



## Apartment communities respond to their residents

Published: Sunday, June 27, 2010, 5:00 AM



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The top priority of apartment managers is to ensure that their residents are happy. This, they hope, will then translate into lease renewals.

As a result, property professionals are placing a great deal of time and effort into creating a positive living environment.

### The perception of value

While value is important to certain renters, quality of an apartment building is often even more important.

As a way to enhance the combination of value and quality, property managers are placing an emphasis on service. Today, many apartment communities include extras or incentives to entice prospective new renters and ensure the satisfaction of current tenants.

“Residents want responsive management,” stated Joy Anzalone, chief operating officer for Burton Carol Management. “They want a building that’s well-maintained and competitively priced. They also want personal attention and their needs addressed by staff that take pride in offering outstanding customer service.”

Brian Weisberg, director of operations for Stark Enterprises/Comet Management, said that extras, such as the use of washers and dryers and parking, are important considerations for his renters.

At The Residences of 668 in Cleveland, residents enjoy extras such as concierge service, 24-hour maintenance, top-notch security, covered parking, and more, noted property manager Jo Gresham.

Renters also want flexibility when it comes to their leases. From better rates for extending their lease to no penalties for early lease termination due to job or lifestyle changes, these are the types of things that are attracting renters to communities.

### Making renters feel special

Today, communities are blending a caring attitude with exceptional service to make renters feel special.

“Staff need to be professional, as well as responsive,” said Weisberg.

For example, they need to react promptly and courteously to a renter’s complaint. They can e-mail or send a personal note regarding inquiries or send a card or notes for a special occasion such as a birthdays, anniversaries, and job promotions.

A number of apartment communities also send inquiries to learn how renters feel about services and programs that are provided by the apartment building staff.

For many renters, a feeling of belonging and a sense of community is important. That's why property professionals try to create an environment that develops ties between renters, their neighbors and the building staff. They may sponsor social or networking gatherings or meetings or create clubs within the building.

## Top renewal considerations

According to the National Apartment Association, the top factors that lead to rental renewals are:

- Flexible lease terms
- Renewal incentives
- Concierge service
- Lease assurance programs
- A feeling of community
- Upgrades, such as newer carpeting
- A sense of security
- Exceptional personal customer service
- Courtesy and professional staff

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