



Location
Pacific Northwest

Units managed
20,000

Portfolio
Owned & Managed

Product
ProspectPortal

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Guardian Real Estate

Introduction

Established in 1971 and headquartered in Portland, Oregon, Guardian Real Estate Services has evolved into a leading management, development and investment firm. The company offers a diversified real estate expertise including property management, investment, development and advisory services. Guardian began implementing Entrata ProspectPortal at all of its communities in 2010. Today, nearly all Guardian communities utilize the offering to attract new residents and create an integrated experience for managing leads.

The Challenge

Update an antiquated resident and associate experience

When Meghan Hill joined Guardian Real Estate Services as director of marketing in 2010, only 15 of the company’s more than 200 communities had websites. Without websites, it was difficult to manage the marketing system, which was primarily conducted at the community level.

Hill didn’t have website traffic metrics, efficient control over the existing website marketing message or reliable Internet lead data. Additionally, associates at the 15 communities with websites in place had to input lead data manually because the websites didn’t integrate with Guardian’s property management system.

“We wanted our communities to establish and create a stronger online presence, as well as a more streamlined marketing system that we could measure,” Hill says. “Our systems were so disjointed that our onsite teams were spending an inordinate amount of time manually entering guest cards into the property management system when other available systems could automatically input the data.”

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In addition, demand for a more sophisticated resident experience was growing as other apartment communities began offering conveniences such as online rent payments and service requests. Guardian wanted to meet that demand and ensure robust integrations with its property management system.

The Solution

A fully-integrated portal experience

There weren't many software options available that could meet Guardian's complex integration needs with its resident management system. Entrata proved to be the ideal choice for many reasons.

“We wanted a solution that would integrate with our property management software, which isn't easy, and a solution that would allow us to make edits to the website without having to send them to a web developer every time,” Hill says. “Entrata offered a full suite of products that met our needs, and we really liked the template designs they had.”

Entrata supplied a fully integrated experience for prospects from browsing the website to moving into the community, paying rent and submitting service requests. It also provided additional strategic oversight to Hill and her marketing team. Since each community's website was managed from a central content-management system, Hill could control online messaging and monitor communications with prospects and residents, as well as measuring the effectiveness of marketing activities.

“Before, we had no way of monitoring traffic because we didn't even have websites,” Hill says. “With Prospect Portal, we can easily measure any type of marketing campaign to learn what's working and what's not.”

The Results

Steady Web Traffic Increases

Since implementing Entrata's ProspectPortal, Guardian has benefitted significantly from simply having access to the metrics that measure marketing success. But more importantly, Guardian went from having just 15 community websites to 150 using ProspectPortal, which are enjoying steady increases in website traffic.

Linden, a newly-constructed Portland community that launched its website in May 2013, received a solid 681 website visits in its first month. The very next month, web traffic jumped more than 50 percent resulting in 1,023 visits. Visits peaked in October at 2,444, slowed down as expected during the lull in the leasing season, and jumped once again to 2,374 in March 2014.

Steady increases have also been the story for Vancouver, Washington-based Van Mall North Apartments, which garnered just six website visits in March 2011, the month of its launch. Traffic increased 400 percent in the following month and visits have steadily improved, reaching their peak in March 2014 when the community site received 581 visits.

Beaverton, Oregon-based Amber Court is also a good example of the traffic increases that Guardian has experienced through Entrata's ProspectPortal. The first month the community's website was launched in August of 2010, it had just 36 visitors. It steadily increased, peaking in January 2012 at 517 visitors and staying relatively level until March 2014, when the site hit a record of 570 visits.

Entrata has created a fully-integrated experience for Guardian residents with the added benefit of providing valuable metrics that are significantly improving the effectiveness of Guardian's marketing activities. “It has elevated our sophistication,” Hill says. “We can measure the success of any type of marketing campaigns that we run, whether it's search engine optimization, pay per click or even a postcard campaign. From web traffic, number of guest cards and conversion rates, our platform tells us everything we need to know.”

Property Websites

