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## EDITORIAL MISSION

Since 1989, the NARPM® news magazine has been a key focal point for the organization. The *Residential Resource* keeps members up-to-date on association events, and provides valuable industry advice and insight. NARPM® members receive the *Residential Resource* as part of their membership, included in their annual dues.

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# PRESIDENT'S Message

Perfectly ordinary people have been shown to direct others to amazing accomplishments simply by developing good leadership qualities themselves.



**AS WE ALL KNOW**, NARPM® is made up of a wonderful group of professional, well-educated and dedicated residential property managers and affiliates. In order to keep the organization progressing forward, many have volunteered their time, money and expertise to see that NARPM® succeeds in becoming recognized as the resource for our industry. Many NARPM® volunteers have contributed their skills and experience towards this accomplishment. In fact, perfectly ordinary people have been shown to direct others to amazing accomplishments simply by developing good leadership qualities themselves. These volunteers have become NARPM® Soaring Eagles.

NARPM® leaders are all over the place—in our chapters, on our local and national committees, and on the national Board of Directors. I know that some of you sit back and think, “I couldn’t be a leader in NARPM®” or “I don’t have what it takes to be a NARPM® leader.” Well, I am here to tell you that each and every one of you can definitely be a NARPM® leader. Let me tell you why I say that.

According to a great book called *The Leadership Challenge* by James Kouzes and Barry Posner, there are five basic qualities of good leaders.

Good Leaders:

1. Challenge the process – The leader recognizes good ideas and supports those ideas. Leaders are willing to take risks

and find new and better ways of doing things. They listen to others.

2. Inspire a shared vision – Leaders have a desire to make things happen. They inspire commitment.
3. Enable others to act – Leadership is a team effort. Very good leaders enlist the support and assistance of all those who must make the system work. Leadership is a relationship founded on trust and confidence.
4. Model the way – Behavior wins respect. Leaders go first by way of setting an example for others to follow.
5. Encourage the heart – Volunteers often become exhausted, frustrated and disenchanted. Leaders encourage the heart of their constituents to carry on.

It is getting on towards that time of the year when NARPM® starts looking for its new leaders. The Nominating Committee will soon be sending out requests for applications for the 2011 Board of Directors. I know you are thinking that 2011 is too far away—but it really isn’t. Time seems to move very fast in NARPM® (as well as everything else we do in life). If you do not think that you will be able to look at NARPM® leadership on a national level, maybe you could do so locally. The lifeblood of the chapter is its members and each one has leadership potential. Once you have tried it on a local level, then I encourage you to do so on a national level. The rewards are boundless.

## NARPM® SOARING EAGLES

*(Each month, I will report to you regarding those members/chapters who are what I perceive to be NARPM® Soaring Eagles.)*

NARPM® has had the opportunity to receive many Chapter Compliances. For those chapters that can be recognized as soaring, Chapter Support Manager Mark Dunlap has brought the following to my attention:

1. San Antonio Metro Metropolitan is having office socials that are hosted by its members at their offices along with tours and sharing of their best practices.
2. Colorado Springs has held a one-day Landlord Symposium for non-members. What a great way to educate others and promote the many benefits of being a NARPM® member!
3. Southwest Idaho has a Board retreat to plan their upcoming year. Taking the time to plan ahead is a hallmark of a chapter that is soaring to new heights.

These are just a few of the chapters that have reported their outstanding activities. Please share your chapter stories with me as I want everyone to see the great things NARPM® members are doing!

**Vickie Gaskill, MPM® RMP® CPM® ARM®**  
2010 NARPM® President



# From the **DESK** of the *Executive Director*



Gail S. Phillips, CAE

Helping the community is something NARPM® members have always been great at doing.

**FEBRUARY FINDS US** getting ramped up to start the regional conferences! Have you marked the dates on your calendar? These events begin in April and run through May. Why should you attend? NARPM® regions are bringing education closer to the member. Check out all the dates on the website at [www.narpm.org/conferences/regional-conferences](http://www.narpm.org/conferences/regional-conferences). Volunteers have been busy scheduling great events that are educational and allow networking for everyone in attendance. NARPM® is involved in all conferences this year so that they will have the look and feel of a national event. Also be sure to visit our Facebook fan page and let us know which conferences you will be attending. You can find the link to the fan page on the home page of [www.narpm.org](http://www.narpm.org). Plan on attending, you will be glad you did!

Volunteers for NARPM® are the lifeblood of the organization. Chapter leaders help groom the future leaders of National, so get involved in your chapter and then take a look at joining a NARPM® committee. You can sign up for a committee by going to [www.narpm.org/members/get-involved/committees.html](http://www.narpm.org/members/get-involved/committees.html) and then returning the application form to National. All committee meetings are held via conference calls and are scheduled for the entire year. Get involved now! This involvement will also help towards your designation points.

Upon reviewing and talking with different chapters, there are many great things happening out there. I am taking President Vickie Gaskill's lead and sharing some of these special projects with you. In November, the Charlotte Regional Chapter collected food for the Second Harvest Food Bank. They purchased bags with the NARPM® logo on them and disbursed them to neighborhoods to fill for the food drive. This event

provided food for families in need while promoting NARPM® throughout the community. The Fort Worth Chapter raised almost \$3,000 in a silent auction for a women's shelter, while the King County Chapter raised almost \$1,500 for the Northwest Children's Fund in their silent auction. Great things are happening in our communities thanks to the efforts of the chapters.

Helping the community is something NARPM® members have always been great at doing. In 2010, you will see the first annual Past Presidents' Charity Golf Tournament on the Wednesday morning prior to the Convention. Past President Bob Machado, MPM® RMP®, is leading this event, and all proceeds will be donated to Creative Living Options (CLO) in California. This non-profit places adults that are not able to live on their own in rentals of their choosing and provides 24/7 care, as needed, so that the person can have a life outside of an institution or group home. Bob knows it works because his son, AJ, who is 23 years old, lives in an apartment in downtown Sacramento with the support of CLO. Make plans to arrive on Tuesday at the Convention so you can participate in this fun event that will become a traditional part of the Annual Convention!

NARPM® is a wonderful organization with outstanding members, and I am delighted to be part of it. I look forward to seeing many of you at the regional events this spring. If you ever need anything, just send me a note at [executivedirector@narpm.org](mailto:executivedirector@narpm.org).

**Gail S. Phillips, CAE**  
Executive Director



# Facebook Food for Thought Is It Social or Business?

Maybe if you have been living in a cave for the past twelve months, you have never heard of the social networking site Facebook. If you have kids, or if you have turned on your favorite news program, or opened a newspaper (do they still have those where you live?), you have most likely heard about Facebook. But, just because you have heard about it, does not necessarily mean you know what it is, or how it can help or hurt your property management business. There are dozens, if not hundreds, of social networking sites you can join, but for the sake of this brief article, I am only going to refer to Facebook.

The dictionary defines “social networking” as “the use of a website to connect with people who share personal or professional interests.” However, just as there are dangers involved with social networking out in the real world, there are dangers that can be encountered with social networking online as well. The most prevalent dangers may be data theft and online viruses—proceed with caution.

Here is another danger many people might not consider. Recently, a resident in Chicago was sued by her landlord when she published the following on a social networking site, “Who said sleeping in a moldy apartment was bad for you? Horizon Realty thinks it’s okay.” Well, as you can imagine, that caused quite a commotion. The company obviously does not think it is okay for the tenant to post that information, and has sued the resident for publishing false and defamatory information. The company went on to say the published remarks “adversely affected its excellent reputation,” but that those adverse affects might be somewhat reversed by compensation of \$50,000.


Have you ever thought about using a social networking site when processing rental applications for your rental properties? You will sometimes be very surprised what you come across when you do a search for the applicants for your properties. While I really doubt that you would base your decision wholly on the information you find on an applicant’s social networking site, it might just give you some

insight as to what kind of tenant an applicant might turn out to be, and it may just lend a little bit of credence to that last landlord reference you received! Be careful though; I think this is uncharted territory. Could you be accused of discrimination by denying an application based on information you find on the Internet? Just some food for thought.

Social networking had overtaken e-mail in terms of worldwide reach by the end of 2008, and Facebook saw growth of 566 percent by its users worldwide. Facebook’s fastest growth demographic is older users; the number of new users between the ages of 35–49 grew by 12.4 million people in 2008, according to Nielsen Online. Users between the ages of 35–65 account for a full one-third of the Facebook participants. So what does that mean to us?

As property managers, we may see these social networking sites as another way to promote ourselves, our businesses, and our properties. As another way to market property inventory, it is certainly cost effective. There are no costs associated with membership on most sites, and you can place property listings on the sites easily through various Internet-based classifieds and real estate advertising portals.

You can also use social networking to bring attention to your company and the services you provide (leasing, property management and asset appreciation). Start with a blog (an online diary), that can automatically be uploaded to your social networking site. There are plenty of free services that you can use to write about things you know—in this case, property management.

So, no matter what we think, social networking is here to stay. Whether Facebook will be the new Google or not is yet to be determined. Whatever the next big thing is, I am sure we will all be made aware of it in due time. For now, start out slowly and get fancier as you go. Whatever you do, remember: write about what you know, spell check your posts, stay safe, be interesting, and—as always—pay attention to the NARPM® Code of Ethics. 



**Bill Evans** is the co-owner and Broker of Austin REAL Pros, REALTORS®, and has been an active participant in residential and commercial property management since 1995. He is a candidate for the RMP® designation, and hopes to earn the designation in the next few months.

**The number of new users between the ages of 35–49 grew by 12.4 million people in 2008, according to Nielsen Online.**

# REGIONAL Communications

CONNECTING THE EXPANDING NARPM® MEMBERSHIP ONE REGION AT A TIME.



**Candi Swanson, MPM® RMP®**, joined the family real estate company, *Estey Real Estate*, founded by her parents in 1946, in 1978. She received her real estate salesperson license and, in 1985, she earned her brokers license. She joined NARPM® in 1995, and has never looked back. In 2003, she became the president of her local chapter, *Alameda-Contra Costa Counties*, and, in 2007, she became president of the California State Chapter.

**Save the date for the CALNARPM Conference April 12–15, 2010. Visit <http://www.narpm.org/conferences/regional-conferences/california.html> for details.**



**Let us know if you will be attending!**

## The RVP Bulletin

It has been so much fun meeting the members of the Pacific Region—California, Hawaii, and Nevada. I look forward to another year of working with the chapter leaders and members. The region has many members that know the value of donating their time, working toward industry excellence. However, the one constant theme I hear—no matter what size the chapter may be—is that, “We need more members to step up and help run the chapter.” How many times have you read in newsletters or heard at meetings, “We need your help. We need a president-elect, treasurer, etc.” Did you just sit on your hands and not step up? Do the same people do the same job, year after year, with you thinking they do it best? People who give of their time find that it is an incredible opportunity. They do not volunteer because they have to; they do it because they want to!


How can I show you that stepping up is a phenomenal experience? One does not wake up at night and say, “How can I obligate myself again today?” Members that volunteer see it as a motivating force—an opportunity, not an obligation. They tend to be happier, find life more fulfilling, and handle situations with a better outlook. I happen to find it great fun. What better job than to meet other like-minded industry professionals with great ideas, all wanting to work better and be better at what they do and go home at the end of the day excited about tomorrow?

When I joined NARPM®, I attended meetings, learned from others, and reaped many of the benefits of non-involvement and did not give back. I was what I called a beach sitter—someone that watched everyone, but never got involved or in the water. Then one day, Wayne Metz of Select 1 Realty in Antioch, CA, came to me and said, “Candi, you can do this. It doesn’t take much.” Of course I kept saying no, but in the end I said yes—thank goodness! Wayne made me get off the beach and head for the water. I even became president of the California State Chapter. I got to know members from all over California. I was able to work with a super Board made of Michelle Horneff-Cohen, RMP®; Robert Winger, MPM® RMP®; and Christine Goodin, RMP®. We grew

a great chapter that continues to grow more each day. I called almost every member in California. We worked hard and the next year it grew even more. I learned so much from these talented, smart people.

Then, the opportunity came for me to apply as a national regional vice president, which could offer me more challenges, great fun, and super opportunities. Now, I get to work with chapter leaders, visit chapters and offices, plus the added bonus of working with outstanding members and the national Board of Directors. I got off the beach watching other members of NARPM® and ended up in the deep water having a great time with the leaders of a national organization. I also have the chance to work with other active members of NARPM® that chair committees, and see the value of sharing their knowledge to lead the way in this residential property management industry.

My journey started out as Alameda/Contra Costa Chapter president, then to California State Chapter president, and finally to the national Board of Directors. Each step made me get deeper into the water, teaching me to swim better. Daily, I work with exceptional members that not only take care of their businesses, but have the ability to work smarter by adding volunteering for NARPM® to their busy lives. When you have the ability to work alongside other NARPM® members, you work with an amazing group who are passionate about what they do, are organized and knowledgeable, and are leaders in the industry and within NARPM®. Their knowledge far exceeds my small brain. These members have what I call *The Hearts of NARPM®*. I have the best of the best at my side, and they have the passion to make NARPM® better for everyone. Great things are always happening to me, to my business, and to my attitude.

Now that I have learned to swim and play in the deep water, I know what you are missing. I used to be where you are now. I know there are many beach sitters with exceptional talents that need to be nudged into the water. Get up, raise your hands, and ask to help in your chapter or beyond. I am looking for you. Join me—the water is fine! Call your RVP and ask what you can do today! 



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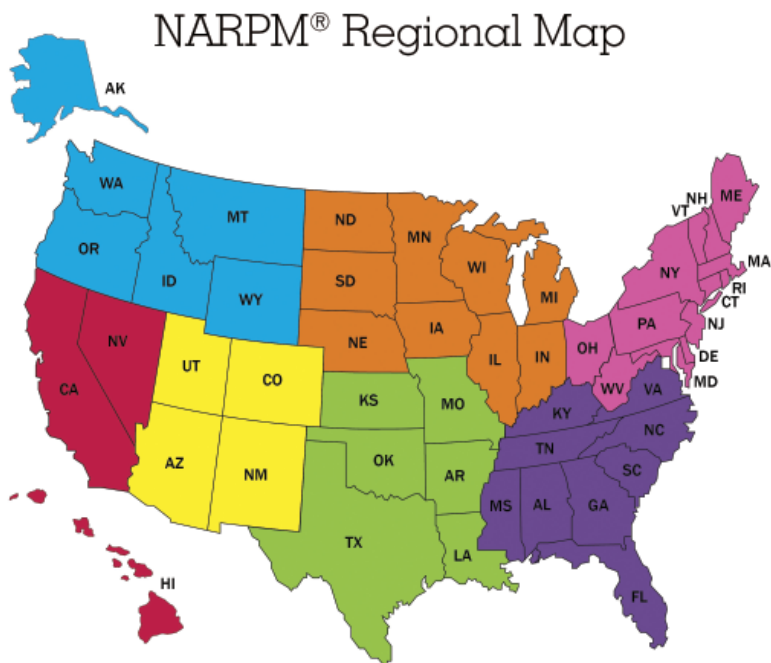
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2010

## NEWS from the Pacific



*(Pictured above)* **Outgoing and incoming chapter presidents, 2009 Chapter President John Adams and 2010 Chapter President Joi Walker. Both John and Joi are second generation NARPM® members, son and daughter of active NARPM® members, Sandy Adams and Gary Walker.**

NARPM® 2010 President Vickie Gaskill, MPM® RMP®, flew into San Jose, California, to much acclaim, from her native state of Washington to install the 2010 Board of Directors of the three-time Chapter of the Year—Santa Clara County. Ms. Gaskill was traveling on her own dollar so the members of the chapter were very much appreciative of her extra efforts in making this official visitation.

The Santa Clara County Chapter has a long and storied history of celebrating Christmas in the best of our NARPM® chapter traditions—coming together over good food and drink, enjoying each other's company immensely, raising and donating money to a selected annual charity, gambling with NARPM® bucks at a casino owned by a previous member of the chapter, and having a hilarious raffle with the gaming proceeds as a conclusion to the evening.

Ms. Gaskill claimed to be a novice to the gambling world thus was shown the ropes by a past president of NARPM® who was born and raised in the state of Nevada. She quickly took to the game of Craps and held the dice for over an hour—all the while claiming ignorance of the intricacies of the game. As the crowd around the table continued to build their stashes, she kept asking, "Is this the way the game is *always* played?"

True to NARPM® tradition, the chapter hosts a 50/50 raffle at the party, and the lucky winner was none other than our surprised national President who ruled the Craps table earlier. In an incredibly generous and selfless gesture, Ms. Gaskill, after deducting a bit for the travel costs, donated the balance of the raffle proceeds back to the chapter's charity.

The Santa Clara County Chapter of NARPM® continues to be an inspiring group, small though mighty in cause and effect. 🎲

*Breaking news directly from the Santa Clara County Chapter!*



**Dan Wilhelm, RMP®  
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Options Realty, a full ser-  
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certified EcoBroker®, and is  
passionately interested in the  
environment. He is also a  
licensed Georgia real estate  
instructor.

# What Exactly Are We Conserving? A Deeper Look at Green

For lots of reasons, more and more people are becoming interested in the environment—some from an altruistic motivation, others from a purely economical or utilitarian perspective. However, the reality is that we, the people the-world-over, have wholly abused our local ecologies (the places we live) to such a devastating degree that, regardless of our motivations, many of us have begun to recognize that we must start paying attention, or else find that we will have misused and abused the land to such an extent that it no longer sustains life—our life! Now, having begun to recognize this, many people are in agreement that our behavior simply must change. And, it seems to me that we are generally prepared to accept the fact that this revelation may entail an acceptance of the personal sacrifice of convenience.

It should not be surprising then, that there is increasing buzz within the real estate community about conservation easements—a method devised to protect designated land by assigning certain lasting protective covenants. We should feel gratified that society has discovered a tool to capture what is left of natural lands and to preserve them in perpetuity, at least for as long as the existing government and its laws survive. If we are genuinely concerned, we should ask which land is worthy of preservation. Should just any parcel of land earn this protection? How do we know which parcels are dear and which parcels are of questionable value? Upon what logic can we base such decisions?

There is a widely spread myth that any natural area (someplace with trees on it), and little or no man-made “improvements,” is valuable and worthy of preservation. And, it may be so by some dubious standard, but the problem is determining which of several parcels is genuinely more valuable than another—if a choice must be made. This is a hard question, but it is one that has been answered by a pair of notable 20th century American botanists, Swink and Wilhelm, with their Floristic Quality Index:

*“... a tract of land occupied prevalingly by weeds or non-conservative native species cannot be viewed as natural area and is quite replaceable. Our interest in natural area identification and floristic quality assessment focuses on the extent and promotion to which constellations of conservative species are present.”<sup>1</sup>*

To really understand this quote, we must first understand what these fellows consider a weed, and what defines a conservative plant. A weed is a plant not native to the ecosystem, and a conservative one is one that belongs there—one that is truly endemic to that place. With this in mind, trained technicians can rate one parcel against another by a common and undisputable standard. The Floristic Quality Index establishes this mechanism, and has been adapted to address regional ecosystems within many states.

The point that must be made here is that conservation easements are a worthy instrument of environmental stewardship, but we should not delude ourselves into thinking that we have done some environmental good by preserving a place overridden with weeds. Unfortunately, laymen would hardly recognize an invasive weed from an endemic plant. For example, we are generally misled into believing that planting a tree—virtually any species of tree, virtually any place—is a good idea. If we are really concerned about improving the ecology of the place, we will either take the time to learn the difference for ourselves, or consult with someone that knows. Planting the wrong kind of tree in the wrong environment does nothing to improve the remnant ecosystem. In fact, it most assuredly contributes to its ecological failing, probably even more so than if the land had just been left alone to recover on its own—which it probably will not.


Conservation easements give landowners the power of law to protect those few remaining parcels of land with redeeming ecological value. This is significant because what many appear not to understand

## Sources

1. **Plants of the Chicago Region, 4th Edition, Floyd Swink & Gerould Wilhelm, the Morton Arboretum, Lisle, Illinois, 1994, P12**

is that the vast acreage of agricultural land, such as the endless crop fields in the heartland, and the over-grazed cattle farms in the south, east, and west, represents land which has been virtually destroyed. We could say the same for 99 percent of the ecologically divested land that hosts our residential subdivision and burgeoning urban areas. These places lack any hope of ecological redemption. However, if a landowner has a parcel on which the soil has not yet been cultivated, it may retain sufficient genetic memory to be restored, with proper human stewardship. This is the sort of judgment that can be made by applying the Floristic Quality Index. It would be a worthy undertaking to preserve and renew such a place, even if only for the sake of posterity. Indeed, if only for the sake of posterity! This should be motivation enough.

So what is the connection between conservation easements and green landlording? If you own an investment property that either encompasses such an easement or sits nearby or adjacent to one—one that is legitimately ecologically significant—then the property may hold special value indeed. If so, this fact should be promoted in the marketing and pricing strategies. The property is surely unique, and this feature should be acknowledged. You can be certain that the marketplace will respond to it. Just keep in mind that it also becomes incumbent upon the landlord to properly educate the tenant about how to properly respect the natural area so that it is not abused or misused and remains a “natural area.” Clearly, both intrinsic and market value is there. We should not only take advantage of these special places, but seek to aid in the rehabilitation of potential parcels. Among the consciously aware, this inherent duty of mankind will resonate to the spiritual core.

So the first thing you might want to do is learn about your local community. Discover if there are conservation easements in your area. You may even own a piece of property on the fringes of such places already, and just not be aware of it. These easements may be publicly owned or held in trust by private non-profits. Search the Internet for conservation easements in your state. You may be surprised at the number of them. If you are a landlord with a large parcel of land that may have ecologically redeemable value and are willing to preserve some of it, check out the application process for your state. There are significant tax incentives for doing this, but there may be even bigger economic incentives with proper landscape development planning. You do not have to do this alone. There are private consulting firms out there that can help with the technical points. One such firm is the Chicago-based Conservation Design Forum. If you would like to read more about self-sustainable landscaping and natural areas, visit their website at [www.cdfinc.com/resources/publications.html](http://www.cdfinc.com/resources/publications.html). There is much work to do. 

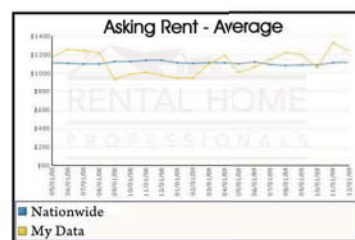


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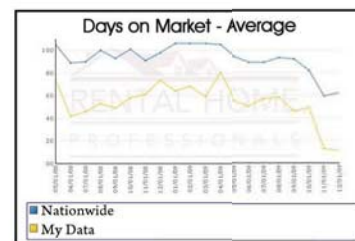
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**Michael Mino** is president and CEO of PropertyBoss Solutions, a provider of property management software solutions that empower your business. He became a landlord in 1977 when he purchased his first rental units. A serial entrepreneur, he has started a number of software technology firms. For more information about Michael or PropertyBoss Solutions, visit [propertyboss.com](http://propertyboss.com) or call Michael at 864.297.7661 x26.

## Move-in, Move-out, Move on

As a property manager, you are constantly faced with coordinating the move-out of residents and preparing the unit for the move-in of a new resident. How effectively and efficiently you manage these processes affect the satisfaction of your residents, your property owners, and how quickly you can have a new resident providing income to your company.

This article addresses ways you can improve communication with your residents and owners, and speed up the move-in inspection process, the move-out process, and the turn/make-ready process.

### PROPERTY INSPECTION: MOVE-IN

An inspection of the property should be conducted at the beginning and end of the term of each lease. The initial inspection is an opportunity to:

- identify any items not addressed during the make-ready process,
- establish rapport with the new resident,
- document the condition of the property, and
- set expectations for the use and care of the property.

Depending on your situation, this inspection could be performed by a property manager, by the new resident, or through a joint inspection by the property manager and the new resident. This inspection is best performed when the unit is empty, before the resident moves in, and when the walls and floors are unobstructed, providing a clear view of the current condition. A physical checklist should be used to document the state of the property upon move-in. Digital pictures are a great aid to record the way things are—particularly any problem areas. Video is also helpful and can capture even more information. A final item on the checklist should be a statement similar to, “This unit is clean and in an acceptable condition,” which the new resident should indicate and sign in agreement.

One challenge is how to best collect, organize, and retain the documentation associated with this initial inspection. Three common approaches include:

- maintaining a physical file containing printed copies of the checklist and photographs taken (an alternative, particularly if a video record is made, is a digital CD-ROM),
- implementing a document management system to store electronic copies of the records, or
- using an online inspection system (ideally incorporated into your property management software) to capture the information in real time.

This third alternative enables the new resident (and/or leasing agent) to access the inspection checklist online. Any photos or videos can be uploaded with the report. Some systems will accept images directly from a camera phone. A few advantages of this approach are:

- the inspection results are available immediately (no mail delay),
- work orders to remedy problems found can be generated directly and tracked as part of the make ready process, and
- the administrative costs of translation and filing are greatly reduced.

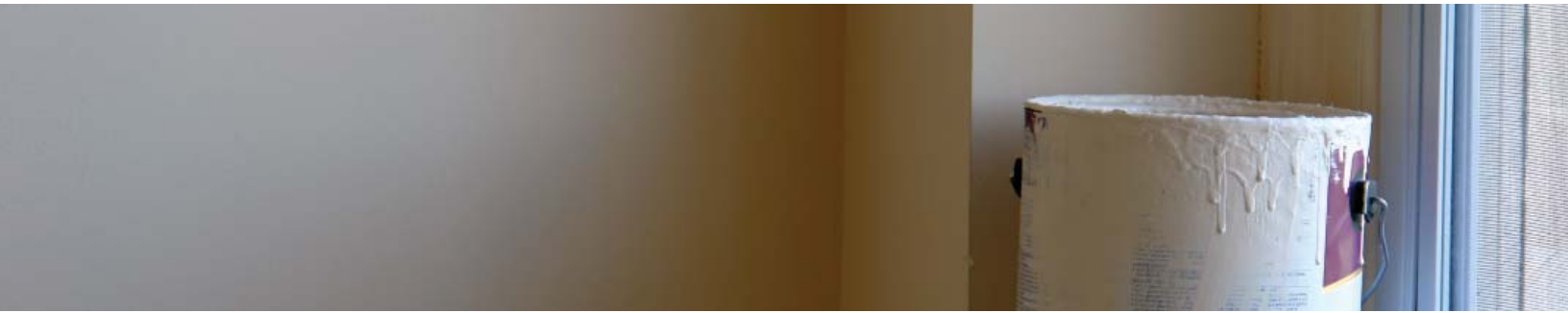
### PROPERTY INSPECTIONS: INTERIM

Some property managers enforce an interim inspection process for longer running leases. These interim inspections provide several advantages including:

- resident can report problems and have problems repaired,
- owners are assured that their properties are being maintained properly, and
- when a move-out does occur, there is less maintenance work to be done for the unit to be rented again.

### PROPERTY INSPECTION: MOVE-OUT

The inspection of the property at the conclusion of a lease should also be conducted after the tenant moves out and the unit is empty. The objectives of this final inspection are to:



- identify any wear or damage done to the property during the lease term,
- determine if any money will be withheld from the security deposit to cover any required repairs, and
- add any items to the make-ready process to be addressed before the next lease begins.

A typical challenge during this process is the determination of “normal” wear and tear (deterioration that results from the intended use of a dwelling, including breakage or malfunction due to age or deteriorated condition) versus damage (deterioration that results from negligence, carelessness, accident, or abuse of the premises or equipment by the tenant).

Important to the determination of wear and tear is comparison of the move-out condition to the move-in condition. Ideally, your property management system will display the condition from the move-in inspection directly on the move-out inspection form. Since these distinctions can be a source of contention between the property manager, resident, and owner, good documentation supported by written communications can save time and money in any potential dispute.

#### MAKE-READY PROCESS

Controlling the process of making a unit ready for the next resident is called the make-ready process. A make-ready process is a series of work orders that are

required in order to turn a unit after a resident moves out to make it ready for a new lease. These work orders can include tasks specific to the move-out that just occurred (i.e. inspecting the unit at move-out). Alternately, the process can deal exclusively with maintenance work required to turn the unit.

A standard move-out checklist is used to cover the common items to address. Items identified during the move-out inspection are added to this list.

If supported, use your property management software to document and track these steps. Work orders for additional work can be automatically generated from each of these steps. The status of these work orders can directly drive the tracking of the make-ready process and show when the unit will be ready for move-in. When tied in with your owner portal (refer to the *Connecting with the Investor* article run in the June 2009 issue of the *Residential Resource*), the owner is kept informed of the status of the unit and the progress towards re-renting the unit.

#### CLOSING COMMENTS

Automation and the drive to a paperless office provide many productivity and cost benefits. Although these moves are welcomed—even demanded—by the younger computer-savvy resident or owner, we must be conscious that many older residents are less computer literate and will need alternative methods to handle inspections and communications. 🏠

**A typical challenge during this process is the determination of “normal” wear and tear versus damage**

A sample make-ready process could be defined as:

DAY	TASK	COMMENT
1	Inspect	Walk the apartment completing the move-out checklist. Make note of damage fees and assess any charges to the lease register.
	Initial Clean-up	Remove garbage, clean refrigerator and stove, clean bathrooms and other rooms to prevent deterioration of the property.
2	General Maintenance	Perform general maintenance items as noted on the move-out checklist.
	Replace/Clean Carpet	Refer to the move-out checklist to determine if carpet replacement and/or cleaning is required.
3	Painting	Perform painting as noted on the move-out checklist for the unit.
	Final Cleaning	Final cleaning to prepare unit for occupancy.
	Make-ready Inspection	Inspect that unit is ready for occupancy.



**Kasey Medina** earned her BS degree in Business Administration from Central Washington University while working as an assistant to the property managers at Bell-Anderson & Associates, LLC in Kent, Washington. Now a residential manager, she joined NARPM® in 2008, and is currently working towards her Residential Management Professional (RMP®) designation.

# Using YouTube for Showings The New Property Tour

Recently, after being stood up for an appointment at a property, I began playing around with my digital camera. If I could put pictures and virtual tours online, why not post a video tour as well? When my husband learned that I was undertaking this project, he had a good laugh at my expense. (He actually works for a video company.) Here is the good news: if technologically-challenged, which-end-of-the-computer-is-up me can make a video, you can too! While this may be old news to some of the more technologically savvy among us, the overwhelming response I have gotten from other property managers is, "How can I do that?" Even though we are still learning how to use virtual tours ourselves, we are happy to share what we have learned so far.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE YOU START

First of all, take a look at the camera you are planning on using. These instructions are for your run-of-the-mill handheld digital camera with a video setting.

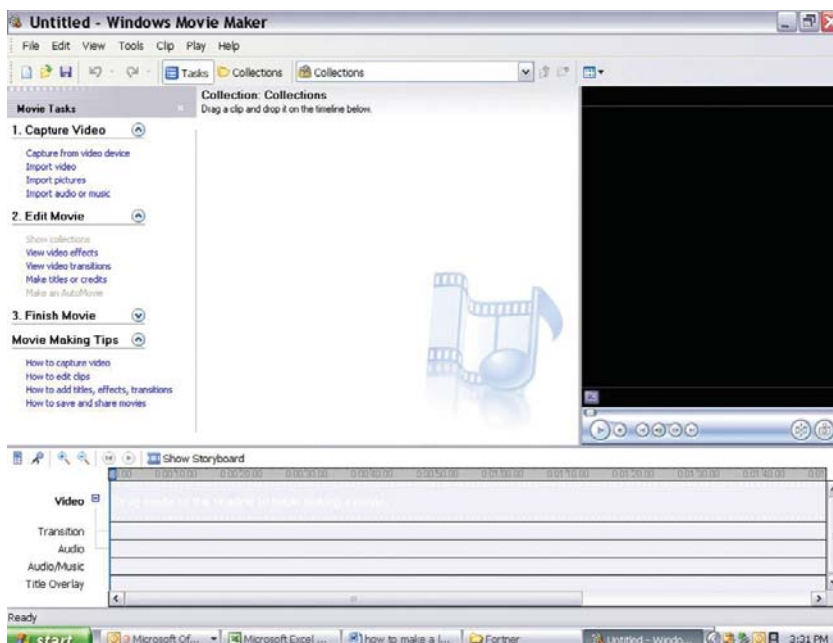
In this case, I am using a Cannon PowerShot. Some memory cards, depending on the size, may only take a few minutes of video. With a 2GB card, my camera can take up to 15 minutes, so buying a larger card definitely pays off. Since most people would take more than a minute of footage and will have to edit the different pieces together anyway, do not hesitate to start and stop the camera between rooms. This way, you will not be wasting precious seconds on a hallway. Before you get going, get as much light into the property as you can. Since you will not be using a flash like you would with a photograph, it pays to make the place look as bright as possible—so open the windows and turn on the lights!

## TAKING THE VIDEO

Since I generally have a limited amount of time and camera space to work with, I start with the most important areas first: kitchen, living room, master bedroom, etc., and work my way on down. While video may not show specific aspects of the room, it is helpful to give prospective tenants a feel for the space—do not be afraid to think big picture. Most cameras should allow you to capture sound as well, giving you the opportunity to provide more detail and explain the way the property is laid out. Be careful not to move your camera too rapidly. These are not high resolution machines we are working with, so if you swing the camera around too quickly, you may end up with a blurry mess. Another helpful hint: take your shoes off! You will be amazed how loud your footfalls can sound in a video when you are wearing shoes.

## SAVING AND EDITING THE VIDEO

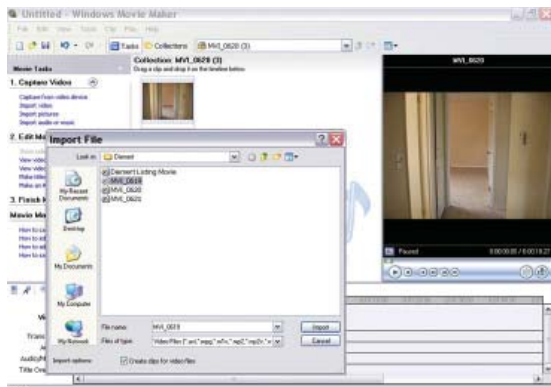
Video files can be moved from your camera to your computer the exact same way that a picture file would be. For the editing portion, I use Windows Movie Maker. There are plenty of programs that will work to edit video, but this program seems to be one of the most common. If you are working with





Windows XP software or anything more recent, you can download Movie Maker for free from Microsoft's website. (See program screenshot on opposite page.)

As you can see, the bar along the left hand side is extremely helpful. I learned to use this program myself by following the steps it gave me. If you are bringing the video files in straight from your camera or memory card, click Capture From Video Device and follow the prompts. My digital camera does not register as a video device, so I first move the files onto my computer like you would a picture, and then click Import Video under the Capture Video tab. Click on the video clip you would like to add, and hit Import when you are done.

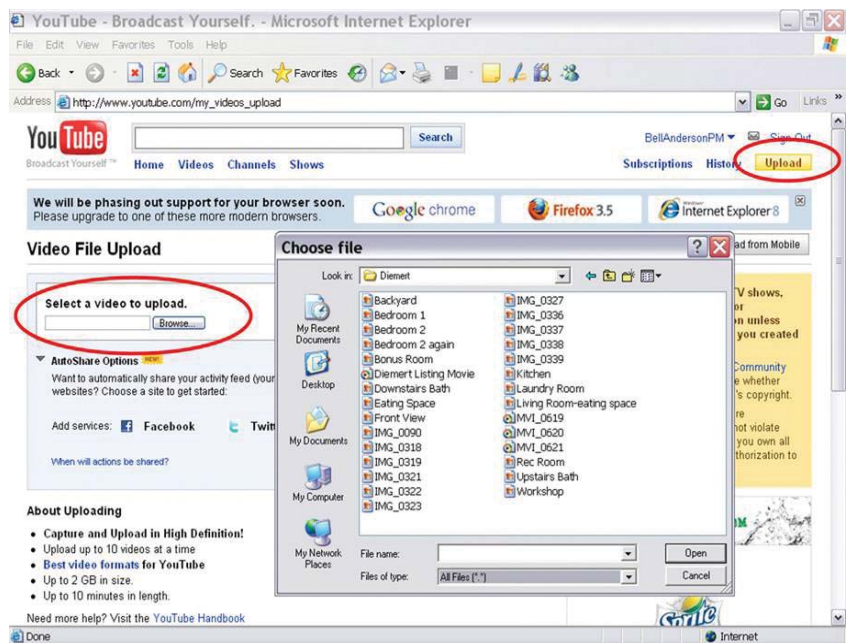


Sometimes, if the clip is long, Movie Maker will break it into a few pieces. It is nothing to worry about. Once they are added to the timeline (the strip at the bottom) they will match up just fine.

From here, you can drag and drop the movie clips onto the timeline below. To arrange them in the order you want, click and drag. The timeline is where you can arrange clips, text, sounds, etc. When you hover your mouse over the beginning or end of clip, a red arrow will appear that says you can trim the clip.

From here on out, you can choose what you want to do with the video by clicking on any of the options on the left hand bar. I typically add a short transition between each room, and text at the end with my name and contact info. Be sure to save your project at the beginning and frequently as you go. You will notice right above the timeline that there is a button that says Show Storyboard. That is the easiest way to add transitions between clips without confusing yourself on the timeline. Also, by right clicking on one of the clips on your timeline, you will find a list of options such as fading in and out, and adding additional effects.

One quick note on video effects: While it can be very exciting to learn to make videos, do not get too carried away with effects. Things like flying and spinning pictures may be fun, but they also may cause your clients to question your professionalism—so keep it calm.



## SHARING YOUR VIDEO

If you are using Windows Movie Maker (and likely any other similar editing program), you will need to export your movie to a file type that is compatible with Windows Media Player. In movie maker, click File and then Save Movie File. Select a place on your computer to store the file. After a few minutes, your clip will be done and ready for sharing!

Once your movie is complete, you will need to host it online for your prospective tenants to view. One option is to create a YouTube channel for yourself and/or your company. If you would like an example of our channel, visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/BellAndersonPM>. In order to do so, you will need to create an account with YouTube. Once your account is set up, you can add videos to your account by clicking the gold Upload button in the upper right-hand corner. Under select a video to upload, click Browse, select the video project you want to use, and click Open.

While your movie uploads to YouTube, you will be prompted to provide a title and description for the video. This is a great opportunity to provide all of the listing information for the rental property. Also, make sure to select Share this video with the world, otherwise folks you direct to the video will not be able to see it.

As with most technology, it is really a trial and error learning process, but making listing videos may prove to be very helpful to your clients if you have the patience. Not many people will be visiting your YouTube channel on their own, so play it up! Include a link to your video in your advertising or put a plug on your blog. You can even e-mail your know-it-all spouse and show him what a tech genius you are!

(Left) To export your video to a readable viewing format, click File and then Save Movie File.

(Above) On YouTube, add videos to your account by clicking the gold Upload button in the upper right-hand corner. Under Select a video to upload, click Browse, select the video project you want to use, and click Open.

**View an example YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/BellAndersonPM>.**

# LEGISLATIVE Scoop

KEEPING OUR MEMBERS CURRENT ON THE NEWEST INDUSTRY LAWS AND POLICIES NATIONWIDE.



**Deb Newell** has been a real estate investor and property manager for over nine years, and is sole owner of Real-Time Leasing in Burnsville Minnesota. She received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Colorado at Denver where she also taught first year Poly/Sci courses. Deb has possessed a life-long passion for governmental affairs and participates in a variety of auxiliaries, such as NARPM®, dedicated toward encouraging local and national citizenship participation.

## Get Involved Locally

It is a new year with new opportunities and, most importantly, new legislative issues. So the question is: Are you governmentally minded? And, why should you be involved and what can you do to help?

Participation in government issues is a necessity for all those who share in a democracy. We are not running for office, but we can all participate in our local government.

What I have discovered is that NARPM® members are very generous in sharing knowledge. We care about the success not just of our own business, but also the business of others. What has been very helpful as I read the business list serves is the amount of knowledge others have to share about the laws/statutes of their community and state; some of which flow over to federal laws and information for us to use to expand our knowledge and share with our owners, which reminds them why they should choose a NARPM® property management company versus those who "fly by the seat of their pants."

My favorite tribute to my business is the education I receive from fellow members and articles written. I feel a step ahead of the game in this industry and realize that these are invaluable lessons we should pass on. So, how do we break in?

### ATTEND MEETINGS OF DECISION-MAKING BODIES

(i.e., your local NARPM® chapter). Now, for some states there isn't a chapter (much like our lovely and cold state of Minnesota); however, we have formed a group of local members (some NARPM® members, some not). When you attend these meetings, you will find areas of interest (governmental affairs, membership, communications, and more) where you know enough to participate or even where you have a desire to learn more.

### BECOME INVOLVED WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

and issues that pertain to your business/industry. This can produce a variety of benefits beyond having an impact on legislation or regulations. These include: increased visibility, credibility, and recognition for members. By getting involved, your industry/chapter

can get more attention which can aid in several areas of NARPM® (mainly membership).

The first step in participating in these groups is to define the agenda of issues that are important to pursue. Establishing guidelines will help decide how to approach future issues/topics. They can be broad topics or specific topics such as:

- Rental license rules/regulations
- Legislative laws that impact REALTORS® and how business can be affected.
- Lead-based paint issues
- Foreclosure issues

Now, how do we convince the local government or statewide government to listen?

- If you have topics of concern/interest that have been expressed by others in the industry, start with letters written by each member to the local government. You can even help by writing a standard letter where they input their name. The more letters/phone calls you flood to your representative, the more he/she cannot ignore the issue at hand.
- Write letters to your local newspapers and radio/TV stations. No one likes a topic to discuss more than property management issues that are a concern and are not being addressed. This pushes the "big guys" to listen and hopefully take action. Remember, it all begins with one.
- Talk with your local representative introducing you and your business. This alone can go a long way. It also gives business a boost, and enables you to be seen as the industry expert.
- Always follow up with a phone call.

In the end, it is important for each one of us to educate ourselves, our staff, and our owners on the legislative issues within our state. We are the professionals; we are the ones that make a difference in our community and provide better, quality living for our tenants and a sense of comfort for our owners. 🏠



# We're Going Green in 2010

You can already Find a Property Manager, Chapter, or Affiliate Manager on [www.narpm.org](http://www.narpm.org), and now you can export these reports into printed versions through the Members Only area to create your own membership directory. This new feature will enable you to always have the most up-to-date listing and help us to become more environmentally friendly. NARPM® appreciates your help in our quest to go paperless and bring you the most accurate information in a green way.

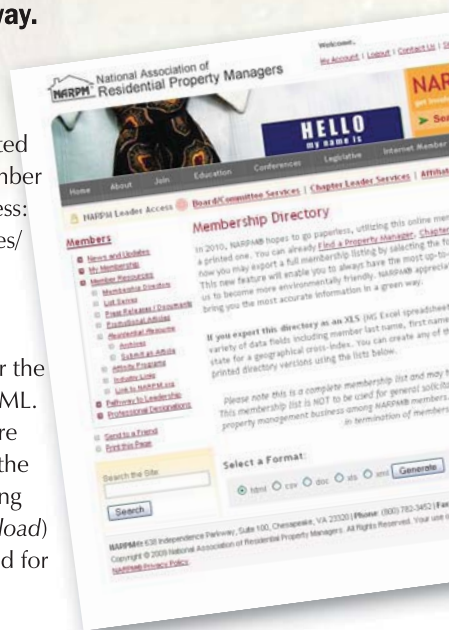
## WHERE TO FIND IT

The online membership directory is located in the Members Only section under Member Resources (on the left). Direct URL address: <http://www.narpm.org/members/resources/membership-directory.html>.

## DIFFERENT FORMATS

There are five different export options for the directory: HTML, CSV, DOC, XLS, and XML. HTML is a type of format that websites are coded in. Selecting this option will print the directory on the website page in a scrolling window (this format may take a while to load). XML is a text format most commonly used for dynamic data sharing.

The formats you will mainly use are CSV, DOC, and XLS. CSV is a Comma Separated Values file used for importing into other programs. DOC is a Microsoft Word format. XLS is a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. This is one of the best options for exporting the directory. Once downloaded, you will be able to sort the directory by member name, company, location, etc.



**BEST PRACTICES TIP**  
The directory is updated every day with new members and changes. It's a good idea to replace your version often.

## SORTING A SPREADSHEET

After downloading the XLS version, open the file in Microsoft Excel. To sort the spreadsheet, click the square above Row 1 next to Column A to highlight the entire spreadsheet.

1. Using Excel 2007, click Sort & Filter on the Editing portion of the ribbon on the right. Select Custom Sort. Using the "Sort by" drop down box, select the columns you wish the spreadsheet to be sorted by (all column fields should be listed). You can also add additional levels (such as by state, then by city, and then by company) by clicking the Add Level button and then selecting the next Column you would like to sort by after the first level.
2. Using Excel 2003 or earlier, go to Data in the top toolbar. Select Sort. You can sort using up to three columns (such as State, City, Last Name). For the "My data range has option," choose Header row. Click OK.

Be sure to save your sorted spreadsheet! You could also save spreadsheet versions with different sort options (such as geographical, by chapter, etc.) if you wanted.

## IMPORTING INTO OUTLOOK

To create your own contact database using the membership directory, you can import a CSV file into Microsoft Outlook.


1. Using Outlook 2007 or earlier, go to File, Import and Export, Business Contact Manager for Outlook. Select Import a file, click Next. Select Comma Separated Values (.csv), click Next. Browse to where you saved the exported CSV membership directory file, click Next. Click the checkbox next to the selected file in the Import Data field on the left. To complete the process, you must map the data fields to import the directory (follow the directions Outlook provides).

## SUGGESTIONS WELCOME

If you have any other thoughts on how we can make the online membership directory easier to use, e-mail [publications@narpm.org](mailto:publications@narpm.org). We hope to add additional features and perhaps even webinars and tutorials in the future.

*This membership list is NOT to be used for general solicitation, but rather for the referral of property management business among NARPM® members. Violation of this policy can result in termination of membership.*





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Carol Griggs  
Deryk Harper  
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# CHAPTER Spotlight

SHEDDING SOME LIGHT ON THE EXCELLENT NARPM® CHAPTERS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.



**Wayne Guthals, RMP®,** is president and founder of Blue Mountain Real Estate and Property Management. He has been involved in the greater Pikes Peak area real estate market since 1987, assisting investors and owners with their portfolios. Being a property owner himself, Wayne understands the importance of healthy cash flow management and keeping properties well maintained. This approach results in quality tenants, maximizes rental income and sustains properties that continue to grow in value.

## Colorado Springs

As the president of the Colorado Springs Chapter of NARPM® for 2010, I wanted to re-introduce myself. I was president of the Colorado Springs Chapter in 2005, but have answered the call of duty once again.

The Colorado Springs Chapter was one of the very first chapters established at the inception of NARPM®. This fact, along with the receipt of the prestigious Chapter Excellence Award, makes us a unique chapter. Nancy Ryan, one of the founding members was always a vital part of our chapter until her passing in 2007. Past National President Denny Snowden has been and still is a very vital part of our chapter and monthly meetings. Denny even stepped in last year as vice president to fill a needed position because of some re-structuring we were doing.

Being one of the first, however, does not mean we do not have problems like many of the other chapters. We are somehow “stuck” at the same number of members. We lose a few and gain a few, but breaking that number seems to be difficult for us. Getting members to step up and run for office has been an on-going problem over the past few years as well.

Location of meetings was also a problem in the past, but we seem to have that little problem under control now. Guest speakers at the monthly meetings are always a challenge, but as a whole we are doing quite well in that arena.

Enough now of the “problems.” I want to express my thoughts on the positives of our chapter and

NARPM® in general, and my reason for doing a second term.

I have always been a huge supporter of the ideals and concept of NARPM®. NARPM® is a professional organization that supports the residential property manager by providing educational opportunities and workshops at local and national events, as well as a powerful website that offers resources that are invaluable to running a successful company. Most helpful to me has been the ability to share ideas with my fellow managers without the concern of losing my portfolio to my competitors. We agree to hold each other to the highest professional standards, and thereby ensure that our owners and tenants receive better services. After being a property manager for over 20 years, I was able to start my business because of the support I received from my NARPM® chapter. They had tools available such as paperwork, forms, marketing ideas, and even referrals to owners who needed my specialized services. I have been on my own for almost three years now, and owe a great deal of my success to the support I received from my local NARPM® chapter.

I am honored to serve as our president for a second term. The support I received over the last seven years has molded me into the successful manager I am today. I am thrilled to give back to my local chapter by volunteering on the Board of Directors, assist in guiding our chapter, and mentor those just entering the property management profession. 🏠

**For additional ideas on how to strengthen your chapter visit the Chapter Leader Services area at [www.narpm.org/chapter-services](http://www.narpm.org/chapter-services), or contact NARPM® Chapter Support Manager Mark Dunlap.**



# DESIGNATION Classes

DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU HAVE EXPERT KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT.

## Interested in Sponsoring?

Opportunities are available to chapters that would like to further member education and increase their chapter funds. However, it takes time to plan a class so give your chapter five to six month's lead-time if you wish to sponsor.

DATE	LOCATION	CLASS	INSTRUCTOR
April 12, 2010	Concord, CA	③ Ethics	Candi Swanson, MPM®
April 12, 2010	Concord, CA	⑥ Office Operations	Ray Scarabosio, MPM®
April 12, 2010	Concord, CA	⑫ Owner/Client	Sylvia Hill, MPM®
April 13, 2010	Concord, CA	⑥ Marketing	Ray Scarabosio, MPM®
April 21, 2010	Lakewood, CO	⑥ Marketing	Betty Fletcher, MPM®
April 21, 2010	Lakewood, CO	⑫ Maintenance Co.	Dave Holt, MPM®
April 22, 2010	Lakewood, CO	⑥ Office Operations	Betty Fletcher, MPM®
April 23, 2010	Lakewood, CO	③ Ethics	Robert Lynde, MPM®
April 28, 2010	Atlanta, GA	⑥ NARPM® 101	Robert Locke, MPM®
April 28 & 29, 2010	Atlanta, GA	⑫ Personnel Procedures	Betty Fletcher, MPM®
April 29, 2010	Atlanta, GA	⑥ Marketing	Fred Thompson, MPM®
April 30, 2010	Atlanta, GA	③ Ethics	Tony Drost, MPM®
May 19, 2010	Spokane, WA	⑥ Tenancy	Vickie Gaskill, MPM®
May 19, 2010	Spokane, WA	⑫ Personnel Procedures	Suzanne Cameron, MPM®
May 21, 2010	Spokane, WA	③ Ethics	Vickie Gaskill, MPM®

**Online Designation Courses** are now available through OMG Distance Learning. For information and/or to enroll visit [www.narpm.org/education](http://www.narpm.org/education).

- Mail** form below to NARPM®, 638 Independence Parkway, Suite 100, Chesapeake, VA 23320.
- Fax** your form with credit card payment to 866-466-2776. Please do not mail the original.
- Online** registration is also available through Internet Member Services at [www.narpm.org](http://www.narpm.org).

## FEES (subject to change)

⑥hour Course	Early Registration*	Registration
Member	\$195	\$250
Non-member	\$295	\$350
Retake	\$75	\$150
RMP®/MPM®	\$100	\$150
Candidate	\$180	\$250
⑫hour Course		
Member	\$395	\$450
Non-member	\$495	\$550
Retake	\$150	\$300
RMP®/MPM®	\$200	\$350
Candidate	\$360	\$450
③hour Ethics		
Member	\$45	\$45
Non-member	\$95	\$95

\*to receive the early registration price, payment must be postmarked, faxed or e-mailed 30 days prior to the class.

## COURSE INFORMATION

- Course flyers containing additional information may be downloaded from [www.narpm.org/education/schedules.html](http://www.narpm.org/education/schedules.html).
- All materials will be given to students on the day of the class.
- Attendees required to make their individual hotel reservations.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations must be received in writing. If cancellation notice is received at least 30 days prior to the class, a full refund will be issued less a \$25 processing fee. If cancellation notice is received less than 30 days before the class, a 50% refund will be issued. No refunds will be made on the day of the class; however, the registration fee can be applied to a later class with a \$25 transfer fee.

If NARPM® cancels the course because minimum registrations have not been met or for any other reason, then tuition paid will be fully refundable. All courses are subject to cancellation by NARPM®.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Company \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/ST/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## Register for Classes

Name of Class	Class Date	Cost
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
Total		\$ _____

## Method of Payment

☐ I have enclosed a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

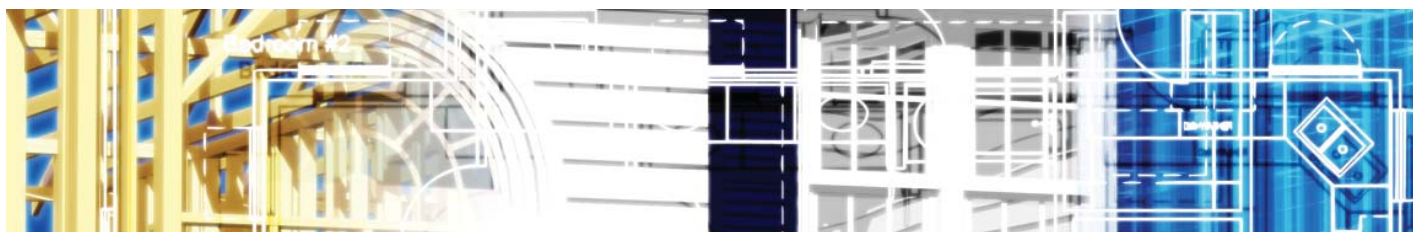
Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Cardholder \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*I authorize NARPM® to charge my credit card.*





# Avoiding the Management Pitfalls of New Accounts

Lessons learned through years of experience in the property management business fill in many gaps left by books and classes on the subject. Ask any experienced property manager. Unfortunately, this business never affords anyone all of the information needed to avoid the many challenges that lie ahead. Not repeating the same missteps and sharing them with others will hopefully reduce those forthcoming.

The most common problems stem from a homeowner who is converting their personal residence to a rental. They usually do not understand that, even though they have been able to live in the home without correcting certain deficiencies, there is a need to remedy the inadequate features prior to renting out their property. Regardless of whether they have been an owner-occupant or a more traditional investor, many need to be educated about the expectations of a tenant in a rental property. Below is a list of the most common omissions and potential issues:

**WINDOW SCREENS:** Surprisingly, some people never open their windows to get fresh air; so in many cases, window screens have never been installed. When initially inspecting a new potential property, missing screens are very easy to overlook. They should be included on the inspection checklist to ensure that they are present. If missing screens are overlooked, they will likely become an issue at some point.

**GARBAGE PICK-UP:** Some cities include garbage pick-up as part of the bundle of services provided by property taxes, but many smaller suburbs do not. Be sure to determine whose responsibility it is so that it can be adequately addressed in the lease document.

**DRYER HOOK-UP:** Most renters across the country, who already have laundry equipment, have an electric dryer. On the initial inspection of a new management account, always make sure that a 220-volt outlet is in place for an electric dryer. Some homes only have a gas connection, which does not accom-

modate most renters' dryers. One option for dealing with only a gas hook-up is for the owner to leave or provide a gas dryer for the incoming tenants. It is not reasonable to expect a new renter to buy a gas dryer to accommodate the lack of a normal electrical hook-up. Installing a 220 outlet can be quite expensive, especially if the electrical service is inadequate.

**OCCUPANCY RULES AND REGULATIONS:** These can get a property manager in trouble if they are not incorporated into the lease. It is most applicable in a condominium, but also applies to certain subdivision and smaller city developments. No property manager wants to find themselves in a situation where the lease permits, or does not exclude, something that is not allowed in occupancy rules and regulations. If this occurs, the property manager may be liable for damages resulting from costs associated with re-locating the renter or for other resulting damages.

**NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED HOMES/APARTMENTS:** Adding newly-constructed properties to a management portfolio is usually very worthwhile and profitable, but the property manager must prepare the builder or the new investor for the expense of getting them market-ready. The use of the phrase "market-ready" does not apply to the normal painting and fix-up tasks, but rather to a list of small items often not completed by the builder.

Also consider the possible need for the following: towel bars, toilet paper holders, bathroom mirrors, dryer vent, window treatments, mailbox (and possibly the paperwork involved in adding the property to a postal route), and information on warranties of all appliances and tradespeople.

In addition, waiting on the builder's sub-contractors is usually not worth the savings in cost over getting a handyman or management company employee to quickly go to the property and work through a



**Rob Massey, Jr., CPM®**, has served as a local chapter president for NARPM®, the Institute of Real Estate Management, and the Apartment Association in his hometown of Louisville, KY. He has taught several property management classes and managed nearly 1,000 apartments and houses before scaling back his property management company to pursue the national Internet listing service he founded known as RentalHouses.com. He served as vice president of industry development for Rentals.com for one year subsequent to the acquisition of RentalHouses.com by Consumer Source in January of 2007. Currently, he serves as a consultant for Rentals.com, focusing his efforts on industry and association relations for the company. Rob can be reached at [rob.massey@rentals.com](mailto:rob.massey@rentals.com).

**The views expressed in this article by the author are his own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Rentals.com or its affiliates.**

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**Brad Dawson** is the managing director of LTV Dynamics and has over 28 years of management consulting experience. He is a frequent lecturer to international entrepreneurial businesses and serves as a contributing writer to several national and international business and leadership magazines. He can be reached at [bldawson@ltdynamics.com](mailto:bldawson@ltdynamics.com).

# A Lesson Learned from History Warrior Management

You are building an empire. You go to battle every day fighting to gain marketshare, defeat your competitors, and capture new customers. The obstacles you encounter are similar to the challenges that world conquerors faced centuries ago. What principles did they use to build their empires? How can those lessons be used to further your business success?

Genghis Khan's approach to world domination was based on a series of warrior management traits—operating tenets that formed the foundation for his success. Not surprisingly, these traits can be used to achieve business success. Once you get past the savagery that marked Genghis Khan's reign, you can see that his structured approach to gaining world domination was simple, direct, and replicable. This article shows you how to use warrior management traits to build your business empire.

## ADAPT TO THE ENVIRONMENT

A residential property management firm contemplated its strategic initiatives for the coming year; a year marked with the lowest expected new home starts in a generation. The managers, filled with bravado, sought to better their peers by setting yearly objectives that were outlandish given the current market conditions. After boasts of 10 percent, 25 percent, and 100 percent growth were offered as targets for the year, a quiet voice of reason came from the back of the room, "I hope we don't go out of business." The room became hushed, and the reality of the market environment was realized. Survival, not growth, was the objective for the year.

Khan realized that certain aspects of his empire were outside his control. For example, the weather had a direct impact on his battle plans. Instead of fighting what he could not control, he used his knowledge of the weather to complement his strategies (i.e., only attack China in the fall when the low humidity is ideal for bowstring tension, making arrow flight more accurate). He chose to embrace, not fight, the variables he could not change.

## ONE OBJECTIVE AT A TIME

Residential property management firms wrestle constantly with issues of adding new employees, increasing the diversity of offerings, changing pricing structures, seeking new sales channels, and numerous other changes to business dynamics. Strategic plans are dutifully brushed off each year and revised to include the newest industry objectives. Once completed, the strategic plan is set back on the bookshelf to be ignored for another year. The reason: strategic plans are long on content but short on implementability—there are too many facets to change simultaneously, which leads to no implementation at all.

Khan followed the premise of achieving one objective at a time. With limited warrior resources, it did not make sense to send fragments of legions into multiple battles simultaneously. Using only partial resources to fight, the outcome would be a huge loss of personnel with little, if any, progress to show for their efforts. It was better to use his resources to conquer one enemy at a time, ensuring success and protecting his warrior resources for the next conquering initiative.

## NO PERSONNEL TRANSFERS

A regional residential property management firm has the enviable statistic of only losing one employee over the last five years—a remarkable retention rate. It turns out the firm only hires entry-level employees and never hires individuals to fill slots in the mid- and higher tier management positions. The rationale is simple: individuals who are new to the industry do not have any bad habits that need to be broken. They are a clean slate that can be taught the business consistent with the firm's policies and practices.

Khan followed a philosophy that forbade any personnel transfers between his officers' battalions. Individuals were assigned to officers at a young age and remained with the same battalion for life. He believed the inability to transfer created battalion

loyalty and ensured that individuals did not flee to more protective quarters in the face of danger.

### SHARING THE SPOILS

A national firm struggled to implement a performance-based compensation system. The problem was not with the system, but the insecurities of the leadership. Many believed that every employee should be limited as to the amount of compensation they could earn, regardless of their contribution. They failed to realize that providing unlimited upside incentives to a high performer ensured a greater value return to them.

Khan believed in sharing the spoils with his troops. When a region was overrun, the troops shared in the bounty. There were no caps on compensation. If there had been, the troops would probably have sat around contemplating the value of battle—especially for those that had already received their total compensation for the year.

### SPEED OF EXECUTION

Small firms share a trait that larger businesses have difficulty emulating: speed of execution. Many small firms pride themselves on being flexible enough to quickly leverage market opportunities. Larger corporations, because of their bureaucracy, often fall prey to analysis paralysis and are beaten to market by smaller competitors. Once in the market, the smaller firms are able to gather marketshare quickly, putting the larger firms at a disadvantage.

Khan recognized that opportunity was fleeting. Infinite patience was necessary to ensure that all the attributes for success were in place prior to leading an offensive charge, but once in place, the window of



**Genghis Kahn was the founder and emperor of the Mongol Empire, the largest contiguous empire in history. Although he used brutal tactics, Kahn had a structured approach to conquering that can be applied to many business plans today.**

**(Left) A bust of Genghis Khan adorns a wall in the presidential palace in Ulan Bator, Mongolia.**

opportunity was small, necessitating quick action on his part. Much of his success was based on his speed of execution—to immediately act when all the pieces fell into place.

History tells us that Genghis Khan was a brutal individual. But, beyond the savagery of his methods, he employed an effective framework that continues to be emulated today by successful businesses. As a business leader, you are in a position to effectively implement many warrior management traits. Will you continue to follow the lessons learned through traditional business methods, or are you ready to be a conqueror? 🏰

**Continued from page 21.**

punch list that will inevitably be presented to the property manager from the new occupant.

**OWNER INCOMPATIBILITY:** The single worst pitfall in property management frequently stems from taking over the management of rental property for an incompatible owner. Incompatibility with an owner may take several forms ranging from an owner who wants to micro-manage the property manager to someone who is very uncooperative and frequently disagreeable. Recognizing this type of owner in the beginning becomes easier with experience. New clients must understand from the outset that the property manager will make decisions involving the following:

- Approval or rejection of leasing applicants.
- Preparation of a vacancy to get it market-ready.
- Disposition of the security deposit at move-out.

- All other decisions authorized within the management agreement.

When a prospective client indicates a desire to be too involved during initial discussions, the property manager should tell them about their experience, their professionalism and training through NARPM®, and refer them to a list of satisfied clients. The property manager should further explain that the best results in the management of their property will be achieved when the property manager is allowed to dwell on their knowledge and experience and left to make decisions within the framework of the management agreement. If a prospective client does not agree to these terms, let them work with someone else.

Taking on new business is necessary for the growth and stability of a property management company. Do not let the most common omissions and pitfalls diminish the success of growing a property management company. 🏰



# MEMBERSHIP Growth

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL THE NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED FROM NOVEMBER 19 – DECEMBER 17.



## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Emieleen C. Alejo  
All Pro Properties, LLC  
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Ned Baker Real Estate  
Salem, OR  
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Richard A. Barker, Jr.  
ProCore Property Solutions, LLC  
Meridian, ID  
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Carter-Hazel Realty  
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Henry de Keratry, Jr.  
Casa Property Management  
Cedar Park, TX  
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Deadrich Real Estate  
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Miller Property Management  
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Real Estate Management Group  
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Missoula, MT  
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People Helping Others PM  
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David Nase Property Mgmt.  
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Peoria, AZ  
623-385-7000

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Riverside Property Management  
Occoquan, VA  
703-494-6924

Hon Wong  
All County Tampa Bay Prop Mgmt  
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**AFFILIATES**  
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Joel N. Goldblatt  
Risk Assessment & Transfer Int'l  
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312-494-0200

Wade Hewitt  
Apartment Ratings  
El Segundo, CA  
310-280-4538

Roy Ingram  
US Window Fashion Supply  
Southlake, TX  
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Mark Walker  
Merchants Information Solutions  
Phoenix, AZ  
570-402-2026

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Blackledger  
Randallstown, MD  
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member application today!**

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Alpha Ecological  
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Appliance Warehouse of America  
Armor Concepts, LLC  
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Service Master Clean  
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Synergetic Systems, LLC  
US Window Fashion Supply  
Victor O. Schinnerer & Company, Inc.  
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#### **INTERNET TOOLS/MARKETING**

All Property Management  
AmericanRentals.biz  
Apartment Ratings  
Epic River, LLC  
EZfloorplan.com  
ezLandlordForms  
FindAPropertyManager.com  
FloridaRentalAds.com  
ForRentByOwner.com  
GotNoVacancy.com  
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Info on the Web  
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Kwikrents.com  
Lemon Landlord  
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PlaceKey  
Property Bridge, LLC  
Property Management Profile  
Property Management Search  
RealRentals.com  
Rent Marketer, Inc.  
Rent.com  
Rental Source

RentalForeclosure, Inc.  
RentalHomesPlus  
Rentals.com  
RentMLS.com  
Resite Online  
Runzheimer International, Ltd.  
SanDiegoRentalAds.com  
vFlyer, Inc.  
Visual Data Systems

#### **LEGAL SERVICES**

Law Offices of Davis, Rothwell, Mullin,  
Earle & Xóchihua, PC  
Law Offices of Heist, Weisse & Davis  
SBSE, LLC

#### **MAINTENANCE**

911 Restoration  
American Home Shield  
Belfor Property Restoration  
By the Code Property Maintenance  
Clean-N-Gleam Professional  
Crime Clean of Texas, Inc.  
DMC Construction  
Dryer Vent Wizard  
HSA Home Warranty  
Kelly-Moore Paint Company  
Orkin, Inc.  
Playground Specialists, Inc.  
Power Lift Foundation Repair  
PuroClean Disaster Restoration Services  
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Rekey.com Locksmith Services  
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The Siding Specialists, Inc.  
Vacant Property Security, Inc.

#### **SOFTWARE**

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Buildium  
DIY Real Estate Solutions  
Domin-8 Enterprise Solutions  
PMM Property Management Master, Inc.  
Pro Home Manager, LLC  
PROMAS Landlord Software Center  
Property Genie  
PropertyBoss Solutions, LLC  
Propertyware, Inc.  
Rent Manager  
Track-IT Systems, Inc.  
TReXGlobal.com  
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#### **TENANT SCREENING**

ACRAnet  
Background Info USA  
Credit Bureau Services, Inc.  
Credit Investigators, LLC  
E-Renter USA  
Inquirehire  
Kroll Factual Data  
LandlordSolutions  
Meridian Properties & Investments  
MOCO, Inc.  
National Tenant Information Services, Inc.  
National Tenant Network, Inc.  
On Target Screening, Inc.  
Pacific Screening, Inc.  
Reliable Background Screening  
Rental Space Network, LLC  
RentGrow, Inc.  
SARMA  
The Information Source  
Trans Union Rental Screening Solutions  
TVS Tenant Verification Service  
VeriQuest Screening Solutions

# AMBASSADOR Program

EARN REWARDS AND ACHIEVE AMBASSADOR STATUS FOR REFERRING NEW NARPM® MEMBERS.

Who better to spread the word of the benefits of NARPM® than its members? To achieve Ambassador status, you must refer five new members in one year. You will then receive an award certificate and a \$245 NARPM® credit that can be used toward your annual dues, upcoming events, education classes, and more! You can earn multiple award certificates in a 12-month period, so be sure you continue referring new members even after you have achieved Ambassador status.

1. Contact NARPM® National for Membership Application brochures. Upon request, National can mail the application directly to the prospective member.
2. The 12-month period to obtain five new members starts the day the first application is processed.
3. When the fifth application is received, an award certificate and a recognition certificate will be issued and dated. A \$245 NARPM® credit will also be issued.

What Would **YOU** Do  
with \$245 NARPM®  
Dollars?



## NOVEMBER 19, 2009 – DECEMBER 8, 2009

### NEW MEMBER

Earlene Gardner  
Michelle McLinden  
Herb Weinstein  
Jennifer Perkins  
Chad Vaughn  
Claudia Evenschor  
Hon Wong  
Nancy Braun  
Joseph Deullos  
Michael Messina  
Mary Wilkins  
Ralph Garrow  
Carol Eisenmann  
John Baker  
Steven Randall  
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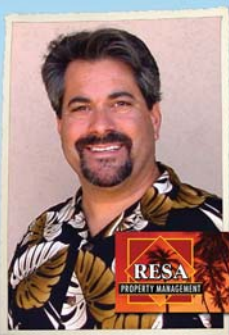
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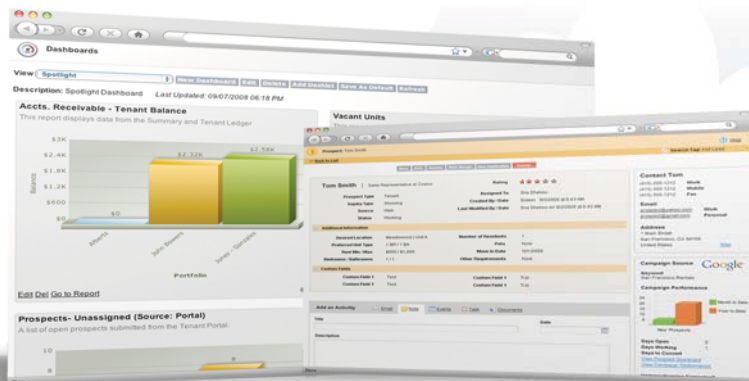


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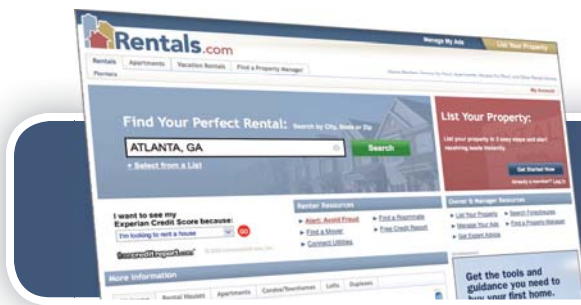
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