

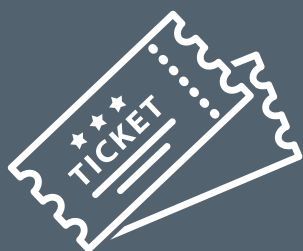


Strategies to Boost Your Online Reviews



Gamification

Modern Message, a resident engagement and loyalty platform, has pioneered the use of gamification in boosting reviews. Through their community rewards platform, residents earn points for activities such as writing reviews, responding to surveys, and renewing their leases. According to J Turner, this incentive produces a higher volume of reviews and a more positive sentiment. In the first quarter of 2019, Modern Message was the second largest source of all reviews, after Google, averaging 183 reviews per community.



Contests

A fun way to quickly boost online reviews is through contests. One Apartment Life Team in Portland organized a giveaway at one of their monthly events. Every resident who attended received a ticket for a drawing, and those who posted a review received an additional ticket. "They were honest reviews too, which was one of our goals," said Kim Lee, Apartment Life staff member.

In Atlanta, the leadership at Park 83 was able to get more than 80 reviews in one month, thanks to a dynamic internal staff competition. It was so well executed, they've continued this trend and now have one of the best reviewed communities in the city.



Events

Fitz and Fabiola, Apartment Life Coordinators at the Residence at North Dallas, recently hosted a pool party for more than 750 of their residents. As host and chef at the event, Fitz encouraged people to post online if they were having fun or if they'd won a prize. "I cannot ask for a 4 or a 5 star review, but I believe I am worth it!," he joked. That simple ask led to 17 five-star Google reviews in a single day, many of which mentioned Fitz by name.

Campaigns



The staff at Villas at Katy Trail in uptown Dallas ran a campaign featuring a series of signs with positive messages such as "Happy Resident," or "I love the Villas staff." Then they asked to take photos of residents holding their chosen sign and posted them to social media and the review page of their website. (The key to success is having the signs made in advance.) Being able to see residents smiling and holding up their reviews was very powerful.

Another campaign idea, from Apartment Life leader John Cissel in Southern California, is to plan a "Love Your Neighbor Week," where residents post things they appreciate about their neighbors and onsite staff on social media. This has an added benefit of boosting your staff and resident morale.



Just Ask

Research by J Turner indicates that residents are much more likely to post a review when asked, and the response rate goes up considerably when the person asking is a friend. Christi, an Apartment Life Coordinator in Dallas, has been so effective at building relationships in her community that she has more than 100 residents as contacts in her phone. For her, getting an online review is natural because she has built community among the residents, and they know she cares about their experience.

