



UPDATE

*The Voice of the Washtenaw,
Livingston, Monroe, and
Lenawee County's Rental
Housing Industry!*

Volume 28, Issue 6 — September 2012

Always available at www.wa3hq.org

Website Visibility Generates Smart Property Management Revenue

by Ernest F. Oriente, *The Coach* {Article #197...since 1995}

Search Engine Optimization, or SEO for short, is one of the most efficient ways to reach the online audience that would be your perfect and ideal client/customer for your property management company and services. SEO, in its simplest form, is your ability to position your website online in such a way that electronic robots from the major search engines can read your property management company website and report its findings back to their main search engines. This allows web searchers to find your property management company website. At least that is the hope. Right? Nielsen Media research indicates that 94 percent of all online transactions begin with some type of online Internet search. This means your placement on the major search engines of Google and Bing are mission critical to the success of your property management company. So, is there a secret algorithm to getting top-listed or is all of this SEO optimization a bunch of smoke and mirrors? The answer is complex and not for the faint of heart.

Let me first share with you that SEO and SEM (Search Engine Marketing; pay per click like Google Ad Words) are different areas of focus for your online marketing efforts. While they share some similar nuances, they are different in many important ways.

There are three main things to consider when optimizing the website of your property management company to be found by the major search engines.

1. What is the main focus or mission of your property management company website? Without a focus you will load up your property management company website with so many key words that your message will be diluted and missed by the search engines. You will find the most success by optimizing for ten key words/phrases or less. Casting too wide of a net might catch more fish, but are they the fish you want? And, if you fish like me, that big net might just be full of holes.

2. Don't assume you know what Internet users are searching for online when looking for the website of your property management company. It is very common to think that people will search for key words like "Chicago fishing nets" because this key phrase makes sense to that industry professional. However, in most cases, a term like "Chicago fishing nets" is very rarely used by web searchers to find local information about fishing nets. It is very common to find most property management company websites are optimized for the wrong search terms. Using the wrong search terms means you are potentially missing hundreds of web users

(Continued on page 3)



Connect with the NAA

NATIONAL APARTMENT ASSOCIATION

2012 Compensation & Benefits National Survey Now Available

The CEL & Associates' National Apartment Compensation and Benefits Survey is the nation's largest, most widely used, referenced and recognized compensation resource for the real estate industry.

The 23rd annual survey covers more than 190 positions, stratifying and reporting data from nearly 400 companies by ownership type, company size, region and metropolitan area. NAA's sponsorship of the CEL survey this year increases its exposure to Member organizations across the country, offering more in the multifamily sector an opportunity to compare and examine data on 51 senior executive and corporate positions, and 47 residential positions from: Divisional and Regional leadership; to key financial, HR, IT, legal, administrative and other corporate support; to real estate functional levels for asset management, acquisitions, development, construction, marketing and engineering; to on-site property management (stratified by # units), leasing and maintenance jobs. Typically, the CEL national survey encompasses tens of thousands of incumbents through participation from over 75 percent of public multifamily REITs, and more than 200 companies focusing on multifamily residential product nationwide. The survey is now available.

Cost to non-participants is \$1,200. Participants receive it for free. Contact CEL's Janet Gora at janet@celassociates.com.

Register Now for the Apartment Revenue Management Conference—Oct. 15-17

As revenue management practices maturation and adoption rates continue to hit new milestones, multifamily is discovering a wealth of dynamic data and actionable business intelligence. Don't miss out on what's next in revenue management and how to capitalize on its benefits. Join us Oct. 15-17 at the Omni Dallas for an insider's guide to revenue management and yield optimization in the multifamily housing industry. To register and for more information, please visit www.multifamilyrevenue.com

Remember To Order NAA's 2012 Survey of Income & Expenses

The complete 2012 NAA Survey of Income & Expenses in Rental Apartment Communities, which details specific data for 78 markets nationwide, is available for order. Cost for members is \$599 and \$1,000 for non-members. Contact NAA's Valerie Hairston at valerie@naahq.org or 703/797-0624.

Are You NAA's First AIMS Member Advocate of the Year?

The Apartment Industry Mobilization Service's (AIMS) award winner will be announced at the NAA Assembly of Delegates meeting in November. The new award honors a volunteer advocate who helps to influence public policy at the national level throughout the year.

(Continued on page 2)

President's Message: by Terri Neely



Hello Everyone!

Do you realize how many member benefits you have? I am going to talk about one in particular today, Midigs.com, which is a rental resource available only to members that allows you to post your available units on one of THE most viewed apartment shopping sites in Ann Arbor. How much do we each spend a year on advertising? For most of us it is way more than what our membership dues equate to. However, for the cost

of our membership dues we not only get the amazing benefits of this association, we also get this advertising resource. The value of this resource is much, much more than what we spend in dues yet many of us don't put it into those tangible terms or use this resource as regularly as we should. You have the ability, through Rentlinx, to update your availability in real time, a feature not readily offered by many other rental sites. In addition, Wa3 advertises this site to renters, which drives even more shoppers to your properties. If you haven't updated your listing recently, do so and reap the benefits of this resource!

EO Message: by Alice Ehn

This fall is shaping up to be a really busy time here at the association.

In September, we are partnering with IREM Chapter 5 (which many of you are also members of) on an After Hours Mixer at Creekside Grill and Bar the second Thursday of the month. Check the calendar for details. Then comes the Nova event at Weber's Inn. Get your boards started now so you don't have the last minute scramble to get them completed by the deadlines. This year we are opening up the sponsorships for Nova so our Business Partners can display their product in a unique fashion. CORT and All About Furniture may be bringing in examples of their furniture and Service Master is putting on a TV/DVR display showing their renovation projects. We have an opening for one other sponsor so let us know if you would like it.

We are doing a Wine Tasting / PAC fundraising event in October that you will need to watch out for along with the NALP, CAM and CAS designation classes. Please plan on attending the PAC event. Your PAC contribution is an investment in your industry. The monies can be used to help fund pro-rental housing initiatives and candidates. In this powerful election year please try to remember that "Government goes to those that show up."

Published By: Washtenaw Area Apartment Association, 2008 S. State Street, Suite C, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Deadline: 15th of the month for next month's publication to newsletter@wa3hq.org. Submit all materials to Alice Ehn, Executive Officer

2012 Directors:

- Terri Neely, *President*, Valley Ranch Apartments, 734-747-9050
- George Markley, *Dietz Property Group*, 313-689-2287
- Karen Valvo, *Legislative Co-Chair*, Fink and Valvo, PLLC; 734-994-1077
- Chris Heaton, *Legislative Co-Chair*, Campus Management, 734-663-4101

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Property Mgmt. Assoc. of Michigan - Association Executive: Kathy Bartnick - 2675 44th St, #303, Wyoming, MI 49519 - 616/531-5243, FAX 616/257-0398 -

National Apartment Association - 4300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 400, Arlington, VA, 22203 - 703/518-6141, FAX 703/248-9440 - www.naahq.org

(Continued from page 1)

To be considered, NAA members must be active advocates, such as by attending the Capitol Conference, participating in Lobby Day, meeting with your members of Congress during a constituent work week or the August recess, and taking action on legislative action alerts. The application criteria and nomination forms are available at www.naahq.org/about/awards/Pages/MemberAdvocateoftheYearAward.aspx.

For more information, contact Kathleen Gamble at kathleen@naahq.org or 703/797-0633. The application deadline is September 17.

Online Resource Center Showcases Different Resource Each Week

The always-expanding Online Resource Center is a little easier to keep up with now, thanks to the Featured Resource of the Week, posted every Wednesday. Each week, a different resource will be highlighted on a different aspect of the apartment industry. Past Featured Resources include hiring guides for maintenance and leasing staff, survey results on renter attitudes toward green apartment units and a traffic calculator to help determine what your leasing staff's closing ratio should be based upon foot traffic.

Visit <http://community.naahq.org> every Wednesday to keep up with the latest ready to be used information!

Apartment Careers Month, February 2013

Now is the time to start planning your participation in NAAEI's National Apartment Careers Month, February 2013. Your participation can be as limited as a one-time presentation on apartment careers at a local high school, a partnership with a local community college to offer CAMT training for veterans and the unemployed or collaboration with any college or university graduating Hospitality and Business Management majors.

Do you want to get involved in college outreach but don't know where to start? Contact Maureen Lambe at maureen@naahq.org to set up a conference call to discuss opportunities to promote apartment careers. For more information, please go to: www.naahq.org/education/naaei/campaigns/Pages/default.aspx

It is up to all of us to get educated about the issues, understand who you are going to vote for before you go to the booth, show up and vote, and most of all put your money where your interests are and invest in the position and persons that will further your cause.

Then, make it a must to come in November to the annual General Membership Meeting and vote in your 2013 officers, attend the National Apartment Association Assembly of Delegates when McKinley's Alexandra Jackiw is installed as the new chairperson for NAA, and finally, attend GLASstar. This is a PMAM sponsored national speaker venue that you must attend and send your employees. Make sure to get all these events on your calendar today!

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB: www.wa3hq.org

- Russell Egerton, *Program Liaison*, AmRent, 248-948-5534
- Michelle Foley, *Mill Creek Town Houses*, 734-971-1730
- Jamie Schmunk, *Marketing*, Wilson White Company, 734-995-0600
- Amy Khan, *Newsletter Chair*, CMB Management, 734-741-9300
- Leslie Lemerand, *Education Chair*, Arch Realty, 734-995-9200

Website Optimization (con't)

(Continued from page 1)

each month that are looking to find your property management company website and the services you offer. It takes an SEO expert and human-expertise/intervention to help you find the right mix of key words for your property management company website that are actually being searched by your ideal and perfect audience.

3. Do it yourself may work when painting your kitchen, but not online. Trying to accomplish detailed SEO results yourself will not only cost you time; it may cost you money and will often hurt your efforts more than help the website efforts for your property management company. I assure you that you will not find long term and ongoing SEO success for your property management company with a \$29.95 piece of software. The SEO industry is changing on a daily basis. While some basic principles always apply, there are many areas that are rapidly changing and if you do not keep up on a monthly basis you may just wake up to find the website of your property management company at the bottom listing on the major search engines. You need SEO experts that know and understand the property management industry inside and out.

Tip from The Coach: I challenge those of you that think your SEO is top-tier to take a deeper look at your search terms and let an SEO expert probe your efforts to see if you are really as golden as you think. There is no reason to navigate the SEO adventure alone as a property management company. And the right SEO research and application to your property management company website will generate a steady and strong stream of revenue and new clients who want and need the services of your company.

Want to learn more about optimizing your property management company website for SEO success? **Send an E-mail to ernest@powerhour.com and The Coach will send you a free PowerHour invitation. During this call we will discuss how to implement the steps in this article.**

Author's note: Ernest F. Oriente, a business coach since 1995 [29,130 hours], a property management industry professional since 1988--the author of SmartMatch Alliances--and the founder of PowerHour...

[www.powerhour.com and www.powerhouseseo.com and www.pirmg.com], has a passion for coaching his clients on executive leadership, hiring and motivating property management SuperStars, traditional and Internet SEO/SEM marketing, competitive sales strategies, and high leverage alliances for property management teams and their leaders. He provides private and group coaching for property management companies around North America, executive recruiting, investment banking, national utility bill auditing [www.powerhour.com/propertymanagement/utilitybillaudit.html] national real estate and apartment building insurance [www.powerhour.com/propertymanagement/insurance.html], SEO/SEM web strategies, national WiFi solutions [www.powerhour.com/propertymanagement/nationalwifi.html], and powerful tools for hiring property management SuperStars and building dynamic teams. Ernest worked for Motorola, Primedia and is certified in the Xerox sales methodologies. Recent interviews and articles have appeared more than 7000 times in business and trade publications and in a wide variety of leading magazines and newspapers, including Smart Money, Inc., Business 2.0, The New York Times, Fast Company, The LA Times, Fortune, Business Week, Self Employed America and The Financial Times. Since 1995, Ernest has written 197 articles for the property management industry and created 350+ property management forms, business and marketing checklists, sales letters and presentation tools. To subscribe to his free property management newsletter go to: www.powerhour.com. PowerHour® is based in Olympic-town...Park City, Utah, at 435-615-8486, by E-mail ernest@powerhour.com or visit their website: www.powerhour.com



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Capitol Update from Greg Brown, NAA VP of Government Affairs:



Apartment Industry Colleagues,

As I have mentioned in previous columns, election season tends to dampen the enthusiasm for passing much legislation. Once we get past Election Day, the lame duck Congress will have plenty to do (see fiscal cliff) and hopefully greater will to do it. But, that doesn't mean there is nothing to do between now and then. We continue to weigh in on a number of legislative and regulatory proposals to ensure that the perspective of the apartment industry is understood. Some of this work

will set the table for legislative efforts next year, especially in the area of tax. Here is a sample of issues on which we're presently working:

Servicemembers Relief Act (SCRA) – Legislation was introduced in the Senate in May that makes changes to the SCRA which will have implications for owners of conventional multifamily apartments located in communities with a significant military presence. Currently, under the law servicemembers may break a lease with no penalty if they are deployed. The Senate legislation would expand that protection to cases where servicemembers are able to obtain "on-base housing." NAA and NMHC continue to gather input from our members as to the potential impacts of this proposal.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Small Loans – The Department of Housing and Urban Development is proposing to expand an existing FHA program to better facilitate refi-

nancing loans for small properties (fewer than 49 units). Efforts like this have proven difficult in the past, but the need for such mortgage credit is great, especially in preserving existing small, multifamily properties. Banks and other lending institutions are not always excited about doing small loans (less than \$3 million, for example) for various reasons, so there may be a helpful role that FHA can play. NAA and NMHC are working with HUD to craft a program that will be most effective for small property owners.

"Disparate Impact" under the Fair Housing Act – NAA and NMHC joined with a coalition of industry groups to submit an amicus ("friend of the court") brief in support of a petition by the Township of Mount Holly in New Jersey to the U.S. Supreme Court. The petition asks the court to review an earlier decision to determine whether disparate impact claims are permissible under the Fair Housing Act. The use of disparate impact (a practice that while on its face is not discriminatory has the effect of being discriminatory against a protected class of individuals) is an emerging trend across the country in fair housing complaints. The brief signed by NAA and NMHC argues that the text of the Fair Housing Act does not support disparate impact claims. Further, disparate impact is an inappropriate analysis to determine discrimination in the housing context and its liability can call into question any otherwise valid housing policies or practices. These are just a few of the issues on our radar at the moment. If you have thoughts or comments on these, please email me directly at greg@naahq.org.

That's all for now. Talk to you next month. Greg



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Book Review: *"Life Would Be Easy If It Weren't for OTHER People"*



At the recent NAA Education Conference in **Boston I attended a session called "Life would be easy if it weren't for OTHER people"** presented by **Connie Podesta**, comedian, author and therapist. She authored a book of the same name and had it available on the trade show floor. Ms. Podesta's presentation provided insight into human behavior and how we all differ in the way we navigate the world in an extremely entertaining fashion. Her book does what her presentation did, with the topic of "How to deal with difficult

people" and explores the communication styles that we all have and how to change the way we communicate with those difficult persons in our lives. This review hopefully will encourage you to either purchase the book or borrow it from the office and make your relationships better.

The premise of the book started with the fact that as we all grow, we learn what types of communication work to get what we want and what types of communications don't work. For those that grew up receiving what they wanted after bossing people about, yelling, screaming and demanding, were reinforced that that communication style is what it took to make it in the world. Not only in the workplace but in their every day lives. Conversely, those that used guilt and quiet passivism to get what they wanted throughout their lives, are not surprisingly any different in communication as adults to get what they want either in the work place or at home. The key to interpersonal relationships is to understand styles of communication that allow you to react to these persons in a way that does not reinforce their bad behavior, and thereby minimize it and its effect on you over

time. In fact, it goes on to say that by ignoring the bad behavior in others, you are perpetuating it. Doing nothing only makes the difficult persons behavior worse and does not help alleviate you or your co-workers/family members from having to deal with this person.

I highly recommend this book to those who would like to learn to communicate in a way that will make their lives more open and honest. Learn to cut through the drama by saying what you feel and let others know what you need in a non-threatening, compassionate way, and achieve better relationships along the way. Thank you NAA for introducing me to this great speaker and great book. I encourage you all to make a change in your communication style. You have nothing to lose.

Review Provided by: Alice Ehn

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Business Partner Spotlight: CIC Industries



The following quick tips are provided to you by Brian Douglass with CIC Industries, a full-service flooring specialist for your education and inclusion in your maintenance program.

You can reach Brian at 1-734-641-9617 or brian@cicindustries.com or visit our web site at www.cicindustries.com.

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1. Be knowledgeable in the quality of the carpet, wear ability, clean ability.
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3. To remove indentations left by furniture prior, to cleaning drop a ice cube in the indentation and let it dry. This will show improved results.
4. When moving appliances always move them front to back never side to side, this will prevent ripping the vinyl.
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Reach for the Stars

Nova Awards 2012



Event date: **Thursday, September 27**

Location: Weber's Inn, 3050 Jackson Rd, 48105

Entry Boards: Must follow GLAStar specifications and are due to Weber's Inn by 2:00 pm on Thursday

Cost to attend: FREE

All other GLAStar entries can be turned in at the same time or can be brought to the office by 5:00 Friday, September 28

Categories that are available for local Nova

- Best Overall Star Community
- Management Company of the Year
- Manager of the Year
- Best New Development
- Outstanding Maintenance Team or Person
- Outstanding Leasing Team or Person
- Independent Owner of the Year

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DATES: September 18, 20, 25, 27 and
October 2, 4 and 9 — 1/2 days

CLASS TIMES: 9:00-5:00 (CAM Lunch provided) — 9:00 to noon (NALP no lunch) Limited to 10 per class

LOCATION: Association Office, 2008 S. State Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Must register by Sept. 11th to ensure course materials.

All modules require comprehensive exam at the end of the class to achieve the designation

No testing out available for any of the classes.

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Events:

SEPTEMBER:

13 - After Hours Mixer with IREM members - Creekside Grill and Bar, 5827 Jackson Rd, Ann Arbor. After work for a while **Sponsored by: Michigan Commercial Realty**

18 - NALP starts - National Apartment Leasing Professional course. Lasts until October 9th on Tuesday and Thursday's. Mornings only. Call the office to register.

27 - Nova Event at Weber's Inn. After work, all judging will happen prior to the event and winners will be announced this evening. Awards will be given out at the Holiday Awards Banquet in December and entry fee for GLAStar will be paid by WA3 for the winners of the local event. **Sponsored by: CORT, Service Master, All About Furniture and TBA**

28 - GLAStar entries due - 5:00 pm at the Association office.

OCTOBER:

10 - Real Estate Continuing Education Class for Property Management Professionals....This class is designed to give you your continuing education for your state licensing and/or 6 CEC's credits for all designations. Cost: \$60 member, \$85 nonmembers. Held at: Kapnick Insurance Office, Briarwood Circle from 9 to 4 pm.

11 - Ann Arbor Student Housing Fair at Michigan Union on State Street - Time: 1 to 4 pm, with set up at noon. Cost: \$60 members, \$350 nonmembers

16 - CAM starts - Certified Apartment Manager - Time: 9 to 4 pm, runs until November 6th, mostly Tuesdays and Thursdays

18 - Wine Tasting PAC event - Location: Village Park Apartments Time: 6 to 8 pm
Cost: FREE **Sponsored by: Service Master and TBA**

NOVEMBER:

7 - Annual General Membership Lunch at Weber's Inn... Last chance to use membership bucks and to vote for next years officers

8 thru 10 — NAA Assembly of Delegates Meeting in Indianapolis, IN. McKinley's newest team member **Alexandra Jackiw** will be installed as the 2013 Chairman of the National Apartment Association

15 thru 16 — GLAStar Education Conference and Awards Banquet: Join national speakers Bruce Wilkinson, Toni Blake, Donna Olsen and Barbara Savona in an all star education two day event. Plan your entries today.



We are Putting the "FUN"
back in Fundraising

Guest Speaker: Greg Brown, VP
of Government Affairs at NAA

Wine Tasting PAC event

*Wine Tasting provided by Sandhill Crane Vineyards,
an award-winning family owned vineyard and winery in Grass Lake*

When: October 18, 2012

Where: Village Park Apartments, 1505 Natalie Lane, 48105
(come see one of our newest member's community)

Time: 6 to 8:00 pm—Cost to attend: FREE

Requesting donations to any PAC with a chance to win a NOOK,
personal DVD, gift basket donated by WASH or other prizes.

Sponsorships:

\$250 - Sold to: **Service Master**
receives 5 min. talk, banner, and name in all
publications

\$150 - name in all publications and banner

\$100 - name in all publications

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