RESIDENTIAL Resource
NARPM™
THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGERS

When the Sky Falls:
Crisis Communication in Property Management

See page 6

p13 The 7 Tenets (not Tenants) of a Thriving Property Management Business

p15 Performetrics: Transforming Performance Metrics into Company Success

p24 RVP Bulletin: Who needs the lesson?

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IN THIS ISSUE March 2025

NARPM® provides resources for residential property management professionals who desire to learn, grow, and build relationships.

FEATURE ARTICLES

p6 When the Sky Falls: Crisis Communication in Property Management

p10 Blogging in an AI-driven world

p13 The 7 Tenets (not Tenants) of a Thriving Property Management Business: How to Build a Profitable, Valuable and Enjoyable Business from Day 1 (Part 3)

p15 Performetrics: Transforming Performance Metrics into Company Success

p20 Rental fraudsters prey on desperation in tight housing market

p30 Financing your residential property management business acquisition with an SBA 7(a) Loan

MONTHLY COLUMNS

p5 President's Message

p17 Discussion Board Hot Topics

p25 Regional Communications

p24 Be #NARPMSmart

p28 Chapter Spotlight

NEW MEMBER REFERRALS • FEBRUARY 2025

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Since 1989, the NARPM® news magazine has been a key focal point for the organization. The *Residential Resource* keeps members up to date on association events and provides valuable industry advice and insight. NARPM® members receive the *Residential Resource* as part of their membership, included in their annual dues.

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PRESIDENT'S Message

Scream it from the mountaintop

Participating in advocacy is important because it gives you a chance to make a difference on issues that matter to you and your community. It's a way to speak up for those who may not have a voice or challenge systems that need change.

When I say I hate politics, I really HATE politics. Before I got involved with advocacy, I thought all legislators were the same. Before I got involved, I thought the people on Capitol Hill were high above us everyday property managers. Before I got involved, I thought my voice did not matter.

What I found over the past several years is every one of these legislators is a member of our community, has hopes and dreams just like I do and truly wants to make a difference. In February, we just finished gathering for the NARPM® Capitol Summit. We had two days of education followed by a visit to the Capitol to sit down with the legislative teams to talk about the real issues. The real issues facing you and me in this industry. The topics included the continuation of the 1031 exchange program, assistance with navigating the Housing Choice Voucher program (also known as Section 8), the elimination of the 30-days-notice requirement and changes to the lead-based paint program.

These topics could impact every property management company and every real estate investor. These topics can impact the individual legislators who are tasked with getting things done in Washington, D.C.

In 2024, I hope you heard that we made a significant change to our mission statement, and I was thrilled to see that advocacy is now a key focus. Our new Mission Statement is: NARPM® exists to support and empower professionals to elevate the property management industry through professional development, advocacy, and community.

With a new Congress and administration in place, the time is now to advocate for critical reforms that address the unique challenges residential property managers face while continuing to meet the needs of our landlords and tenants.

As a longtime NARPM® PAC supporter, I am always amazed by the work our Governmental Affairs team does. They have a huge job and yet navigate the politics with ease. They have spent countless hours meeting with legislators and staff and reading page after page of proposed legislation. We are lucky to have a great Governmental Affairs staff.

Many NARPM® Members joined us in our nation's capital to learn more about advocacy and held in-person meetings that are crucial for driving meaningful change. These meetings provided a platform to raise awareness, express concerns and provide decision-makers with information on important issues.

Throughout these meetings, we hoped to bridge the gap between the needs of our local communities and the actions of policymakers. By coming together as NARPM® Members, we can continue sharing knowledge and building coalitions to create solutions that benefit society as a whole. Advocacy is not just about speaking up; it's about taking action to ensure our voices are heard, respected and acted upon for the greater good.

Participating in advocacy is important because it gives you a chance to make a difference on issues that matter to you and your community. It's a way to speak up for those who may not have a voice or challenge systems that need change. Our advocacy efforts help ensure that concerns are heard by decision makers, influencing policies, laws and practices for the better.

Of course, we need funds to support these legislative efforts, and we make it easy to invest at www.narpm.org/invest.

I challenge you to participate, either by giving financially or contacting your National or State legislators. When you do this, you are contributing to a larger movement where our collective efforts can create real, lasting impact. Together, we can continue to strengthen our industry and make a meaningful impact through our collective efforts. We need to continue shouting it from the mountaintops.

Amy Hanson

Amy Hanson, MPM® RMP®
NARPM® President

Amy Hanson, MPM® RMP®, *is the Vice President of Property Management for PenFed Realty Texas in Plano, Texas, and is the 2025 National President for NARPM®. She is also active in the REALTOR® community in Local, State and National organizations and serves as Vice Chair for Leasing and Property Management at the Texas Association of REALTORS®. She was born and raised in San Antonio and holds a Bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University and a Master's degree from the University of Oklahoma. Amy is most proud of her two sons, Aaron and Aiden, who are her pride and joy. When she's not fixing toilets and collecting rent for owners she likes to read, garden and travel the world!*

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When the Sky Falls: *Crisis Communication in Property Management*

The news headlines are relentless. Wildfires ravage communities. Hurricanes pound coastal properties. Flash floods swamp entire neighborhoods. Tornadoes carve destructive paths through apartment complexes. And that's just the natural disasters. Property managers also face crises ranging from criminal incidents to infrastructure failures that can upend lives as dramatically as any storm.

When disaster strikes, the property manager becomes the focal point for an intense web of human needs and emotions. Tenants are scared, confused, and desperate for answers. Owners are anxious about their investments and liabilities. Staff members are overwhelmed by the sudden surge in demands. And you, as a property manager, must somehow maintain your composure while coordinating responses and communicating with everyone affected.

A TALE OF TWO MANAGERS

So, how do you handle disaster communications effectively? Well, let's imagine the good and bad scenarios that play out all too often in our industry. Let's say a severe ice storm hits two different property management companies in the same city. "Frank," who manages 200 units across three properties, had never really thought through a severe weather crisis plan. "It won't be that bad," he'd always told himself. "We'll handle it when it comes."

The storm arrives on a Tuesday evening. By Wednesday morning, pipes have burst in two of Frank's buildings. His phone is buzzing constantly with panicked texts and calls from tenants. Some are without heat. Others have water pouring through their ceilings. Everyone wants answers now. Frank's maintenance team is overwhelmed, and he has no clear protocol for prioritizing the emergency calls flooding in.

DROWNING IN DIGITAL CHAOS

Frank's tenants grow increasingly frustrated by his delayed responses and lack of clear information. Some take to social media to vent their anger, damaging his company's reputation. Property owners are calling, too, worried about damage to their investments and liability issues. Frank feels paralyzed. Every decision seems to create two new problems. His staff is exhausted and demoralized. The lack of a clear communication plan has turned a weather emergency into a full-blown crisis of confidence.

SAILING THROUGH THE STORM

Across town, Barbara faces the same ice storm at her properties. But Barbara spent time preparing for various emergency scenarios. She established a communication system that automatically activates when the weather service issues an ice storm warning. Her staff knows their roles. Her tenants receive immediate notifications about storm preparations and emergency protocols.

When pipes burst in one of Barbara's buildings, her team immediately implements their crisis communication plan. Every affected tenant receives updates every two hours, even if the update is simply "repairs still in progress." She has pre-established relationships with multiple plumbing companies, ensuring faster response times. Her owners receive detailed situation reports, including photos and estimated repair timelines.

Here's another way to look at it: Crisis communication planning is a type of insurance policy for your reputation. Just as you wouldn't leave a property uninsured against disasters, you can't leave your communication strategy to chance.

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BUILDING YOUR EMERGENCY LIFELINE

The core of Barbara's plan centers on four key principles: transparency, frequency, empathy, and action. She is always honest about what she knows. She communicates regularly, even when there isn't much new to report. She acknowledges the hardship and frustration her tenants are experiencing. Every communication includes clear action steps – what her team is doing and what tenants should do next.

Barbara's plan also includes specific roles for her staff. Everyone knows who is responsible for sending updates, who fields emergency maintenance calls, who documents damage for insurance purposes, and who coordinates with vendors. This clarity eliminates the confusion and redundancy that plagues Frank's response.

The most devastating impact of poor crisis communication is the long-term erosion of trust. When people feel abandoned or dismissed during emergencies, that resentment lingers long after the crisis passes. Every future interaction gets colored by that memory of being left in the dark.

Or, you can be like Barbara, known as a source of stability during hard times. Your team's confidence directly affects their crisis performance. When staff members know exactly what to do and say in emergencies, they project confidence to your tenants and owners. This ripple effect of calm competence can transform a potential panic into a manageable challenge.

Here's another way to look at it: Crisis communication planning is a type of insurance policy for your reputation. Just as you wouldn't leave a property uninsured against disasters, you can't leave your communication strategy to chance. The premium you pay is time spent preparing, but the payout – maintaining trust and stability during your community's most challenging moments – is priceless.

Crisis communication says a lot about the true nature of our organizations. In calm times, we can sometimes mask our operational weaknesses. But every crack in our communication foundation becomes glaringly obvious when emergencies strike. The property manager who rarely updates owners suddenly finds themselves unable to craft clear messages during a crisis. The team that operates in silos suddenly can't coordinate effectively when rapid response is needed. Crisis communication isn't a separate skill. It's an amplification of our daily communication habits.

This is why practice is so crucial. Don't create a detailed crisis communication plan and let it sit in a file cabinet until an emergency strikes. In the heat of the moment, we all revert to our habits. Regular drills and simulations might feel awkward or unnecessary, but they build the muscle memory your team needs when real emergencies arise. Even small exercises, like running through a power outage scenario during a team meeting, can identify gaps in your planning and strengthen your response capabilities.

Technology can be your greatest ally or your worst enemy during a crisis. While multiple communication channels provide more ways to reach people, they also create more potential points of failure. Your crisis communication plan must account for what happens when certain technologies aren't available. What if the power is out and phones aren't charging? What if internet service is down? What if your property management software is inaccessible? Having low-tech backup plans is essential.

And don't forget the different types of communication needs in a crisis. Tenants need immediate, practical information about their living situations. Owners need updates about property damage

and financial implications. Staff needs clear direction about priorities and procedures. Local authorities might need technical details about your property's systems. Your crisis communication plan should address the "how" of communication and the "what" for each audience. One size doesn't fit all when it comes to crisis messaging.

FROM CHAOS TO CALM: YOUR ACTION PLAN

Disasters and emergencies are inevitable in life. The only question is whether we'll face them prepared or unprepared.

Get your team together and imagine various crisis scenarios. Don't just think about the obvious natural disasters. Consider everything from power outages to crime incidents. For each scenario, write down every person who would need information. What would they need to know? How quickly would they need to know it?

Second, create your communication templates. Write out clear, empathetic messages for different situations. Include spaces for specific details you'll fill in during an actual crisis. Have these reviewed by your team and perhaps even some trusted tenants. The middle of an emergency is not the time to craft careful messages.

Third, establish your communication protocol. Who contacts whom? Through what channels? How often? Create a clear chain of communication that everyone understands. Test it regularly through drills. Remember that some communication methods might be unavailable during certain emergencies, so always have backups.

And build relationships before you need them. Establish connections with multiple vendors, emergency services, and local authorities. Create emergency contact lists and update them regularly. Consider joining property management groups where you can share resources and assistance during crises.

As a property manager, you can't prevent every crisis. But you can lead effectively when they occur. Start planning today, because tomorrow might be the day you need it.

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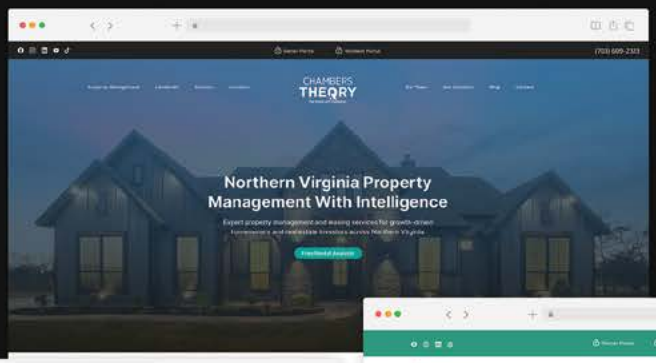

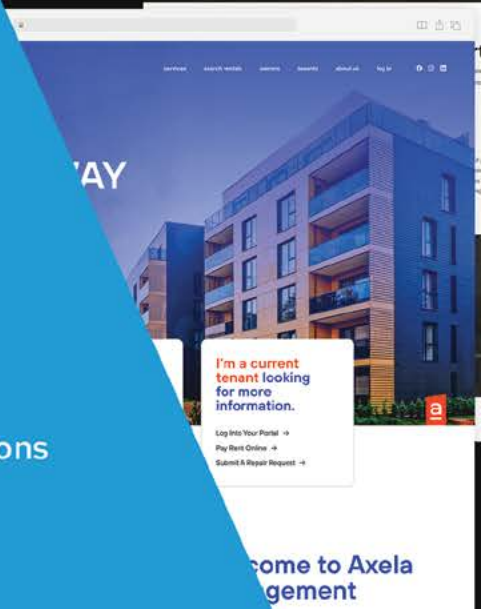

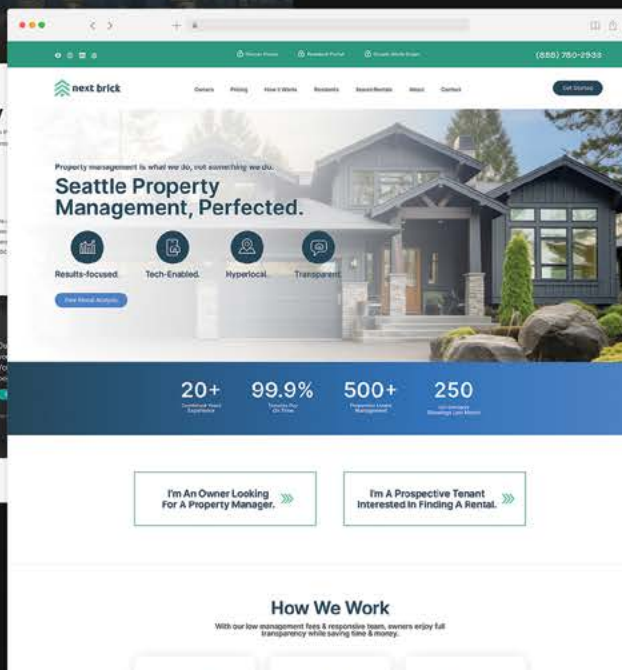

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Blogging in an AI-driven world

Kristen Ewen *is the Vice President of SEO at Property Manager Websites (PMW), where she has been a key leader since the company's inception 15 years ago. With a deep expertise in search engine optimization, Kristen has played a crucial role in shaping PMW's digital strategies and helping clients achieve top search rankings. Her innovative approach and commitment to results have made her an industry leader in the property management and web development space. Visit www.mypmw.com, or email Kristen at kristen@propertymanagerwebsites.com.*

Remember when "Googling it" felt like the pinnacle of modern problem-solving? Now, artificial intelligence (AI) and large language models (LLMs) are sweeping in, making old-school keyword searches look about as cutting-edge as flip phones.

With chatbots that can interpret your questions in natural language and spit back shockingly relevant answers, it's fair to wonder if blogging is about to go the way of dial-up internet. Spoiler alert: It's not. But it is evolving.

THE EVOLUTION OF SEARCH ENGINES: UNDERSTANDING USER INTENT

Search engines have come a long way since the early days of basic keyword matching. Back then, stuffing your page full of the right keywords could propel you to the top of the rankings. However, algorithms have become far more sophisticated. Google's major updates – like Hummingbird, RankBrain and BERT – signaled a shift toward understanding user intent and natural language.

Instead of scanning for exact keyword matches, modern search engines interpret context, synonyms and even the deeper meaning behind a query.

Now, AI and large language models take this to the next level. Tools like ChatGPT and Google's own LLMs are trained on massive datasets of text, enabling them to understand and generate human-like language. Search queries have evolved into conversational prompts; rather than typing fragmented keywords, users pose full questions expecting detailed and immediate answers. With AI's ability to process nuanced language, search engines can deliver results that closely match the user's assumed intent, not just a surface-level keyword.

BLOGGING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

While AI can automate certain writing tasks, it can't replicate genuine human expertise, personal experience or brand storytelling. A blog remains one of the best platforms to showcase your thought leadership, share detailed insights and give readers (and prospective clients) a reason to trust you.

Moreover, blogs feed the content pipelines of AI tools. When these systems crawl the web for answers, they prioritize sources that are thorough, credible and frequently cited. Over 70% of content sited by LLM's is coming from blogs! That's why a well-maintained blog with high-quality posts stands a better chance of being pulled into AI-driven search snippets or knowledge panels.

THE SHIFT TO LONGER, HIGHER-QUALITY CONTENT

For years, content marketers often believed that posting frequent, bite-sized articles was the key to dominating search results. The logic was simple: More pages mean more opportunities to rank. This methodology has worked well for years. However, the trend is now shifting toward depth rather than breadth. Why? Because search engines, powered by increasingly intelligent AI, prioritize how thoroughly a piece of content addresses a user's query.

A single, in-depth post – covering all facets of a subject – can outperform a series of shorter, surface-level articles on related topics. Rather than forcing users to click through multiple pages, a comprehensive post keeps them engaged and satisfied, signaling to search engines that your site is a high-quality resource. Over time, producing fewer but more robust blog posts can substantially boost

A single, in-depth post...can outperform a series of shorter, surface-level articles on related topics. ...A comprehensive post keeps [users] engaged and satisfied, signaling to search engines that your site is a high-quality resource.

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your credibility, authority, and visibility online.

CONTENT CREATION AND DISCOVERY - E-E-A-T MORE!

AI and large language models have introduced new ways for users to discover and interact with content. Conversational interfaces, like chatbots and voice assistants, are increasingly how people find answers, whether they're at home or on the go. As these AI-driven solutions parse user queries, they're hunting for content that covers every angle of a question – essentially looking for an authoritative, well-rounded take.

Furthermore, the concept of Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness and Trustworthiness, or E-E-A-T, has gained traction as search engines emphasize credibility. Blogs that cite reputable sources, present data-driven insights, and offer expert opinions are more likely to appear in top results or AI summaries. If your blog can demonstrate both depth and authenticity, you increase your chances of being included in these AI-generated responses.

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING IN-DEPTH, EXPERT-LEVEL BLOG POSTS

- **Comprehensive topic research:** Begin with thorough research on any subject you plan to cover. Identify the most pressing questions and relevant subtopics. Dive into current studies, news articles and authoritative sources to ensure you're not missing crucial information.
- **Use of credible sources and data:** Linking to reputable industry reports, peer-reviewed studies or government databases can significantly bolster the trustworthiness of your blog. Include data points or stats wherever possible, but be sure to cite them properly.
- **Organized structure and clear formatting:** Even if your post is lengthy, it should be easy to navigate. Break down large sections with clear headings, bullet points, or numbered lists. This structure helps readers and AI tools alike understand the hierarchy and flow of your content.
- **Personal and professional insights:** Inject your own experience or expert opinions to set your content apart. Sharing real-world examples, case studies and anecdotes demonstrates practical knowledge and adds a relatable human element.
- **Multimedia Integration – VIDEO:** Don't limit yourself to just static visuals – go the extra mile by adding embedded videos to your blog posts. Whether it's a quick explainer clip, a walkthrough of key concepts or interviews with industry experts, video content can significantly boost user engagement. Combining charts, infographics and videos not only breaks up large blocks of text but also offers multiple ways for visitors to absorb information.
- **Building authority and trust:** In a world where AI tools can analyze and synthesize information at lightning speed, standing out requires human authenticity and proven expertise. If you're a professional in your field, highlight your credentials. Make sure your name and qualifications are clearly displayed in an author bio, so readers (and search algorithms) understand the expertise behind the words.

Another pillar of building trust is consistency. Publishing a single masterpiece post and then going silent for six months won't cement your authority. Even if you opt for fewer posts, keep them on a reliable schedule. Regularly update older content with new data or insights to ensure it remains accurate and relevant. Rewrite, update and combine older posts that are all on the same topic! Lastly, encourage user engagement!

MEASURING SUCCESS IN THE NEW SEO LANDSCAPE

Tracking the performance of your blog is still vital, but the metrics you focus on may need to evolve. Traditional indicators – like organic traffic and bounce rate – remain important. However, watch out for emerging metrics tied to AI-driven features, such as how often your content appears in featured snippets, knowledge panels or voice assistant answers.

Also, evaluate engagement signals in greater depth. Look at average session duration, scroll depth and the number of returning visitors – all signs that users find your content valuable. Keep a close eye on shares or mentions across social media platforms; these often indicate a level of authority that can influence how AI ranks or cites your content.

And don't forget about conversion rates – ultimately, the goal of quality blogging is not just to generate clicks, but to foster meaningful actions.

EMBRACE THE POWER OF QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

As AI and large language models reshape the digital landscape, in-depth, high-quality blogging remains a cornerstone of effective content marketing. While short posts may still have their place, the real opportunity lies in creating authoritative, comprehensive content that resonates with both humans and algorithms.

As the expert, remember that the human touch, your unique experiences and authenticity, will always set you apart in a world where information is increasingly machine-generated.

Scott P. Brady *is the owner of Progressive Property Management (with 1,050 doors under management), Progressive Association Management (195 communities and 12,000 owners under management) and Partners Real Estate Group (94 agents) in Southern California. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a degree in Comparative Literature (German, Latin and English) and obtained his MBA from Cal State Fullerton in 1993. Scott is married to Dr. Deanna Brady and has three children and three grandchildren.*

The 7 Tenets (not Tenants) of a Thriving Property Management Business: How to Build a Profitable, Valuable and Enjoyable Business from Day 1 (Part 3)

Editor's note: This article is the third in a three-part series. Part 2 appeared in February's Residential Resource® *magazine and covered Tenet 5. The series concludes in this issue with Tenets 6 and 7.*

BE (OR BECOME) THE EXPERT

When you read this magazine, attend a conference or listen to a podcast, you are inundated with information from industry "experts." I understand the temptation to hear the siren call of an expert because ignorance can be expensive, and it is preferable to listen to the wisdom of others.

But when you completely outsource industry expertise you may be led down a path that is not right for your property management journey. If you don't know what you're doing, you may pay for the expertise of others, but their advice may not be the best solution for you. I am not saying that industry experts, consultants, vendors and the many companies who are in our orbit are not valuable and worthy of the fees they charge.

As Lewis Carroll wrote, if you don't know where you are going, any road (or expert) will take you there.

When you take the time and effort to become an expert in this industry, it not only helps your brand and gives you the ability to create content for your owners, but it also builds your confidence as a business owner. Experts like to mingle with other experts.

Our industry is so diverse with many owners specializing in certain niches. No one is an expert in every possible aspect of property management, real estate, association management or maintenance services. Our field is vast, and there is always an opportunity to increase your skill set.

Don't wait five years or the purported 10,000 hours; start immediately to increase your expertise.

Pick your poison and find a way to build that perception as an expert: conduct local investor, landlord or Board seminars; write industry blogs or create videos; offer property management training classes at your local association; mastermind and network with like-type company owners; submit a presentation for state or national conferences on your new-found expertise; or join your state investment housing committee and serve on a Board.

The information and opportunity are out there; it is up to you to act.

BE THE CCO (CHIEF CARE OFFICER)

I am asked at conventions and meetings what do I do since I don't work in the business and now work with others who work on the business.

Here is what I do: I care about my businesses. I decide every day to care on one aspect and make incremental improvements. The experience for every owner whose property or association we manage, every direct mail and email that leaves our office and every action we take is a direct reflection of me. I care about that impression. I care about my company.

In no particular order, I care about our brand, the actions we take (or don't take), our business principles, the monthly profit, my team members, the vision of our company and everything not delegated. It seems clear to me that if I take care of my business, the business will take care of me.

I also care about our industry. I want good operators to succeed and build a business they can be proud of, and perhaps, one someone in their family can propagate. In 2010, I was a good real estate agent making a nice living from a brand I had nurtured over 12 years.

Now, after 12 years in the management industry, I have built a solid business that has provided not only for my family but has made a difference in the lives of our owners, tenants, Boards and team members.

The more successful we are, the more good we can do in our market area. We are not profiteers, just looking to make a buck; we are missionaries, trying to make a difference in the lives with whom we do business.

Break free from the old.

Enter the new era of property management.

Are you trapped in outdated systems and overwhelmed by clunky workflows? It's time to escape the chaos and embrace the future. Rentvine empowers property managers to disrupt the norm, streamline operations, and scale with ease.

Visit rentvine.com to schedule a demo today!

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Mike Nelson, MPM® RMP®, *is a NARPM® National Instructor and managing broker of Excalibur Homes, LLC, CRMC®. Excalibur represents over 1,400 rental homes in the Metro Atlanta area. He is also an instructor for the Georgia Association of Realtors. He speaks and teaches classes around the country for various NARPM® Chapters and Realtor organizations on the topics of property management and real estate investing.*

Performetrics: Transforming Performance Metrics into Company Success

Do you remember the NARPM® Accounting Standards?

One of the purposes of these standards was to give NARPM® Members a standard for tracking their company's performance. The numbers generated out of the standards are very helpful for the owner to see when they should spend more on advertising because of the value of each new account, or when they have a problem within their business development activities because their closing rate is so low, or many other important metrics that a successful company ought to know.

If you knew that you were only paying $1,000 for each new account, and that each new account generates $10,000 in net income over the life of the account, would you be willing to invest more to sign up more accounts? NARPM® is looking for 50 Members to assist with the beta testing of a key performance indicator (KPI) project.

The second part of the NARPM® Accounting Standards project is to determine what "normal" in the single-family residential property management industry looks like. That is what NARPM® is building now at no cost to the Members.

There are two aspects of this project: market data and privacy.

First, let's talk privacy. NARPM® has hired consultants who will help Members learn their performance metrics and how to improve them. The information that is submitted is confidential, which is why this project works.

Since we have heard some Members would rather not share with others their sensitive information, this NARPM® survey will take Member responses and enter them into a database that only the NARPM®'s contractor has access to, not any other Members or Affiliates.

Now on to market data. A company may already be generating these metrics regarding their own performance, but they have no idea how well, or how poorly, they are performing relative to other property management companies.

This NARPM® KPI project will send a monthly survey around to each Member and ask them 16 questions. If all 16 questions are answered (not required), then 35 performance KPIs will be generated for that Member. The "benefit" is that the average of all the survey responses will also be available.

These numbers are only for demonstration purposes so that you better understand the math. Suppose your company's average income per unit per month is $200. Suppose the average life of one of your property management accounts is 48 months. These are just two of 35 metrics.

This Member logs in to the NARPM® website, connects to the KPI Dashboard link, and the Member can see that the average income per month per unit is $250 and the average life of a property management account is 72 months.

Wouldn't you want to know if your company was underperforming so that you could identify problems (comes from other metrics), fix those problems, and greatly improve profitability?

This collection of data (monthly surveys) and presentation of the results, in a private way, will give our business owner Members an opportunity to improve the profitability of their companies. We hope you will join in the beta testing of this new project. Please consider joining in to assist with this new project: https://forms.office.com/r/zWA78D9fPt.

Continued from page 30 "Financing"

three years, a profit-loss statement, a balance sheet and the letter of intent to purchase the existing small business. You'll also need personal documents including your tax returns and a personal financial statement.

You'll need to find the right lender for your residential property management business acquisition loan. When looking for a lender who offers SBA loans, ideally you want to work with an SBA Preferred Lender, one who is part of the SBA's Preferred Lender Program. Also check to ensure that the lender has significant experience helping residential property management businesses secure SBA loans.

DISCUSSION BOARD Hot Topics

WHAT HOT TOPICS ARE PROPERTY MANAGERS CURRENTLY TALKING ABOUT?

NARPM® maintains Discussion Boards in the NARPM® Community for several specialties within the organization. These Discussion Boards enable members to stay in contact and to share questions and concerns as they arise. If you would like to participate in one of these groups, visit **community.narpm.org** and look for **Communities**. Member login is required. Discussion Boards are only available to NARPM® members.

Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of the authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of the officers, staff, or Members of NARPM®. Any legal matters or advice mentioned herein should be discussed with an attorney, accountant, or other professional before use in a particular state or situation. All readers are responsible for their own investigation and use of the information.

Q ***Help! I have not encountered this before. Tenant calls at 4:35 p.m.; the shower knob came off (no water is leaking). I begin calling plumbers, and none can guarantee the fix. It is an old shower valve, plus it is now emergency call pricing. I reached a plumber willing to come at 8 a.m. The tenant claimed that is not good enough and that he would go to the Hilton hotel if not fixed that night and deduct from rent. What is a reasonable time for a repair? Does he have the right to call it uninhabitable and pick the most expensive hotel? He is a plumber himself and [is] willing to repair for a hefty price and forgo the Hilton if we'd OK him to [do the] repair. Any shared experience would be appreciated.***

A *In Michigan, this would NOT be considered an emergency requiring a hotel stay. We'd have a "reasonable" amount of time to address the repair. What does your lease state? What about state local statutes? This won't be easy as the tenant believes they are right, and many will burn bridges rather than admit their error.*

A *Same here. This is not an emergency, nor would we pay for a hotel. Life happens. Last week my power was out for two days. No one paid for my hotel room. I don't mean to sound harsh about it, but we would simply say, "Gosh, we are sorry this has happened, and we are assigning a plumber to come on out. They will give you a call to set an appointment and go from there."*

If they want a hotel, their insurance can kick in and cover. But surely they would say "no" to him and stating the same thing. The shower not working isn't an emergency.

For us, as long as we are working hard to get repairs completed in a timely manner, that is what we do. When I hear a tenant fussing loudly and demanding, it is usually something else going on, and we are the ones they are trying to vent. Good luck.

A *Do you require all of your tenants to have renter's insurance? In my experience, it is the tenant's insurance policy that would pay for a hotel should the stay be necessary. This is not something you would pass off to the owner. In Florida, for example, we deal with HVAC issues, of course, in the middle of July! We are to move quickly and efficiently to get it repaired, but sometimes you are waiting on a part to be ordered, or a home warranty to schedule their vendor. Every time this happens, it is the tenant's insurance that pays for their hotel stay. I would suggest to your tenant that this is EXACTLY why you require renter's insurance!*

A *You did the right thing in not letting the renter do the repair, even though he is a plumber. When it comes to a habitability issue, as long as you are making a concerted effort to get the repair done as soon as possible, in my humble opinion, the renter can be mad and inconvenienced. But they certainly cannot demand to be reimbursed for a Hilton hotel room. If the water to the whole house had had to be turned off overnight, then we absolutely would send that renter to a reasonable hotel. You can do without a shower for overnight, but you must have at least one working toilet. This guy is being a jerk to you and trying to bully you. Do the tough love conversation/email with him. Plug the details into ChatGPT and ask how you would respond to him in a professional clear manner. (I use ChatGPT to help my brain word responses to lousy online reviews.) Good luck.*

Remember – everything you read on the Internet is not true. If necessary, seek legal counsel.

See the entire discussion here:
https://community.narpm.org/home

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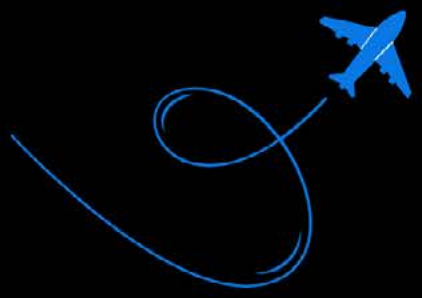

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- Manage Work Orders
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- Automate Move-Ins / Outs
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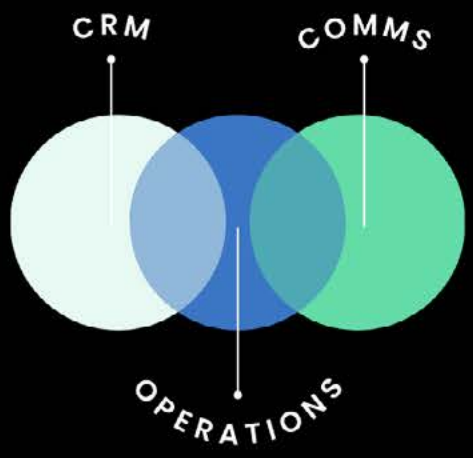

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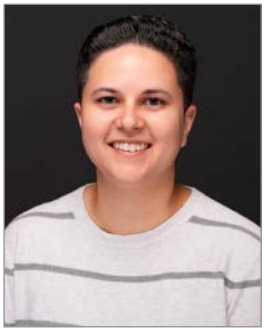

Becca Nevarez, *Rently's Senior Marketing Director, is a talented communication professional with a broad range of expertise including corporate branding initiatives, marketing communications, digital marketing, event marketing and sales enablement. Since joining the company in 2018, Becca has contributed to significant sales growth and enhanced client support. Prior to Rently, Becca worked at The Walt Disney Company.*

Rental fraudsters prey on desperation in tight housing market

The process of finding a new rental home or apartment is fraught with stress. With limited options, budget realities, location constraints and more, renters navigate an intense journey to find the perfect home, often leading them straight into the trap of a sophisticated scammer.

Rental scams have spiked in recent years. In 2023 alone, the Federal Trade Commission showed more than 10,000 rental scam cases opened, and the Better Business Bureau reported a 45% increase in rental scam complaints over the past two years.

As housing demand outpaces supply, new data from Rently shows how fraudsters exploit this desperation with alarming success. Using fake listings, fabricated identities, and high-pressure tactics, these scammers target vulnerable renters, leaving financial and emotional turmoil in their wake.

The pervasiveness of scams also undermines the credibility of trustworthy rental platforms, property management companies and landlords, creating a climate of suspicion that erodes confidence in the rental process.

"As housing demand surges, scammers are exploiting renters' desperation with alarming precision," said Rently CEO Merrick Lackner. "Beyond the financial loss, these scams create lasting emotional harm, turning what should be an exciting step into a source of stress and heartbreak."

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

To understand the prevalence and impact of these scams, Rently partnered with the third-party survey platform Pollfish on the 2024 Rently Survey: Rental Scams and Fraud Report to explore the experiences and concerns of 500 U.S. adults who have rented an apartment, condo or house over the past five years and have either experienced or are aware of rental scams and fraud.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Renters fear scams are lurking around every corner:** 93% of renters believe that rental scams are common, and 90% are worried about falling victim themselves.
- **Facebook is the epicenter of rental scams, luring victims with the perfect package:** Among those who have fallen victim to a rental scam, 88% came across the fraudulent listing on Facebook, and 12% found it on Craigslist. Top features drawing them in were the ideal location, below-market price, and fast availability.
- **Scammers cash in fast:** Before discovering that they were scammed, 70% of victims had already paid their security deposit, 59% paid their application fee, and 50% had paid their first month's rent. 62% lost more than $500 from the scam, with nearly half (48%) losing more than $1,000 and 8% losing more than $5,000.
- **Pervasiveness of scams is shaking confidence in the rental market:** Renters place the blame on rental platforms (40%) and landlords (23%), and 39% say they distrust online rental platforms.
- **Renters demand better protection and education:** Renters expect more proactive prevention efforts from the broader rental industry, with 92% saying it's "important" or "very important" to educate the public about rental scams and fraud, and the same amount saying it's "important" or "very important" that landlords and property management companies utilize more technology to prevent fraudulent listings.

RENTERS FEAR SCAMS ARE EVERYWHERE

The threat of fraud looms large over the rental market, with 93% of renters polled perceiving rental scams as a common threat. Nearly half – 46% – say such scams are "very common," while only 6% view them as a rare occurrence.

Beneath this near-universal perception lies deeply ingrained anxiety that renters feel when searching

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for housing. 90% of renters fret about becoming a victim of a rental scam, with 46% saying they're "very concerned" about this taking place. For many, the prospect of losing hard-earned money to fraudsters is compounded by the anticipated emotional toll. When asked how they feel when hearing about rental scams, 73% felt angry at the scammers, 63% were empathetic toward victims, and 51% were anxious about also becoming a victim.

FACEBOOK IS THE EPICENTER OF RENTAL SCAMS

Social media's role in facilitating rental scams cannot be overstated. Among victims of rental fraud, 88% came across the fraudulent listing on Facebook, far outpacing other platforms like Craigslist, which accounted for just 12%. Facebook's dominance highlights its attractiveness to scammers, who leverage its wide reach, lax security and low barriers to entry.

The fraudulent listings themselves were carefully crafted to attract renters suffering from a tight housing market. Discovering a listing in an ideal location drew in 57% of victims, while 55% were swayed by below-market prices, and quick availability sealed the deal for 52%.

SCAMMERS CASH IN FAST

By creating a sense of urgency, scammers were able to drain vulnerable renters of their savings and security, leaving lasting financial and emotional scars. Before realizing they had been defrauded, 70% of victims had already paid a security deposit, 59% had handed over an application fee, and 50% had even paid their first month's rent.

The financial losses are equally staggering. 62% of victims lost more than $500, with nearly a quarter losing between $1,001 and $2,000. For some, the impact was even greater—8% of respondents reported losses exceeding $5,000. These amounts are not easily recoverable for many households, compounding the stress of an already traumatic experience.

CONFIDENCE IN RENTAL INDUSTRY ERODES

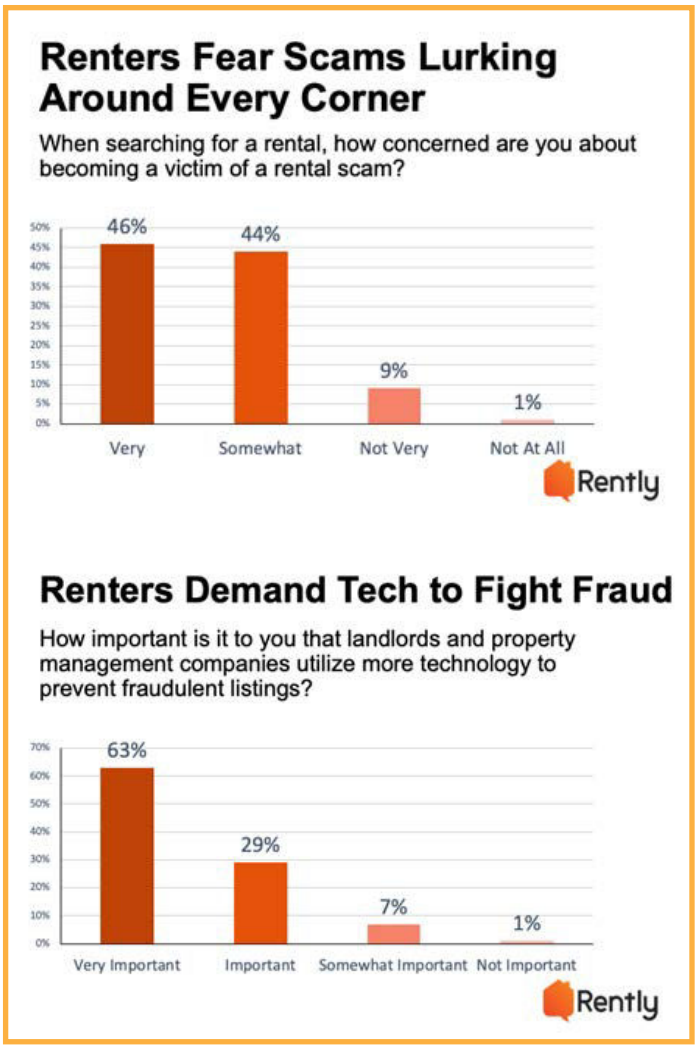
For many renters, trust in landlords, property management companies and rental platforms is waning due to the pervasiveness of scams, creating a climate of suspicion that erodes confidence in the rental process as a whole. 39% of renters claim to distrust online rental platforms, with 27% saying they "only somewhat" trust the platforms, and a mere .6% saying they "completely trust" the platforms.

When asked who should be responsible for preventing rental scams, 40% pointed to rental platforms, 23% said landlords, 19% said renters themselves, and 17% said government authorities should shoulder the burden.

RENTERS DEMAND BETTER PROTECTION AND EDUCATION

Eager for protection from this looming threat, renters expressed overwhelming support for measures aimed at safeguarding the rental process. Technology plays an increasingly prominent role in crime prevention, as well as reassurance to vulnerable individuals that every possible step has been taken. 92% of renters said it's "important" or "very important" that landlords and property management companies utilize more technology to prevent fraudulent listings.

Within property listing platforms, renters said they would be most assured by those with landlord identity verification (85%), secure payment processing (70%), past tenant reviews (66%), real-time property viewing (65%) and photo verification (59%).



The resources and tools renters believe will help them avoid rental scams included a mandatory verification process for all rental listings (73%), community reviews or ratings of landlords and properties (54%), scam detection tools or app integrated into rental platforms (48%), and government hotlines to report or verify suspicious listings (37%).

Renters see room for improvement when it comes to educating consumers. 77% would like to see alerts for high-risk areas or platforms, 65% desire tutorials on how to verify listings, 64% would like reviews and forums for sharing scam experiences, and 56% requested articles or guides on spotting scams.

"Rental fraud isn't just a financial crime; it's a direct attack on the trust and stability that renters depend on during one of life's most critical decisions," Lackner said. "Our industry must lead the charge in outpacing scammers with stronger safeguards, transparency and education, ensuring every renter can search for a home without fear of exploitation."

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Rently used the third-party survey platform Pollfish to conduct an online survey in November 2024 of 500 U.S. adults aged 18 and older who have rented an apartment, condo or house over the past five years, and have either experienced or are aware of rental scams and fraud. Researchers reviewed all responses for quality control.

That's Regional Vice President

The RVP Bulletin:

Atlantic Region: Who needs the lesson?

NARPM® Atlantic Regional Vice President **Steve Pardon, MPM® RMP®,** *is Broker/Owner of JMAX Property Management in Salem, Virginia. JMAX manages around 400 single-family residential and multi-family residential in the Roanoke Valley. Steve joined NARPM® in 2012 and has served at the state level and in governmental affairs, most recently as Vice Chair of the PAC Trustees.*

When we talk about education in NARPM®, we almost always mean educating property management professionals. NARPM® also strives to educate investors about the benefits of hiring a professional and legislators about the impact of laws and regulations. Property managers, investors and law makers are NARPM®'s target audience.

But I've always thought there are some other folks out there who needed some education that NARPM® doesn't reach: neighbors.

Raise your hand if you have ever gotten a message similar in tone to the excerpt below:

"These people have a rap sheet longer than Kareem Abdul Jabbar's arm. These are not nice people, and they are not welcome in the neighborhood. I hope you guys are willing to have the guts and courage to do something about it. If not, I am going to make sure that this information gets put out to the public and everybody knows what is going on as far as you people not being willing to do something about it."

If you have been in the business more than five minutes, I'm sure you have. Maybe without the dated NBA reference, but you get the point.

When this call came to our company, I was excited for the call back. I was going to get an opportunity to educate!

When I called the upset neighbor, I thought he would welcome my lessons on such topics as disparate impact, source of income discrimination and how long an eviction takes. Shockingly, he did not.

> "It's time I stop looking at every situation for the black-and-white answer that can be dropped into an SOP. Black and white is a myth; it's all gray. Realizing that sometimes all the answers are lousy is a valuable lesson to learn."

To be fair, the neighbor had a right to be upset. Police have been to the property on occasion, and recently it was targeted by a drive-by shooter. There is the possibility some of the inhabitants of the property may not be the most upstanding citizens. That being said, in the eyes of the law for this particular instance the tenants are the victims. Try telling THAT to the neighbor.

As I got bashed on social media over this incident by the neighbor and his friends for not caring about neighborhoods and supposedly renting to unqualified people, I heard from members of my own family (who, mind you, have heard me talk about my job for over 20 years), "Well, you don't rent to people with criminal histories, right?" Yes, family members. Yes, I do.

Amongst friends who heard about the saga I got, "They sound like trouble. Can't you just evict them?" No, friends. No, I can't.

Normally, this would be the part of the article where I would go on a long rant about supporting common sense laws, the need for expedited legal processes and how important it is to make our voices heard in Washington by donating to NARPM® PAC. All of that is important, of course, but since today's topic is education, I thought I'd ask in the broader scope: How do we educate the neighbors?

If I had some answers (better than my one-on-one phone tutoring idea), I would insert them here — but as I pondered the question all I did was come

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up with more.

Is it arrogant to even suggest they need the education? No amount of understanding will change the fact that the neighbors feel they are suffering because of actions at a property that we profit from.

Is it wrong to even worry about the neighbors and what they want done when an occupied home was shot at? The tenant and their small children have suffered more than the neighbors. They want quality housing and a safe neighborhood, too.

Are the neighbors on Facebook right that I should be held accountable personally for the rentals in their neighborhood and the actions of our tenants? This is my chosen profession. No one made me do it. I own the company, and within the law I approved our screening policies.

I could go on…

When presented with a problem at work, do you ever go down these rabbit holes? Lately, I have. A lot. These recent ponderings have made me realize that thinking the problem would be solved for everyone if the neighbors would just take the time to get educated on my business was wrong. I'm the one who needs the schooling.

It's time I stop looking at every situation for the black-and-white answer that can be dropped into an SOP. Black and white is a myth; it's all gray. Realizing that sometimes all the answers are lousy is a valuable lesson to learn.

At conferences there is a win-win solution to any problem just around the next corner of the trade show. In the real world they are a bit harder to find.

A designation is what sets you apart from your competition.

Be #NARPMSmart

Designees approved at the February 2025 Professional Development Committee meeting

Brian Alterman, RMP®
Rental Guys
Ponte Vedra, FL

The Professional Development Committee now approves Designation Packets monthly.

- Please submit your packet by the **15th of each month** to be approved.

You must be a Member of NARPM® National in order to be eligible to apply.

***There is a new upload system available to submit your designation / certification documents. To receive instructions to upload your documents to the new upload system, please email: designationinfo@narpm.org

Join the other 1,000+ NARPM® Members who have earned their designations or certifications.
Contact designationinfo@narpm.org for more information.

The power that comes with increased knowledge and confidence is tangible. It's what sets you apart from your competition. **Professional designations from NARPM® have an impact on your company and your clients and the results translate directly to the bottom line.** Add the credibility of our professional designations to your name and to your company name!

NARPM® designations* are earned with a combination of property management experience, NARPM® and industry education, and service to the association through volunteer activities. You may have taken clock-hour courses to maintain your license. Imagine the gains when the courses are specifically focused on what you do as a property manager and are being taught by a property management professional. Take it one step further and envision networking with other experienced property managers from across the country. Earning your NARPM® designation will bring a whole new dimension to your daily tasks.

*You must be a member of NARPM® National in order to be eligible to apply for a NARPM® designation or certification.

Many of you have already started the designation process and some of you have all the necessary items to complete your designation. You just have to send them in. What's stopping you?

Dr. Shenetta Malkia-Sapp, PhD, *is President of NARPM®'s District of Columbia Chapter and the CEO of The PMs of the City Realty and The PMs of the City LLC. The PMs of the City LLC is a full-service property management, asset management and consulting firm specializing in residential management. The PMs of the City Realty is a full-service residential and commercial real estate brokerage serving Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia and Georgia.*

District of Columbia Chapter: The importance of knowledge on legislation and laws in residential property and asset management

As residential property and asset managers, we operate in a field that is constantly evolving. We are tasked with the responsibility of managing properties, ensuring they meet legal and regulatory standards, and addressing the needs of our clients.

However, one of the most important elements of our work is often overlooked – the critical role that legislation and laws play in the day-to-day operations of our businesses. Understanding how laws can either support or hinder our work is not only essential for compliance but also be pivotal in ensuring the long-term success of our business and the protection of our clients' assets.

THE EVER-CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF HOUSING LAWS

The real estate and property management industries are regulated by numerous federal, state and local laws. These laws cover everything from Fair Housing practices to rent control, building codes, eviction processes, tenant rights and more. As property managers, we must navigate this complex legal landscape to ensure that we comply with all the regulations that govern our work. But it's not just about avoiding penalties or fines. Being well-versed in these laws gives us the ability to advocate for policies that benefit both property owners and tenants.

In the District of Columbia, for example, housing laws are particularly dynamic and responsive to the social, economic and political climate. Legislation can change rapidly, and what might have been a straightforward process yesterday may be completely redefined today. This shift can have a profound impact on residential property owners and managers, and failing to stay updated on these changes can result in financial penalties, legal disputes or an erosion of client trust.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVOCACY AND BEING AT THE TABLE

This is why NARPM®'s District of Columbia (D.C.) Chapter has taken a proactive approach by establishing the Housing Provider Advocacy Committee. As part of our mission to provide the best possible service to our clients, we recognize that we need to have a stronger voice at the table when it comes to housing policies and legislation. By being involved in the legislative process, we can ensure that the interests of housing providers are represented and that we can work collaboratively with policymakers to shape fair and effective regulations.

Our committee's goal is to monitor proposed legislation that could impact the property management and housing sectors, communicate with lawmakers about the potential effects of such legislation, and advocate for policies that support property owners, managers, and residents alike. We understand that the role of housing providers is vital to maintaining a healthy housing market, and we believe that having a seat at the table allows us to influence decisions that directly impact our clients' assets.

KNOWLEDGE OF LEGISLATION ENHANCES DECISION-MAKING AND RISK MITIGATION

A deep understanding of relevant legislation doesn't just help us avoid legal pitfalls. It empowers us to make informed decisions that can benefit our clients and improve the overall efficiency of property management.

For example, if a new rent control law is introduced, a knowledgeable property manager can anticipate how the law will affect rental income and advise their clients on the best course of action, whether it's raising rents within the legal limit or exploring other ways to increase revenue. Similarly, understanding eviction processes and tenants' rights can help prevent costly legal battles by ensuring that proper procedures are followed when resolving disputes.

Another area where legislation plays a significant role is in the management of property maintenance

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and safety standards. For instance, laws surrounding lead paint, mold remediation and fire safety regulations must be adhered to for avoidance of fines or lawsuits. Staying on top of these laws helps property managers ensure that they are not only compliant but that the properties they manage are safe, healthy, and attractive to tenants.

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF HOUSING POLICY

As our industry evolves, so too does the way in which laws and regulations are crafted. With the rise of issues such as affordable housing shortages, rent stabilization, tenant advocacy and environmental sustainability, housing policy is more critical than ever before.

Property managers must be prepared to engage with these issues and advocate for solutions that balance the interests of both tenants and property owners. In this environment, the role of our Housing Provider Advocacy Committee is becoming increasingly important.

Through our advocacy efforts, NARPM®'s D.C. Chapter seeks to build relationships with local and state lawmakers to ensure that policies reflect the realities of property management. Whether it's advocating for more flexible eviction laws or pushing for policies that make it easier for property owners to maintain their assets, our committee is committed to shaping a regulatory environment that fosters business success while protecting tenants' rights.

As residential property managers, we cannot afford to operate in a vacuum. Knowledge of the legislation that governs our industry is not just a matter of compliance; it is a strategic advantage that can help us grow our businesses, safeguard our clients' interests, and influence the policies that shape the future of housing. That's why the Housing Provider Advocacy Committee of the D.C. Chapter of NARPM® is so critical to our work.

By staying informed, advocating for our clients and having a voice in the legislative process, we ensure that our businesses thrive while contributing to the creation of a more fair and sustainable housing market.

I encourage every property manager to engage with local legislative processes and stay informed about the ever-changing laws that affect our work. Through education, advocacy and collaboration, we can continue to be a strong force for positive change in the housing industry.

Through our advocacy efforts, NARPM®'s D.C. Chapter seeks to build relationships with local and state lawmakers to ensure that policies reflect the realities of property management.

Jordan Coleman *is a loan officer at Live Oak Bank, specializing in financing for property management. Jordan brings over seven years of experience in the financial services industry, including a strong background in supporting small businesses across diverse sectors. Visit liveoakbank.com/propertymanagement or email Jordan Coleman at jordan.coleman@liveoak.bank.*

Financing your residential property management business acquisition with an SBA 7(a) Loan

If you want to buy an existing residential property management business and are looking into financing options, a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan might be the ideal fit for you. These loans are backed by the SBA, a part of the U.S. federal government that partners with lenders to help small businesses receive funding.

The SBA reduces lender risk by guaranteeing the loans up to 85 percent, allowing lenders to take more chances on small businesses. Through SBA-backed loans, new residential property management business owners can gain access to financing that they otherwise might not receive through conventional loans.

The 7(a) loan is the SBA's primary business loan program and can be used for a variety of residential property management business needs such as purchasing commercial real estate to operate your business out of, obtaining working capital and refinancing debt. The loan can also be used for a new owner or an existing owner to acquire a residential property management business, which the SBA refers to as a change of ownership.

BENEFITS OF AN SBA 7(A) LOAN FOR A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT BUSINESS PURCHASE

SBA 7(a) loans offer numerous advantages when compared with conventional loans. They are designed to be affordable for small businesses, and they can be easier to qualify for – which is ideal for residential property management business owners.

These loans offer competitive terms, typically with lower equity injection required and fees than other types of loans. The loans typically do not have financial covenants or balloon payments associated with them.

SBA 7(a) loans also offer large amounts, up to $5 million. They also offer long repayment terms – up to 10 years, and even up to 25 years if over half of the loan is allocated to commercial real estate, which is great for residential property management businesses.

The loans also offer flexible overhead requirements and are typically more flexible with equity and collateral requirements. Some collateral might be required for SBA 7(a) loans, but typically not as much as conventional business loans, and in some cases, none at all. These loans also require a lower down payment, and you might be able to finance up to 90 percent of the total costs of your acquisition.

SBA 7(A) LOAN QUALIFICATIONS

Businesses must meet certain requirements stipulated by the SBA in order to qualify for an SBA loan.

First, the residential property management business must be an operating business, and it must be operating for profit. The business must be located in in the U.S. and it must be considered a small business according to the SBA's size requirements, which are detailed at https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide/size-standards. There is also a list on the site of certain types of businesses that do not qualify for SBA loans.

The SBA stipulates that residential property management businesses must not be able to obtain the desired credit on reasonable terms from non-federal, non-state and non-local government sources. Finally, the applicant must be creditworthy and demonstrate a reasonable ability to repay the loan.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO APPLY

If your residential property management business meets the SBA's qualifications, you'll need to be ready to demonstrate to the lender why you should receive an SBA 7(a) loan to purchase an existing property management business. Lenders will want to see the financial history of the property management business you wish to acquire, as well as your business plan and projections for the business. They will want to see how you plan to spend the loan money and that you'll be able to repay the loan.

If collateral is required, you'll need to have assets available for that. A down payment, also known as an equity injection, may be required for 10 percent of the loan, and perhaps more based on the riskiness of the business.

To apply for an SBA 7(a) loan to buy an existing residential property management business, you'll need to gather all the business documents for the application. These include tax returns from the last

Continued on page 15 "Financing"

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