



**Location**

Chicago, Illinois

**Units managed**

20,000+

**Portfolio**

Owned & Managed

**Product**

Message Center

“ Our teams manage a 14-arm octopus as it is, Message Center provided them one place to go to for resident communication. ”

**Virginia Love, VP**  
Waterton Residential

**Situation**

**Cumbersome Communications Prove Risky and Inefficient**

Waterton understood the importance of being able to quickly and effectively communicate with its residents. However, when it came to sending messages, many of its properties often found themselves laboring through a cumbersome process.

“We were managing two separate platforms for resident communications,” said Waterton’s Vice President, Leasing and Marketing, Virginia Love. “Our teams were cross-checking the ResidentPortal with emails sent via Outlook. For everything from rent payments, maintenance requests, and emails, they were logging into and backing out of each platform in order to gather all the information they needed. To say the least, it was problematic.”

Under Waterton’s current system, the fastest and easiest way for the leasing teams to update residents about property updates and emergencies was with printed communications placed on each resident’s door.

“One resident said at a townhall meeting, ‘I would appreciate if you didn’t put anything from the property on my door. All it does is tell people I’m not home,’” Love said. “From that statement we were prompted to make a change. We wanted our residents to know we heard them loud and clear.”

In addition, the antiquated Outlook and flyers system didn’t allow Love and her team any insight into its open-rate data or analytics to determine the effectiveness of its communications.

“ From a high level, prior to Message Center, we didn’t have an in-depth understanding of how effective our resident communications were. Now not only can we accurately track open rates, we can also see the frequency in which our teams are communicating with residents. If they aren’t taking advantage of the system, we know they need additional training on both the marketing and customer service side. ”

**Virginia Love, VP**  
Waterton Residential

## Approach

### One Solution, Customized for Effectiveness

Waterton needed a system that would allow them to track resident communications, disseminate messages more quickly and filter who receives what messages when. Love and her team began by testing Entrata’s Message Center on one of its largest properties Presidential Towers, a 2,346 unit community in downtown Chicago.

“Our teams manage a 14-arm octopus as it is, Message Center provided them one place to go to for resident communication,” said Love.

Message Center organizes, creates, and sends messages directly to a target audience. The platform offers a centralized contact database, message tracking, customizable-branded email templates, and filtering capabilities, all designed to streamline the communications process and ensure the message is being delivered.

With complete integration into ResidentPortal, the leasing staff is no longer burdened with trying to consolidate communications riddled across multiple platforms. By surveying on-site teams, Waterton was able to create branded communication templates that closely aligned with the company’s policies and procedures like pets, trash, parking and rent. They were also able to develop tailored messages for its various enterprise-wide marketing initiatives. It’s all saving time that can be allocated to other operational and customer service efforts. Waterton is even able to track the system’s improvements in Entrata.

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## Results

### Residents and Staff Tout Message Center’s Perks

Waterton is no longer laboring between two separate communications platforms as the firm has launched Message Center across the majority of its portfolio, roughly 20,000 units. Over the last year, the firm has disseminated more than 500,000 messages through Message Center and is experiencing close to 50 percent open rates on all its resident communications.

The results were proven in more than just the numbers. When an extremely cold spell hit Atlanta causing pipes to burst at one of Waterton’s properties, Message Center was there as an invaluable resource to the on-site team.

“If we didn’t have Message Center, there wouldn’t have been enough paper, ink, or people to climb the stairs covered in ice to get messages to the residents about what to do,” said Love. “The manager at the property sent me an email saying Message Center was the greatest tool we have. We could communicate instantly. It saved us in this situation.”

The management aren’t the only one’s raving about the tool. Just recently, on one of the industry’s ratings and review sites, a resident said that a Waterton community had a really cool resident portal and emails you all the information.

“They made a comment about the Message Center and I think that speaks volumes,” said Love. “A lot of communities have systems in place like Message Center but I don’t think you get people who comment about how great it is on a ratings and reviews site. It made a difference in their life and that is a definitely a win for us. When does that ever happen?!”

