

A Landlord's Handbook to Online Reputation Management



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Introduction

Renters increasingly rely on online reviews to make decisions about their next rental. Maybe you are leasing your first property, or maybe you are trying to fix a tarnished reputation. Whatever the case, this guide provides a thorough breakdown of everything you need to know to manage your online reputation, increase your number of reviews, and improve the quality of your ratings. So, let's get started!

What is online reputation?

Online reputation ultimately refers to how internet users perceive your property. Your reputation is made up of the following:

- Where your property ranks in search results.
- Your social media presence.
- What prospective or current renters are saying about you online.
- How you personally respond to feedback online.

These four components culminate in the assessments, opinions, and experiences of existing and prospective renters on various platforms, such as social media, review sites, and other digital interactions. Whether positive or negative, these elements shape public perception and can significantly impact a property's desirability.

Why does online reputation matter?

A strong online reputation matters because it significantly influences potential renters' decisions. Positive reviews and high ratings can attract more inquiries and increase occupancy rates, ensuring a steady revenue stream for property owners. In a competitive market, properties that consistently receive favorable feedback are more likely to stand out and appeal to discerning renters looking for quality living experiences. This is known as **virtual curb appeal**.

Furthermore, maintaining a good online reputation can significantly enhance renter satisfaction and retention. When potential renters see that feedback from existing renters is valued and promptly addressed, they are more inclined to consider leasing. Engaging with renters through responsive communication and proactive improvements demonstrates a commitment to their well-being, solidifying your property's standing and positively impacting renter relations.



5 stages in a renter's purchasing journey



A renter's relationship with your property involves five concepts, each representing a stage in their renting journey:

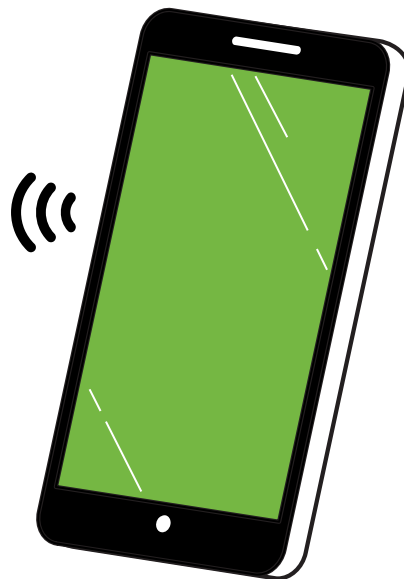
1. Awareness
2. Findability
3. Reputation
4. Conversion
5. Advocacy

Awareness

Generating interest with renters in your property starts with a comprehensive digital marketing strategy. A well-crafted online presence is one of the most effective ways to create awareness and build interest. According to a recent survey, 73% of renters search for rentals on sites like Apartments.com and 36% search using property websites. Ensuring your property's listing is user-friendly and optimized for mobile devices can enhance visibility and appeal significantly.

“73% of renters search for rentals on sites like Apartments.com and 36% search using property websites.”

Another critical aspect of generating interest is leveraging social media platforms to reach a broader audience. According to a recent survey, 27% of those planning to rent their next home said they'd use social media in their search, making it an invaluable tool for engaging with potential renters. Posting regularly on platforms like Instagram or Facebook allows property managers to showcase amenities and share renter testimonials. Through consistent and authentic online interactions, property managers can cultivate a compelling narrative that resonates with potential renters and sets their property apart from the competition.

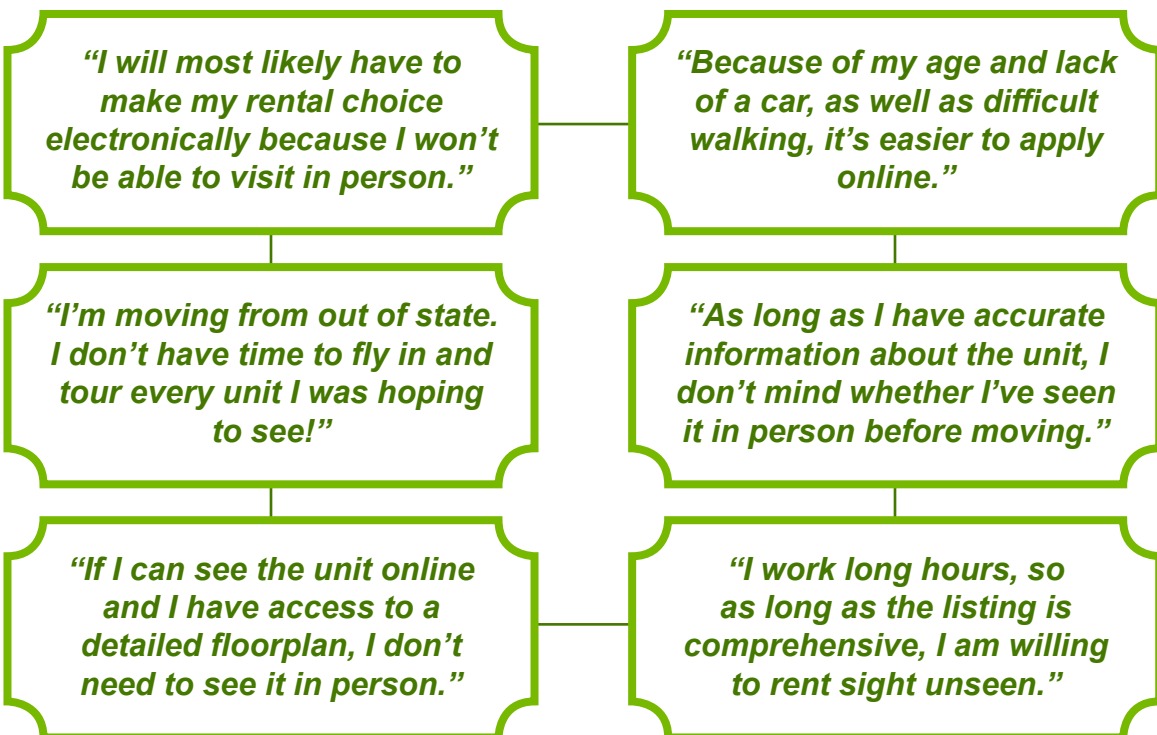


Findability

Findability is vital to property managers because it directly impacts the discoverability of their properties. According to data from Apartments.com, properties that appear on the first page of search results receive 90% of all click interactions. This demonstrates the importance of optimizing your property listing for search engines to ensure it appears prominently in search results. Higher visibility ensures potential renters come across your property during their initial search, increasing the chances of receiving inquiries and scheduling tours. Furthermore, a findable property listing can reduce the time needed to fill vacancies, ensuring a steady rental income stream.

Moreover, online visibility also affects a property's perceived trustworthiness and credibility. Based on a recent study, it was found that 38% of all renters are likely to sign a lease sight unseen. A property frequently visible across various online platforms, including social media and rental marketplace websites, is likelier to be perceived as trustworthy and reputable.

But don't take our word for it! Here are some direct quotes from survey participants:



Reputation

Your property's reputation greatly influences renters' perceptions and decisions to continue leasing. A stellar reputation, built through positive reviews and responsive management, fosters trust and reliability. Renters often associate a well-managed property with quality living standards and prompt maintenance. Consequently, they are more likely to extend their leases, knowing their needs are efficiently addressed. Conversely, a tarnished reputation can deter potential renters and drive current residents to seek better-managed alternatives. According to market research, 98% of renters stated that online ratings and reviews directly influenced their leasing decisions. Maintaining a solid online reputation is crucial for attracting new renters and retaining existing ones.

“98% of renters stated that the online ratings and reviews directly influenced their leasing decisions.”

Conversion

Conversion occurs when a renter signs a lease, representing a critical stage in their leasing journey. The renter's positive experiences often influence this decision during previous stages (awareness, findability, and reputation). A seamless and efficient leasing process can significantly enhance the likelihood of conversion. Factors such as transparent communication, ease of application, and prompt responses to inquiries play vital roles. According to a recent survey, 62% of renters would stop considering a property or unit if they have concerns about the maintenance or condition of the property, unit, or appliances. Additionally, providing flexible tour types,

clear guidelines on lease terms, and incentives like move-in specials or flexible lease terms can entice prospective renters to commit to your property. Property managers prioritizing renter engagement and satisfaction throughout the search process are likelier to see higher conversion rates, resulting in a vacancy filled and a stable revenue stream.

Reputation doesn't end at conversion; however, there is one last major stage in the renter's relationship that will solidify your reputation and foster trust with many renters to come.

Advocacy

Advocacy is the final stage of a renter's relationship with your property, reflecting their satisfaction with your management. When current residents are pleased with their living experience, they become ambassadors for your property, promoting it to friends, family, and other potential renters. Word-of-mouth recommendations are powerful endorsements that can significantly influence prospective renters. For example, a resident might share their positive experiences on social media, highlighting your property's amenities or your responsive management.

These authentic, first-hand accounts carry substantial weight with prospective renters, who often seek assurance from existing renters' experiences before committing to a lease. This not only fosters a sense of community but also helps maintain high occupancy rates. Property managers can leverage satisfied customers to drive sustained interest and growth in their rental properties by nurturing positive relationships and encouraging advocacy.



So how can you do all of this yourself?

Now that you've learned why online reputation matters,
let's explore the steps you can take to improve your
property's reputation online step by step.





How can you improve your property's online reputation?

1. Create a Google Business Profile

This is the very first step to start establishing your reputation online. Creating a business profile allows you to control the information that Google lists about your property across its services, including searches and Google Maps.

1. Navigate to Google and log in to your account or create one.

Note: If you are creating a new account, sign up with your business email domain.

2. Go to business.google.com/create.

The Google Business Profile wizard starts.

3. Enter the name of your business and search for your business category.
Select Next.



The wizard continues.

4. Choose whether you have a location that prospective renters can visit.

For businesses with an office staffed during business hours: Select Yes.

For businesses that don't have a centralized office: Select No.

The wizard continues.

5. Enter a phone number and website URL. Select Next.

The wizard finishes.

6. Select Finish.

Verification options appear.

7. Select a verification option.

Note: Review your information before requesting verification.

After verifying your business account, your profile is complete.

Why does a business listing matter?

A Google Business listing enhances your property's visibility, making it easier for prospective renters to find accurate information about your business quickly. It also allows you to collect and display reviews, contributing to your Google ranking and fostering trust with potential renters.

What is my Google ranking?

"Google's ranking systems are designed to sort through hundreds of billions of web pages and other content to present the most relevant, useful results in a fraction of a second" (Google). Depending on how you manage and optimize your Google Business Profile and listings determines how well you rank within the Google ecosystem for searches that might be relevant to your property!

How do I manage my Google Ranking?

32% of your Google ranking is determined by your Google Business Profile, so make sure that your profile is 100% accurate across the board.

An accurate listing includes the following:

- Business Name
- Physical Address
- Hours
- Phone Number
- Website
- Category
- Photos

After you've spruced up your Google Business Profile, the next step is to ensure your business is findable. The fastest way to do that is to create and build your presence on social media.

2. Establish a presence on social media

This step is easy to start but can be challenging to maintain as building a robust social media presence requires consistent effort and strategic planning. Here's a step-by-step, guide to help you get started:

1. Sign up for social media accounts

When signing up for social media accounts, it's important to focus on the platforms that align with your target audience's preferences and behavior. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook are ideal for reaching a wide and engaged user base, while newer options like Bluesky might appeal to niche audiences. Always be sure to use your property's official email address to maintain a professional image and ensure consistency across your business identity.



Note: Facebook, in particular, provides a robust set of tools for businesses, including advertising features and analytics, which can give your brand a competitive edge.

2. Create a content calendar

Creating a content calendar is essential for maintaining consistency and ensuring your social media strategy stays on track. By mapping out your posts in advance, you can create a cohesive narrative that aligns with your goals and messaging. Scheduling tools make this process even more efficient, allowing you to plan and automate posts ahead of time, ensuring you never miss a day of engagement. Posting consistently, at least once per day, not only keeps your audience engaged but also improves your visibility across platforms, helping to strengthen your business presence over time.

3. Develop engaging content

Developing engaging content is essential to capturing your audience's attention and showcasing the best aspects of what your property has to offer. By sharing a diverse range of content, like stunning photos of property amenities, heartfelt resident testimonials (we will get to this later), and updates about your community as a whole, you can create a well-rounded and appealing online presence. High-quality visuals paired with thoughtful and engaging captions are key to highlighting your property's unique features and values, leaving a lasting impression on potential renters and fostering a sense of connection with your community at large.

4. Reference other popular property management accounts manager

Building a successful presence on social media requires both inspiration and strategy. By following other popular property management accounts, you can gain valuable insights into what works well in engaging audiences. Observing their most effective posts can help you identify trends and strategies that might align with your property's unique story. Adopting proven techniques while customizing them to reflect your property's personality ensures your content remains distinctive and appealing.

After you've established your foundational social media presence online, you can focus on getting more eyes on your property. A great way to get more visibility is to create an account on Apartments.com and list your property with us!

3. Create an account with Apartments.com

What are the benefits of listing your rental on Apartments.com?

If you're a landlord looking for the perfect way to connect with renters, listing your property online is essential. Among the many platforms available, [Apartments.com](https://www.apartments.com) stands out as the top choice. Why? Apartments.com offers a wide range of tools, features, and benefits designed to help property owners attract the right tenants in the shortest amount of time. From a massive audience reach to user-friendly tools and detailed analytics, Apartments.com simplifies the rental process while setting you up for success!

Showcase your property to millions of renters

Want to maximize your visibility? When you publish a listing on Apartments.com, your rental now also appears on our partner site, Homes.com, in addition to our existing network. Gain a competitive edge and attract more quality renters today!



Get paid faster

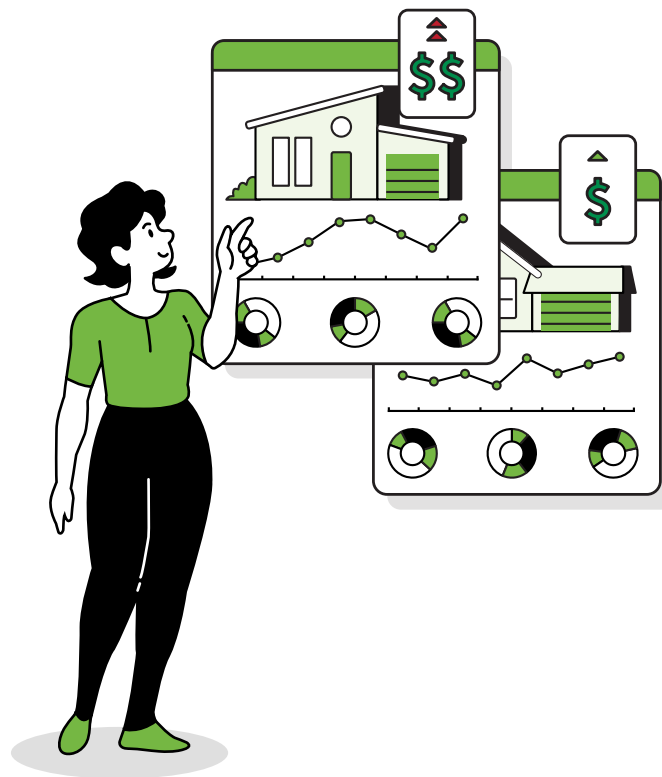
Tired of waiting 5 or more days for your payments to clear? We have the solution. Unlock the power of faster payments with Express Pay for free!

- Lightning-Fast 2-Day Payouts
- Rock-Solid Security
- No Subscriptions Necessary



Get personalized rent comparable reports

Want insight into the local market? Need an analysis of your property so you can set a competitive rental rate? Our rent comparable report provides all of this and more! [Get yours now.](#)





Creating your account

1. Navigate to Apartments.com.
2. Select Manage Rentals in the top navigation.
The Rental Manager home page appears.
3. Enter your email into the field and select Get Started.
A Sign Up page appears.
4. Enter your information and then select Create account.
A verification pop-up appears.
5. Enter your one-time access code and select Verify.
Your account is created.

Adding your first listing

Now that you've created your account, it's time to use it and publish your first listing on Apartments.com!

1. Log in to your account and select the Menu dropdown button in the top navigation.
2. Select Properties & Listings and then select Properties.
Your Properties page appears.
3. Select the Add a Property button at the top of the page.
The Add your property page appears.
4. Select your property type and then enter the address of your property.
5. Select Add Your Property.
The Create a Listing wizard begins.
6. Follow the prompts to create your listing.



Note: Our AI-powered description generator takes the hassle out of writing and helps you create a compelling, attention-grabbing listing description in seconds! [Watch this video to learn more.](#)

After completing the listing wizard, your listing is published to Apartments.com!

Get more exposure with Premium

Get up to 3x more high-quality leads

Maximize your visibility across 6 network sites and gain a competitive edge. Our network is backed by over one billion visits, so sit back and start effortlessly connecting with more motivated renters.

Get up to 9x more search impressions

Boost your property's visibility for 30 days with a bigger and more prominent ad.

Upload videos to your property media gallery

Upload up to six videos to showcase what makes your property truly unique!

Now that you've listed your property on Apartments.com, what's next? We recommend optimizing your listing within search engines. This practice is known as SEO, and how well you wield it determines the remaining two-thirds of your Google ranking.



4. Build Relevance Using SEO

SEO, or Search Engine Optimization, is a digital marketing practice that helps search engines (like Google) understand your content and connect it with users by delivering relevant results based on their web searches.

SEO is a vastly complex topic and implementing it properly is the subject of fierce debate. For now, there is one basic concept that you can be aware of that will go a long way toward helping you build your reputation online: relevance.

Relevance

Relevance in SEO is key to making sure your property or business connects with the right audience. By creating content that aligns with the needs and interests of renters, you help search engines understand your niche and match it to the queries renters are searching for. This includes providing detailed property descriptions, showcasing unique features, and addressing common concerns like pricing, amenities, and location. Not only does this improve user satisfaction, but it also signals to search engines that your content is both authoritative and matches search intent. Ultimately, understanding and addressing this search intent is what will drive better rankings and ensure you're meeting the exact needs of your audience.

Search intent

Search intent, also known as user intent, refers to the primary goal behind a user's query, whether they are looking for information, making a purchase, or navigating to a specific website. By optimizing your content to match intent you can improve your listing's relevance and authority in organic traffic.

Organic traffic

Organic traffic refers to visitors who arrive at a website through unpaid search engine results. It is considered a key metric for measuring a website's performance and its ability to attract and retain visitors naturally over time. According to recent studies, about 63% of all website traffic comes from organic searches through Google. To succeed, SEO strategies should combine intent-based keyword targeting with high-quality, trustworthy content that addresses users' needs effectively.

How does keyword targeting work?

Keywords and keyword targeting are fundamental elements of an effective SEO strategy. Targeting the right keywords ensures that content aligns with users' search intent, thereby increasing the likelihood of higher organic traffic. Strategically incorporating these keywords into titles and body text boosts a website's authority and relevance while maintaining a user-focused experience.

For example, if you are looking to rent out an apartment in downtown Chicago, including a keyword phrase such as "downtown Chicago apartments for rent" in the listing title and description can significantly improve its visibility to prospective tenants. For instance, a title like "Spacious Downtown Chicago Apartment for Rent - Modern Amenities" appeals directly

to the search intent of someone looking to move to that area. Additionally, mentioning nearby landmarks or neighborhoods in the description, like "just steps away from Millennium Park," can further enhance search relevance.

Highlighting key features that tenants commonly search for can also improve results. For example, if your property has pet-friendly accommodations, integrating keywords such as "pet-friendly rental in [City]" or "apartments with dog parks in [City]" into your listing will attract renters specifically looking for these attributes. A description such as "Beautiful 2-bedroom apartment in [City] with pet-friendly policies and an on-site dog park" not only captures attention but also matches the specific needs of the target audience.

Why is SEO important?

To sum this all up: managing your SEO is critical for:

- Being found by potential renters
- Outranking the competition
- Being chosen by prospective renters

After you identify your SEO strategy, the next step is to start building credibility. After all, "66% of your ability to show up in a local search and outrank your competitors is directly linked to managing your listings and reputation" (Apartments.com). A great way to give your business a reputation boost is to start soliciting reviews and start gathering resident feedback!

5. Solicit reviews and improve your ratings

More reviews statistically lead to more leases; Volume and frequency are important! If you are starting from scratch, aim to get a new review every time you give a tour or fill a vacancy. This steady flow of new reviews gives credibility to your business and will make you more attractive to prospective renters. Here are topics you can focus on to help you gather renter feedback:

Make it easy to leave a review

It's important to make the review process personal and convenient to encourage residents and prospective residents to leave reviews. Given that many renters prefer communication via text messages, it's logical to request reviews through this channel. This approach not only allows for a more tailored experience but also simplifies the review process for everyone.

Know the best times to ask for reviews

The best times to request a review to secure the highest ratings possible are right after positive moments such as finishing a tour, moving in, or renewing a lease. These are

pivotal experiences for residents, and their satisfaction is often at its peak during these times.

1. After touring or moving in

Prospective renters are usually excited about the possibility of joining a new community, making it an ideal moment to ask for a review. Similarly, when residents move in, they're often filled with enthusiasm about their new home, and capturing their positive feelings can translate into glowing feedback.

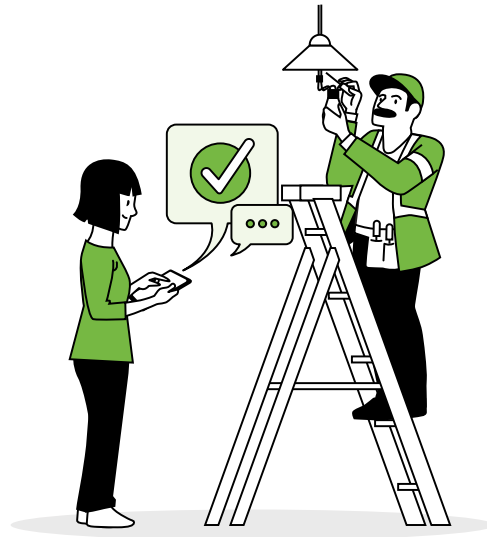
2. Renewing a lease

Renewing a lease is another critical opportunity. At this point, residents have experienced leasing your property firsthand and can reflect on their overall satisfaction. If they are renewing, it's a strong indicator of positive sentiment, making it the perfect time to request a review.



3. After a positive interaction

Additionally, don't overlook the power of positive interactions with residents. Whether it's a friendly conversation, addressing their needs promptly, or assisting them during difficult times, these moments can foster goodwill. Use these interactions to gently remind them how much their feedback means to you and encourage them to share their experiences in a review. By strategically timing your requests and leveraging positive experiences, you can greatly enhance the likelihood of receiving the best ratings.



Improve your reputation with your current residents

1. Provide exceptional customer service.

To provide excellent customer service as a landlord, it's essential to start by promptly addressing any maintenance requests or concerns raised by renters. Establish clear and open lines of communication, ensuring renters can easily reach you or your management team when needed. Additionally, you can provide convenient solutions for common renter needs, such as online payment options or flexible lease arrangements, to enhance their overall experience.

2. Follow up with tenants after move-in.

Once renters have settled into your rental property, follow up with them to ensure their satisfaction and address any lingering issues. Send a welcome email within the first week, thanking them for choosing your property and providing important contact information for maintenance requests and emergencies. Consider scheduling a quick phone call or visit within the first month to discuss their experience and any potential concerns. This proactive approach demonstrates your commitment to providing a comfortable living environment and can help foster a positive long-term relationship with your renters.

3. Utilize surveys

Creating surveys is an effective way to gather valuable feedback and improve your renter experience. These surveys could help you identify areas of concern, highlight opportunities for improvement, and receive insights directly from your renters. When designing a survey, it's important to ask clear and concise questions that cover various aspects of the rental experience, such as maintenance response times, amenities, and overall satisfaction. Incorporating both multiple-choice questions and open-ended responses provides a blend of quantifiable data and detailed opinions. Regularly conducting and analyzing renter surveys demonstrates a commitment to renter satisfaction and fosters trust and loyalty among residents.

4. Encourage happy tenants to leave reviews.

Encouraging renters to leave reviews can significantly boost your property's online reputation. You might start by providing gentle reminders in newsletters or emails, highlighting the importance of their feedback in helping you improve their living experience. Another effective approach is offering small incentives, such as a discount on future rent or entry into a giveaway, as a token of appreciation for their time. Remember to provide a seamless review process by providing direct links to your property's review pages, making it easy and convenient for renters to share their thoughts.

Engage with your reviews

Good and bad! Always respond to the reviews you see. Thank the resident or acknowledge any issues. This shows that you care and can improve customer satisfaction.

Use your reviews on social media

Be strategic with your reviews and use them to your advantage on your social media platforms. Share positive reviews to showcase your property and respond to any negative reviews publicly, showing that you are actively addressing any concerns. Be sure to avoid generic or repetitive responses to reviews as this could show prospective renters that you are not invested in your current residents' experiences.

In conclusion

Managing a property successfully requires a proactive approach to engaging with current and prospective renters. By leveraging customer reviews strategically, maintaining open and authentic communication, and addressing concerns in a thoughtful manner, you can build lasting trust and credibility. Remember, every interaction with your residents, whether through social media or other channels, is an opportunity to showcase your commitment to their happiness and satisfaction. When you prioritize listening and responding to your residents' needs, you create a stronger, more vibrant community that attracts long-term renters and enhances your property's reputation online.



Need more help with your property's reputation?

Apartments.com's Rental Manager suite has a vast array of tools to help you manage your rental property or apartment. [Fill your vacancies fast](#), [screen tenants](#), [collect rent easily](#), and manage maintenance requests and expenses with our all-in-one property management software.

[Create an account to get started!](#)

Sources

- [Your Online Reputation: Why It Matters and What to Do | Apartments.com](#)
- [Learning Center \(Apartmentology\) | Apartments.com](#)
- [Sign up for Business Profile - Google Business Profile Help](#)
- [Ranking results – How Google Search works](#)