

Rent & RetainSM

YOUR GUIDEBOOK TO MORE SUCCESSFUL APARTMENT MANAGEMENT

February is National Apartment Careers Month

ADVANCE YOUR CAREER WITH THESE SIMPLE TIPS

Starts on page 10

plus

10 Tips To Be More
Successful At Selling
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January / February / March 2012

RENT & RETAIN MAGAZINE

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FREE WEBINAR!

Need Some Motivation On A Cold Winter Day?

Mindy's webinar, "How To Increase Occupancy in a Down Market" is still one of Appfolio's most-downloaded seminars. To download it for free go to:

www.propertymanager.com/2010/10/webinar-recap-increase-your-occupancy-in-a-down-market-with-mindy-williams/ or go to www.PropertyManager.com and type "Mindy Williams" in the Search bar.

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Please check with your attorney and insurance provider before implementing any of these ideas.

You've made the right choice by purchasing from Rent & Retain. It's a surefire way to help you stay on top of your game. Just remember, nothing changes if nothing changes!

So set a goal that you will do at least one idea a month. We're positive you'll see the impact. Publisher's Right

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Thank you!

If money is your hope for independence you will never have it. The only real security that a man can have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability.

- Henry Ford



Since February is National Apartment Careers Month, we dedicated a lot of this issue to improving your career skills. It's always smart to keep your resume updated, the list of your accomplishments fresh and complete ("this ad pictured here pulled in 8 times the normal traffic and directly resulted in 4 leases which equaled \$48,000 in revenue"), and it is always wise to know what direction you are headed so your actions can meet your goals.

If you are facing in the right direction, all you need to do is keep on walking. - Buddhist saying

One of the goals of R&R is to provide you with tools to make your jobs easier, and, ultimately, make you more successful. Along those lines, a big shout out goes to America First's John Sons, one of the most inspired and great motivators of our industry. John does a beautiful job educating and pumping up his team members so they can do their jobs better. John makes sure his team milks each issue of R&R to squeeze out every last idea. He has struck the perfect balance between providing team members knowledge & tools and then facing them in the right direction so they keep on walking towards success. Thank you John!

Let me know your thoughts — via email or you can also Facebook us your idea. (Facebook.com/rentandretain and Twitter: @RentandRetain) or email me at Mindy@RentandRetain.com.

Keep being awesome!

mindy

Remember,
people can go

anywhere

to get an apartment.

But they can't
go anywhere
to get an
apartment
and get

You!



"We love this idea from Essex Property Trust! Someone will win free tuition for a year. In this economy, this could make the difference between if someone stays in school or not. What a life-changer this could be for a lucky Essex person! www.essextuitiongiveaway.com.

Kudos to you, Essex! Thanks for making a difference.

ONE:

Visit The Sweeps or
The CBC Collection*

TWO:

Win Free Tuition for a Year**

THREE:

Enjoy the Savings

FOUR:

Buy Stuff, Big Time

**TOUR ONE OF THESE
ESSEX APARTMENTS
TODAY FOR YOUR
CHANCE TO WIN!**

ESSEX
PROPERTY TRUST, INC.



*NO PROPERTY TOUR OR PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. A PROPERTY TOUR OR PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING.

**Prize will be limited to a total amount equal to \$12,125.00. Open only to legal U.S. residents of the State of California who are eighteen (18) years of age or older residing within ninety (90) miles of Santa Barbara, California. See Official Rules at www.EssexTuitionGiveaway.com for additional eligibility restrictions, prize description and complete details. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Void where prohibited.



"Don't be an 'I know' person, be a 'You're right' person."

-Lisa Trosien

Expert's Input

- 50% of ILS listings in Dallas had a picture of the pool. Stand out and be different by not using photos similar to what your competition has in their ads.
- Interior photos are one of the most requested items for ILS's.
- Pictures of the bathroom and kitchen are what people want to see.
- Apartment hunters checking their mobile phones increased by 366% from February 2010 to February 2011. (Vaultware)
- Property listings with 5 or more interior photos received 28% of more leases. (Rent.com)
- Properties with one or more floor plan had 38% more leases than properties not showing a floorplan. (Rent.com).
- Showing a coupon will increase leads by 20%. (Apartment Guide)
- Including specific pricing on your listing increases leads by 30% on average -- so don't use "starts at"use the exact price. (Apartment Guide)
- In her last Apartment All Stars seminar, Lisa mentioned waiters who repeated orders receive 70% higher tips. The thinking here is that if the waiter repeats the order, the customer feels "heard." This results in a better connection between waiter and customer. Lesson for us: repeat what your future resident says so she feels heard. That will close more sales for you.

Lisa Trosien gears her career to help others do their property management jobs more effectively. One of the smartest people in our business, follow Lisa on Twitter (@LisaTrosien) or on Facebook.com/ApartmentExpert. Contact her directly at Lisa@ApartmentExpert.com.



Waterton's VP of Training and Marketing Virginia Love

The Power of Testimonials

Who cares what you think!?! →

What matters is what the residents think. Virginia Love at Waterton Residential shared this standout ad during our Idea Factory at NAA and we think it is AWESOME!

Notice the strong resident testimonial in the center of the ad? "If you're looking for new digs, I enjoy mine. Come kick it with me!"

Now THAT sells!

UPTOWN SQUARE
at Lindbergh

NOW LEASING!

"If your looking for new digs, I enjoy mine. Come kick it with me!" - FACEBOOK 11.20.10

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Testimonials Sell It or Sink it!

With so many quick and easy ways to get other people's opinions (and to share your own), testimonials can make or break the success of your occupancy.

For instance, a gal told us this before buying her couch: "I posted a picture on Facebook and got my friends' opinions before I made the purchase." (more on next page)

Some prospective renters find apartments this way, too. They'll post pictures of several communities / vacant apartments on their Facebook pages and ask for input from their friends and family.

And two bummers for an apartment community in Seattle on Foursquare.com:

Ruth C. says:

Don't move in here unless you like hearing loud parties, poo smells, and indifferent management. Good luck! July 28, 2010

Rick J. says:

From the dilapidated chain link fenced enclosed AstroTurf covered roof top deck to the obnoxious leasing agent on the ground floor, this complex is a complete disappointment. September 18, 2010

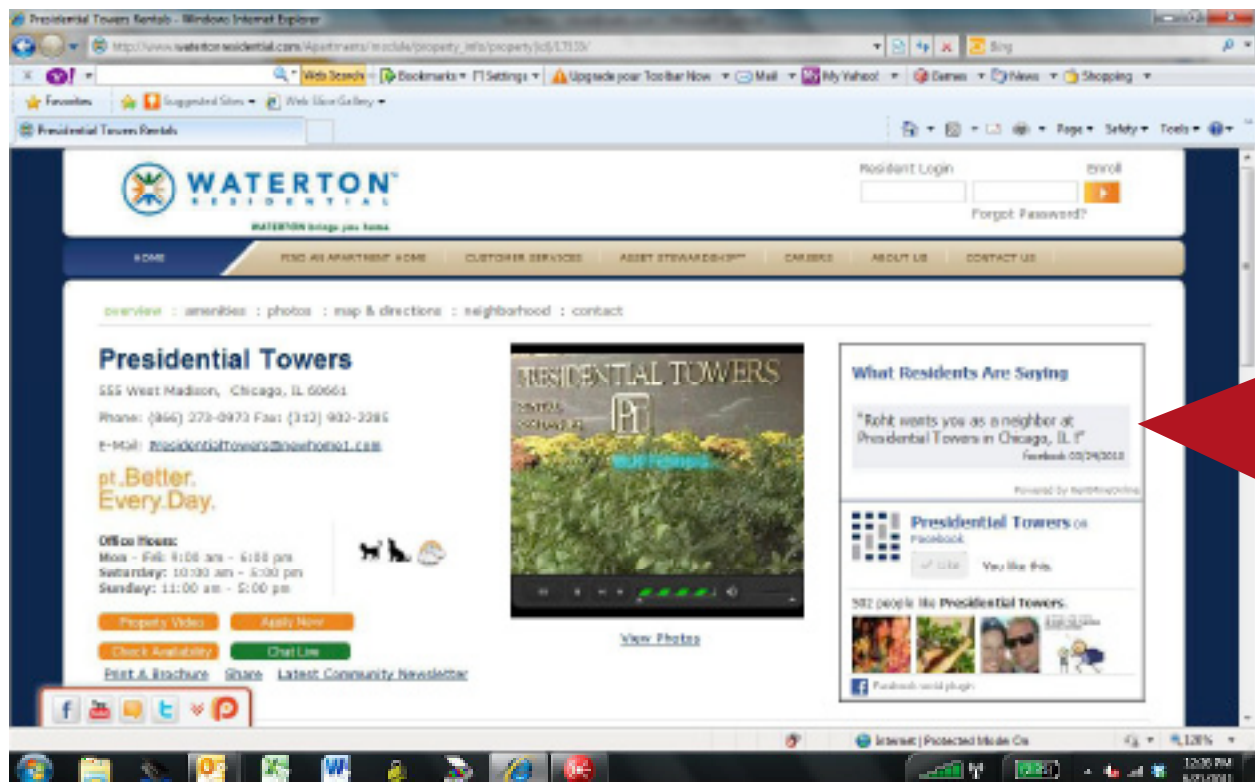
To lease more apartments and to watch out for bummer-testimonials, keep checking the internet and try to populate it with as many favorable testimonials as you can.

- Ask residents to "Friend" and "Like" your community and what's happening.
- Ask future and existing residents before they leave if their needs were met, if you did a good job answering their questions, and generally if they got a good feel for the place. Give them a parting gift (cookies, ice cream, hot cocoa-to-go) so they'll leave on a high note.

Everyone is watching — there just aren't any secrets out there anymore as folks have smart phones that can capture a video or picture any time, any where (just ask celebrities! :-). No room for error — stay on top of things and you'll be great!

Testimonials on Your Website Work

Waterton uses RentMineOnline to power their "What Residents Are Saying" on their website:



February is National

Apartment Careers Month

What is National Careers Month?

The NAA Education Institute (NAAEI) created National Apartment Careers Month to promote the attractive and recession-resistant careers in the apartment industry.



How YOU Can Get Involved In Apartment Careers Month

Reach out to local high schools, community or technical colleges or universities and offer to:

- Participate in a career fair
- Speak to a class about apartment careers
- Offer Job Shadow opportunities to interested students
- Make teachers, instructors and professors aware of NAAEI's industry designation programs.

Many states now require high school, technical and community college students to earn certifications before graduation.

The NAAEI team is happy to work with any industry professional willing to contact their local high schools and colleges. For More information contact Education@naahq.org.

NAAEI has developed the Workforce Development Packet, for hiring managers, apartment management companies and NAA affiliates and associations. There is also a Participant Toolkit you can download for free at <http://www.naahq.org/EDUCATION/NAAEI/CAMPAIGNS/Pages/default.aspx>. This downloadable booklet details a suggested timeline for participating, tips for a successful job shadow day, tradeshow/job fair tips, resources and much more!

Also available: NAAEI's award-winning career materials, including the maintenance, leasing and management brochures and the DVD Careers in Apartment Management.

For information, contact NAAEI directly at 703-518-6141 or email: education@naahq.org.

www.singlemostimportantthing.com makes it easy for people to find information about NAAEI's professional designation programs, as well as enroll in classes. The blog on this site is also informative and fun to read!

Fashion Alert!

10 Tips on What Not to Wear To Your Next Job Interview

You have about three seconds to make an impression— good or bad. Make sure your clothes don't make your interviewer think you are a "No way" before you even say a word! Use your common sense — if you have a doubt about what you are wearing, do without!

Don't Wear...

1. Revealing Clothes. This goes for both men and women. This isn't the "Jersey Shore" reality show — we don't want to see abs, cleavage, underwear, or a flabolanche (belt too tight so the flab goes over the belt!).

2. Hats, sunglasses, headphones.

3. Facial piercings, tongue jewelry or visible tattoos. Men take out the earrings, women stick to one pair.

4. T-shirts with goofy sayings or inappropriate graphics and designs. We just saw a t-shirt that said, "Snookin' for love at the Jersey Shore." Funny for a night out — not for a job interview.

5. Super long fingernails or goofy patterns on your nails.

6. Stained or wrinkled clothes — or clothes that look like you slept in them.

7. Sneakers, flip flops or worn footwear.

8. Too much perfume, deodorant or aftershave. I can smell my neighbor's perfume from my yard when she leaves the house — too strong!

9. Sales tags on your clothes. A fellow professional speaker was about to go on stage when I saw the sales tag on her dress... not the impression she wanted to give the crowd, I'm sure. (Yes, I stopped her before she went on stage!)

10. Leather or pleather.

Bonus: Wear a smile and look the interviewer in the eyes as you shake hands! This double whammy of professionalism will open the interview on the right foot.



10

Tips On How Your Cover Letter/ Initial Email Can Get You In The Door

Don't underestimate the power of the cover letter or the first email you send to a company: It can give a great first impression and is a crucial hook for the interviewer to want to know more about you.

- #1** You have about three seconds to make the impression. Make sure your cover letter/ email is clear, doesn't have too much type (bullets are great), and explains the top 5 reasons why the prospective employer should call you in for an interview.
- #2** If a zillion people apply for the job, you need to make sure your email stands out. A generic, cut-and-pasted email is obvious, and is the first email that hits the Trash folder.
- #3** Give the prospective employer what he/she asks for. If they ask for a PDF of your resume, send a PDF. If they want your resume in Word, send it in Word. There is a reason the interviewer is asking for specific things — if you don't send the specific things, you aren't following simple instructions. Would you hire someone who doesn't follow simple instructions?
- #4** Nobody wants a large attachment sent with an email. And many times emails with large attachments get sent directly to the company's SPAM folder. If you really need to send an attachment, send a short email first, and explain the attachment will be coming in the next email. This way the interviewer knows to look for the attachment.
- #5** Interview with as many people/companies as you can, even if you don't think it's your "dream job". It's super practice (the more you do it, the more comfortable and less daunting it becomes) and even if you aren't right for the particular job, the interviewer might have another position you'd be suited for.
- #6** If emailing the cover letter, don't BCC (blind carbon copy) a ton of prospective employers. Personalize each email, and send each one to each company individually.
- #7** Let the interviewer know how to contact you in EVERY thing you send them — the cover letter, an email, on your resume, on your design samples/ I'm GREAT notebook, etc. Don't miss the opportunity because the interviewer can't find a way to contact you.
- #8** What's on your Facebook page? What happens if the interviewer goes to www.Google.com and types in your name in the Search Bar? Do unflattering photos or stories about you show up? That's not going to make you a forerunner for the job either.
- #9** See if you can find the company on Facebook or Twitter and start following what's happening.
- #10** What can you do for the company for free that shows your talent?
- If you are an onsite manager, can you walk one of the company's properties and offer suggestions for improvement?
 - If you are a leasing consultant, can you show the interviewer (in numbers) how you leased X apartments and why?
 - If you are looking for a marketing position, can you rewrite or revamp one of the company's marketing pieces?
 - If you are looking for a maintenance position, do you have all of your certifications/ qualifications? Are you willing to get them?

Don't aim for success if you want it; just do what you love and believe in, and it will come naturally. —David Frost

21 Tips For Your Next Interview

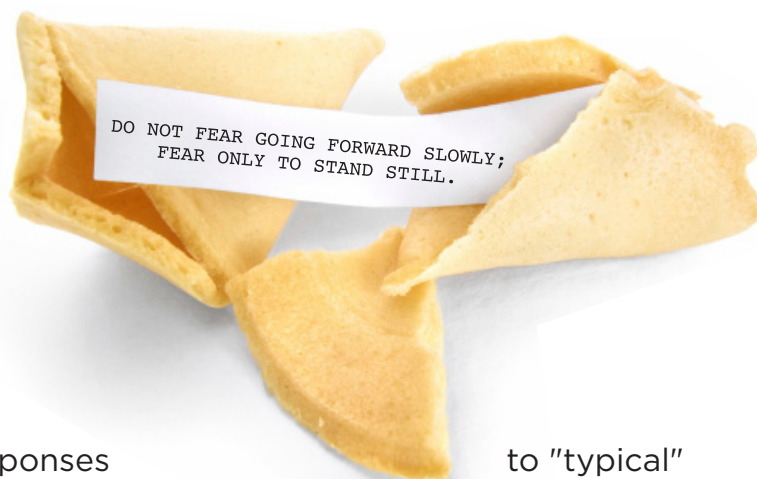
Ready for your next interview? Review our list of 21 No-No's and you will be! No-No's include:

Career

- Arriving late.
- Asking about the salary/benefits up front.
- Bad-mouthing your last boss/coworkers/company.
- Chewing gum, tobacco, or a mint.
- Interrupting the interviewer.
- Failing to research the company in advance (do this on Google.com, Facebook and Twitter).
- Giving answers that sound fake and like you've practiced them a million times (though practice your answers :-).
- Leaving your cell phone on.
- Looking at your watch/the clock/out the window/at the hot guy in the next office.
- Lying about your skills/experience/anything.
- Not asking questions.
- Not having five good reasons on why you are the best person for the job.
- Not having good answers to "typical" interview questions like, "Where do you see yourself in five years?" (See page 14 for Typical Interview Questions.)
- Not listening/ asking the interviewer to repeat him/herself constantly.
- Not making eye contact.
- Shaking hands too weakly, or too firmly.
- Sitting down before your interviewer does.
- Smoking, or smelling like a cigarette.
- Wearing a Bluetooth earpiece or iPod/music earbud.
- Wearing a ton of perfume, smelly deodorant or aftershave.
- Not sending a thank you email or letter. If sending an email, do it an hour after the interview. Reinforce in the email why you are the right person for the job.



12 Typical Interview Questions



No Matter What Side of the Desk You are On, These Questions Will Help!

It's smart to have some intelligent responses to "typical" interview questions. I've had potential employers ask me almost everything on the list, and I've had potential employers ask me nothing on the list! You never know — but what's great about answering the questions is you get to know yourself a little better. This will help you find a job that works for your short and long-term goals, as well as your personality and interests.

Most future employers expect you to have good answers to these questions — so be prepared with good answers and look smart. Starting a sentence with "uh," and "ummm" is kind of like watching someone chew gum — doesn't always make you look like you're the sharpest tool in the shed.

If possible, answer the questions with how you would suit the job. That's what the interview is really looking for — to make sure you'd be a good fit with the company.

Twelve Typical Interview Questions

- Describe a situation in which you had to work with a difficult person (another co-worker, customer, boss, etc.). How did you handle the situation? Is there anything you would have done differently?

- Describe a situation in which you worked as part of a team. What worked well and what didn't?
- Do you have any hobbies?
- How do you think a friend would describe you?
- How do you work under pressure?
- What are your long-range goals and objectives for the next three to five years?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What has been the most rewarding thing you've ever done?
- What skills do you bring to the job?
- Where do you see yourself in the next one to three years?

4 Sites To Find Multifamily Jobs:

www.jobsinmultifamily.com
www.mymaintenanceshop.com
www.Gracehill.com's Career Center tab
www.apartmentjobs.com

Three Surefire Steps To Be More Valuable

1. Save the company money, and prove it. Cut costs for the company wherever you can find an opportunity (vendor supplies, advertising, office supplies or equipment, etc.). Document the savings.

2. Bring in more money. Show how you implemented new ideas and the impact of the ideas in a measured form ("this new ad generated 19 calls which we converted to 4 leases. At \$800 per month, per lease, that added \$38,400 in revenue. (\$800 x 4 leases times 12 months = \$38,400.")

3. Show progress from one year to the next. For many bosses it's all about the bottom line. What have you personally done to affect it?



Say What?

You are what you think about all day long. Check your inner voice to make sure you are your #1 cheerleader!

These two pages are filled with thoughts to motivate you.

Classy Ways To Say Goodbye

Be well, do good work, and keep in touch.

If I had a single flower for every time I think about you, I could walk forever in my garden.

See ya!

Saying goodbye isn't the hard part, it's what we leave behind that's tough.

The song is ended, but the melody lingers on.

The world is round and the place which may seem like the end may also be the beginning.

Until this moment, I never understood how hard it was to lose something so important.

We only part to meet again.

You are the weakest link - goodbye!

You never leave someone behind, you take a part of them with you and leave a part of yourself behind.

- What runs through your mind? God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today. Have you used one to say, "thank you?" Gratitude is a great attitude.
- If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is 'thank you', it will be enough.
~Oprah Winfrey
- Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!" ~Robin Williams
- The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who'll get me a book I ain't read. ~Abraham Lincoln
- For yourself (and your kids)... what you might have just done could be "stupid". YOU aren't stupid. Your coworker may be "acting" like a loser - that's a lot different than saying, "You are a loser." See the difference? People internalize so much - "acting like X" is different than being an X. Watch your words.

Power Thoughts: New Year. New YOU!

- ★ A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.
- ★ Fear melts when you take action towards a goal you really want.
- ★ Goals should always be made to a point that will make us reach and strain.
- ★ Your goals are the road maps that guide you and show you what is possible for your life.
- ★ God gives us dreams a size too big so that we can grow in them.
- ★ If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things.
- ★ Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal: my strength lies solely in my tenacity.
- ★ Make your life a mission....not an intermission.
- ★ My goal is simple. It is complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all.
- ★ Seventy percent of success in life is showing up.
- ★ The future you see is the future you get.
- ★ The impossible is often the untried.
- ★ Do or do not. There is no try.
- ★ There are two things to aim at in life; first to get what you want, and after that to enjoy it. Only the wisest of mankind has achieved the second.
- ★ Think little goals and expect little achievements. Think big goals and win big success.
- ★ This one step – choosing a goal and sticking to it – changes everything.
- ★ To solve a problem or to reach a goal, you don't need to know all the answers in advance. But you must have a clear idea of the problem or the goal you want to reach.
- ★ To think too long about doing a thing often becomes its undoing.
- ★ What is not started today is never finished tomorrow.
- ★ What keeps me going is goals.
- ★ When I am anxious it is because I am living in the future. When I am depressed it is because I am living in the past.

Photocopy this page and tape one quote a day to your mirror. This helps guides your subconscious and conscious towards your goals. 21 quotes for 21 days to a new you!

QR Codes: A must have for your leasing office

Apartment communities are using QR codes to give prospects quick snapshots of brochures, amenities, leasing deals and more.



What's a QR code? You've seen them before — the crazy black and white squares with cool designs on them. According to Wikipedia, A QR code (abbreviated from Quick Response code) is a specific matrix barcode (or two-dimensional code) that is readable by dedicated QR barcode readers, telephone cameras, and to a less common extent, computers with webcams.

Your apartment community could use QR codes for contact information, your website address, how to get to your community with a Google map, -- a QR code could even link the prospect to your website or to an online video highlighting your community (Try YouTube.com).

Post a QR code on the Leasing Office door that links to general information about your community. This is SUPER for after-hours visitors, as the QR code quickly links them to information you want them to see. You could even create a QR code for residents that includes contact info for the manager, services offered, and common fixes for maintenance issues. Include that QR code in your newsletter, on signs, near where your service response forms/drop off box is, etc.

QR codes are another cool way we can lease apartments and retain residents with technology.

Get Started ▤

You need to download an app to read a QR code on your phone. Two ones we like are i-nigma (www.i-nigma.com) and <http://gettag.mobi>.

How can your property get a QR code?

Go to www.qrstuff.com. You can generate various QR codes for website, SMS, email address, contact details and Google Map locations — and it doesn't cost anything!

Get Inspired ▤

Folks have already blown the doors off what traditional QR codes look like — check out www.mashable.com/2011/07/23/creative-qr-codes/ for photos of super cool and creative QR codes.

(DISCLAIMER: We are not affiliated in any way with any of the websites mentioned. We do not receive compensation in any form if you choose to sign up for an account or download an app.)

Top-10

reasons why consumers follow a company on Facebook!

Facebook is an awesome way to stay in touch with your residents and it doesn't take a lot of time to update them. Use this list to make sure you maximize what people want from you on FB.

- 1** 40% want to receive discounts and promotions
- 2** 37% want to show support for the brand/company
- 3** 36% hope (want) to get free samples, a coupon (a.k.a. freebies)
- 4** 34% want to stay informed about the activities of the company
- 5** 33% want to get updates on future products
- 6** 30% want to get updates and information on future sales
- 7** 27% like to get fun and entertainment out of it
- 8** 25% want to get access to exclusive content
- 9** 22% mentioned they were referred by someone to follow this brand/company
- 10** 21% want just to learn more about the company

From the article "The Top-10 reasons why consumers follow a company on Facebook" by Ralph Paglia on www.socialmediatoday.com as seen on the Internet August 19, 2011

“Getting information off the Internet is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant.”

~Mitchell Kapor

Make your FB posts fun

Search the Rent & Retain Calendar dates for fun things to post on your Facebook page. Presidential Towers posted pictures of their team members in flip flops for National Flip Flop Day (June 17).

Villas At Spears Creek posted an announcement that a local restaurant would provide babysitting so parents could go out to dinner. Cute!

Find out what's happening in your neighborhood and tell your residents about it.

Tie in these goofy holidays with your Facebook promotions:

January 14th: Dress Up Your Pet Day

January 27th: Fun at Work Day

February 23rd: International Dog Biscuit Day

March 2nd: Employee Appreciation Day

March 23rd: Chip and Dip Day

(More ideas start on page 24 of this *Rent & Retain Magazine*.)

10 Tips To Be More Successful At Selling

Read through our ten tips and take a sincere look at your selling technique. Where are you best? What area needs the most improvement?



1. Listen to the prospect's needs.

Talk about the product & sales recommendations only AFTER you know exactly what your prospect wants. Nothing's worse than thinking, "Jeesh, this salesperson hasn't heard a thing I said."

2. Keep asking for feedback and opinions:

"Does that sound like what you need?"

"This one is what you are looking for, right?"

"Am I showing you the right types of apartments?"

"What do you think?"

3. Feel, Felt, Found

...is a tried and true selling technique when dealing with an objection.

Objection: "I only need a one-bedroom."

Answer: "I understand how you feel. Other people have felt the same way. But some have decided to use the second bedroom for a workout room/ home office/ place for guests. It's just \$___ more."

A study found that only 1 in 6 people wash their hands properly. Yuk! Successful selling does not include a runny nose :-).

Wash your hands well (sing "Happy Birthday" while washing) and you'll get sick less which means you'll sell more.

Objection: “The closets are too small.”

Answer: “I understand how you feel. Other residents have felt the same way. But after installing a few storage shelves from The Container Store down the street, for less than \$50 they have found the closet worked fine.”

4. Get permission to follow up.

If they don't give you permission to follow up -- there is a reason. Maybe they are not interested in your apartment community -- or perhaps they are getting a divorce and don't want their spouse to know. It's okay to ask them why they don't want you to follow up, but be sure to respect their answer.

5. It's okay to ask WHY.

If your prospect has an objection, ask for clarification. The more you know, the more you can help find something to suit their needs. Soften the "why" with a "hmmm" or "just to make sure I understand, why..."

6. If you aren't sold (on the product/location/whatever), the feeling could be contagious.

To be successful, you must feel confident about what you are selling. If you don't, it's time to find out why -- then find a way TO feel confident about it.

7. When a prospect states an objection, be quiet for a few seconds afterwards.

This shows the prospect that you heard and are processing her comment. Give her an agreement statement like “I understand” or “I hear what you are saying” or “I see.” Then, address her objection. “I understand what you mean. But what if we did _____ (it this way or whatever).”

8. Be Sincere

Remember people know when they are being "sold" something. The best salespeople develop a rapport with their future customers first.

9. Make Your Prospect Feel Comfortable

People remember how you made them feel -- they won't necessarily remember what you said. Leave them on a high note — with candy, a warm handshake, a guarantee you'll hold their perfect apartment for them, whatever works for you (and them).

10. Visuals Aids Are The Best

People "get" pictures in seconds. They only "hear" about 25% of what you say. Always use pictures or QR codes (on your cell, on the brochure, on a video, the floor plan) to get your best points across.

Make your office
stand out

CHECK OUT MANCANS

Candles with "Manly" Scents!

ManCans were created by a 13-year old boy who didn't like the "girly" smell of his sister's candles. So cute! ManCans are made out of an empty soup can and a proprietary wax blend that is made of all natural food grade wax. Scents include bacon, campfire, coffee, grass and New York Style Pizza. What a riot.

Neat Fact: The soup from the cans are donated to soup kitchens, hospitals, churches or other non-profit organizations. At this point over 3,000 cans of soup have been donated.

Each candle is \$9.50 and available online at www.man-cans.com. Wholesale pricing is available for orders of 20 or more. Make sure to watch this remarkable 13-year old telling his story on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xSfNyotlqA.

What were you doing when you were 13?

These would be a hilarious gift for a boss or coworker, and are a great conversation piece in your leasing office (Yes, that is pizza you smell...).



Lessons from Extraordinary Lives.



Just For Fun

Katie Couric put together a book called ***The Best Advice I Ever Got: Lessons from Extraordinary Lives.*** Here are some of the quotes we think are cool.

- Michael Bloomberg: *"Eighty percent of success is showing up . . . early."*
- Eric Stonestreet: *"Remember that the old lady who's taking forever in line is someone's grandma."*
- Joyce Carol Oates: *"Read widely—what you want to read, and not what someone suggests that you should read."*
- Jimmy Kimmel: *"When in doubt, order the hamburger."*
- Olympic Champion Apolo Ohno: *"It's not about the forty seconds; it's about the four years, the time it took to get there."*
- John Wayne: *"Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway."*
- Fareed Zakaria: *"When you start getting into the fear business, you blame your problems on other people."*

- From Katie Couric ~ *"A boat is always safe in the harbor, but that's not what boats are for."*
- Our favorite quote is from Jay Leno, he wrote *"Marry someone who you would want to be, someone who wants to be help you be that better version of yourself."*

Three of Rent & Retain's All-Time Favorite Quotes:

- *"NEVER get good at a bad job."*
- *"Don't marry him."*
- And seriously, *"Blowing out someone else's candle doesn't make yours burn any brighter."*

Get this book at any bookstore or at www.Amazon.com for \$15.

january

Apple and Apricots Month
Artichoke and Asparagus Month
Bath Safety Month
Cervical Cancer Screening Month
Financial Wellness Month
Hot Tea Month
Int'l Change Your Stars Month

Int'l Creativity Month
National Clean Up Your Computer Month
National Get Organized Month
National Glaucoma Awareness Month
National Hobby Month
National Hot Tea Month
National Mail Order Gardening Month

Week 1: Nat'l Lose Weight/Feel Great Week
Week 2: National Vocation Awareness Week
Week 3: Hunt For Happiness Week
Week 4: Nat'l Take Back Your Time Week

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<p>New Year's Day Rose Bowl Game Tournament of Roses Parade Polar Bear Plunge Day</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Happy Mew Year For Cats Day Run up the Flagpole and See if Anyone Salutes Day</p> <p>2</p>	<p>J.R.R. Tolkien Day Humiliation Day Festival Of Sleep Day Fruitcake Toss Day</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Pop Music Chart Day Trivia Day World Hypnotism Day World Braille Day</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Bean Day National Bird Day</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Three Kings Day Cuddle Up Day Epiphany or Twelfth Night</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Harlem Globetrotter's Day Int'l Programmer's Day I'm Not Going To Take It Any-more Day Old Rock Day</p> <p>7</p>
<p>Bubble Bath Day Nat'l English Toffee Day Show & Tell Day At Work National Joy Germ Day</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Balloon Ascension Day Panama's Martyr Day Play God Day</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Nat'l Cut Your Energy Costs Day United Nations Day Nat'l Clean Off Your Desk Day Peculiar People Day</p> <p>10</p>	<p>Step In A Puddle And Splash Your Friend Day Cigarettes Are Hazardous To Your Health Day</p> <p>11</p>	<p>Nat'l Pharmacist Day Feast Of Fabulous Wild Men Day</p> <p>12</p>	<p>Rubber Duckie Day Int'l Skeptics Day Make Your Dream Come True Day</p> <p>13</p>	<p>Dress Up Your Pet Day Organize Your Home Day Caesarean Section Day</p> <p>14</p>
<p>Humanitarian Day First Super Bowl (1967) Nat'l Hat Day</p> <p>15</p>	<p>Nothing Day Religious Freedom Day Martin Luther King Jr's B-day (1929)</p> <p>16</p>	<p>Kid Inventor's Day Customer Service Day Judgment Day Cable Car Day</p> <p>17</p>	<p>Winnie The Pooh Day Thesaurus Day Rid The World Of Fad Diets & Gimmicks Day</p> <p>18</p>	<p>Nat'l Popcorn Day Tin Can Day</p> <p>19</p>	<p>Inauguration Day Nat'l Disc Jockey Day Get To Know Your Customers Day</p> <p>20</p>	<p>Nat'l Hugging Day Squirrel Appreciation Day</p> <p>21</p>
<p>22 Nat'l Blonde Brownie Day National Puzzle Day</p> <p>29</p>	<p>23 Nat'l Pie Day Nat'l Handwriting Day Inane Answering Message Day</p> <p>30</p>	<p>24 Nat'l Compliment Day Inspire Your Heart With Art Day</p> <p>31</p>	<p>A Room Of One's Own Day Opposite Day Macintosh Computer Day</p> <p>25</p>	<p>Nat'l Peanut Brittle Day Spouse's Day Lotus 1-2-3 Day</p> <p>26</p>	<p>Holocaust Memorial Day Punch the Clock Day Chocolate Cake Day</p> <p>27</p>	<p>Thank A Plugin Developer Day Fun At Work Day Nat'l Kazoo Day</p> <p>28</p>

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THUR

FRI

SAT

American Heart Month
An Affair to Remember Month
Avocado and Banana Month
Bake for Family Fun Month
Black History Month
Int'l Boost Self-Esteem Month
Int'l Expect Success Month
National Children's Dental Health Month
National Laugh-Friendly Month
National Grapefruit Month

Nat'l Freedom Day
G.I. Joe Day
Hula in the Coola Day
Spunky Old Broads Day

Crepe Day
Groundhog Day
Sled Dog Day
Marmot Day

Five Kids A Smile Day
The Day The Music Died
Four Chaplains Memorial Day

USO Day
World Cancer Day
Quaker Day
Thank a Mail Carrier Day

1

2

3

4

National Weatherman's Day
World Nutella Day

5

Lame Duck Day
Bob Marley's B-Day (1945)
Dump Your Significant Jerk Day

6

Ballet Day
Wave All Your Fingers At Your Neighbor Day
The Beatles arrive on American Shores (1964)

7

Boy Scout Anniversary Day
Laugh & Get Rich Day
Extraterrestrial Culture Day

8

Read In The Bathtub Day
Nat'l Stop Bullying Day
Toothache Day

9

Umbrella Day
TGIF Day
Eat Pizza Day

10

Be Electric Day
Satisfied Staying Single Day
Make a Friend Day
White Shirt Day

11

Darwin Day
Lincoln's B-Day
Plum Pudding Day
Safety Pup Day
NAACP Day

12

Clean Out Your Computer Day
Get A Different Name Day
Madly In Love With Me Day

13

Ferris Wheel Day
Library Lovers Day
League of Women Voters Day

14

Susan B. Anthony Day
Nat'l Gum Drop Day
Singles Awareness Day

15

Kyoto Protocol Day
Pancake Day
Do a Grouch a Favor Day

16

My Way Day
World Human Spirit Day
Random Acts Of Kindness Day

17

Battery Day
Pluto Day
Compliment Day

18

Iwo Jima Day
Chocolate Mint Day

19

Love Your Pet Day
President's Day
World Day for Social Justice
Cherry Pie Day

20

Malcolm X Assassinated (1965)
Int'l Mother Language Day
Card Reading Day

21

Inconvenience Yourself Day
George Washington's B-Day
Be Humble Day
Walking the Dog Day

22

Curling Is Cool Day
Tennis Day
Int'l Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day

23

Nat'l Chili Day
Nat'l Personal Chef's Day
Nat'l Tortilla Chip Day

24

Pistol Patent Day
Maintenance Worker Day

25

For Pete's Sake Day
Levi Strauss Day
Int'l Sword Swallows Day
Nat'l Pistachio Day

26

Polar Bear Day
No Brainer Day

27

Floral Design Day
Nat'l Tooth Fairy Day
Public Sleeping Day

28

Leap Day
Galileo Day
Chopin's B-Day (1810)

29

Week 1: Boy Scout Anniversary Week
Week 1: Freelance Writers Appreciation Week
Week 2: National Green Week
Week 2: Risk Awareness Week
Week 3: National Secondhand Wardrobe Week
Week 3: National Future Farmers of America Week
Week 3: International Flirting Week
Week 4: Learning Disabilities Week
Week 4: National Schools Social Work Week
Week 4: National Entrepreneurship Week

march

SUN

MON

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Adopt A Rescued Guinea Pig Month
American Red Cross Month
Credit Education Month
Employee Spirit Month
Int'l Expect Success Month
Int'l Listening Awareness Month
National Athletic Training Month
National Caffeine Awareness
National Craft Month Month

Week 1: National Pancake Week
Week 1: Save Your Vision Week
Week 2: National Procrastination Week
Week 2: National Bubble Week
Week 3: National Money Week
Week 3: National Agriculture Week
Week 4: Act Happy Week
Week 4: National Cleaning Week

Peanut Butter Lovers' Day

Peace Corp B-Day

Plan A Solo Vacation Day

1

Dr. Seuss' B-Day (1904)

NEA's Read Across America Day

Employee Appreciation Day

2

I Want You To Be Happy Day

Nat'l Anthem Day

Peach Blossom Day

3

Courageous Follower Day

Old Inauguration Day

March Forth - Do Something Day

4

Hula-Hoop patented 1963

Multiple Personality Day

5

Daughters and Sons Day

Namesake Day
Dentist's Day

Nat'l Frozen Food Day

6

Nat'l Be Heard Day

Telephone patented 1876

Nat'l Crown Roast Of Pork Day

7

Girls Write Now Day

Int'l Women's Day

Unique Names Day

8

Barbie Day

Joe Franklin Day

Panic Day

Lent Begins Get Over It Day

9

Int'l Day of Awesomeness

US Paper Money Day

Salvation Army Day

10

Johnny Appleseed Day
International Fanny Pack Day
World Plumbing Day

11

Girl Scout Day
Plant a Flower Day

12

Donald Duck Day
Good Samaritan Involvement Day
K-9 Veterans Day

13

Int'l Ask A Question Day
Potato Chip Day
Pi Day
Napping Day

14

Everything You Think is Wrong Day
Ides Of March
World Consumer Rights Day

15

Curllew Day
Freedom of Information Day
Lips Appreciation Day

16

Campfire Girls Day
St. Patrick's Day
Submarine Day

17

Awkward Moments Day
National Quilting Day
Nat'l Biodiesel Day

18

Swallows Return To San Juan Capistrano Day
Corn Dog Day
Poultry Day

19

Bed-in For Peace Day
Proposal Day
Won't You Be My Neighbor Day

20

Fragrance Day
Memory Day
National Common Courtesy Day

21

As Young As You Feel Day
Int'l Goof-Off Day
World Water Day

22

Nat'l Puppy Day
Near Miss Day World
Meteorological Day
National Chip and Dip Day

23

Nat'l Chocolate Covered Raisins Day
World Tuberculosis Day

24

Pecan Day
Waffle Day
Old New Year's Day

25

Legal Assistants Day
Make Up Your Own Holiday Day
Earth Hour

26

Celebrate Exchange Day
Education & Sharing Day
Quirky Country Music Song Titles Day

27

Weed Appreciation Day
Something On A Stick Day

28

Nat'l Mom & Pop Business Owner's Day
Knights Of Columbus Founders Day

29

Doctor's Day
I am in Control Day
Pencil Day
Take A Walk In The Park Day

30

Bunsen Burner Day
Nat'l "She's Funny That Way" Day
National Clam on the Half Shell Day

31



DAYS & DAYS

of fun leasing & resident retention activities

Fast, easy and inexpensive ways to lease apartments, motivate residents, excite prospects and allow YOU to have fun at work.

january

National Volunteer Blood Donor Month

Believe it or not, only 3 of every 100 Americans donate blood. It's time for you and your residents to face your fear of needles and volunteer to donate some blood. Every minute of every day, someone needs blood. Contact your local Red Cross to host a blood drive at your community. Visit www.redcross.org/donate/give or call 1-800-REDCROSS to find the nearest Red Cross location. Hang red balloons and other red-colored decorations to help attract attention to your event. We like to offer punch and cookies to residents after they donate blood to make it more like a party. Advertise your Blood Donation location on Facebook, in the local paper, on flyers hung in grocery stores and coffee shops, and in your resident newsletters.

Week 1: National Lose Weight/Feel Great Week

Our celebration of the New Year brings resolutions! The most popular resolution of them all is to lose weight. Dropping those extra pounds can be pretty difficult if you don't have the right resources to help you along the way. Give your residents a helpful push during National Lose Weight/Feel Great Week. 24 Hour Fitness offers free 7-day trial memberships to newcomers. Hand the passes out to residents on the first day of lose weight/feel great week. Seek out personal trainers in the area and raffle off a few free training sessions to residents. Part of weight loss involves feeling good about yourself. Put up motivating signs of praise such as, "You can do it!" or "We believe in you". By the end of the week, members should be on track to shedding pounds and feeling great. www.24HourFitness.com or call 1-800-224-0240 to find a club near you.

January 8

Elvis Presley's Birthday (1935)

On this day in 1935 "The King" was born. Yes Elvis Presley, the man who melted the hearts of millions and brought rock 'n roll to the world way back in the 50's. There are so many things to do for this special day. For starters, curl that lip of yours and start swinging those hips (just kidding!). Look into hiring an Elvis impersonator who can give a live performance to residents. www.eimpersonators.com/advanced_listings.html is a site devoted to Elvis impersonators available in your area.

There were over 10,000 results when I went to www.Google.com and typed "Elvis Costumes" into the Search bar. Websites where you buy costumes for adults, kids and pets are all over the Internet! Another great idea is to offer one of Elvis's favorite meals, a peanut butter, banana, and bacon sandwich. Might sound disgusting but it's actually quite tasty. Head over to Costco and pick up sliced bread, bananas, peanut butter and bacon. This will have residents saying, "Thank you. Thank you very much." Very simply you can cite on your Facebook page that it is Elvis' birthday and thank your residents very, very much for being part of your community.

*Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning
but a going on, with all the wisdom that
experience can instill in us.*

- Hal Burland

January 10

National Cut Your Energy Costs Day

Do you work at an older apartment community? By replacing windows with updated, energy-efficient ones you will experience noticeably lower energy costs. Residents will find themselves using the heater and a/c less often because of the new window's ability to keep in the cold or heat! We know upgrading windows may not be in every budget — but something to consider in your next upgrade. Programmable thermostats are also easy to install and are relatively inexpensive. Or work out a deal with a local drapery company for discounts for residents on heavy curtains to keep the cold out.

January 27

National Chocolate Cake Day

This one is simple. Head over to your nearest local bakery or even grocery store and purchase a giant chocolate cake. Purchase plates, forks, and napkins and set the cake out in the main office. See if the bakery will be willing to put your logo or community name on the top of the cake for free. Some bakeries can actually put photo images on the cake. This is a great way to market your name!

Our grocery store (Albertson's) sells sheet cakes for \$20 each. A great investment and fun way to welcome residents home from work today.

If you liked our Crock Pots Sell Apartments article (October/November/December 2010 issue, page 12), try cooking a cake in a slow cooker. A yummy cake cooking in the model is an awesome way to utilize the "smells sell" concept.



Slow Cooker Chocolate Pudding Cake

Ingredients

1 package (3.9 oz.) Jell-o chocolate instant pudding

3 cups milk

1 package chocolate fudge cake mix

2 squares Baker's semi-sweet chocolate, chopped

thawed Cool Whip whipped topping

Directions

Mix pudding mix and milk in a slow cooker (sprayed with cooking spray) for about two minutes.

Prepare cake batter as directed on package: carefully pour over pudding. (Do Not Stir)

Cover with lid.

Cook on Low 2-1/2 to 3 hours (or on High 1-1/2 to 2 hours) or until toothpick inserted in center of cake comes out clean. Check cake starting at 2.25 hours.

Top with chopped chocolate.

Turn off slow cooker. Let stand, covered, 30 min. to allow pudding to thicken.

Serve with Cool Whip.

Adapted from www.kraftrecipes.com/recipes/slow-cooker-chocolate-pudding-cake-114854.aspx as seen on the Internet September 6, 2011.

*Adds a yummy smell to Leasing Offices and the model if you make it during work hours!

February 2

Groundhog Day

Groundhogs have helped make weather predictions on this day since the mid 1800's. You all know how the story goes, if it is cloudy when a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day, it will leave the burrow, signifying that winter-like weather will soon end. If it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly see its shadow and retreat back into its burrow, and the winter weather will continue for six more weeks.

This is a fun tradition to celebrate with your residents. Have them predict the groundhog's decision. One week prior to Groundhog Day cut numerous index cards in half and set them by a drop box. Put out a sign next to the box telling residents to write either "6 more weeks of winter", or "winter will soon end". Have a morning muffin party to watch the results.

February 3

Wear Red Day

On Friday, February 3, 2012, Americans nationwide will wear red to show their support for women's heart disease awareness on National Wear Red Day®. This observance promotes the Red Dress symbol and provides an opportunity for everyone to unite in this life-saving awareness movement by putting on a favorite red dress, shirt, tie, or Red Dress Pin.

There is a toolkit at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institutes website (www.nhlbi.nih.gov/educational/heart-truth/materials/wear-red-toolkit.htm) with information and resources that you can use to help celebrate National Wear Red Day 2012 in your community. Call the NHLBI at 301-592-8573 for more info. Post the "Wear Red" info on your Facebook page starting on February 1st to give folks ample time to plan their red outfits.

February 7

Wave All Your Fingers At Your Neighbors Day

Encourage residents to wave at their neighbors on this special holiday. This is a great day for everyone to break the ice with new neighbors and possibly make some friends. Post signs around the community that read, "Have you waved all 5 today?" or "Give your neighbor a good

wave on this special day." Head over to Office Depot, Staples, or any arts and crafts store and pick up some thick, colorful markers (preferably the colors that are used in your logo) and also some poster board. The more colorful the signs, the more attention grabbing they are!

February 14

Valentine's Day

Have all the kids at the community make hand-crafted Valentine's and pass them out to all of the residents. We just did a quick search on the Internet and our favorite stores for crafts would be Oriental.com (1-800-875-8480), Michael's (Michaels.com which offers 10% off to all senior citizens every Tuesday) and www.craftkitsandsupplies.com (561-266-9360).



February 15

Disney's Cinderella Movie opens in 1950

Have one of your leasing consultants dress like Cinderella to lease today. Just picturing it puts a smile on my face!

February 20

Presidents Day

For more than 8,000 downloadable coloring pages that are free, go to coloringbookfun.com/. The Presidents Day coloring pages are super cute — and these are a great activity for kids to do while you lease an apartment to their parents.





Photo Courtesy of Bakerella.com

Cake Pops

A Hot Way to Warm Up Your Residents

Cake Pops are fun and pretty easy to make. These would be a terrific thing to make at your next Kid's Club meeting, or to give to prospects as thanks for visiting your community.

Handing out Cake Pops also means you can re-use your "Thanks for Popping In," "Pop In and Renew Your Lease" and "Just Popped in For Your Service Request" stickers you used to use for microwave popcorn giveaways. Use food coloring to customize the pops for holidays.

You Will Need

1 box cake mix (cook as directed on box for 13 X 9 cake)

1 can frosting (16 oz.)

1 package chocolate bark (regular or white chocolate) or melts

wax paper

How To Make A Cake Pop (or Balls)

Make a 13×9 cake. All cake-types work, just follow the instructions on the box. Let it cool completely – several hours at least, overnight is best. Crumble the cake. Add in 1 can of frosting. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Form the cake into balls about the size of a golf ball. Stick a lollipop stick into the top of each cake ball. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Melt the candy melts.

After 15 minutes in the fridge, dip and swirl each pop into your candy melt.

Once you've got an even coating on the cake pop, place the stick into a Styrofoam block while the candy melt shell hardens or lay on wax paper.



Photo Courtesy of Bakerella.com

www.bakerella.com has FABULOUS recipes and ideas on how to decorate your cake pops. Bakerella likes the Kroger (grocery store) brand chocolate melts, other posts on the Internet recommend a bag of melts from Michael's. You can also get the lollipop sticks from Michael's too.

For your President's Day (Feb. 20th) emails, newsletters, Facebook pages, etc.:

George Washington Quotes:

"Be courteous to all, but intimate with few, and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence."

"I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an "Honest Man."

"If the freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter."

"It is better to offer no excuse than a bad one."

"My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her."

"Ninety-nine percent of the failures come from people who have the habit of making excuses."

Abraham Lincoln Quotes

"Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt."

"I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends."

"I walk slowly, but I never walk backward."

"If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six hours sharpening my ax."

"My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure."

"That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve it as well."

"Wanting to work is so rare a merit that it should be encouraged."

"Most folks are about as happy as they make their minds up

February is Beans Month

High in fiber and low in fat, beans are celebrated all throughout the month of February. There are about a million different recipes, crafts and games that call for beans. A great activity for kids is to have them grow a bean sprout. www.ehow.com/how_1996_grow-beans.html has great step-by-step instructions on how to create a bean plant. Pick up bean seeds and soil from Home Depot, or any nearby gardening store. You will also need cups for the children to put their bean plant in. This is a great way to get the kids involved and learn how plants grow. Have a storytelling day where you have an employee at the office read Jack and the Beanstalk a few times throughout the day. Set out a sign up sheet in the office for parents to sign their kids up to attend.

DID YOU KNOW?

Beans are one of nature's healthiest foods - they are naturally low in total fat, contain no saturated fat or cholesterol, and provide important nutrients such as fiber, protein, calcium, iron, folic acid and potassium.

The USDA recommends that adults eat more than three cups of beans each week for maximum health benefits - three times more than the current average American consumption.

QUICK BEAN BURRITO RECIPE

Quick Bean Burritos have a perfect balance of flavor, nutritional value, they are cheap, and easy to make.

Directions: Makes 4 servings 1 can of low-fat vegetarian refried beans 4 whole-wheat tortillas 2 green onions, chopped 1 cup shredded lettuce 1 garlic clove, chopped 1/2 cup salsa 1/2 cup Guacamole.

Mix in chopped garlic w/ beans, heat beans in pan or microwave until warm. In a large skillet, heat a tortilla until it is warm and soft. Spread 1/2 cup of the beans down the center of the tortilla. Top with 1/4 cup lettuce, 1 tablespoon green onions, 2 tablespoons salsa, and 2 tablespoons guacamole. Fold the bottom end toward the center, and then roll the tortilla around the filling.

Source: americanbean.org/bean-facts/ as seen on the Internet August 8, 2011.

february & march

to be."

February 24

National Chili Day

Have your very own chili cook-off! Start advertising the event a few weeks prior to the date so that everyone has a chance to get involved. Set out a sign up sheet in the office for people who would like to compete. Contestants must bring, set up, and take down all materials needed to prepare the chili. Have 2-5 employees (depending on availability) organize the event. Supply taste-testers with small Dixie cups, spoons, and napkins (all can be purchased in bulk at Costco). Make sure you have a good handle on how much food will be there in case you need to buy some chili for the group. Corn bread is also tasty with chilli. Set out garbage bags for chili trash. Happy tasting!

February 29

Leap Year Day

2012 is a leap year and that means February ends on the 29th instead of the 28th. Post a Facebook status reminding everyone to enjoy his or her extra February day. Don't forget to wish the people who celebrate birthdays on this day a happy birthday! They only get to see their birthday 1/4th of the amount everyone else does.

OR: Do something out of the ordinary and wonderful for yourself today. It's a special occasion. Go for it!

march

All Month:

Employee Spirit Month

Our favorite books to motivate employees (all on www.amazon.com):

1001 Ways to Reward Employees by Bob Nelson Ph.D.

Love 'em or Lose 'em: Getting Good People to Stay (4th edition) by Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans

Make Their Day! Employee Recognition That Works - 2nd

Edition by Cindy Ventrice

365 Ways to Motivate and Reward Your Employees Every Day: With Little or No Money by Dianna Podmoroff

Perfect Phrases for Motivating and Rewarding Employees, Second Edition: Hundreds of Ready-to-Use Phrases for Encouraging and Recognizing Employee Excellence by Harriet Diamond and Linda Eve Diamond.

March 1

International Pancake Day

Host a pancake day for residents all day long! Pancake mix can be purchased in bulk from Sam's Club or Costco. Target sells a portable electric griddle for around \$38.00. Don't forget to set out syrup, butter, paper plates, forks, and knives (all can be purchased from Costco as well).

Easier: Visit an IHOP or Denny's with your team!

March 10th

Salvation Army Day

This is a great day to clean out your closets, garages, and attics while also helping others in need. Make an announcement either in the newsletter or on Facebook that your community will be offering free pickup / removal of any unwanted items and you'll donate them to the Salvation Army. If your local Salvation Army won't put a truck in your parking lot for the day, consider renting a U-Haul for the day to pickup and transfer the delivery. In-town moves for U-Hauls start at \$19.95 plus mileage. Cleaner closets = more space = less need to move to a bigger apartment!

**"Associate with men of good quality
if you esteem your own reputation;
for it is better to be alone than in bad
company." ~George Washington**

march

March 13th

Check Batteries Day

Gather up a crew of employees to check residents' smoke detector batteries. Far too often a routine smoke detector test is forgotten about and this is so easily avoided. The smoke detector test on Check Your Batteries Day is a great way to protect assets and a great excuse to get into apartments to test batteries.

Easier: Remind residents to check batteries in flashlights, radios and alarm clocks on your Facebook page or in the enewsletter. Have a box in your office to recycle old batteries. Your Waste Removal company and/or fire department will have places to recycle the batteries responsibly.

March 14th

Pi Day

Pi day celebrates the magical number of 3.14159.... Uh, let's just stop there! Pi's value is the ratio of any circle's circumference to its diameter.

Pi Day can be celebrated by everyone from the smartest math wiz to your average Joe. But the best part is it's a great reason to eat PIE! Apple pie ranks as America's favorite flavor with cherry and pumpkin coming close behind. Pick up some pies from your local grocery store or have residents do a bake off.

If you have some extra time, head over to the baking goods section and pick up tubes of frosting and write 3.14 on each pie! Set out paper plates, forks, and napkins next to the pies, and make sure to tell residents, "Happy Pi Day!"

Easier: Post Pie recipes on your Facebook page and in your enewsletter. We like www.Recipe.com.

March 17th

St. Patrick's Day

For super cute ideas for kids for St. Patty's

"We must walk
consciously only part
way toward our goal,
and then leap in the
dark to our success."

~Henry David Thoreau

Day, visit: familyfun.go.com/st-patricks-day. Also post on your Facebook page any restaurant that is hosting a St. Patrick's Day special. Guess the number of potatoes in the container, green jelly beans (or M&Ms) are also fun games to play. Buy green-colored M&Ms at <http://www.mymms.com> (1-888-696-6788). Make the cake pops on page 30!

Comcast offers web access to low-income families for \$9.95 a month

Families with children on the free lunch program at school can receive Internet access for \$9.95 a month through Comcast. If your child receives free school lunches, then it's likely your family will be eligible to get the free Internet. The program is called 'Internet Essentials', and it will be available in all Comcast areas — currently in 39 states — and supplied to those who meet their low-income requirements. Once enrolled, Comcast also offers vouchers towards a budget computer worth \$150. Free Internet training is included.

For more info contact Comcast (1-855-846-8376, www.internetessentials.com) and ask about their Internet Essentials program.



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Grace Hill, Inc. is the multifamily industry's leading provider of state-of-the-art online education. The company's Apartment Management Learning Center provides dozens of property management specific courses, including Fair Housing, Leasing for A Living, Mold Awareness and Mindy Williams' Resident Retention course. Free course previews are available in our Learning Center online at www.gracehill.com.

Seriously, There's an App for THAT?

An App For Maintenance Requests & Rent Payment

With the holidays here and winter vacations around the corner, there's a good chance your residents will have some unfinished business they left back at their apartments—leaky bathroom faucet, that quirky water heater, broken AC, or heaven forbid, unpaid rent—and somehow reality will find them no matter how far they've traveled. Luckily, when reality hits (or when they get a mean phone call from the neighbor below about the leak coming from their bathroom), residents will have an easy way to take care of or check up on any maintenance or rent related issues with Property Solution's ResidentPortal. When residents sign up for ResidentPortal, they can use their desktop or mobile phone to access their accounts and pay rent, or they can submit a maintenance request to get some towels and a wrench sent up to their bathroom ASAP.

Residents can sign-up for ResidentPortal, or download the ResidentPortal app from the app store. The new app lets residents download it for free, locate your property, then add payments and maintenance requests whenever they want. Kudos to Property Solutions for being right there with this technology! www.PropertySolutions.com, 1-877-826-9700.

(Adapted from Property Solutions' newsletter.)



"Wealth, like happiness, is never attained when sought after directly. It comes as a by-product of providing a useful service."

~Henry Ford

Resource Guide

Continuing Education and Resources for the Professional



AIM (Advertising Incentives & Marketing) *

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Agoura Hills, CA. 91301
1-866-541-9090
info@AIMcruise.com
www.AIMcruise.com

AIM Cruise Incentives is the nation's pioneer and leading provider of **Cruise Incentives** to the multi-housing industry.

As rental markets ebb and flow, property management companies are on constant watch for the latest trends to differentiate their properties from others in their community. AIM's Cruise Incentive program is helping property managers throughout the country to increase leases and retain more residents, while reducing concession and turnover costs. Management companies turn to AIM to offer residents a **5 Day/4 Night Luxury Cruise Vacation for Two, to Mexico, the Bahamas or the Western Caribbean** when residents sign a new lease or renewal.

All cruises are booked on luxury super-liners, primarily Carnival Cruise Lines. These packages are loaded with all the great amenities like a 4A stateroom, gourmet meals and snacks, 24-hour complimentary room service, a wide range of nightly entertainment, including Las Vegas style shows, dozens of exciting shipboard activities, plus tropical destinations to visit and shop!

Certificates can be purchased from \$139 - \$169 per certificate, based upon quantity. With a value up to

\$1798, residents will get excited about the cruise offer, and your property can get the edge over other properties! It's also a great incentive for lease ups! Property manager Terry Ragland said; "We have had great success with AIM's cruise promotion, 17 leases in one week. The colorful and eye-catching marketing materials made a real impact in the leasing process."

'AIM provides FREE full color marketing materials for each participating property, including a 4' x 10' Leasing Banner, Large and Small Countertop Displays, Cruise Flyers, Be-Back Cards for prospective residents, Renewal Door Hangers, Posters, Flower Leis and Digital Photos. AIM's reputation for exceptional customer service is backed by no booking fees, transfer fees or extension fees for your residents!

AIM is a long term member of the NAA and National Supplier's Council (NSC), and is an approved vendor with Compliance Depot. AIM is also an accredited business with the BBB, with an A+ rating. For more information, and to receive a free marketing kit, call or email us today, and ask for the "Rent and Retain Special."

**Please tell our vendors you saw
their listing in Rent & Retain!**

**If interested in being listed in the Resource Guide,
please contact Katie@RentandRetain.com.**

* Member of the National Supplier's
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Coastal Marketing & Incentives, Inc.*

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Atascadero, CA 93422
(866) 541-8077 x 16
www.Cruise4Two.com
Fax: (805) 460-9798

Cruise4Two & Coastal Marketing is the leading provider of 5-Day 4-Night cruise incentives for companies nationwide. Providing quality incentive marketing solutions for both our client's and their employees, we will help you to be more successful in today's competitive business environment. The Cruise certificates are very cost effective as low as \$145.00 per certificate.

Let's face it; earning your residents loyalty is more challenging than ever. Those that can reward and build a relationship with their residents will be the ultimate winners. People love to take cruises. It's a chance to get away and experience something totally different - with friends or family. Plus, cruise incentives perform better than any other type of reward, discount, amenity or travel incentive program.

"The high perceived value of the cruise allows us to compete in a very soft market without having to resort to offering the huge concessions our competition is offering. The pairing of the cruise certificate with a modest discount has been an unbelievable success!"
Chris Pratt Property Manager

Whether you want to increase new leases, retain more residents or just reduce concession costs Cruise4Two is here to make it happen. We include high quality full color marketing materials for each property including; Posters, Door Hangers, Desk Displays, Kitchen Counter and Bathroom Sink Counter Toppers, Cruise Flyers, Be-back Cards, Renewal Door Hangers and Flower Leis (A Party in a box) at no additional charge. You'll also be treated to the best customer service in the travel incentives industry...Guaranteed!

As the leader in the premium and incentive industry, we have travel programs to fit every budget and every type of promotion. Plus, we can ship travel certificates overnight which is ideal for those who are busy and are putting together that last minute marketing campaign.



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Property Solutions International, Inc. provides industry-changing property management software to the multifamily housing industry. Property Solutions prides itself on accomplishing the following three objectives:

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RealPage provides products and services to more than 20,000 apartment communities across the United States. Its five-on-demand product lines include OneSite property management systems that automate leasing, renting, management and accounting onsite; CrossFire sales and marketing systems that automate and enhance the process of capturing and closing leads; M/PF YieldStar asset management optimization systems; Velocity utility and billing services; and Leasing Desk risk transfer solutions.

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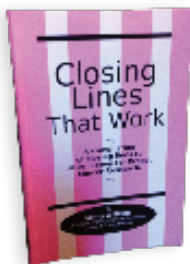
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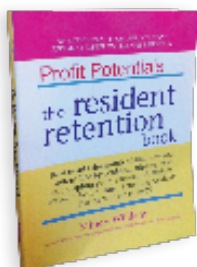
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