful images of your property and make an excellent first impression.

3 Key Aspects of Photography

1. Lighting

The key to a beautiful photo is lighting. Good lighting can make your property feel fresh, new, and inviting. The easiest way to ruin a photo is to shoot when it's too dark, as it gives the space the appearance of being smaller and dull. When taking photos of your property, be sure to utilize as much natural light as possible. Make sure blinds and curtains are open to showcase the natural light. You also want to turn on any available interior lights to add brightness to the spaces.

2. Composition

Composition is all about the layout and arrangement of the photo. A properly composed photograph captures key details and features of a room, and makes it appear more inviting. After all, the point of photographing your property is to appeal to your potential residents and drive interest in your unit.

TIP! For a better composition of a smaller space, stand in the doorway when taking your photos. This will help you capture a more appealing angle and avoid making the area appear cramped.

3. Editing

Once your images are taken and you're back at the office, it's time to start the editing process. This means making sure the brightness and exposure are balanced, but can also mean using tools like Adobe Photoshop to edit out unsightly elements. But this is an area where you need to be careful, as there's a fine line between enhancing and misleading. It's important that the images you capture and share represent your property honestly and authentically.

Here are some Do's and Don'ts for editing your images:

Good

- Brightening images
- Photoshopping a blue sky if it's a gloomy day
- Adding watermarks to your photos

Not Good

- Editing out permanent features of the building (satellite dishes, power lines, etc.)
- Editing out stains or damage to the unit
- Adding items that aren't actually at the property—such as Photoshopping grass and enhancing the landscaping.



3 Key Pieces of Equipment

1. Camera

If you've decided you want to handle your shoots in-house, you should consider investing in a professional-quality DSLR camera that enables you to produce significantly higher-quality images than those your smartphone can provide.

If purchasing a new camera isn't an option right now, the easiest solution is to use your smartphone. The cameras in today's mobile devices are more than capable of capturing great images when you follow the key aspects discussed on the previous page.

2. Lens

A wide-angle lens comes in handy when photographing properties, as it allows you to capture the full scene. For interiors, this means you can fit more of your space in each image, helping your prospects get a clearer picture of the depth and layout of the unit. Composition is a key aspect of photography, and a wide-angle lens helps solve the challenge of photographing a modest interior space. This isn't just an accessory for those with a camera, either. If you're planning to use your smartphone for your photography, look into the wide-angle lens options that are compatible with your device.

3. Tripod

The last piece of equipment every property manager should consider when it comes to photography is a tripod. If you're using a camera, a tripod is a great tool to help ensure you snap high-quality pictures that you (and your audience) will love. When taking photos directly from a handheld position, even the slightest shake or movement can cause your beautiful photo to be ruined. Even the most basic tripod will help stabilize the camera and remove the risk of images appearing blurry.

Other Things to Consider

Always Plan Ahead

Before arriving for your photo shoot, plan a list of the shots you want to capture and take multiple photos of each room from different angles. This helps things run more efficiently and eliminates the possibility of forgetting a critical shot. There are certain pictures you'll always want to get, regardless of the space.

Staging vs. Empty

Are you going to furnish and stage the space, or leave it empty? Staging the unit can help viewers picture how their items would fit in the space and provides scale to the viewer. If you are going to stage the unit, keep it simple and furnish the space with neutral colors and minimalistic styling to appeal to a wider audience. Avoid using personal photos or aggressive color schemes.

Bonus Video

A video walk-thru enables viewers to experience the entire layout of the space. The same key aspects and tools for photography remain true in the world of video.

Aerial/Drones

If your property is in a prime location or on a large plot of land, consider using a remote-controlled drone to capture images and video from the air. Check with your local community for registered drone pilots who can help you take your imagery to new heights.



Building a Better Website for Your Property

Your website is your digital front door. The content, design, and photos on your site create digital curb appeal for your property. First impressions go a long way, and just like you would make sure the property and unit you were showing was prepared to make a great impression, the same story goes for your website.

Where Do I Start?

Start by researching your competition. What type of layout do they use? What is their messaging? What do their photos look like? Once you know what you're up against, begin thinking about your target audience. Picture your ideal residents and use that insight to help craft the appropriate messaging for your website.

Communicating your property's personality

After scoping out the competition, it's time to plan your website. Prospects value key information, like an engaging description of the neighborhood and nearby attractions, that make your community stand out. Communicate the property's value and positioning and align your content with the property's brand to attract your ideal resident.

A few key must-haves on your property's website:

#1. A picture is worth a thousand words

High-quality photography helps tell the story of your property and goes a long way in capturing the attention of your prospects. Ensure the images you use represent your property honestly and authentically.

#2. Help viewers imagine the space as their own

Help prospective tenants get a better feel for the space and invite them to imagine it as their own by including floor plans and dimensions in your profile.

#3. Now available

Show prospects the exact units available for rent. If you're at 100% occupancy, include the dates the current leases are up. Market your available units the moment they're ready by automatically linking vacant, rent-ready spaces to your company's site. When a unit's information is updated in Rent Manager, the change will automatically appear on your website, ensuring that you're sharing the most up-to-date details.

#4. Closing the loop

Now it's time to close the loop with the call-to-action. Minimize the amount of time your units are vacant by clearly directing your prospects to apply online or fill out a guest card. Easily accessible online applications empower prospects to submit their information and make renting more convenient for both the renter and your leasing team.

Responsive design is a must

Once you have identified a color palette that fits your brand and chosen a user-friendly layout, it's time to ensure the site has a responsive design. A responsive website is a site that's layout is optimized depending on the viewers screen size. That way, whether a prospect is viewing from a computer, tablet, or their phone, they'll be able to interact easily with your website.

Ready to enhance your first impression?

Web appeal is the 21st Century's curb appeal. The digital front door to any property management company is the key to making a good first impression in the eyes of a prospect. If you need help getting started or are looking for a website refresh, our talented team of web designers can create a stunning, interactive website that fully integrates with Rent Manager.





3 Tips for Writing Compelling Property Listings

According to Microsoft, the average human attention span lasts eight seconds. That's roughly the amount of time it takes to pour a cup of coffee and add a dash of cream. As a property manager digitally marketing your vacancies, you have to make the most of your eight coffee-pouring seconds.

We compiled the following tips to help you draft property overviews in a concise, compelling way that captures prospective tenants' attention in this era of perpetual scrolling.

Emphasize Renovations and Amenities

If you've recently made a physical and monetary investment in refreshing your units, be sure to celebrate and emphasize those upgrades in your listings. Draw attention to those newly installed granite counter tops and stainless-steel appliances. Mention freshly renovated bathrooms, ample parking, as well as your property's communal spaces like gyms and pool areas. Now more than ever, renters are attracted to properties that offer amenities that enable them to conduct fitness and social activities from the comfort of their home.

For apartments and single-family homes, Millennial and Generation Z renters are looking for terms like "spacious", "open concept", and "balcony access". If your properties are located in downtown, metropolitan areas, call out your community's walkability to bars and restaurants. On sites like Zillow, HotPads, and Trulia, you're given around 250 words for your listing. Make them count.

Avoid Words that Spark Negative Visuals or Connotations

Today's renters can read between the lines. In a study conducted by Zillow, they found that words like "potential," "TLC," "cosmetic," and "opportunity" often signal that major fixes still need to be made, while terms like "nice" are far too broad and ambiguous. Rather than blanketing a listing as nice, describe *what* is nice about it.

Craft an Enticing Headline

Since you only have about 250 words to work with in a property listing description, it's important to draw in your online audience with a captivating headline. Your headline is your first impression and it helps the prospect create a visual of their life while living in your property.

For example, if you're advertising a home for rent near Charleston, South Carolina's historic district, emphasize that prime location.

Rather than a generic-sounding headline like, "Cozy 2 Bedroom Home on a Quiet Street," try, "Charming 2 Bedroom Home Nestled in the Heart of Charleston's Historic District."

If you're experiencing writers block and struggling with your word choice, take advantage of [powerthesaurus.org](https://www.powerthesaurus.org) or [thesaurus.com](https://www.thesaurus.com) to help liven up your lexicon.



Words most certainly have the power to influence—choose them thoughtfully. Concisely and accurately describe your properties in a way that makes them stand out, even during those eight, fleeting, coffee-pouring seconds.



A Beginner's Guide to Internet Listing Services

In any industry, it's important to "be where your customers are"—and when it comes to leasing units at a rental property, this means being on an Internet Listing Service (ILS).

Deciding which site(s) you want to advertise on depends on your industry, market, and property size. By combining your ILS presence with a well-designed, user-friendly website, you'll be on your way to finding your next tenants!



What is an ILS?

An Internet Listing Service—an online real estate database—shows properties and units that are available for rent or for sale. ILS sites are a great way to get in front of potential residents in your area, as they play a key role in how potential renters research what's available in their desired market.

Most ILS resources feature single-family homes, student housing, and multifamily properties. There's no shortage of ILS sites you can turn to for attracting more leads. Rent Manager ILS Marketing integrates with several sites to market the available units/properties in your database.

With varying advertising costs, ranging from pay-per-lead pricing to monthly subscription packages, the increased visibility of your listings typically outweighs the expense. Maximize the effectiveness of your ILS postings with the following tips.

Strong Visuals

High-quality photos and videos are a must for capturing the attention of potential renters. Place particular emphasis on the hero image (the first photo) viewers see when they visit your listing. Your lead photo should capture visitors' attention and pull them in for more information. Once the perfect shots are captured, you/your staff can upload the files directly to Rent Manager from your smartphone via rmAppSuite Pro.*

Property Overview

ILS sites allow renters to filter their searches in a number of ways—from specific neighborhoods and price ranges to preferred property types and features. To give your prospective residents the best idea of what life at your property will look like, include diagrams, an overview of the area, amenities, and features lists in your property profile.

Competitive Pricing

Prospects will be able to quickly compare your units with competition in your area, so make sure your units are competitively priced. Utilizing Rent Manager's ILS Marketing* capabilities, you can ensure your Unit Marketing* information—including your property's address, photos, and pricing—is always current with real-time updates. Prospective renters will likely use filter capabilities to select their preferred price range, so having the most up-to-date information included in your listings is key to attracting qualified prospects.

Link To Your Website

Once prospects find your property via their ILS searches, drive them to your website or online application portal via an easy-to-find direct link to your property's site. Using ILS platforms to connect prospects with your website, you can tell your community's whole story.

Remember, the site(s) you advertise on depends on your industry, market, and property size. By combining your ILS presence with a well-designed, user-friendly website, you'll be on your way to finding your next residents!

**To learn more about these Rent Manager features, press the F1 key in Rent Manager 12 or click the question mark (?) icon in Rent Manager Express to access the Help File.*