

# Best Practices In **ONLINE** REPUTATION Management

FEATURING



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It's all about being where the customer is when they are shopping. If online is how the customer is communicating with you, if that's where the customer chooses to give you their feedback or communicate their praise or their concerns, then you should be there too. It's wrong to ignore online reputation. You need to make sure that you are listening to feedback and managing that communication.

## **Q What is the relevance of online reviews in the multifamily industry?**

**A. |** As much as one person is choosing a site to be their platform for feedback, somebody else is going to choose to read and engage with it to help them make their decision. It's becoming the nature of our general buying behavior and apartments are no different. It is simply a part of doing business.

## **Q What are the top sites that Camden focuses on for review management?**

**A. |** The sites that we focus on are subject to change based on the credibility, popularity, and use of each review site. If a high volume of apartment shoppers are looking at a site, we want to monitor it. We used to focus on Google+, ApartmentRatings.com and Yelp. More recently, with Facebook incorporating reviews, we are focusing on it too. And we also work with Apartments.com as they did a large push for reviews last year.

## **Q What is your perspective on ILSs?**

**A. |** We try to be strategic in our placements on every ILS. We work with them closely to adjust placements based on a community's need and their performance on that site.

## **Q What aspects of online ratings and reviews are important to prospects?**

**A. |** We are getting more sophisticated with looking at and analyzing reputation data. We undertook a specific study with regard to our Yelp star ratings and we saw an uptick in leads when a community was above three stars. This has helped us set goals and shape the conversation internally in regards to the importance of online reputation management.

## **Q How does Camden respond to online ratings and reviews?**

**A. |** Camden tasks their communities to respond to reviews. Camden's philosophy is that the onsite teams best understand the specific situation with the resident or prospect. The marketing team is there to assist and provide resources when needed.

We respond to reviews so that as business we make sure we engage with the reviewer. We also have an opportunity to show that we care - not only to the person who wrote the review, but also to everyone who is reading it as part of their decision making process.

## **Q What is the role of Facebook in apartment marketing?**

**A. |** We know that Facebook is a great tool to keep residents informed of what's going on at the community. Even before Facebook incorporated reviews however, we knew that prospects would visit our Facebook page to better understand the community amenities, neighborhood, etc. And now, with reviews on Facebook, this channel has become that much more important.

## **Q Share some Camden best practices in online reputation management.**

**A. |** At Camden, online reputation is a portion of each property's bonus. We recognize that it's a large part of what ultimately drives the income at that property and we get more engagement from the property manager when it is included as a bonus metric.

## **Q How do you prepare your property management teams to manage your online reputation?**

**A. |** It's definitely the tendency for people to go online and review when they've had a really bad experience or a very good experience and we understand that. Our focus is to educate and train our teams to ask for reviews regularly and especially when residents have had a good experience. Maintenance teams are great resource for this as they interact with residents frequently.

It is important for the whole team to understand how important the recency and quantity of reviews are on review sites. Consistently asking for and keeping reviews top of mind helps in this effort.

