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Digital delivery lockers go extra mile for multifamily owners

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Growing trends like online retail have created new pain points for the apartment industry in recent years, including the need for secure, efficient package deliveries. According to Forrester Research, online shoppers will spend \$279 billion this year, a 20% increase since 2010. As a result, package management has become an increasing part of the daily workload for property management staff. It is now commonplace for property staff to be dealing with overcrowded package rooms and constant interruptions from carriers delivering packages and residents retrieving them. With the continued growth of e-commerce, it's easy to see why they are having a difficult time keeping up with it all.

Digital delivery lockers take the weight off of building management staff by completing the last mile of any package's journey - the trip between a mailing address and the recipient's hands. These locker systems, which are designed specifically for apartment buildings, work by automatically alerting residents that they have a new package whenever a carrier delivers something into the locker system. Below are three reasons this trend is catching on and driving business results for real estate managers and owners.

Security

If you're developing a luxury apartment complex, you need to avoid the appearance of disorganized package delivery rooms - and not just because it looks messy. Residents are recognizing that having their packages fall into the wrong hands can present security issues. Since most mail carriers offer the option to track packages online, if apartment communities are unable to keep track of the deliveries they receive, then they appear to be the weak link in the delivery chain.

When a package is deposited into a delivery locker, the recipient receives a personal message that it was delivered and they can then access the locker anytime, 24/7 to retrieve it. She doesn't have to wonder if her package was lost, stolen or sent to the wrong unit in her complex. Instead, she's able to increase her trust in the delivery and in turn, in the building's management staff.

Cost savings

The average 250-unit apartment complex receives more than 14,000 packages per year. Assuming that every package takes several minutes to receive, label and deliver, building staff spends more than 930 total hours per year handling deliveries. Delivery lockers offer the option to cut these labor costs or refocus them on services, marketing and other activities that increase resident satisfaction and drive revenue.

Convenience

According to a 2014 survey by the National Multifamily Housing Council (NMHC), most apartment communities receive up to 100 packages per week, and that number can double during holiday seasons. Another NMHC survey from the previous year ranked package access as the second most important amenity for apartment dwellers, falling only behind fitness centers. As the popularity of online shopping continues to rise, there's no doubt that residents will continue to consider package

access a priority as they make important decisions about whether to renew a lease or look for other housing options.

Delivery lockers offer residents the luxury of picking up their packages at any time without added support from staff. Not only does this lead to a rise in resident satisfaction, but it also allows multifamily property managers to decrease their delivery management resources and better direct them toward resident services that further improve the facility's competitive edge.

Barry Hume is the co-founder and president of Package Concierge, Medfield, MA

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540