



The Next-Gen Renter: 2025 & Beyond

AN ACTIONABLE GUIDE TO RENTER PRIORITIES,
PREFERENCES, AND ROI FOR MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPERS



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Executive Summary

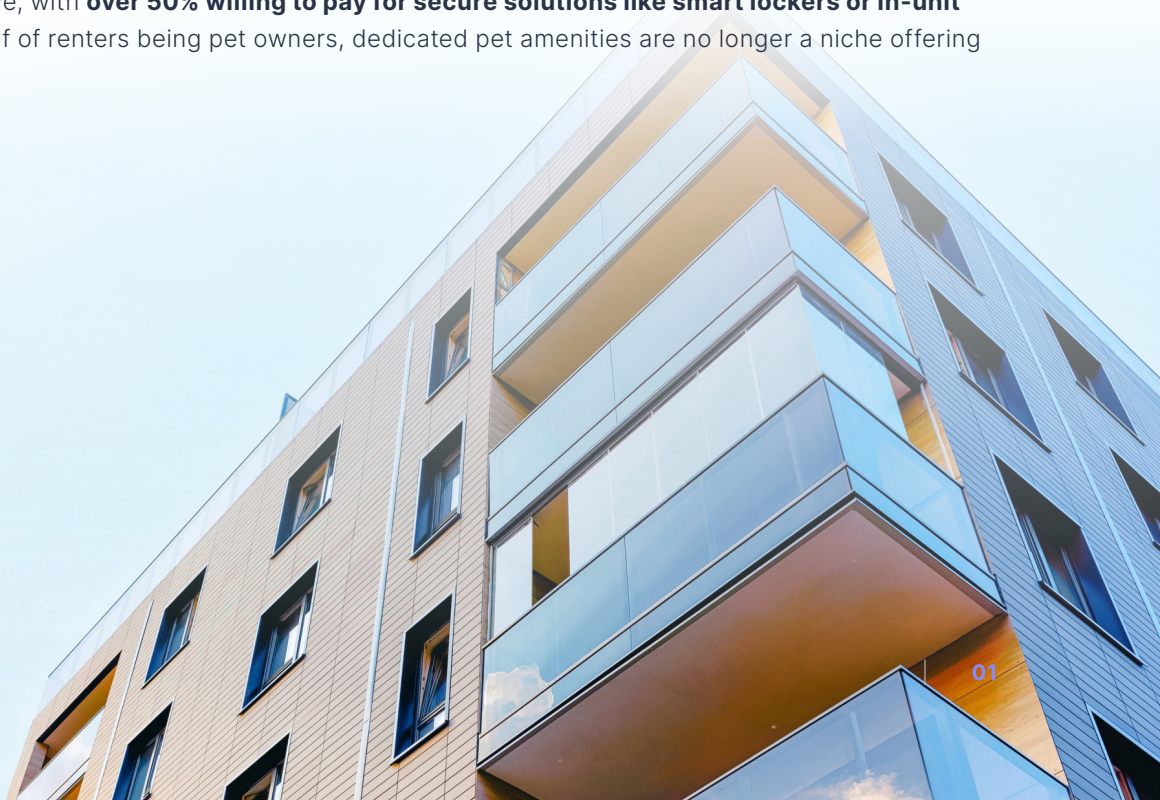
THE 2025 RENTER: AN ROI-DRIVEN CONSUMER IN A HYBRID WORLD

The multifamily landscape has fundamentally shifted. Today’s renter, a digitally-native and discerning consumer, no longer just seeks a place to live; they seek a lifestyle hub optimized for work, wellness, and convenience. This survey of renters nationwide reveals a departure from pre-2020 norms, presenting both challenges and significant revenue opportunities for developers and operators.

This report quantifies the ROI of amenities and upgrades, providing a data-driven roadmap for future-proofing assets and maximizing rental income.

KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE:

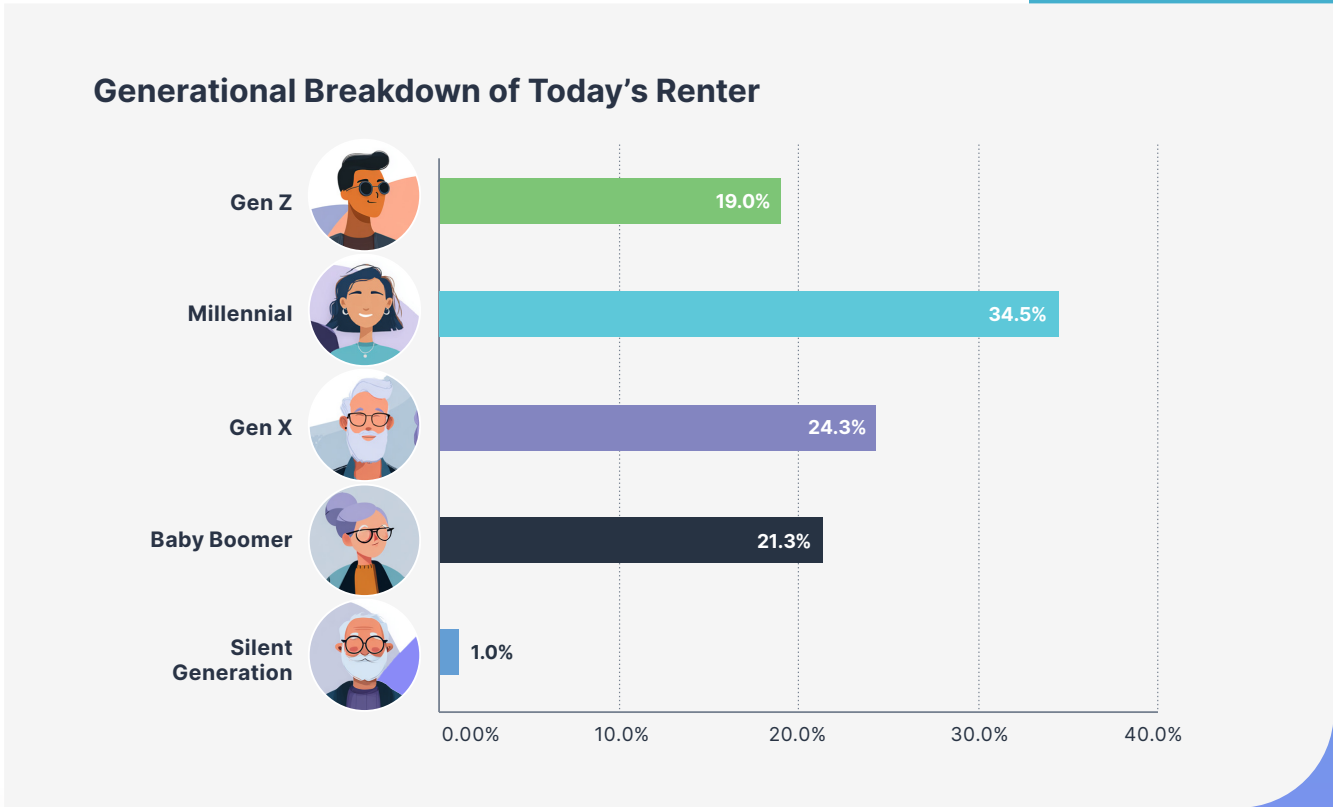
- 1. The Price of Priority: Renters Will Pay a Premium for Meaningful Upgrades.** The modern renter is willing to invest in their living space. For example, the data shows a staggering **54% of renters will pay an average of \$291/month more** for an upgraded bathroom. The focus is on tangible, high-impact features like hardwood-style flooring and quality countertops, creating clear, calculable revenue streams for savvy developers.
- 2. The Hybrid Lifestyle is Permanent, and It Demands a Better “Home Office.”** While only 10.6% of renters work from home full-time, a significant 34.7% do so at least one day a week. This “hybrid renter” prioritizes features that enhance their work environment. For them, **high-speed internet is non-negotiable** (4.32/5 importance), and **enhanced soundproofing is a critical utility**, not a luxury.
- 3. The Digital Search is Everything, and Reputation is the Final Hurdle.** The apartment hunt begins online, with **Apartment Listing Sites (73.9%)** and **Google (60.8%)** dominating the search. However, the decision is solidified by social proof. **Over 71% of renters rate online reviews as a 4 or 5 (out of 5) in importance**, making a strong digital reputation essential for closing leases.
- 4. Amenities are Evolving from “Perks” to “Essentials.”** A fully-equipped gym remains the top fitness choice (32%), but renters now expect a holistic approach including outdoor trails and wellness classes. Package management is a must-have, with **over 50% willing to pay for secure solutions like smart lockers or in-unit delivery**. And with over half of renters being pet owners, dedicated pet amenities are no longer a niche offering but a mainstream demand.



The Modern Renter Profile

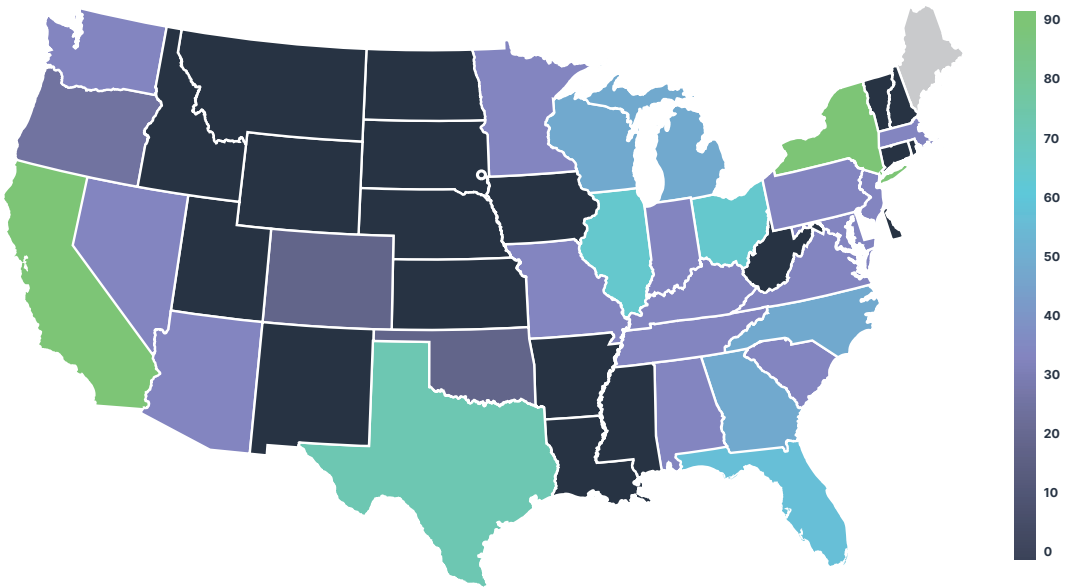
WHO YOU'RE BUILDING FOR

The “average” renter is a myth. Today’s market is a diverse mix of generations, each with distinct needs and financial situations. Millennials (34.5%) and Gen X (24.3%) form the core of the market, but Gen Z (19.0%) is the fastest-growing segment, bringing a new set of digital-first expectations.



Top 10 States for Renter Responses

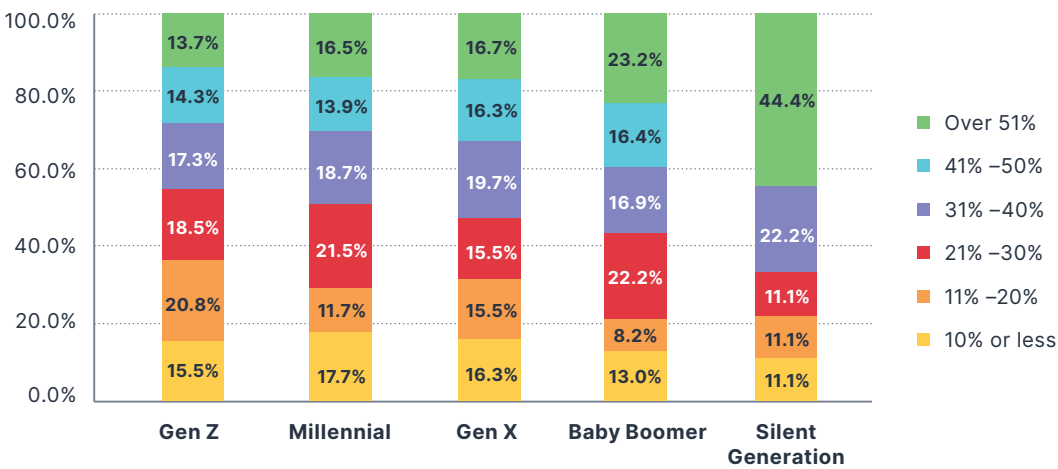
Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents



The Affordability Equation

Affordability remains a critical factor. Across all generations, a significant portion of renters are rent-burdened. Notably, Baby Boomers and Silent Generation renters show the highest percentages, spending over 50% of their income on rent, suggesting a need for diverse housing options.

The Rent Burden by Generation



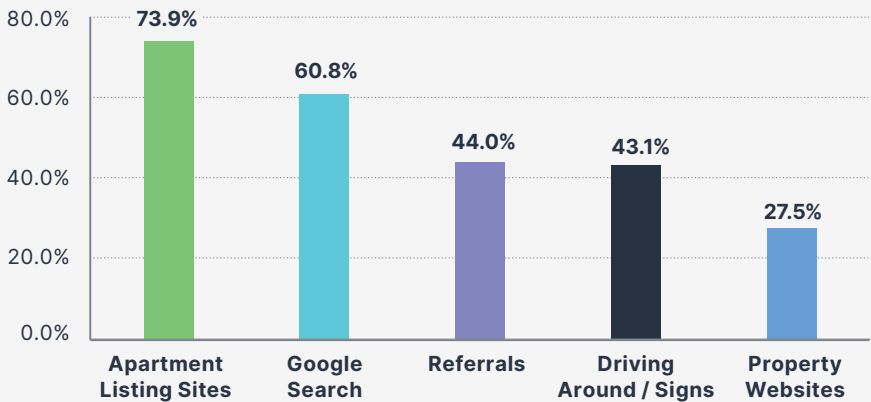
GENERATION	10% OR LESS OF INCOME	11% - 20%	21% - 30%	31% - 40%	41% - 50%	OVER 51%
 Gen Z	15.5%	20.8%	18.5%	17.3%	14.3%	13.7%
 Millennial	17.7%	11.7%	21.5%	18.7%	13.9%	16.5%
 Gen X	16.3%	15.5%	15.5%	19.7%	16.3%	16.7%
 Baby Boomer	13.0%	8.2%	22.2%	16.9%	16.4%	23.2%
 Silent Generation	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	44.4%

The Renter’s Journey: From First Search to Signed Lease

THE DIGITAL-FIRST SEARCH

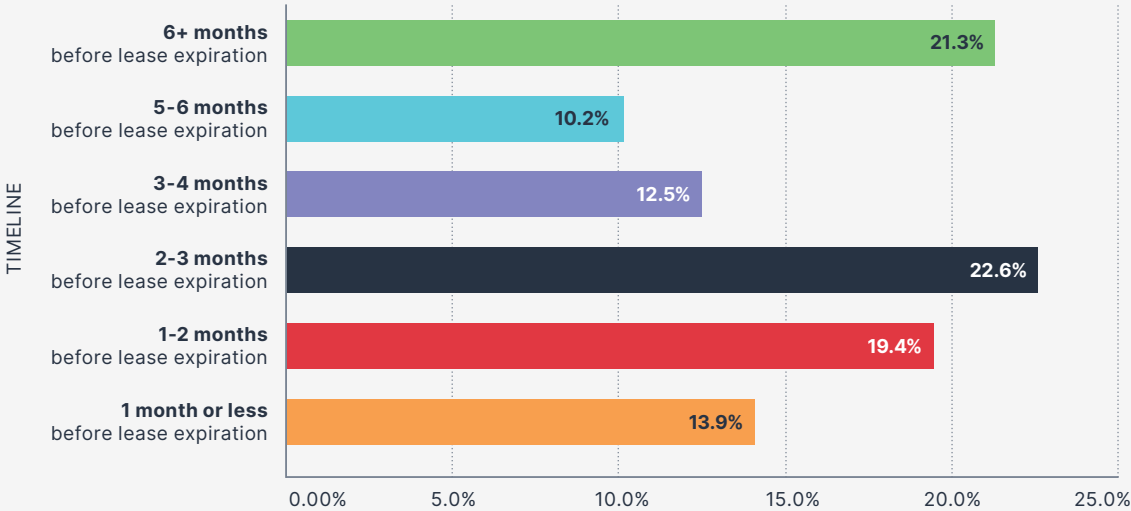
The path to a new apartment begins on a screen. Traditional “drive-by” discovery (43.1%) is now outpaced by Apartment Listing Sites (73.9%) and Google Search (60.8%). Your property’s digital curb appeal—its online listings, website, and search engine visibility—is the first and most critical touchpoint.

How Renters Find Their Next Home



Furthermore, the decision-making window for renters is surprisingly varied. The data shows two primary search periods: **2-3 months before a lease ends (22.6%)** and **6+ months in advance (21.3%)**.

When Does the Apartment Search Begin?





BUILDER TAKEAWAY

Your unit mix and pricing strategy must appeal to a multi-generational audience. While Millennials are the largest group, **designing for Gen Z’s future needs** and accommodating the financial realities of Boomers can provide a competitive edge.



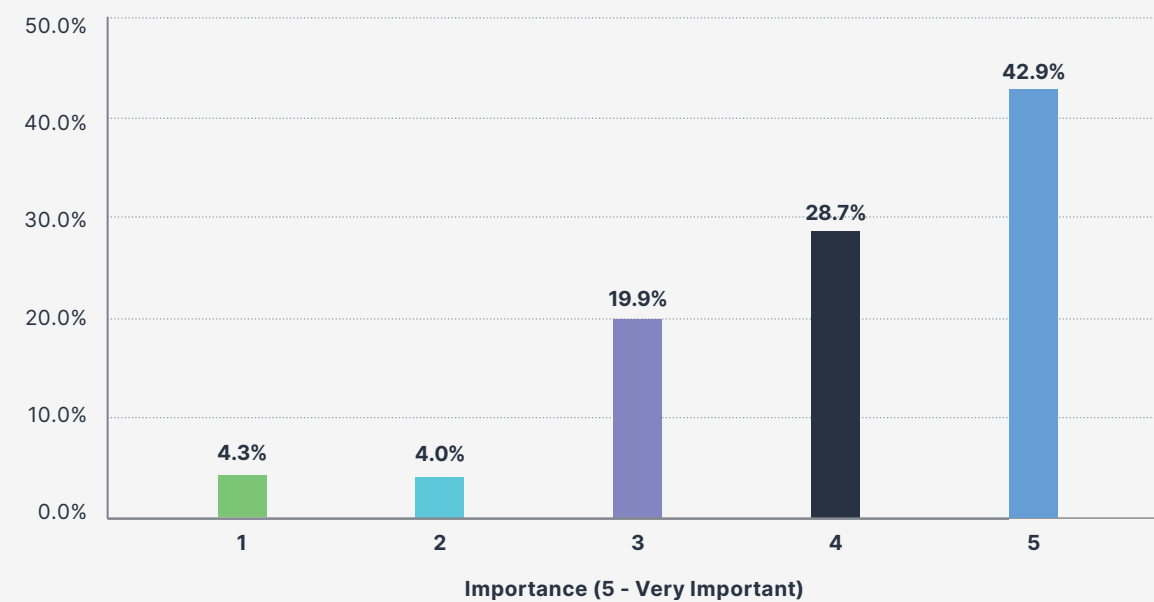
MANAGER TAKEAWAY

The battle for retention and new leases is won months in advance. Renewal offers should be sent at the 4-month mark. Your peak marketing spend for attracting new residents should be concentrated in the **60-120 day window** before target move-in dates.

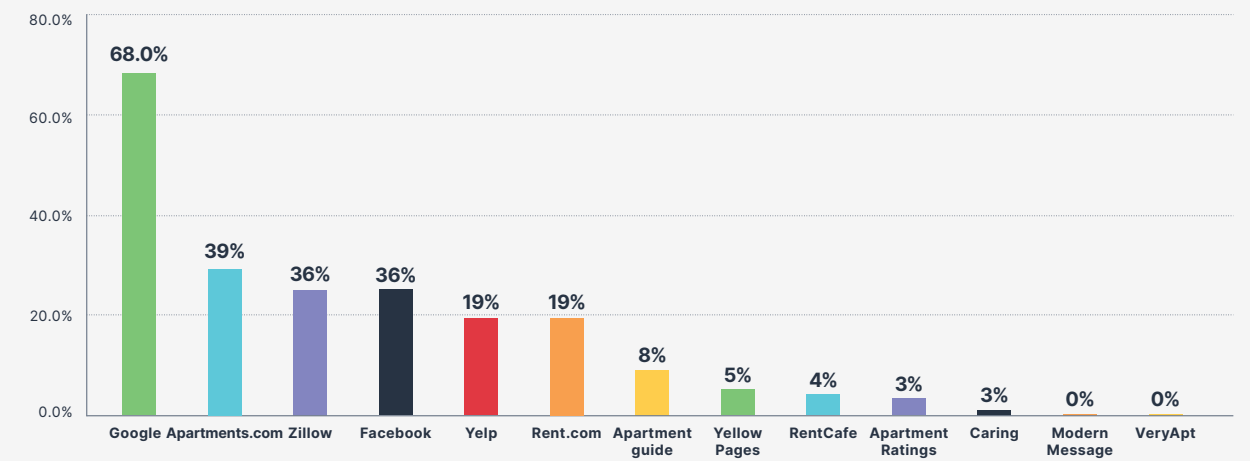
THE POWER OF REPUTATION

After the initial search, the final decision hinges on trust. Online reviews are not just influential; they are a prerequisite. An overwhelming **42.9% of renters give reviews the highest possible importance (5/5)**, with Google and Apartments.com being the most consulted sources. A low rating or lack of recent reviews can be a deal-breaker.

The Importance of Online Reviews



Where Do Renters Look for Reviews?



BUILDER TAKEAWAY

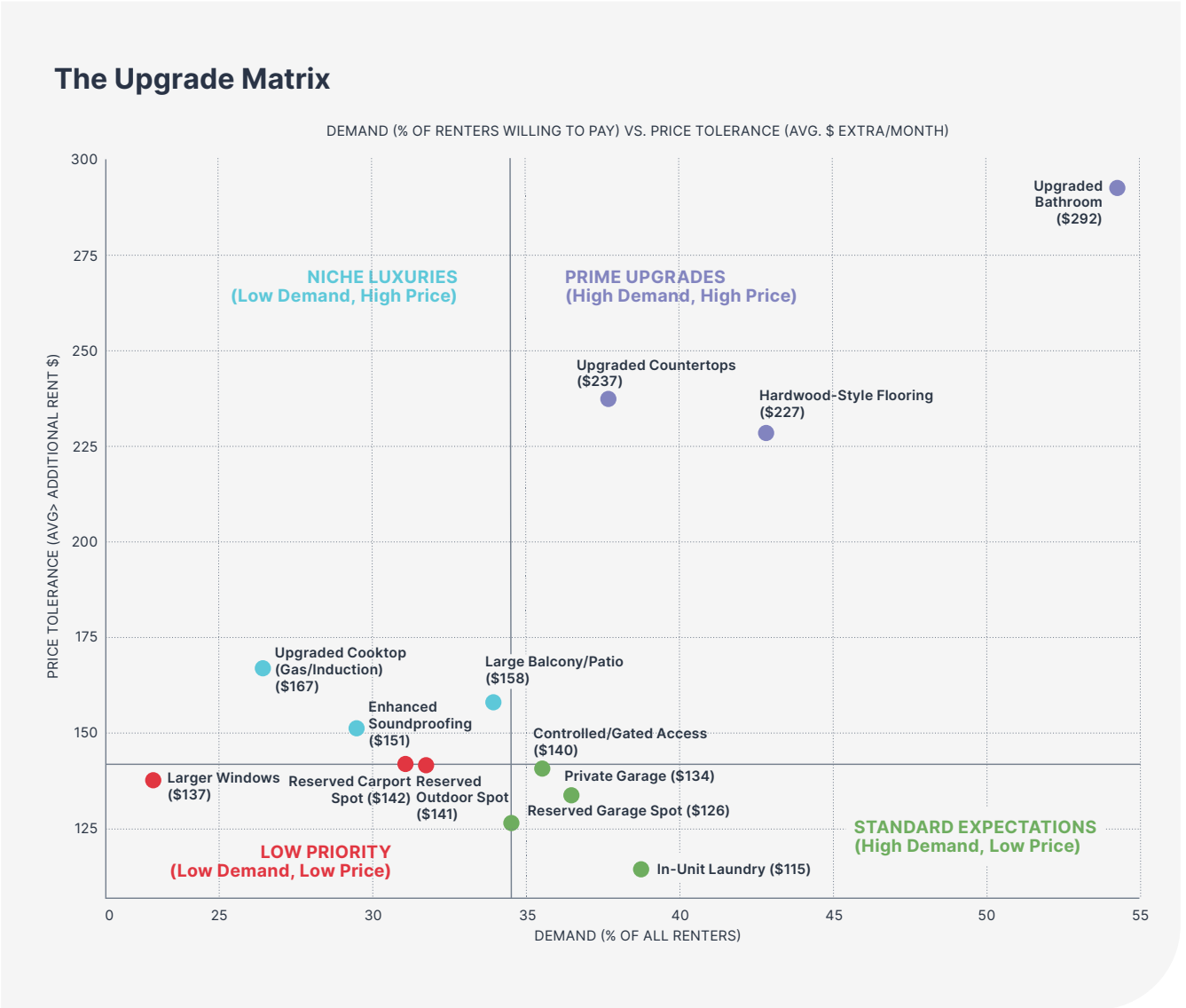
Reputation management is not optional. It is a core operational function. Invest in tools and processes to cultivate strong resident satisfaction and actively manage your presence on top-rated platforms.



The Ultimate Upgrade Matrix: A Developer's Guide to ROI

QUANTIFYING DESIRE: WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR PREMIUM UPGRADES

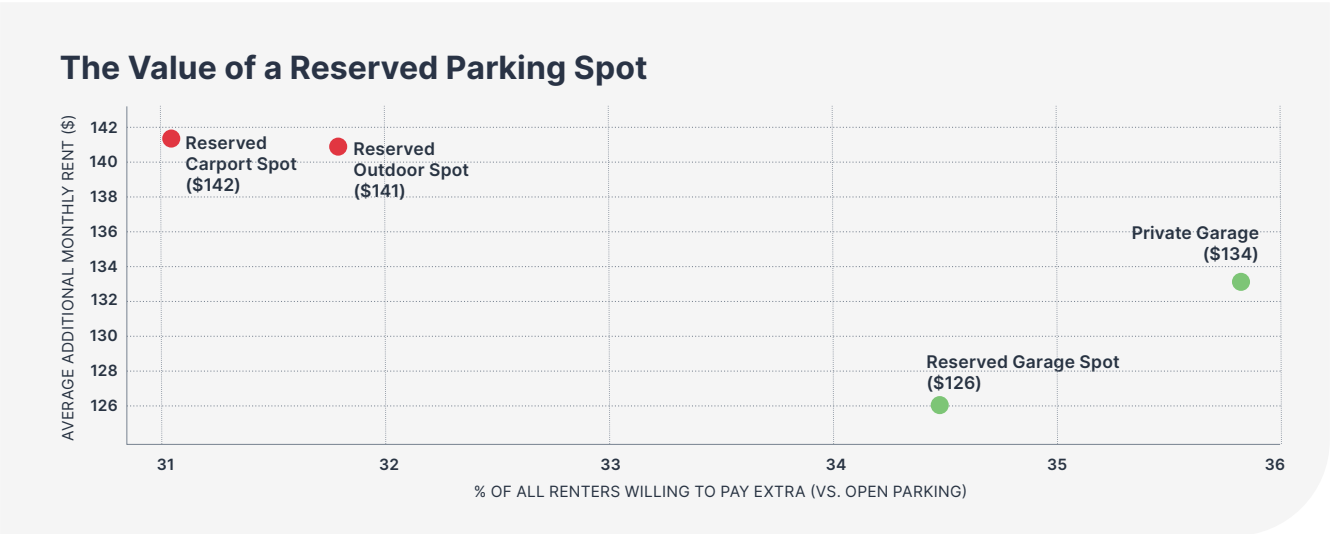
Today’s renters don’t just want upgrades; they are willing to pay for them, and they’ve told us exactly how much. We analyzed 14 common in-unit and community upgrades, plotting them based on renter demand (% willing to pay) versus price tolerance (average additional rent). This creates a powerful decision-making matrix for developers.



QUADRANT 1: PRIME UPGRADES (HIGH DEMAND, HIGH PRICE)	
Upgraded Bathroom (\$292) Hardwood-Style Flooring (\$227) Upgraded Countertops (\$237)	Takeaway: These are your most profitable investments. They have broad appeal and command the highest rent premiums. Prioritize these in both new builds and renovations.
QUADRANT 2: NICHE LUXURIES (LOW DEMAND, HIGH PRICE)	
Upgraded Cooktop (Gas/Induction) (\$167) Enhanced Soundproofing (\$151)	Takeaway: Offer these in premium units or as an à la carte upgrade package. They appeal to a smaller, more discerning segment willing to pay for specific lifestyle features.
QUADRANT 3: STANDARD EXPECTATIONS (HIGH DEMAND, LOW PRICE)	
In-Unit Laundry (\$115) Private Garage (\$134) Controlled/Gated Access (\$140)	Takeaway: These are becoming table stakes for a competitive property. While the direct rent lift is moderate, lacking them can make your property feel dated and lead to longer vacancies.
QUADRANT 4: LOWER PRIORITY (LOW DEMAND, LOW PRICE)	
Larger Windows (\$137)	Takeaway: These are “nice-to-haves” but are unlikely to be a deciding factor for most renters or justify a significant rent increase. Consider these only after prime upgrades are addressed.

THE PARKING PROBLEM: A SOLVABLE PAIN POINT

Parking, while not a major source of resident frustration, can be a pain point for those who are unable to secure a spot near their home. Our data shows a willingness to pay for the convenience and security of a guaranteed spot. Offering a tiered parking solution can create a significant, predictable revenue stream.





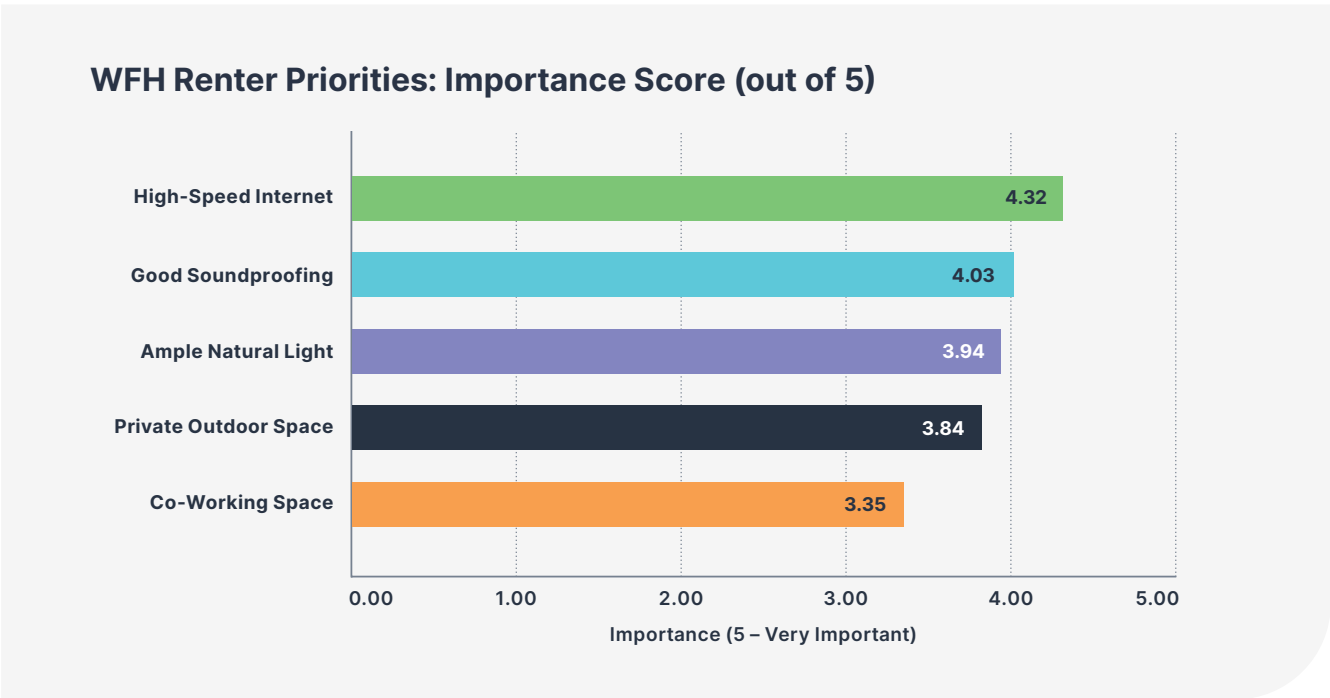
BUILDER TAKEAWAY

Don't give away parking. It's a valuable asset. A strategy combining open parking with paid reserved options (carport, prime outdoor, garage) can satisfy resident needs while boosting Net Operating Income (NOI).

Designing for the Hybrid Lifestyle: The New In-Unit Essentials

THE HOME AS THE OFFICE

The rise of remote work has transformed the apartment from a living space into a workspace. For the 35% of renters who work from home, certain features are paramount.



FEATURE	PRO WFH RENTER (3+ DAYS WFH)	STANDARD RENTER	IMPORTANCE LIFT
Importance of Soundproofing	4.27	3.77	0.5
Importance of Co-Working Space	3.37	3.32	0.05
Importance of Private Outdoor Space	4.02	3.65	0.37

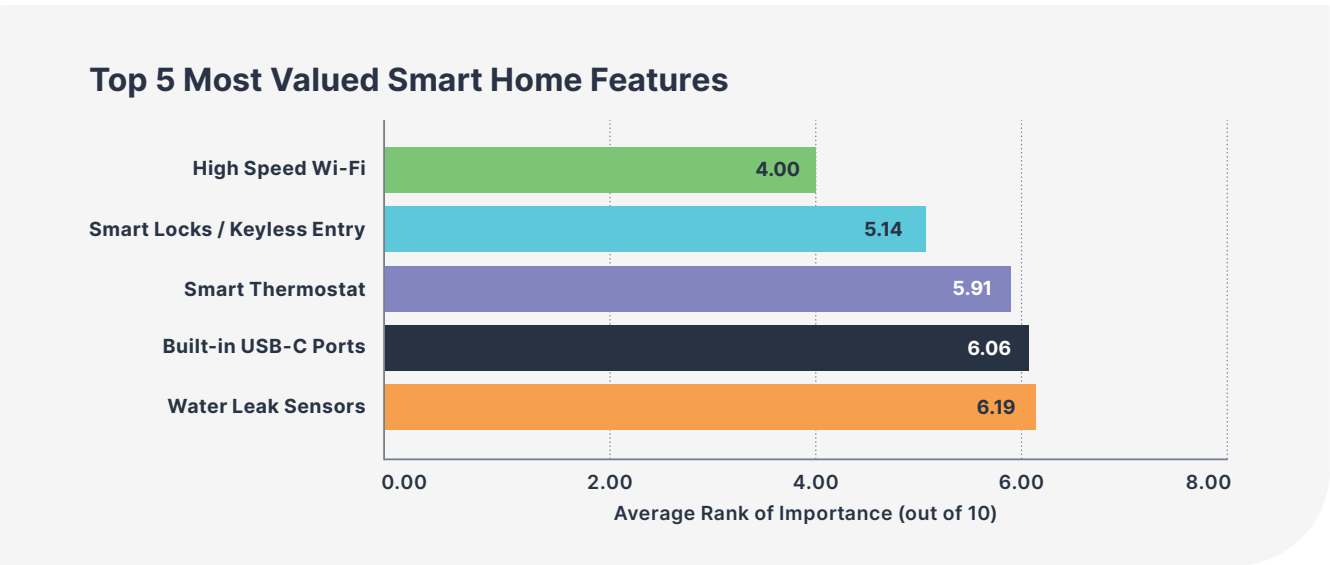


PRO RENTER TAKEAWAY

To attract high-earning professional renters, market your units as **WFH-optimized**. While building a separate coworking station is a costly undertaking, a more effective strategy is to invest in in-unit features. Highlight amenities like “blazing-fast community Wi-Fi” and “private balconies.” Most importantly, deliver on the promise of “quiet construction for uninterrupted calls.” Soundproofing has a 0.50 importance lift for WFH renters, and incorporating it during the design of a new building is a far simpler task than expensive retrofits.

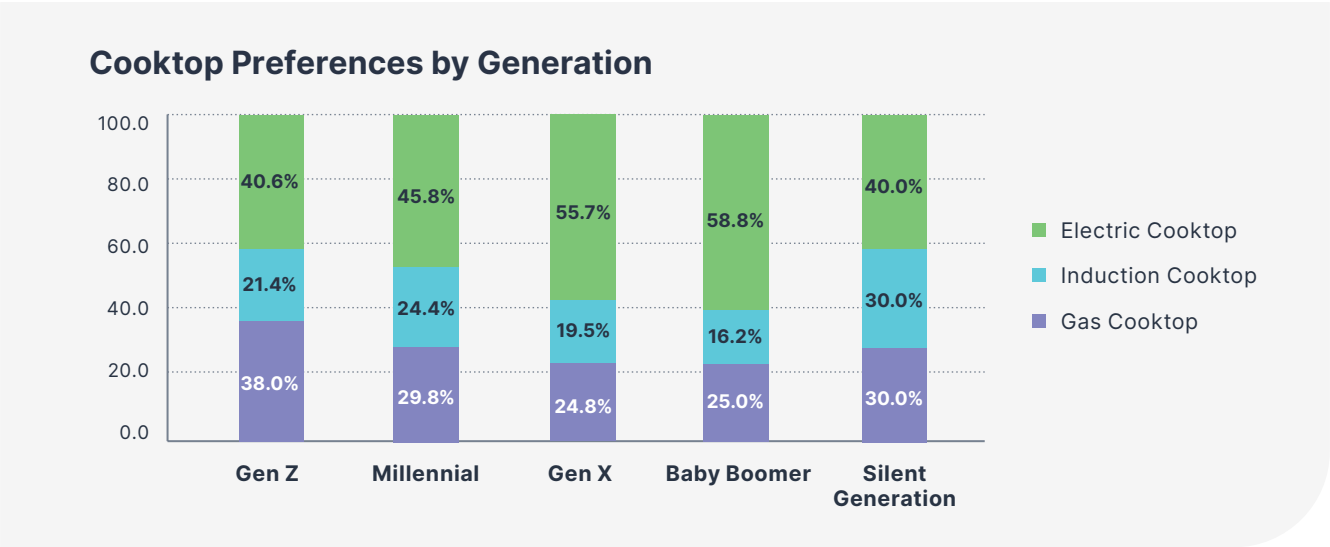
SMART HOME TECH THAT ACTUALLY MATTERS

Renters desire smart home features that provide tangible convenience and security, not just novelty. While a plethora of gadgets exist, their priorities are clear.



The Evolving Kitchen

While electric cooktops remain the most common, there is a clear desire for other options, especially among younger renters. Gen Z shows a growing preference for Gas (38%), indicating a shift in culinary expectations.





BUILDER TAKEAWAY

Invest in the smart tech fundamentals. Robust, community-wide Wi-Fi and keyless entry are more valuable than a dozen less-impactful gadgets. In the kitchen, offering a gas or induction cooktop as a premium upgrade can attract foodie-focused Millennials and Gen Z.

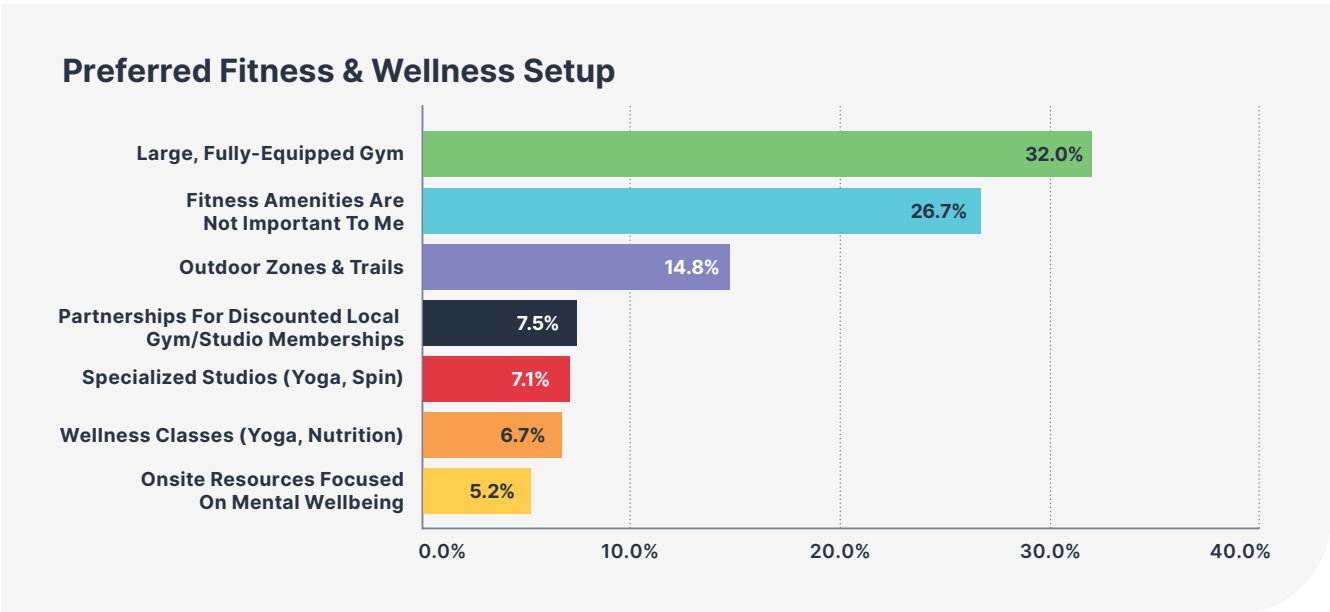
Beyond the Unit Door: Building a Competitive Community

THE “THIRD SPACE” – AMENITIES FOR WELLNESS AND CONNECTION

The modern rental community is more than a collection of apartments; it’s a “third space” between work and home that must support residents’ wellness, social, and logistical needs. While in-unit features are critical, community-wide amenities are powerful differentiators that drive both initial attraction and long-term loyalty.

Fitness & Wellness: A Fragmented Demand

A large, fully-equipped gym remains the anchor of a community’s fitness offering, preferred by a solid **32% of renters**. However, it’s a mistake to assume this single amenity meets everyone’s needs. A notable **26.7% of renters state that fitness amenities are not important to them**, while others show a growing interest in more holistic and nature-integrated options.



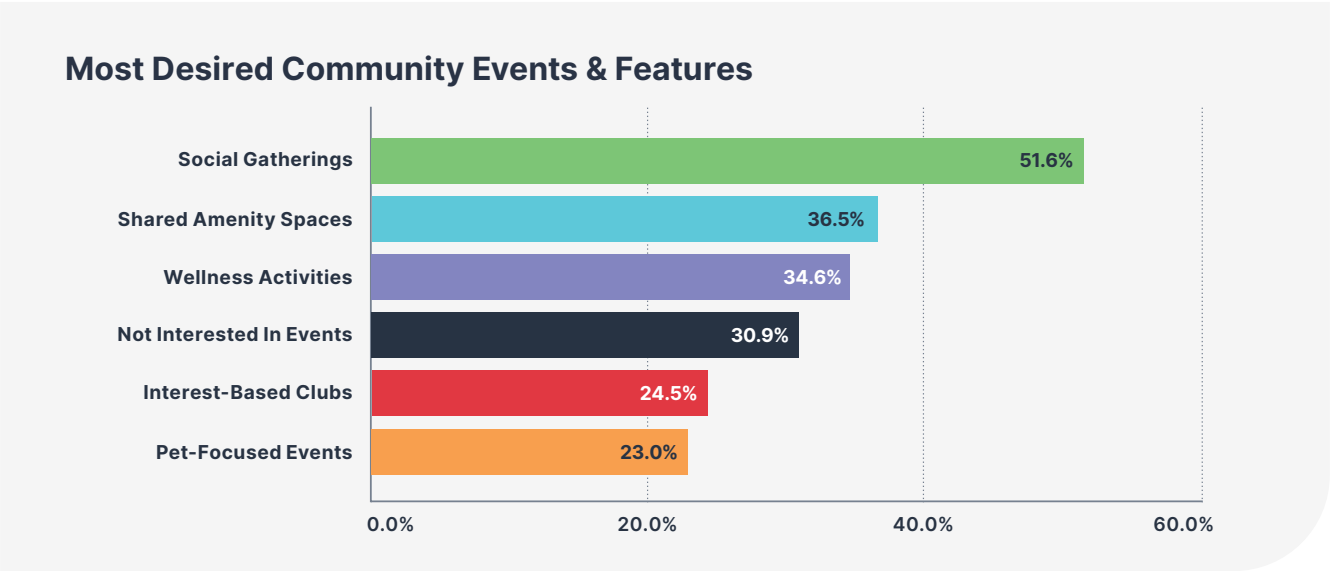
BUILDER TAKEAWAY

A high-quality gym is a safe and valuable investment. To capture a wider audience, supplement this with low-cost, high-impact features like well-maintained walking trails. For premium properties, offering partnerships with local yoga or spin studios can be a powerful, capital-light perk that appeals to the 7.5% of renters who prefer that model.

The Quest for Community

The quest for community remains a powerful force in resident satisfaction. In our Next-Gen Renter: 2020 and Beyond report, the desire for connection was clear, with a “Community App” ranking as the most-desired smart home amenity. Today, that sentiment is just as strong, with “sense of community” scoring a **3.60 out of 5** in importance. However, the way residents want to build that community has evolved.

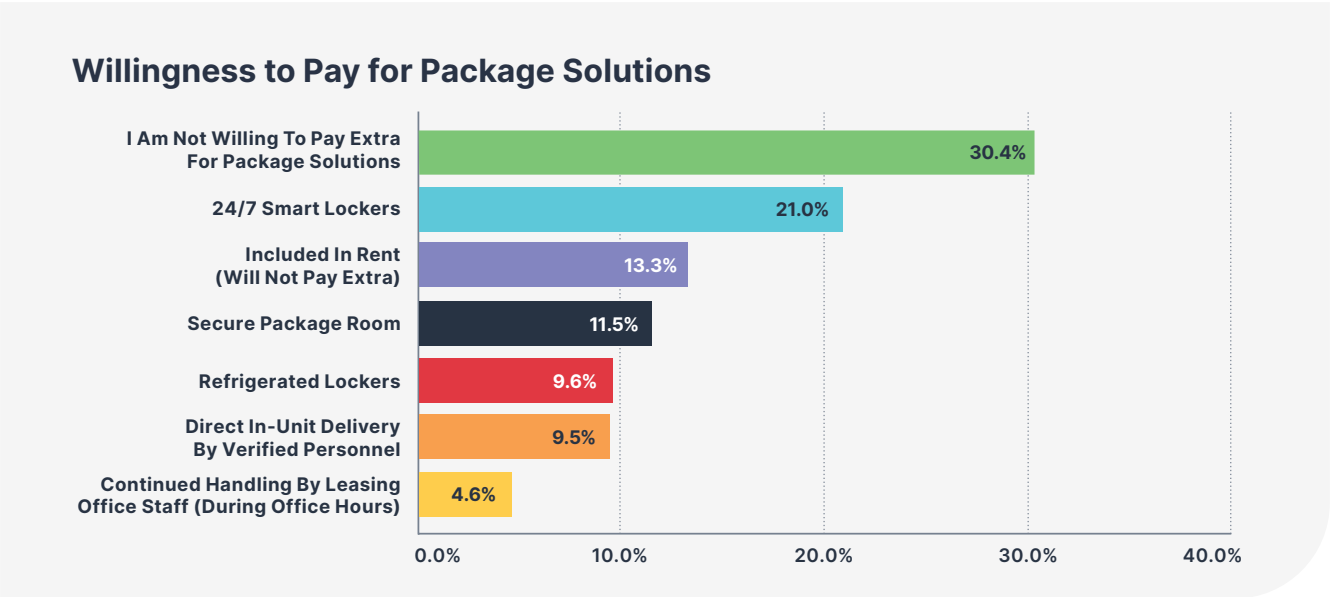
In 2020, renters preferred structured activities like wellness or cooking classes. Today, there has been a clear pivot to casual social events. **Social Gatherings (51.6%)**, like holiday parties and food truck nights, are now the most desired event type, outpacing structured clubs or classes. This signals a growing preference for low-commitment, high-reward opportunities to connect with neighbors organically.



THE MODERN NECESSITIES: LOGISTICS, PETS, AND POWER

Solving the Package Problem: From Cost Center to Revenue Stream

Package delivery is no longer a simple courtesy; it’s a critical piece of infrastructure. While nearly a third of renters **(30.4%) are unwilling to pay a fee**, there is still a significant revenue opportunity. A combined **50% of renters are willing to pay for a secure, convenient solution**, including 24/7 Smart Lockers (21.0%), a secure package room (11.5%), refrigerated lockers (9.6%), or even direct in-unit delivery (9.5%).



BUILDER TAKEAWAY

Stop treating package management as a burden. **It is a monetizable amenity.** By offering tiered solutions (e.g., basic package room included, smart lockers for a monthly fee), operators can meet resident demands while creating a new, reliable income source.

Pets Are Family: A Non-Negotiable Reality

The data is unequivocal: **51% of all renter households own a pet.** For these residents, pet-friendly policies and amenities are not a “nice-to-have;” they are a prerequisite for even considering a property. This makes pet-focused features a powerful tool for doubling your potential market.



51% OF RENTERS ARE PET OWNERS



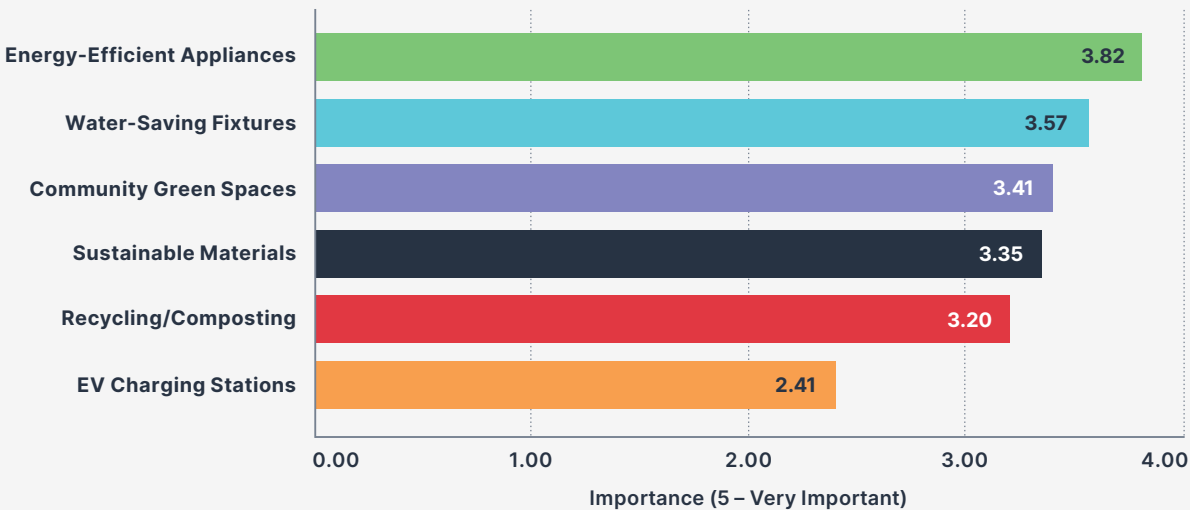
MANAGER TAKEAWAY

Restrictive pet policies effectively cut your target market in half. To be competitive, properties must not only allow pets but embrace them. This includes offering pet-focused events (desired by 11.4% of renters) and considering amenities like dog parks or pet washing stations, which can be marketed as a premium community feature.

Future-Proofing: The Rise of the EV

While sustainability features like energy-efficient appliances are broadly important (3.82/5), the most forward-looking amenity is the **EV charging station**. Though its overall importance is currently lower (2.41/5), demand is highly concentrated. Renters in **High-Rise (2.51/5 likelihood of use)** communities show significantly more interest than those in Garden-Style (1.73/5) properties.

Sustainability Feature Importance



BUILDER TAKEAWAY

EV charging is a strategic investment in future-proofing. While EV charging may not seem like a top priority for the average renter today, it is a powerful marketing tool for future-proofing your property. For new developments, the decision is even more critical. **Installing the necessary infrastructure during construction is significantly cheaper than a costly retrofit later.**



Gen Z:
Tech-Native, Experience-Driven,
and Value-Conscious Renting

As the fastest-growing renter segment (19.0%), Gen Z is the future of the multifamily market. Having never known a world without the internet, they expect a seamless, digitally-integrated living experience from their first TikTok search to paying rent via an app. They are often renting with roommates, making them highly value-conscious, but they are also willing to pay for amenities and upgrades that enhance their lifestyle, social experiences, and personal wellness.

WHO THEY ARE	WHAT THEY PRIORITIZE
• Household Size: 2.59 people (highest of all generations, indicating roommate living). • Financials: Less likely to be severely rent-burdened, often splitting costs. • WFH Status: 47.4% work at least one day from home	Top 3 Priorities: 1. Health & Fitness (41.7%) 2. Sustainability (31.2%) 3. Pet Amenities (29.2%)

THE TOP 3 MOST PROFITABLE UPGRADES FOR GEN Z

This cohort demonstrates a clear willingness to pay for tangible improvements to their daily living space.

UPGRADE FEATURE	% WILLING TO PAY	AVG. ADDITIONAL RENT
1. Upgraded Bathroom	65.6%	\$408.95
2. Hardwood-Style Flooring	54.2%	\$286.82
3. Upgraded Countertops	47.4%	\$306.80

QUICK HITS: THE GEN Z MINDSET

- **Smart Home Must-Have:** Smart Locks / Keyless Entry (Ranked #1 by 11.5%). They expect the convenience of entering their home with their phone or a code.
- **Community Vibe:** They crave connection. Wellness Activities and Social Gatherings are a major draw. For them, community spaces are an extension of their living room.
- **How to Reach Them:** Meet them where they are: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Communicate via Text Message (SMS).
- **Kitchen Preference:** The most adventurous cooks, with the lowest preference for basic electric (40.6%) and strong interest in Gas (38.0%) and Induction (21.4%).

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: WHAT GEN Z WANT DEVELOPERS TO HEAR

When asked for direct suggestions, Gen Z’s feedback moves beyond simple wish lists to focus on the fundamental quality of life in a rental community. Their comments coalesced around four key themes:

- **The Price of Entry: Affordability is Paramount.** The most frequent and passionate plea was for more reasonable rent prices. Gen Z is acutely aware of the cost of living and feels that rent is outpacing the quality of the product. This theme also includes frustration with “junk fees,” with specific call-outs against monthly “pet rent” on top of a pet deposit.
- **The In-Unit “Deal-Breakers”.** For this generation, certain amenities are not luxuries but baseline expectations for a modern apartment. The most cited were in-unit laundry (washer/dryer) and reliable air conditioning. A lack of these fundamental features makes a property feel dated and undesirable.
- **Functional Community: Beyond the Pool.** While amenities like pools and gyms were mentioned, there was a strong desire for practical community features. Suggestions included community gardens to save money on groceries, more elevators for accessibility and convenience, and improved security measures to control who enters the property.
- **A Voice in Their Home: The Call for Communication.** A clear theme emerged that Gen Z wants a more collaborative relationship with management. They suggested managers should “listen to the people who are currently renting,” use “community surveys,” and “ask for their opinion.” They don’t just want to be tenants; they want to be heard and have their feedback lead to tangible improvements.



Millennials: Seeking Upgraded, Connected, and Convenient Living

As the largest renter cohort (34.5%), Millennials are the core of the market. They are in their prime earning and family-forming years, and they expect their apartment to be a seamless extension of their digitally-integrated and busy lives. They are willing to pay for quality but expect fundamental conveniences to be standard.

WHO THEY ARE	WHAT THEY PRIORITIZE
• Household Size: 2.36 people • Financials: 16.5% are severely rent-burdened (>51% of income). • WFH Status: 41% work at least one day from home.	Top 3 Priorities: 1. Health & Fitness (32.1%) 2. Pet Amenities (31.8%) 3. Sustainability (28.4%)

THE TOP 3 MOST PROFITABLE UPGRADES FOR MILLENNIALS

This cohort demonstrates a clear willingness to pay for tangible improvements to their daily living space.

UPGRADE FEATURE	% WILLING TO PAY	AVG. ADDITIONAL RENT
1. Upgraded Bathroom	61.6%	\$326.96
2. Hardwood-Style Flooring	51.3%	\$247.72
3. Upgraded Countertops	45.3%	\$279.31

QUICK HITS: THE MILLENNIAL MINDSET

- **Smart Home Must-Have:** Smart Locks / Keyless Entry (Ranked #1 by 15.5%)
- **Community Vibe:** Prefers low-key Social Gatherings over structured events.
- **How to Reach Them:** Communicate via Text Message (SMS). They find apartments primarily through Google and Apartments.com.
- **Kitchen Preference:** While 45.8% accept electric, they show the strongest interest in Gas (29.8%) and Induction (24.4%) cooktops after Gen Z.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: WHAT MILLENNIALS WANT DEVELOPERS TO HEAR

As the core of the rental market, Millennials offer experienced and practical feedback. Their suggestions are less about flashy perks and more about the fundamental contract of renting: a well-maintained, functional home for a fair price. Their comments clustered around four key themes:

- **The Unending Rent Crisis: Affordability and Value.** Like Gen Z, the most common plea from Millennials is to “stop charging so much rent” and “keep the prices affordable.” However, their feedback adds a layer of nuance: it’s not just about the price, but the value. They demand that if rent is high, the apartment must deliver with updated appliances, included utilities (like Wi-Fi), and quality finishes. They are acutely aware when the price doesn’t match the product.
- **“Just Fix It”: The Maintenance Mandate.** A significant portion of comments expressed deep frustration with unresponsive management and deferred maintenance. Phrases like “fix things when they’re broken,” “answer repair requests timely,” and “don’t be cheap and self-centered like my current landlord” were common. For Millennials, the #1 job of a property manager is to maintain the property. Failure to do so is a breach of trust.
- **The Non-Negotiable In-Unit Features.** Millennials have clear expectations for what constitutes a modern apartment. Overwhelmingly, they named in-unit washer/dryer as an essential feature. This was followed by calls for updated kitchens with a full suite of appliances (refrigerator, dishwasher) and better bathrooms. Lacking these is a major red flag for this generation.
- **The Human Element: Communication and Respect.** Millennials want to be treated like valued customers, not just a monthly rent check. They advise managers to “treat your residents as human beings,” “be a good listener,” and improve communication. They value transparency and feel that management who actively listen and respond to feedback (via surveys or direct conversation) are far more likely to retain them as long-term residents.



Gen X: Seeking Balance, Quality, and Low-Maintenance Living

The stable, often-overlooked core of the rental market (24.3%), Gen X renters are typically established in their careers and value quality, practicality, and convenience above all else. They are less influenced by trends and more focused on whether an apartment genuinely makes their busy lives easier. For developers, this means focusing on durable finishes, functional amenities, and a hassle-free living experience.

WHO THEY ARE	WHAT THEY PRIORITIZE
• Household Size: 1.98 people • Financials: Financially stable, but practical with their spending. • WFH Status: Only 27.6% work at least one day from home.	Top 3 Priorities: 1. Pet Amenities (39.0%) 2. Health & Fitness (29.7%) 3. Smart Home Features (23.6%)

THE TOP 3 MOST PROFITABLE UPGRADES FOR GEN X

For Gen X, upgrades are about long-term quality, ease of use, and reduced maintenance. They appreciate features that feel solid, look timeless, and make cleaning and daily life simpler.

UPGRADE FEATURE	% WILLING TO PAY	AVG. ADDITIONAL RENT
1. Upgraded Bathroom	50.8%	\$213.90
2. In-Unit Laundry	41.1%	\$67.24
3. Hardwood-Style Flooring	37.4%	\$185.55

QUICK HITS: THE GEN X MINDSET

- **Smart Home Must-Have:** Community-Wide Wi-Fi (Ranked #1 by 22.0%). For this working generation, reliable internet is not a luxury; it’s a fundamental utility.
- **Pet Priority:** Gen X places the highest priority on pet amenities (39.0%) of any generation. A community’s pet policy and features can be the deciding factor for them.
- **How to Reach Them:** They are active on Facebook and use Google for research. They prefer Email and Text Messages for communication.
- **Kitchen Preference:** They overwhelmingly prefer what is familiar and reliable, with Electric Cooktops (55.7%) being their top choice.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: WHAT GEN X WANTS DEVELOPERS TO HEAR

Gen X renters offer practical, no-nonsense advice focused on quality, security, and fairness. They are experienced consumers who can easily spot where management is cutting corners and are not afraid to call it out. Their feedback centered on four core themes:

- **Build It to Last: A Rebuke of “Cheap Materials.”** More than any other generation, Gen X expressed frustration with poor build quality. They repeatedly demand that developers stop using “cheap materials” and focus on durability. This is especially true for soundproofing, which they see as a critical component for peaceful living and a major failure in many modern apartments.
- **Security is a Priority.** Gen X renters place a high value on feeling safe in their community. Their suggestions frequently included a desire for visible security measures, such as a “security guard and or safety officers,” “security cameras and onsite patrolling,” and well-lit parking areas and pathways.
- **Stop the “Nickel-and-Dime” Fees.** This generation is highly sensitive to what they perceive as unfair or “junk” fees. They believe high rent should cover the cost of living in the community and are frustrated by extra charges for administration, pets, or basic amenities. They expect fair, transparent pricing without a constant stream of add-on costs.
- **Responsive and Respectful Management.** Echoing the sentiments of Millennials, Gen X expects professional and timely service. They want management to “listen to the renters more often,” provide clear “time frames for maintenance requests,” and “quit making tenants feel expendable.” For them, a good landlord is one who is present, listens, and acts.



Baby Boomers: Prioritizing Comfort, Community, and Accessibility

Representing a significant and loyal renter segment (21.3%), Baby Boomers are often downsizing from single-family homes, seeking a vibrant, maintenance-free lifestyle. They bring high expectations for customer service and build quality. For this group, a sense of community is paramount, and amenities should support both active living and future accessibility needs.

WHO THEY ARE	WHAT THEY PRIORITIZE
• Household Size: 1.49 people (Smallest of all generations) • Financials: 23.2% are severely rent-burdened, the highest of working-age generations. • WFH Status: Mostly retired or working part-time; WFH features are less of a priority, only 22.7% work at least one day from home.	Top 3 Priorities: 1. Health & Fitness (34.7%) 2. Pet Amenities (30.6%) 3. Smart Home Features (28.2%)

THE TOP 3 MOST PROFITABLE UPGRADES FOR BABY BOOMERS

Boomers view upgrades through the lens of comfort, quality, and safety. They appreciate features that feel luxurious and reduce physical effort, making their daily lives safer and more enjoyable.

UPGRADE FEATURE	% WILLING TO PAY	AVG. ADDITIONAL RENT
1. Upgraded Bathroom	38%	\$137.20
2. In-Unit Laundry	37.5%	\$75.72
3. Hardwood-Style Flooring	25.9%	\$114.96

QUICK HITS: THE BABY BOOMER MINDSET

- **Smart Home Must-Have:** Community-Wide Wi-Fi (Ranked #1 by a commanding 29.6%). They use it for entertainment, social media, and connecting with family.
- **Accessibility is Key:** While they desire an “upgraded bathroom,” for many this means a large, walk-in shower instead of a tub, which is a key safety and accessibility feature.
- **How to Reach Them:** A multi-channel approach is best: Email, Facebook, and traditional Paper Notices/Flyers are all effective.
- **Kitchen Preference:** They have the strongest preference for Electric Cooktops (58.8%), valuing simplicity, familiarity, and ease of cleaning.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS: WHAT BABY BOOMERS WANT DEVELOPERS TO HEAR

Baby Boomers are often downsizing and seek a comfortable, secure, and hassle-free lifestyle. Their feedback is pragmatic, focusing on build quality, practical amenities, and a strong sense of community. Their suggestions were clear and consistent across four major themes:

- **Peace and Quiet are Non-Negotiable.** The single most dominant theme in Boomer feedback was the need for better soundproofing. They repeatedly requested more sound insulation “between units and floors” and even suggested requiring carpet on upper floors to dampen noise. For this generation, a quiet and peaceful apartment is the ultimate luxury.
- **Prioritize Safety and Accessibility.** Boomers are planning for the long term and place a high premium on security and ease of living. They frequently suggested gated communities, locking outer doors, and better lighting. Crucially, they also focused on accessibility, requesting “wider doors for handicap access,” “walk-in tubs” instead of traditional ones, and apartments designed as if the developer “were going to live there” themselves in their later years.
- **Foster a Real Community.** More than any other generation, Boomers expressed a strong desire for genuine social connection. They suggested creating “larger common areas” and having management “encourage residents to engage with each other by hosting parties.” They value community gardens, resident mixers, and clear, consistent communication (like a community calendar) that helps them feel connected to their neighbors.
- **Fair Price, No Surprises.** While they are willing to pay for quality, Boomers on fixed incomes are highly sensitive to “unrealistic rent prices” and “hidden fees.” They want transparent pricing and express a desire for longer-term leases that offer stability. They believe that rent should be affordable and reflect the true value and quality of the apartment and its management.

Conclusion: The Blueprint for the 2025 Multifamily Market

THE ERA OF THE PASSIVE RENTER IS OVER.

The multifamily landscape is now defined by a new class of consumer: an ROI-driven, digitally-native resident who views their apartment as the central hub for their entire life—work, wellness, and social connection. For developers and operators, simply offering four walls and a roof is a strategy for obsolescence. The strategic imperative is to build and manage communities that function as a comprehensive lifestyle service.

The findings of this report provide a clear, data-driven blueprint for success. But beneath the numbers lies a fundamental truth that resonates across all generations: renters are skeptical and want to feel heard, treated fairly, and know that management genuinely cares. Therefore, the properties that thrive will not be those that simply offer the most amenities, but those that prove they are listening. They achieve this by offering the right amenities that enhance resident life, mastering a digital journey rooted in transparency, and understanding the precise ROI that signals a smart, caring investment in the community.

To win the market of 2025 and beyond, focus on three core pillars:

1. **Invest with Precision by Quantifying ROI.** The most critical shift is moving from “amenity creep” to data-driven investment. This report demonstrates that renters will pay a significant premium for tangible quality. They have explicitly stated they are willing to pay an average of \$291/month more for an upgraded bathroom and \$227/month for hardwood-style flooring. These are not line-item expenses; they are your highest-yield revenue streams. Use the Upgrade Matrix to de-prioritize low-impact features and double down on the “Prime Upgrades” that deliver a direct, measurable lift to your Net Operating Income.
2. **Future-Proof Your Asset for the Hybrid, Connected Renter.** The modern renter lives online and, increasingly, works from home. This is the new reality. A full 35% of renters now work remotely at least one day a week, making features like enhanced soundproofing and reliable, high-speed Wi-Fi fundamental utilities, not perks. Future-proofing also means preparing for tomorrow’s technology today. Investing now in strategic EV charging stations and the smart home features that matter most, keyless entry and smart thermostats, will secure your property’s competitive advantage and asset value for the next decade.
3. **Master the Entire Digital Resident Journey.** A renter’s experience with your brand begins long before they tour, with a Google search or a scroll through Apartments.com. It is solidified by your online reputation, where over 71% of renters place high importance, and is maintained daily through digital communication. Mastering this digital ecosystem, from search engine optimization and reputation management to seamless resident communication via their preferred channels of Text and Email, is the new foundation of leasing and retention. It is the most cost-effective way to keep occupancy high and turnover low.

The developers and operators who internalize these principles will do more than just meet market demand. They will build communities that command premium rents, foster long-term loyalty, and ultimately deliver superior financial returns in an increasingly competitive world.







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