

A person with long hair, wearing a brown jacket, is holding a dark-colored smartphone. The background is blurred, showing a green plant and a window. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

A Holistic Approach to Multifamily Growth

How to attract, convert, and retain residents for maximum occupancy and long-term success.



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Introduction

The one-hit wonder band, New Radicals, put it best when they said, “You get what you give.” This is just as true in your life as it is in property management. The more you invest in building relationships with residents, the more you’ll get back from them both in terms of renewals and positive social proof online.

Your relationship with residents starts from first contact, whether that be social media, Google reviews, or even your website. First impressions matter, but that is just the beginning. In order to develop lasting relationships that result in renewals, there are a number of tactics properties should consider implementing. These include quick engagement, consistent lead nurturing, accurate lead scoring, streamlined application and approval processes, seamless move-ins, and ongoing engagement throughout the life of the lease.

In this ebook, we’ll show you how to take a long-term approach to marketing and resident engagement. You’ll see what it takes to attract qualified leads, convert them into residents, and keep them renewing through high-value touchpoints and great service. We’ll also break down how an all-in-one property management system makes every step simpler—for your teams and your residents.



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SECTION I

Attracting More Qualified Leads

Properties wishing to attract more leads start by building a strong foundation online, which includes a website optimized for conversion, digital advertising that is laser focused on your target audience, and a centralized process in place to capture and assign leads. When optimizing your online presence, a good first step is to implement digital marketing software that enables you to create a professional website featuring high-quality community photos, virtual tour options, and detailed property listings that attract potential renters.

Building a Digital Strategy that Converts

Today's consumer often prefers to conduct research on their mobile device. Approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of all web traffic worldwide is occurring on a mobile browser.¹ That number increases significantly for prospective residents. According to Multifamily Executive, 84% of apartment searches last year occurred on a mobile device—this is up from 28% in 2013. The primary driver behind this is how mobile friendly and easy to navigate listing sites are.²

When building a website for your property, the first priority should be a mobile-first design—ensuring a seamless transition from listing sites to your property's webpages and landing pages. A mobile-optimized site should automatically adapt to different screen sizes and devices while delivering the same high-quality experience as a desktop browser. It's also essential to consider network speed, so your site loads efficiently and maintains a consistent user experience, even on slower connections. Finally, design with mobile touch interactions in mind by simplifying navigation—enabling intuitive actions like tapping buttons or links, pinching to zoom on photos, scrolling, and swiping through image carousels.

When evaluating the effectiveness of your digital marketing efforts and website, focus on a few key metrics—such as bounce rate and click-through rate (CTR). According to HubSpot, the average website has a bounce rate of 37% and a CTR of 13%. While a high CTR can indicate strong ad or listing performance, it doesn't necessarily mean your campaign is successful. What truly drives results is what users do after landing on your site—engaging content, intuitive navigation, and compelling calls to action are what ultimately impact your bottom line.

Just as important as intuitive navigation is the ability to analyze visitor behavior on your website. Tracking metrics like time on site, bounce rates, and heat maps can provide valuable insights into what's resonating with your prospects—empowering you to make informed updates that drive conversions. In addition, implementing a robust CRM ensures you can efficiently capture and manage leads once a prospect completes an application, helping you turn interest into action.



¹ [Global StatCounter](#)

² [More Consumers Using Mobile to Apartment Hunt](#)

Next, be intentional about the type and quality of visuals featured on your website. Invest in professional photography and videography that captures the essence of your community—highlighting your amenities, common areas, and what it’s like to live in your individual units. According to HubSpot, short-form video and imagery deliver the highest return on investment when it comes to digital content. While hiring professionals may seem like a significant upfront cost, it can deliver long-term value by elevating your brand and increasing engagement. To complement in-person tours, offer immersive virtual tours with 360° views that allow prospects to explore your apartments and floorplans from anywhere.

An attractive website is important—but if prospects can’t find it, even the best design won’t deliver results. That’s where search engine optimization (SEO) comes in. Optimize your site with location- and community-specific keywords, and make sure your listings are tailored for local search visibility as well. If your team doesn’t have the capacity to create consistent content, this is a great opportunity to leverage generative AI tools like ChatGPT or Entrata’s own ELI. These tools can help you efficiently produce keyword-rich content—such as blog posts and FAQs—that not only boost your organic search rankings but also showcase the unique value your community offers.

SECTION II

Converting Web Traffic to Leads

Once your website is visually polished and informative, it’s time to focus on driving action through strategic calls to action (CTAs). Place clear, compelling CTAs—such as “Schedule a Tour,” “Apply Now,” or “Check Availability”—prominently across your most visited pages, including the homepage, floor plan listings, and amenities. Eye-catching design and strategic placement help ensure these CTAs stand out and encourage engagement.

But simply placing CTAs isn’t enough. To maximize conversion rates, regularly monitor their performance—evaluating both button placement and CTA language. Use A/B testing and engagement metrics to refine what works best. Robust website analytics are key here, helping you track traffic patterns, time on site, bounce rates, and conversions so you can continuously improve.

From there, focus on simplifying communication with your leasing teams. Prospects expect instant access, so offer tools like live chat, AI leasing agents, and chatbots to enable 24/7 engagement. The faster you respond, the less likely prospects are to turn to competing communities. Once contact is made—via call, text, email, or chat—streamline the experience from initial conversation to tour scheduling, guest card submission, and application completion.

It’s also critical to build trust by prioritizing online security during the application process. Applicants will be required to upload sensitive personal information to verify identity and income—so security measures must be visible and reliable. This not only gives prospects peace of mind, but also reduces bottlenecks that can delay the leasing process. Additionally, incorporate automated reminders or auto-responders to keep applicants moving smoothly through each step, minimizing drop-off and accelerating lease conversions.



**Make it easy for
prospects to connect—
anytime, anywhere.**

Targeted Advertising

Once your website is in place, the next step is to launch digital marketing campaigns designed to reach your ideal residents across Google, social media, and local listing sites. To increase traffic and boost conversion rates, it's important to start by clearly identifying your target audience. Consider their demographics, lifestyle preferences, and what motivates their housing decisions. Are they seeking luxury or comfort? Do they have pets? Are they looking for a quiet retreat or a social community? Once you've established who they are, determine where they spend time online so you can meet them where they are.

Google Ads should be a central part of your strategy. While SEO helps you improve organic visibility through keyword-rich website content, those same keywords can power your paid search campaigns to ensure your property shows up at the top of search results. This dual approach helps maximize your presence across both organic and paid channels.

Equally important is choosing the right social media platforms. Focus your efforts on the channels your audience engages with most, whether that's Meta (Facebook and Instagram), TikTok, or X. Social media also offers a great opportunity to reuse video content created for your website and to let your onsite teams show what it's really like to live in your community, adding personality and authenticity to your brand.

Your listing site strategy should also align with the platforms renters in your area rely on most, such as Apartments.com and similar regional sites. Ensure your listings include benefit-driven copy, professional visuals, and compelling calls to action that guide users to your site.

To keep the experience streamlined and conversion-focused, consider building dedicated landing pages for each campaign. Rather than sending ad traffic to your homepage, these pages should deliver content that directly aligns with the ad's message and includes a clear path to convert—whether through a form, chat feature, or tour scheduler. This helps reduce bounce rates and provides a more relevant experience for high-intent prospects.

As with your website, proper reporting is essential to campaign success. You'll need to track performance across metrics like impressions, clicks, conversions, cost-per-lead, and bounce rates to determine what's working and where to improve. With these insights, you can fine-tune your efforts for stronger outcomes over time and make smarter marketing decisions moving forward.

SECTION III

Convert Leads Into Renters

Whether a prospect expresses interest through your website or one of your digital campaigns, having a centralized lead capture system in place is essential for operational efficiency. A well-integrated process ensures a minimal delay between a prospect reaching out and your leasing team responding. In fact, Entrata data shows that leads are nine times more likely to convert if they receive a response within the first five minutes. By automatically routing leads to the appropriate team members in real time, you ensure that no opportunity is missed and that every inquiry receives timely attention.

Today, AI is redefining the leasing experience. It goes beyond automating repetitive tasks—it's reshaping how teams connect with potential residents. With AI, you can analyze lead data with precision, personalize engagement based on behavioral cues, and nurture prospects throughout their journey. This reduces wasted effort and ensures that your team can focus on high-value activities—like building rapport and closing leases. AI helps shift your approach from reactive to proactive, transforming your team from overwhelmed to empowered.

An AI leasing agent provides immediate, consistent responses—day or night—across multiple communication channels. It can keep conversations going until a human is needed and seamlessly guide prospects through the next step of the leasing journey. One of its most powerful features is lead scoring and routing, helping prioritize follow-up and nudging prospects who may become unresponsive to take the next action. This intelligent automation increases conversion potential while maintaining a positive user experience.



**AI leasing
turns interest into leases—
faster and smarter.**

AI can also enhance your online application process, automating the collection of critical documents, verifying income and identity, and preventing fraud. With the ability to rapidly assess risk and support quick approvals, applicants enjoy a faster, more seamless experience. Centralizing application data in a secure digital repository eliminates the inefficiencies of paper-based workflows and ensures that documentation is both accessible and protected. This not only benefits operational efficiency, but also improves transparency and trust for applicants.

The benefits of an AI-driven application system are wide-ranging. It reduces paperwork, accelerates approvals, and enhances compliance by ensuring adherence to relevant regulations and fair housing laws. Automated workflows also minimize processing time, which means applicants move from interest to signed lease faster. Most importantly, AI delivers a personalized experience that makes a strong first impression—one that contributes to long-term satisfaction.

Once a lease is signed, the focus shifts to occupancy optimization. Reducing vacancy loss is key to maximizing net operating income, and the quickest way to do that is by minimizing downtime between residents. With most move-outs announced in advance, your team can proactively schedule inspections, identify needed repairs, and prepare make-ready boards to expedite the turnover process. Reviewing historical maintenance data can also help determine whether persistent issues—like faulty appliances—warrant replacement rather than repeated repairs, ensuring a better move-in experience for the next resident.

But while fast turns are important, the most sustainable path to high occupancy is resident retention. Happy residents are more likely to renew, and one of the biggest drivers of satisfaction is reliable, responsive maintenance service. Residents often equate the quality of service with how quickly and thoroughly maintenance issues are resolved—not necessarily with their leasing office experience. That’s why service requests should be integrated directly into your property’s resident portal or app, with all communications—from request to resolution—tracked and easily accessible.

Maintenance performance directly impacts renewal decisions, but it’s only part of the equation. Ongoing resident engagement plays a critical role as well. Once a resident has moved in, you should continue the nurturing process that began at their initial inquiry. Establishing a consistent communication cadence—whether through community updates, event invites, or neighborhood news—helps maintain a strong relationship. With the right property management software, much of this communication can be automated, reducing the burden on your team while keeping residents informed and engaged.

Paying attention to what and how often you communicate makes a difference. Residents notice thoughtful, consistent outreach—especially when it includes updates on amenities, rent changes, or community happenings. Even difficult conversations, such as rent increases, can be well-received when handled with transparency. In many cases, residents are willing to pay more when they feel valued, informed, and part of a community they’re proud to call home.



Conclusion

In today's competitive multifamily landscape, success goes beyond beautiful properties—it requires a holistic strategy that builds strong relationships from first click to long-term lease renewal. That means attracting the right leads through a strong digital presence, converting them with efficient, tech-enabled leasing tools, and retaining them through outstanding service and consistent engagement.

By leveraging modern tools like AI, centralized lead tracking, and robust analytics, you can simplify operations while delivering an exceptional resident experience. When done right, your digital strategy not only fills units faster—it creates communities where people feel welcome, supported, and eager to stay.

To see how Entrata can help you deliver a connected, end-to-end leasing experience that drives occupancy and resident satisfaction, request a demo today.