



entrata[®]

Smarter Maintenance, Lower Costs

A comprehensive guide to driving efficiency in multifamily facilities management.

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Introduction

Today's economic landscape is increasingly unpredictable. With inflation on the rise and the long-term impact of tariffs still unfolding, it's becoming more difficult to forecast operating costs—whether for the year ahead or even month to month. For multifamily businesses, expenses such as payroll, insurance premiums, and maintenance are all vulnerable to these shifts, especially as material costs climb and supply chain disruptions persist. Add high interest rates to the mix, and the cost of financing property improvements can quickly escalate.

If left unchecked, these rising expenses could outpace revenue growth, putting pressure on net operating income (NOI), limiting available cash flow, and reducing investor returns. However, properties that proactively adopt efficient facilities management strategies are better positioned to manage costs and maintain a healthy NOI—even amid economic headwinds.

Efficiency should be at the core of any facilities management approach. Whether refining operational workflows, improving vendor coordination, or investing in proactive maintenance, the key is to optimize how teams spend their time and how funds are allocated across the property.

To help you get started, we've identified four key areas to focus on for improving efficiency and controlling costs:

- Empowering site teams through streamlined processes
- Leveraging data and business intelligence
- Simplifying resident-facing interactions
- Choosing the right technology partner

SECTION I

Creating Efficiencies for Site Teams

It's no secret that site teams carry a heavy workload—especially those tasked with maintaining the property and managing maintenance services. Much of their time is spent on repetitive, manual tasks that, while necessary, limit their ability to focus on more rewarding aspects of the job—like engaging with residents and enhancing the overall community experience. Fortunately, recent advancements in technology make it possible to automate many of these routine activities, freeing up teams to focus on higher-value tasks—without increasing headcount or labor costs.

Start with the Right Tasks

The first step is identifying which tasks can be automated. Look for activities that are highly repeatable and easy to plug into streamlined workflows. Examples include service requests, vendor management, invoice processing, and make-ready or move-in/out processes. While automation plays a key role, it's just one part of the efficiency equation.

Analyze Time Allocation

Next, assess how your teams are spending their time. Break down daily activities to uncover inefficiencies and ask questions like: "If I had more budget, is this a task I'd prioritize improving?" If the answer is no, then it may be a strong candidate for automation or process refinement. This kind of analysis is essential to ensuring your team is maximizing their time on work that truly matters.

One Entrata customer—a high-end, mixed-use apartment developer in Atlanta—faced a rising number of after-hours maintenance calls. These emergencies were expensive, as they required on-call technicians to be paid time-and-a-half, plus mileage. Suspecting many of these weren't true emergencies, the company reviewed the data—and confirmed that fewer than half of the calls warranted immediate action (such as flooding or HVAC failure in extreme temperatures).

In response, the company proactively educated residents on what constitutes an emergency. This simple step reduced after-hours maintenance costs significantly—without negatively affecting resident satisfaction. In fact, thoughtful efficiency measures like this often improve the resident experience, especially when paired with clear communication and expectation-setting.

Streamline Vendor Management

Vendor management is another area ripe for optimization. Identifying, vetting, and tracking approved vendors is often tedious and never-ending. However, this burden can be greatly reduced by partnering with a provider that pre-vets vendors, collects payment details, and offers a punchout catalog. This enables on-demand access to real-time pricing and one-click purchasing—saving time while ensuring quality and compliance.

Invoice processing is another pain point. Manually entering invoices into an accounts payable (AP) system is time-consuming. With AI-powered solutions, invoices can be processed automatically with near-perfect accuracy, and payments sent via the vendor's preferred method once approved.

These two areas alone—vendor management and invoice processing—can reclaim hours each week for site teams. But this mindset can be applied more broadly: any process that's manual and repetitive is a candidate for transformation.

Don't Overlook Training

After identifying areas for improvement, consider whether any issues stem from a lack of training. For example, if a recurring maintenance issue like a leaky faucet often requires multiple visits to resolve, there may be an opportunity to improve technician skills through targeted coaching. Ongoing training helps technicians stay current with evolving tools and techniques—empowering them to complete work more effectively the first time.

SECTION II

Utilizing Data and Business Intelligence

Another impactful way to drive efficiencies in facilities management is by harnessing data analytics and business intelligence. These tools help improve performance, extend the lifespan of assets like appliances, plumbing, and HVAC systems, and identify unnecessary spending. They also aid in forecasting staffing needs based on seasonal trends or upcoming vacancies. Most importantly, data empowers you to take a proactive stance—addressing potential issues before they escalate into costly problems.

Proactive, Preventative, and Strategic Facilities Management

The most efficient facilities management strategies are proactive, preventative, and strategic. Properties that adopt a proactive approach often see their physical assets last longer and reduce the risk of unplanned, expensive repairs.

This approach also allows maintenance teams to use their time more effectively. Rather than waiting for issues to arise or jumping from one emergency to the next, teams can plan ahead, prioritize important tasks, and prevent breakdowns before they occur. It's a shift from reactive "break/fix" workflows to a more preventive maintenance mindset.

A common example is scheduling HVAC filter changes quarterly or biannually. Though simple, this task can significantly reduce maintenance requests during peak seasons, extend the lifespan of HVAC units, improve energy efficiency, and lower long-term costs. It also enhances the resident experience by reducing the chances of mid-season breakdowns.

That's just the beginning. Other preventative tasks include gutter cleanings, routine roof inspections, and regular pest control. Proactively scheduling these services not only ensures better property performance but also makes it easier to forecast maintenance budgets and seasonal staffing needs.



Data-driven, preventative maintenance transforms facilities management into a strategic asset—cutting costs, extending equipment life, and improving resident satisfaction.

Applying Business Intelligence

Business intelligence tools help teams track and evaluate key metrics, allowing them to optimize workflows and identify areas for improvement. A few critical data points include:

- **Work Order Completion Time**

The speed at which work orders are completed indicates overall efficiency. If parts are readily available and vendor partnerships are strong, maintenance teams can resolve issues faster and keep residents satisfied.

- **Average Maintenance Cost Per Unit**

Tracking this figure helps control spending and flags potential overages—such as rising repair costs that may indicate it's time to replace aging appliances.

SECTION II

Utilizing Data and Business Intelligence

The Power of Predictive Analytics

While business intelligence focuses on visualizing historical data and spotting trends, predictive analytics uses that data to forecast future outcomes. This forward-looking approach allows teams to anticipate needs and optimize resource allocation. Here's how it can elevate your facilities management:

- **Forecasting Unit Turnover**

Predicting when units will turn helps ensure maintenance and cleaning teams are scheduled appropriately, allowing for seamless transitions between residents. (We'll dive deeper into this in the next section.)

- **Predicting NOI**

Estimating future costs and revenue allows teams to prepare for financial shortfalls, identify areas for cost reduction, and uncover new efficiencies to help properties meet their financial goals.

- **Forecasting Workload**

By analyzing seasonal trends and maintenance demand, facilities managers can staff appropriately—ensuring teams aren't overwhelmed during peak periods or underutilized during slower months.

- **Optimizing Inventory Management**

Anticipating the parts and materials needed for upcoming repairs reduces inventory carrying costs and ensures essential items are available when needed.

- **Boosting Technician Productivity**

With a proactive schedule and fewer surprise issues, technicians work more efficiently, with better preparation—resulting in increased productivity and improved job satisfaction.



- **Making Informed Replacement Decisions**

Predictive insights into the remaining lifespan of major assets (like roofs, boilers, and HVAC units) help teams plan capital replacements accurately—avoiding unexpected breakdowns and improving long-term budgeting.

SECTION III

Streamlining Resident-Facing Interactions

Few things can turn a potential promoter into a detractor faster than maintenance issues. Quick response times are essential—but resolving issues correctly on the first visit is even more critical. According to Entrata research, 80% of residents consider maintenance a key factor when deciding whether to renew their lease—second only to rent cost¹.

When a resident chooses not to renew, it leads to increased marketing and leasing expenses, plus lost rental income while the unit sits vacant. That's costly under normal circumstances—and even more so in today's economic climate where minimizing spend is a top priority. To improve the resident maintenance experience and boost retention, properties should implement workflows that automatically trigger each step in the process as the previous one is completed.



¹ [Entrata 2024 Resident Report](#)

The Ideal Maintenance Workflow

Here's a streamlined maintenance experience that combines automation and resident-focused communication:

1 Request Submission

The resident submits a maintenance request via the property's app.

2 AI-Powered Response

An intelligent maintenance assistant immediately replies to gather more details and schedule an appointment.

3 Work Order Creation

The system creates a work order, assigns it to a technician with the appropriate skillset, and checks the inventory for necessary parts.

4 Resident Notification

The resident receives a notification when the technician is en route, keeping them informed and prepared.

5 Follow-Up

Once the repair is completed, the system sends a feedback request to the resident to ensure satisfaction and identify improvement opportunities.

This type of automated workflow benefits both residents and property staff. Residents enjoy fast, transparent service, while site teams save valuable time. AI integration prevents unnecessary part orders by checking real-time inventory, reducing waste and improving operational efficiency.

SECTION III

Streamlining Resident-Facing Interactions

Make-Ready and Inspections Go Mobile

Paper-based make-ready boards and inspection forms are relics of the past. A modern facilities management solution should enable mobile access to make-ready tasks and inspections, empowering teams to manage everything from smartphones or tablets.

All updates are synced in real time within the facilities management platform, ensuring visibility for the entire team.



Technicians can:



View and update unit readiness checklists



Take and upload photos of issues



Add notes directly into the system



Move seamlessly from one unit to the next—no need to return to the office

Resident-Led Inspections

Properties can also shift parts of the move-in/move-out inspection process to residents. By empowering residents to document the condition of their unit upon move-in—using photos and a mobile-friendly checklist—teams reduce their own workload while enhancing transparency.

This approach helps mitigate disputes at move-out, builds trust, and saves site teams from fielding redundant questions or constantly following up. The checklist gives residents clarity on what's expected, fostering a smoother and more efficient experience for everyone involved.

SECTION IV

Partnering with the Right Technology Provider

The right property management technology is the linchpin of an efficient facilities management strategy. Implementing a platform like **Entrata** can simplify and automate your operational workflows—boosting team efficiency and supporting long-term financial performance.

Entrata's integrated solutions—including the **Facilities Management App**, **Entrata Layered Intelligence (ELI+)**, **Entrata BI**, and the resident-facing **Homebody Move** experience—deliver powerful tools that help reduce operational friction and elevate the resident experience. Together, they enable teams to work smarter, not harder, and help properties maintain a healthy net operating income (NOI).



Facilities management thrives when the tech behind it is built to anticipate, automate, and adapt.

Entrata Facilities Management App

Our mobile-first **Facilities Management App** allows your site teams to complete inspections and manage make-ready processes directly from a smartphone or tablet. Technicians can:

- Snap photos of unit conditions
- Add notes about required fixes
- Automatically upload information to Entrata in real time

This eliminates the need for physical make-ready boards, reducing trips back to the office and ensuring instant visibility into unit status for all team members. The app also guides maintenance staff through each step of the workflow, enhancing consistency and reducing delays.

Entrata Layered Intelligence (ELI+)

With **ELI+**, Entrata brings AI and automation into the core of your maintenance operations. From the moment a request is submitted to final resolution, ELI+ automates each step—assigning technicians, checking inventory, and keeping residents informed. This reduces response times and improves transparency while relieving teams of administrative burdens.

SECTION IV

Partnering with the Right Technology Provider

Entrata BI and Reporting

Entrata's business intelligence tools help you harness the full value of your operational data. With customizable dashboards and powerful reporting features, you can:

- Forecast staffing and scheduling needs
- Evaluate maintenance performance
- Plan proactive service routines
- Track inventory levels

All of this is presented in a clear, actionable format to support confident, data-driven decision-making.

Homebody Move

Homebody Move simplifies the move-in and move-out experience for both residents and staff. By empowering residents with a mobile-friendly checklist and the ability to upload photos, properties reduce manual follow-ups and increase transparency. This self-service model lightens the workload on site teams and improves the overall resident experience.

To explore these tools and other **Entrata** innovations that can help your property operate more efficiently, [request a demo today](#).

