



Finishing strong: Creating a smooth and clear move-out experience for tenants and owners

See page 13

p8 Introducing the NARPM®
Trust Accounting Chart of
Accounts

p14 Where to actually start
with AI

p29 The battle for your
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IN THIS ISSUE June 2026

NARPM® provides resources for residential property management professionals who desire to learn, grow, and build relationships.

FEATURE ARTICLES

- p8** Introducing the NARPM® Trust Accounting Chart of Accounts, a new NARPM® Member benefit
- p13** Finishing strong: Creating a smooth and clear move-out experience for tenants and owners
- p21** Positioning in a crowded market: How to stand out when everyone sounds the same
- p27** The cost of waiting: Pet risk, damage, and liability in multifamily housing
- p29** The battle for your best thinking



MONTHLY COLUMNS

- p5** From the Desk of the CEO
- p7** NARPM® Member Spotlight
- p11** Membership Growth
- p14** The Tech-Forward Manager
- p15** Be #NARPM®Smart
- p16** NARPM® Snapshot
- p23** Discussion Board Hot Topics
- p25** Leadership Bulletin



NEW MEMBER REFERRALS • APRIL 2026

<u>REFERRING MEMBER</u>	<u>NEW MEMBER</u>	<u>REFERRING MEMBER</u>	<u>NEW MEMBER</u>
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Roland Charles	Deborah Avery	Rhonda Navarro	Dustin Parvin
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Desiree Doggett	Kayla Lamb	Karen Radcliff	Haylee Penwell
Amelia Duran	Jody McCormick	Renee Samay	Leanna Samay
Paul Guadarrama	Samuel Neagu	David Triebel	Adam Villio

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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.

The *Residential Resource* is published monthly, with occasional combined issues. Submit articles by email as a Word doc to: publications@narpm.org. You will be advised if accepted and be required to sign NARPM®'s Author, Presenter and/or Creator Warranty and Agreement before your article's publication. Items mailed in for publication cannot be returned. Address changes may be forwarded to NARPM® National. NARPM® reserves the right to edit or refuse all publications for content and selection. Members are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Printed articles help earn members credit toward their designations.

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NARPM® NATIONAL

1403 Greenbrier Parkway, Suite 150
Chesapeake, VA 23320
P: 800-782-3452
www.narpm.org

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Tracy Streich, MPM® RMP® Treasurer treasurer@narpm.org	Amy Hanson, MPM® RMP® Past President pastpresident@narpm.org

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COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Tiffany Rosenbaum Communications/Marketing communicationschair@narpm.org	Amy Hanson, MPM® RMP® Leadership Development pastpresident@narpm.org
Jock McNeill Member Services memberserviceschair@narpm.org	Megan Zellers, MPM® RMP® 2026 Annual Convention & Trade Show conventionchair@narpm.org
Tracy Streich, MPM® RMP® Finance treasurer@narpm.org	Brad Randall 2026 Broker/Owner Conference & Expo brokerownerchair@narpm.org
Robert Dell'Osso Governmental Affairs govtaffairschair@narpm.org	Brittany Reed, CMP® Affiliate Advisory Council vendoraacchair@narpm.org
Michael McCreary, MPM® RMP® Professional Development profdevelopmentchair@narpm.org	

NARPM® NATIONAL

Troy Garrett Chief Executive Officer CEO@narpm.org	Blake Hegeman Chief Operating Officer COO@narpm.org
Rebecca Woodring, CAE Deputy Executive Director Chapter Support Manager rwoodring@narpm.org chaptersupport@narpm.org	John Broadway Regulatory Advisor jbroadway@narpm.org
Shannon Sharples Membership Support Staff info@narpm.org	Victoria Hecht Public Relations & Digital Media Director Residential Resource Editor vhecht@narpm.org publications@narpm.org
Chere Tonetti Designation Support Staff Education Support Staff designationinfo@narpm.org educationinfo@narpm.org	Print Media advertising@narpm.org
Tyler Craddock Governmental Affairs Director legislativeinfo@narpm.org	Jenna Frankfort Graphic Designer jfrankfort@narpm.org
Luke Priddy Governmental Affairs Director legislativeinfo@narpm.org	Sara Blanch Conferences & Conventions Coordinator conventioninfo@narpm.org
	Barbra Barbour Creative Service Specialist bbarbour@narpm.org



FROM THE DESK OF THE Chief Executive Officer

As you can imagine, there are a million moving parts that need to be contracted, negotiated, problem-tasked, budgeted, priced, scheduled, digitalized, and reviewed, and all of this was before putting the final product together.

Hard work behind the scenes makes for a better NARPM®

Looking back over the past nine months since I began work as your NARPM® CEO, I am truly amazed by the journey to where I am today. As you can imagine, making a transition from a Government Affairs Director to CEO was not a small undertaking, and my decision did not come lightly.

Transitioning from specializing in one department to the oversight of all the amazing departments of NARPM®, including education, member services, technology, communications, regional, state, and local Chapter services, vendor and exhibitor management and relations, event planning and services, and yes, even my first love, government affairs, seemed like a daunting task at the time.

I can't lie. I was even a little scared to be taking this huge professional leap. However, I chose to do so because I knew from the very beginning that I had the most amazing team that a leader could ask for standing right behind me.

The 2026 Broker/Owner Conference & Expo culminated the road I travelled to get where I am today. As you can imagine, there was a lot to learn quickly to ensure that the organization remained steadfast and true after Gail's departure.

Would I have liked to have seen a longer transition time? I would be lying if I said I didn't. However, I moved forward with my amazing staff to work on the strategic vision that the NARPM® Board laid before us. Broker/Owner was the first example of that vision coming to life. It would not have happened without the dedication and many, many, many hours the staff dedicated to executing what Brad Randall and the Conference Committee wanted to happen.

As you can imagine, there are a million moving parts that need to be contracted, negotiated, problem-tasked, budgeted, priced, scheduled, digitalized, and reviewed, and all of this was before putting the final product together. My staff did all of this with purpose and with a drive to put on the best show that NARPM® has ever seen.

They took the dream and made it a reality. This was the first conference I fully had a part in, and it was only the beginning.

Events aren't the only area that we are working in. Behind the scenes, committee chairs and staff are

working to bolster education programs, making sure that our Members benefit from having their RMP®, MPM® (Master Property Manager), and CRMC® designations, transforming them into the best of the best throughout the country at property management.

We are working with new data projects and creating new Member benefits like the NARPM® Legal Hotline and NARPM® Trust Accounting Standards. My staff and I are fully on board with NARPM® 2.0, helping to take our association to the next level.

While I still may not know every detail of all the ins and outs of the organization, NARPM®'s new memberships are on the rise, we have increased revenue streams, and the feedback I have received from Members and vendors has been overwhelmingly positive. I am hopeful that what they see is a new and invigorated association.

I can now say that I am happy with the decision I made, and I hope you have seen the hard work that my staff and I have put in for you, the Members. It has truly been an honor serving you, and I dedicate this letter to the hard work of my staff.

I encourage you to reach out and let them know you see their hard work and that they are appreciated. I know I couldn't have done it without them. I am happy to report that the state of your association is solid and growing. 🇺🇸

Troy Garrett
NARPM® Chief Executive Officer

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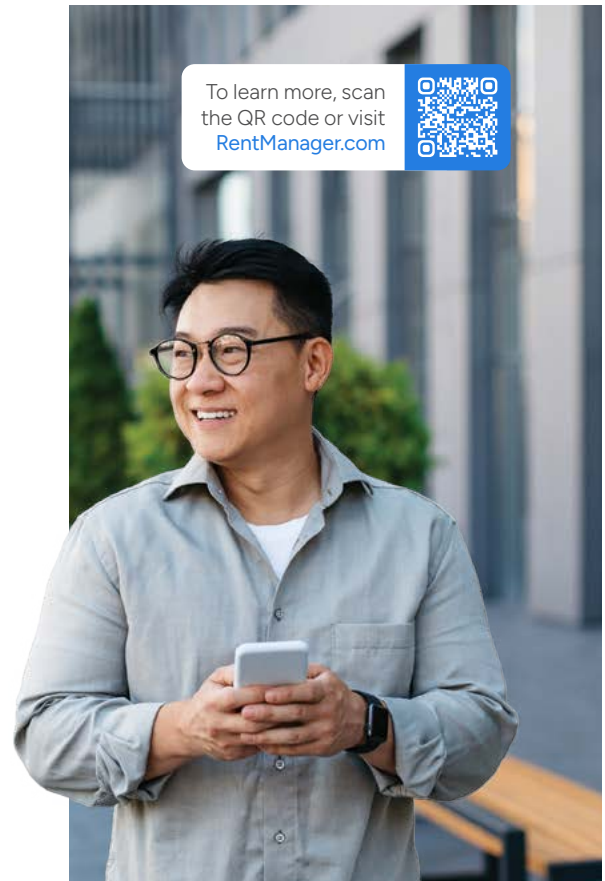
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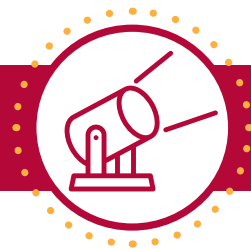
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MEMBER Spotlight

GET TO KNOW AMAZING NARPM® MEMBERS FROM ACROSS THE UNITED STATES



NARPM® Radio Host: Pete Neubig, Master Property Manager (MPM®) RMP®



Name: Pete Neubig, Master Property Manager RMP®, VPM Solutions, Houston, Texas

I've been a NARPM® Member since: 2012

I became involved with NARPM® because: I had no idea what I was doing. I needed to stay in business...and stay out of jail!

I will mark my fifth anniversary as podcast host on: Our first episode dropped on Nov. 19, 2021. How time flies!

I was intrigued by hosting the NARPM® Radio podcast because: NARPM® did not have its own podcast at the time. Bob Preston (shoutout to Bob) was kind enough to give his podcast to NARPM®. I wanted to host a NARPM® podcast because I believed the organization needed its own podcast if it wanted to be the leading voice in the property management industry, and I am a bit of a ham and love holding a microphone to hear myself talk!

One of my favorite podcast episodes was: My episodes are like my children. I love them all! But one that comes to mind was when I was interviewing Billy Early with Colorado Realty and PM. He happened to be in town, so we were able to record in my studio (i.e., office), and we went deep on maintenance. As much as I like high-level topics, I am an integrator at heart and love going deep on a process. Plus, Billy is one of the funniest, nicest guys around.

Members should listen to NARPM® Radio because: The podcast was built for them. The topics and the guests are picked for them. I do not let any guest on who does not add value to the property managers. If you want to know what is going on in the industry, or what's a hot topic, or learn more about a specific vendor or learn about a specific process in your business...this is THE place.

One of the most significant changes I've seen in property management in the past five years is: I'll give you two... technology and legislation.

I think the following will impact the industry the most in the next five years: I'll give you two....technology and legislation. Haha. Same answer for both questions. AI is definitely the disruptor of the moment.

My favorite NARPM® memory is: 2017 Hurricane Harvey hits Houston (say that 5x fast), devastating the city. I owned my PM firm, Empire Industries, at the time. It was quite traumatic and honestly a cluster. I received calls from numerous NARPM® Members all over the U.S. asking how they can support me, can they take some of our phone calls, can they loan us some people, etc. That is the spirit of NARPM®.

In my opinion, the greatest challenge facing the property management industry today is: Legislation. There are too many tenant lobby groups and not enough landlord lobby groups. Give to the PAC! More importantly, explain to your clients the need for them to also contribute to the PAC.

NARPM® membership is important to me because of: The relationships you build, the education you receive, and, now, with NARPM 2.0, access to industry data.

My best advice for those who want to get involved in NARPM® is: The more you give, the more you get. When I first joined NARPM®, I did not get involved in the first year, and although NARPM® helped my business, it wasn't super impactful. Once I got involved, the impact on my business was immeasurable. Dave Ramsey famously said you will be the same person you are today in five years, except for the people you meet and the books you read. When you get involved, you meet some of the best operators in the country, and they give you the answers to all the tests. Any question that starts "How should I do x" is answered by people who have walked those footsteps.

My favorite pastimes are: Building my business and meeting with other business owners. I also enjoy walking, lifting, shooting guns, and trying to play my guitar

Fellow NARPM® Members would be surprised to know: Back in the day (I know I don't just sound old...I am old!) I completed three Ironman Triathlons, raced bicycles, and ran over 20 marathons, qualifying for the Boston Marathon twice. I also ran the Boston Marathon the year of the bombing. 🇺🇸



Alicia McClurg is the Manager of Accounting Services with Ingenium BCS, formerly the Director of Administration with ProfitCoach. She has contributed to the 2018 NARPM® Accounting Standards, the 2022 NARPM® Financial Performance Guide, the 2024 PM Operations Standards, and the 2026 NARPM® Trust Chart of Accounts. She is passionate about creating systems, bringing order to chaos, and solving Sudoku puzzles with a strong cup of tea.



Aimee Berkompas is the Operations Project Manager at Crane, bringing a track record of transforming how businesses scale with innovative solutions and problem-solving. As Customer Solutions Architect at LeadSimple, she helped standardize processes across the property management industry — and she's built her career on turning operational bottlenecks into competitive advantage across multiple departments.

Introducing the NARPM® Trust Accounting Chart of Accounts, a new NARPM® Member benefit

NARPM®, ProfitCoach, and Crane are proud to present the NARPM® Trust Chart of Accounts Standard, launched live on stage at the 2026 NARPM® Broker/Owner Conference & Trade Show in Las Vegas.

At its release in 2018, the NARPM® Accounting Standards (NAS) provided ground-breaking clarity for property managers. Property managers could finally compare themselves to the industry in a common language and could identify their key levers for growing the business.

However, the NAS was designed only for corporate accounting, in QuickBooks or an equivalent system. Almost from Day One, innumerable requests poured in for a NAS-equivalent for trust accounting for the major property accounting systems.

WHY THE NARPM® TRUST CHART OF ACCOUNTS STANDARD IS NEEDED

Without a standard Chart of Accounts (COA) for the industry, each property management company is left to choose how to structure their trust accounting. In the absence of strategic guidance, the IRS Schedule E is often used: valuable for compliance, but severely lacking in detail for a deep understanding of a property's operational performance.

HOW THE NARPM® TRUST COA BENEFITS PROPERTY MANAGERS

Common language: The NAS drove a revolution in the way serious property managers thought about growing their business. Standard definitions clarified the conversation, allowing property managers to compare notes on a one-to-one basis.

The NARPM® Trust COA similarly gives property managers a common language for their portfolio, property, and trust accounting activity. Metrics built on these definitions will help you identify operational weak spots, quantify the value you bring to your owners and leads, and organize your PM activities in a way that maximizes your value.

Automation and AI: Data standardization is absolutely critical for effective AI implementation or workflow automation. A standard COA is the foundation of organized operational data, setting you

and your business up for success with current and future AI projects.

Mergers and Acquisitions: We've already seen the value of the NAS in mergers and acquisitions, both in the valuation process and in the operational difficulty of merging accounting functions. Companies on the NARPM® Trust COA will see similar benefits in M&A transactions, as the existence of standardized trust accounting operations will increase the value of the M&A proposition.


Owner value: The NARPM® Trust COA has the potential to elevate the owner experience significantly, from key metrics and insights on property performance, to the ability to compare properties under different management companies in different states. Benchmarking will help with objections during the sales process and increase owner trust. The industry may well mature to a point where owners specifically search for property management companies that use the NARPM® Trust COA.

WHAT IS NOW POSSIBLE:

With the NARPM® Trust COA, go beyond basic compliance and set yourself up for deeper analysis and insight:

- The NARPM® Trust COA captures the key PM operational numbers in more detail.
- Property owners have visibility into where their money goes
- Property managers have visibility into key operational bottlenecks they can optimize
- Bookkeepers can quickly establish a coherent corporate-to-trust accounting workflow with connections to the NAS.

Cutting-edge property managers can finally benchmark their properties, drive insights into operational gaps, and provide owner transparency at a deeper level. We're truly excited to watch the industry develop and mature even further with the NARPM® Trust Accounting COA.

Get the standard and conversion guides by visiting www.pmtrustcoa.com. You can also access by logging in at <https://www.narpm.org/education/trust-accounting>. 

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Continued from previous page

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- STEP 3** Qualified leads self-schedule
- STEP 4** Leads receive showing details
- STEP 5** Tenant Turner manages showing updates.
- STEP 6** Leads attend their showing
- STEP 7** Follow-up auto-sent after tours
- STEP 8** Leads are nurtured
- STEP 9** Lead applies



Jennifer Rippey, RMP®, with One Focus Property Management in Pennsylvania, brings 28 years of hands-on experience in residential property management, working closely with both property owners and residents to deliver strong results and positive experiences. She manages a diverse portfolio of single-family and multi-family homes and is known for her practical approach to operations and market-driven decision-making. She joined NARPM® in 2018 and earned her RMP® designation in 2022. She currently serves as Membership Committee Chair for the Pennsylvania Chapter and is dedicated to strengthening the property management community through connection and shared best practices.

Finishing strong: Creating a smooth and clear move-out experience for tenants and owners

A well-managed move-out process is just as important as a successful move-in. While the beginning of a lease sets expectations, the end of a tenancy is where those expectations are tested. A clear, consistent, and well-communicated move-out process protects property owners, reduces disputes, and leaves tenants with a positive final impression.

For property managers, the goal is simple: Eliminate confusion, document thoroughly, and follow the law. Here are eight key components of a smooth and professional move-out experience:

REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO VACATE

One of the most important steps in the move-out process is requiring tenants to submit their notice to vacate in writing. Whether it's 30 days, 60 days, or lease-specific, this requirement ensures there is a clear record of the tenant's intent to move out.

A written notice establishes the official timeline, allows for proper planning, and prevents last-minute surprises. It also gives property managers time to begin marketing the property, schedule inspections, and coordinate turnover work. Consistency is key — this policy should be clearly outlined in the lease and enforced uniformly.

PROVIDE CLEAR MOVE-OUT INSTRUCTIONS

Clarity prevents conflict. Move-out expectations should be detailed in the lease agreement, but it's equally important to reinforce them when the tenant submits their notice. Providing a dedicated move-out instruction packet ensures tenants know exactly what is expected.

This packet should include cleaning expectations, trash removal guidelines, instructions for returning keys and access devices, utility shut-off procedures, and forwarding address requirements for the security deposit. Providing a checklist significantly reduces misunderstandings and disputes.

CONFIRM RETURN OF ALL PROPERTY ITEMS

At move-out, it's essential to collect all items issued to the tenant at the start of the lease, including keys, garage door openers, and mailbox keys. A documented checklist makes this process

straightforward and ensures the property is secure and ready for the next tenant.

CONDUCT A THOROUGH MOVE-OUT INSPECTION WITH VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

A detailed move-out inspection is one of the most effective ways to avoid disputes. Inspecting on video provides clear, time-stamped documentation of the property's condition. When paired with the move-in inspection, this creates a defensible comparison to support security deposit deductions.

FOLLOW STATE GUIDELINES FOR SECURITY DEPOSIT DISPOSITION

Timeliness and compliance are critical. Send the disposition within the required timeframe, include itemized deductions, and provide supporting documentation. Failure to comply can result in penalties, so a standardized process is essential.

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND PROFESSIONALLY

Keep tenants informed throughout the process. A respectful and professional tone helps maintain goodwill and prevents escalation of disputes.

HAVE A CLEAR PROCESS FOR HANDLING SECURITY DEPOSIT QUESTIONS AND DISPUTES

Even with clear expectations, disputes may arise. Establish guidelines for reviewing and responding, including timelines and documentation. Providing videos, photos, and invoices helps resolve concerns efficiently and demonstrates transparency.

USE THE MOVE-OUT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE

Each move-out provides insight. Use recurring issues to refine processes, improve communication, and enhance the overall experience for both tenants and owners.

A smooth move-out experience doesn't happen by chance — it's the result of clear policies, consistent enforcement, and detailed documentation. Ending a lease professionally minimizes conflict and strengthens your reputation. 🏠



Jarrett Lau is the owner of Green Ocean Property Management, a Boston-area firm managing residential rentals and condo associations across New England. He also runs SmoothOperations.ai, where he builds AI and automation systems for service businesses — most of which are tested first inside his own company. He spends most of his time looking for ways to make his team's work easier and his company run more sharply.

Where to actually start with AI: Three questions that save you from wasting a year

If you've sat through a NARPM® session in the last 18 months, you've heard the term "AI" (artificial intelligence) repeatedly. Every vendor at trade shows has it. Every newsletter mentions it. And most of you still haven't done a single thing with it inside your own business.

That's not a personality flaw. It's a starting-point problem. The advice out there is either too vague ("just play with ChatGPT!") or too ambitious ("build a custom AI receptionist that books showings, screens leads, and writes the lease!"). Neither tells you what to actually do on Monday morning.

Here's the framework I wish someone had handed me two years ago.

Three questions. If you can answer yes to all three, that's your first AI project.

1. Do you do this thing more than 10

times a week? Volume matters more than impressiveness. A boring task you handle every

an hour? If yes, it's a pattern. Patterns are exactly what these tools are good at. If the task needs three years of judgment about a specific owner, a local ordinance, and the unwritten history of a building, save it for round three.

So what does that look like in real life? Here are five projects that pass all three tests for almost any property management company, regardless of size:

1. Drafting tenant update emails for in-progress maintenance work orders. (You write the same five emails a hundred different ways every week — let the AI do the first pass.)
2. Turning a 600-word owner email into a three-bullet summary before you respond. Cuts your read time in half. You reply faster; you sound sharper.

You don't want your first project to be tenant screening, denial letters, or anything that touches fair housing. You want a project where the worst case is "had to redo it," not "got a HUD complaint."

single day will save you more hours over a year than a flashy task you do once a quarter — even if the flashy one looks better at a cocktail party.

2. **If the AI got it wrong, would you be a little embarrassed — but not sued?** This is the filter most operators skip, and it's the most important one. You don't want your first project to be tenant screening, denial letters, or anything that touches fair housing. You want a project where the worst case is "had to redo it," not "got a HUD complaint." (When in doubt, talk to your attorney before you wire anything up that touches an applicant or a protected class.)

3. Could a smart new hire learn to do it in under

3. Cleaning up handwritten board meeting notes into actual minutes you can send the next day, not next month.
4. Drafting the first response to a leasing inquiry — not the final one, the first one. You polish. You send.
5. Turning a stack of vendor invoices into a one-page payables view before you sit down to approve them.

None of these is sexy. You won't see them on a Protech blog. Everyone saves your team real hours in week one, and if the AI hiccups (and it will hiccup), the downside is approximately nothing.

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Contrast that with the project most PMs reach for first: the AI phone receptionist. Big swing, big budget, big rollout. And usually a big disappointment. Phone calls have endless edge cases. Every miss is a tenant who's annoyed at you, not at the bot. That's a lot of risk for a tool you've had for nine days.

Start small. Get one win. The second project is easier because now you actually know what these tools can and can't do — and your team isn't rolling their eyes when you say, "I have an idea."

Here's what to do this week: Open a blank doc. Write down every task you personally did more than three times in the last seven days. Cross out anything that touches fair housing, denials, or money movement. Of what's left, pick the one you hate most. That's your first project. You don't need a budget. You probably don't need anything beyond a \$20-a-month ChatGPT or Claude subscription and one quiet afternoon.

The PMs who get the most out of AI three years from now will mostly be the ones who started this month. Pick something small. Ship it. The rest takes care of itself.

Be well. 🍷



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Dorman Property Management, CRMC®
Alexander Yoder, Master Property Manager (MPM®) RMP®
Colorado Springs, CO

Brianna Wardle, Residential Management Professional (RMP®)
Black Pine Property Management
Boise, ID

**Pamela Greene, Master Property Manager RMP®
Certified Support Specialist (CSS®)**
Alarca Realty
Davidson, NC

The Professional Development Committee now approves Designation Packets monthly.

- Please submit your packet by the **15th of each month** to be approved.

***There is a new upload system available to submit your designation / certification documents. To receive instructions to upload your documents to the new upload system, please email: designationinfo@narpm.org

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Contact designationinfo@narpm.org for more information.



The power that comes with increased knowledge and confidence is tangible. It's what sets you apart from your competition. **Professional designations from NARPM® have an impact on your company and your clients and the results translate directly to the bottom line.** Add the credibility of our professional designations to your name and to your company name!

NARPM® designations* are earned with a combination of property management experience, NARPM® and industry education, and service to the association through volunteer activities. You may have taken clock-hour courses to maintain your license. Imagine the gains when the courses are specifically focused on what you do as a property manager and are being taught by a property management professional. Take it one step further and envision networking with other experienced property managers from across the country. Earning your NARPM® designation will bring a whole new dimension to your daily tasks.

Many of you have already started the designation process, and some of you have all the necessary items to complete your designation. You just have to send them in. What's stopping you?



Victoria Hecht is the NARPM® Public Relations & Digital Media Director and Residential Resource Editor.

The good times rolled at NARPM®'s 2026 Broker/Owner!

Laissez les bons temps rouler, y'all — because the 2026 NARPM® Broker/Owner Conference & Trade Show from April 28-30 brought the spirit of New Orleans to life in the biggest, boldest way possible! From the very first “up-and-at-’em!” breakfast to the final hugs and selfies, this year’s conference in The Big Easy was equal parts business brilliance, Bourbon Street energy, and 1,400-plus attendees.

The moment NARPM® rolled into NOLA, the vibe was electric. Brokers, owners, vendors, and industry leaders filled the halls with laughter, ideas, and enough networking magic to light up the French Quarter. The sold-out Expo buzzed like a jazz band, while breakout sessions, masterminds, and panels delivered a feast of strategies and game-changing conversations.

The keynote lineup? Fire! Among them, Ivy Zelman helped attendees “sift through the noise” with a sharp look at the housing market, while John Dijulius reminded everyone that human connection is still the secret sauce in business success. Jennifer Ruelens brought the energy home strong, and Joey Coleman closed the conference with a mic-drop session on creating unforgettable tenant experiences in those crucial first 100 days. Brains were stuffed fuller than a po’boy.

And then there was NARPM® Party Gras sponsored by Second Nature and DoorLoop. Whew, cher! If New Orleans (and NARPM®!) knows how to do anything, it’s throw a celebration, and the Caesars Superdome transformed into the ultimate NARPM® bash complete with a Ferris wheel, zip-lining, deejays, and dancing. Beads, music, and good eats turned colleagues into fast friends quicker than you can say “another round of jambalaya!” (And did you pet the alligator?)

Of course, no Broker/Owner Conference is complete without a few unforgettable surprises — and this year’s crowd favorite may have been the lunchtime “NARPM® Jeopardy!” emceed by Phil Owen. Between the learning, the connections, and the pure joie de vivre flowing through every hallway, this was one for the history books.

Now the beads are packed away, the vendor booths are quiet, and everyone’s home with full hearts, full notebooks, and maybe just a little extra Cajun seasoning in their souls. Thanks to all who worked hard to make this one of the most unforgettable NARPM® experiences ever! Mark your calendars now for the 2026 NARPM® Annual Convention & Trade Show, Oct. 13-15 in Vegas, baby! 🎉






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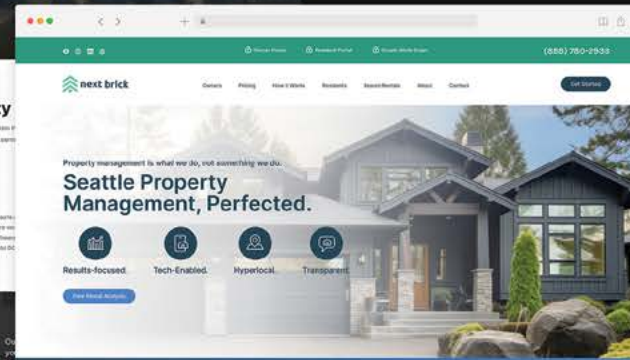
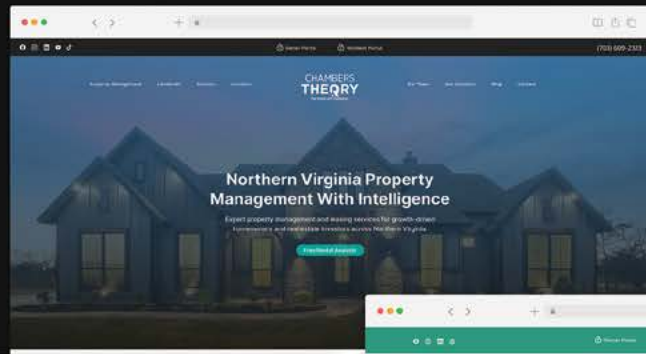
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Chris Brasher is the Chief Marketing Officer at PMW by Rentvine and Rentvine, where he leads marketing strategy, brand growth, and industry visibility. With a background in proptech and digital marketing, he brings a creative, results-driven mindset and a knack for turning big ideas into campaigns that connect with customers. Visit <https://www.propertymanagerwebsites.com>. Reach him at chris.brasher@rentvine.com.

Positioning in a crowded market: How to stand out when everyone sounds the same

In today's property management landscape, most companies look interchangeable at first glance. Visit a handful of websites, and you will see the same claims repeated over and over. Responsive communication. Transparent pricing. Advanced technology. Local expertise.

None of these is wrong. The problem is that they are no longer differentiators.

As we move into peak season, competition increases. More owners are evaluating their options, and more management companies are competing for their attention. In that environment, sounding like everyone else is one of the fastest ways to get overlooked.

Standing out is not about being louder. It is about being clearer.

WHY DIFFERENTIATION FEELS SO DIFFICULT

Many property managers struggle with positioning because they try to appeal to everyone. It feels safer to stay broad, to keep messaging neutral, and to avoid excluding potential clients.

But broad messaging creates a different problem. When everything sounds good, nothing feels specific. And when nothing feels specific, owners have a hard time seeing why they should choose you over the next company.

This is especially true today. Owners are more informed, more cautious, and more selective. They are not just looking for a service provider. They are looking for a partner who understands their goals and can deliver a consistent experience.

If your messaging does not clearly reflect that, you blend in.

WHAT OWNERS ARE ACTUALLY RESPONDING TO

Owners are not making decisions based on a checklist of features. They are making decisions based on confidence.

They want to know that you understand their situation. They want to feel that your process is structured and predictable. They want to trust that what you promise upfront will match their experience after they sign.

That means your positioning needs to do more than describe what you do. It needs to communicate how you do it and who it is built for.

For example, there is a meaningful difference between saying you offer "full-service property management" and explaining how your onboarding process works, how communication is handled, and what an owner can expect in the first 90 days.

Specificity builds trust. Generalities create doubt.

THE RISK OF PLAYING IT SAFE

When firms avoid strong positioning, they often fall back on price as a way to compete. If your messaging does not clearly communicate value, owners will default to comparing cost.

This creates a cycle that is difficult to break. Lower prices attract more price-sensitive clients, which can increase operational strain and reduce profitability. Over time, this makes it harder to invest in the very systems and services that would support stronger positioning.

Clear differentiation helps you avoid that cycle. It allows you to compete on fit and value rather than price alone.

HOW TO START STANDING OUT

Strong positioning does not require a complete overhaul. It starts with a few focused shifts.

First, define who you are best suited to serve. Not every owner is the right fit for your business. The more clearly you can identify your ideal client, the easier it becomes to tailor your messaging.

Second, move beyond features and describe your experience. Instead of listing services, explain how those services are delivered. What does communication actually look like? How are issues resolved? What should an owner expect every month?

Third, align your messaging across every touchpoint. Your website, your consultations, and your onboarding process should all reinforce the same story. When those elements are aligned, it creates consistency. And consistency builds confidence.

Continued on page 30 "Positioning"

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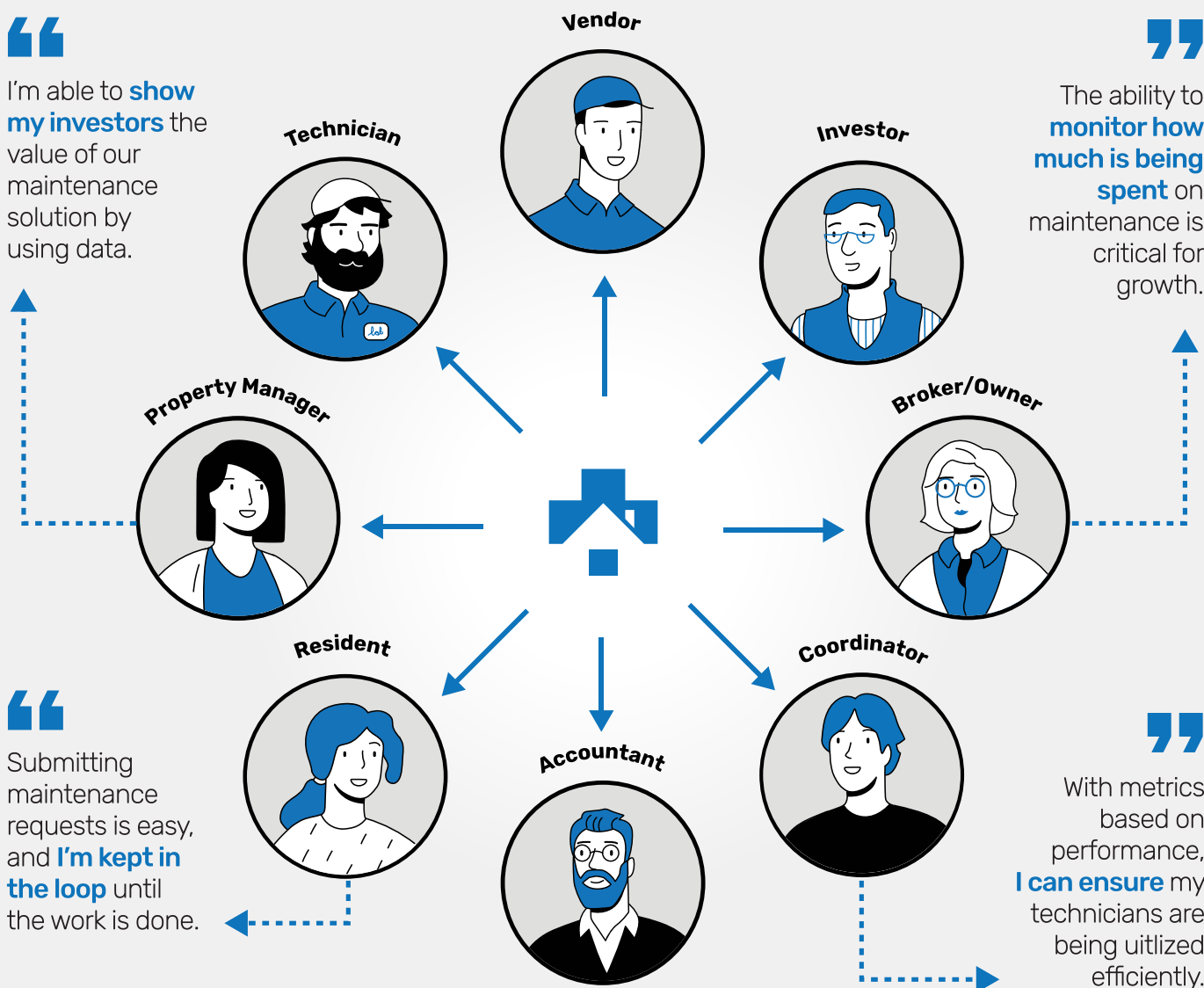
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DISCUSSION BOARD Hot Topics



WHAT HOT TOPICS ARE PROPERTY MANAGERS CURRENTLY TALKING ABOUT?

NARPM® maintains Discussion Boards in the NARPM® Community for several specialties within the organization. These Discussion Boards enable members to stay in contact and to share questions and concerns as they arise. If you would like to participate in one of these groups, visit community.narpm.org and look for **Communities**. Member login is required. Discussion Boards are only available to NARPM® Members.

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Q *I'm a solo operator managing 100-plus units across 45 properties in Jefferson County, New York (Watertown/Fort Drum market). I also manage my own investment portfolio alongside my third-party clients. Over the past year, I have been deep in the process of systematizing everything: onboarding, compliance workflows, tenant communication, and owner reporting. The biggest lesson so far is that every recurring frustration is really just a missing system. Curious to hear from other operators, especially those running lean. What is the one workflow or process that made the biggest difference once you finally documented and built it out?*

A *You hit the nail on the head; it's missing systems across the board. I don't think there is just one. Having clear policies built into systems for renewals, NTV, onboarding, applications, etc., removes the stalls and frustrations.*

A *This isn't the exact answer you were looking for, but my first hire was a bookkeeper. Went through a couple but landed on a [finance platform]. This has allowed me to spend more time on process and building out the framework for the RTM I want to hire. I am planning to scale but am in a very similar spot as you currently, and we got started in July last year. My intention is for each future PM to have an assistant, so I'm wanting to have those two positions ironed out and working cohesively with the trust accounting bookkeeper. Hope that helps. It's more geared toward scale. I can likely double in size with that setup (hopefully) before needing to actually hire the PM.*

A *If I had to pick one that I'd suggest spending the most of your time on and hammering down early, it would be your lease renewal process. Between the number of events and deadlines that have to be hit on every renewal, if you don't have a good process in place, you'll miss something. Apart from that, it's the one activity that (for me) you'll do every year for every lease you manage.*
After that one, I'd put move-outs/ins and turns on your top to-do list. Our move-in also focuses on the tenant notifications. We send automated emails leading up to the move-in and shortly after move-in. Half are really just friendly reminders, things like, "Did you forward your mail yet?", "Do you need help with utilities?", "Do you have the first box of moving essentials ready?" It just gives a good first impression to your tenant, and since we have these automated, we spend no time sending them.
Just make sure you are using a good process system that you can live with for the long haul. I started with one when I didn't know how detailed I should be, and now, a few years later, I'm redoing my processes in a new system.

A *Completely agree on lease renewals. The number of moving parts in a single renewal cycle is easy to underestimate, and once you're managing enough doors, even one missed deadline creates a cascade. That's the kind of process where "I'll just remember" stops working fast.*
On move-ins: I built out a similar system. I send a move-in requirements letter, a resident portal setup guide, and a maintenance emergency guide (which cuts down on after-hours calls significantly). All three get referenced in an automated post-move-in email. Same philosophy as yours. Set it up once, let it run, and let the tenant's first impression of your operation be that you have your act together.
Your last point is the one I'd underline for anyone reading this. Pick a system you can actually sustain. I went through the same evolution. Started building processes before I fully understood the level of detail they needed, and ended up rebuilding. The lesson is that your first version will never be your last, so pick a platform with enough flexibility that version two doesn't require starting from scratch.

Remember – everything you read on the Internet is not true. If necessary, seek legal counsel.

See the entire discussion here:
<https://community.narpm.org/home>



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Kate Roth, Master Property Manager RMP®, is the founder and Designated Broker of Amethyst Realty Group, specializing in residential property management across the Phoenix metro area. With nearly two decades of experience and advanced designations including MPM®, RMP®, and CRPM®, she's known for strong communication, compliance expertise, and high-quality service. Kate is also a state-approved real estate instructor and National NARPM® Instructor.

The foundation for a successful lease

At a recent industry event, a point that stood out was the concept of unbundled services — offering flexible options that allow property managers to meet owners where they are, instead of pushing everyone into a full-service model. Lease-only was mentioned as one example.

For some of us, lease-only is something we have always done — but not always something we have been intentional about.

In my own business, lease-only has consistently been a source of referrals. Agents and fellow PMs send over owners who just need a tenant placed, and for years, I approached it exactly that way: a one-time service, help them out, and move on.

But recently, I started to rethink that approach.

I have always believed leasing is the foundation of everything. If the lease is done right from the beginning, everything else runs more smoothly. If it is not, you are managing problems for the entire lease term. That belief made me take a closer look at lease-only — not as a side service, but as a core part of the business.

One of the biggest challenges with lease-only is how it is perceived. It is often reduced to marketing and placement, as if the primary value is simply filling a vacancy.

In reality, the most critical and highest-risk part of any tenancy happens before the resident ever moves in. This is where key decisions are made: who is approved, how the lease is structured, what expectations are set, and how well the owner is protected.

When those decisions are handled well, the lease has a much higher likelihood of performing smoothly. When they are not, issues tend to surface later, often at a higher cost.

A well-executed lease-only service should reflect the same level of professionalism and structure as full-service management, particularly in the areas that matter most.

This includes consistent and compliant screening practices, adherence to fair housing requirements, strong lease agreements with appropriate disclosures and addenda, and proactive risk identification before move-in.

These steps are not administrative; they are foundational. They directly influence the success of the lease and the experience for both the owner and the resident.

Another common challenge is how lease-only is priced and positioned. Because it is often seen as a limited service, it is frequently under-structured or underpriced.

However, when clearly defined, lease-only can be both predictable and profitable.

A strong model typically includes an upfront retainer to cover initial work, a leasing fee that reflects the value of the placement, and a clearly defined

scope of services. Additional offerings, such as make-ready coordination or enhanced marketing, can be incorporated as optional add-ons.

This level of structure not only supports profitability but also creates clarity for the owner, reducing misunderstandings and improving the overall experience.

Beyond immediate revenue, lease-only can play an important role in long-term business development.

Many owners who inquire about lease-only are not opposed to full-service management. They are simply not ready to commit to it. They may be accustomed to

“ In reality, the most critical and highest-risk part of any tenancy happens before the resident ever moves in. This is where key decisions are made... ”

Continued on page 30 "Foundation"

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John Bradford is the Founder and CEO of PetScreening. Download the 2026 State of Pets in Rental Housing Report at <https://info.petscreening.com/2026-state-of-pets> to review the full data, benchmarks and practical recommendations for building a stronger, more defensible pet policy strategy.

The cost of waiting: Pet risk, damage, and liability in multifamily housing

Pet-related risk in multifamily housing is no longer a marginal issue. It is a measurable, recurring financial exposure that compounds over time.

Operators who delay implementing structured pet screening are not avoiding cost; they are deferring it and often multiplying it.

Across large portfolios, two realities are consistently observed:

- Dog bite incidents create low-frequency but high-severity liability, with claims averaging \$70,000 and exceeding \$250,000 in serious cases
- Pet-related damage is high-frequency and operationally expensive, impacting a significant percentage of units annually

Data shows a clear divide:

- Non-screened portfolios: 36% of units experience pet-related damage annually
- Screened portfolios: 26% of units experience pet-related damage

That 10% gap represents millions in preventable costs at scale.

The conclusion is straightforward. Waiting introduces avoidable risk across both liability and property damage. Acting early reduces both frequency and severity.

Key takeaways:

- Liability does not stop with the pet owner. Property operators can be held responsible when risks are known but not addressed.
- Exposure grows quickly at scale, turning isolated incidents into meaningful portfolio-level financial risk.
- A small number of high-severity events drive the majority of losses, creating volatility that is difficult to predict.
- Proactive pet risk management can materially reduce both the frequency and severity of claims.

THE HIDDEN RISK OF UNKNOWN PETS

The most expensive risk is not just pets, it is undocumented pets. When pets are not properly disclosed or tracked:

- Maintenance teams enter units without knowing

animals are present.

- Vendors and inspectors face unpredictable conditions.
- Prior pet complaints and behavioral signals are not systematically recorded.

This significantly increases the likelihood of bite incidents and injury claims.

From a legal standpoint, this creates a dangerous combination; a lack of documentation does not eliminate liability and it weakens the operator's ability to prove due diligence.

Securing written records from the pet owner on their pet's training and/or aggressive tendencies shows resident accountability, creating due diligence for the landlord.

With structured pet screening, disclosure rates increase because residents are required to affirm accuracy. This creates a natural shift toward transparency and reduces unauthorized pets, directly lowering operational and liability risk.

DOG BITE LIABILITY: HIGH SEVERITY, PREVENTABLE EXPOSURE

Dog-related incidents represent one of the most volatile liability categories in multifamily housing:

- Average claim: \$70,000
- Severe incidents: \$250,000-plus
- Extreme cases involving children or facial injuries: \$300,000-plus

In the most severe cases — particularly those involving multiple surgeries, permanent disfigurement, or young victims — jury verdicts and settlements can escalate into the millions (Source: Enjuris Top Dog Bite Verdicts).

Geographically, risk concentration is uneven. California represents the highest total dog bite claim value in the U.S., with approximately \$208.4 million in claims in 2024. The next closest state, Florida, reported \$101.4 million — less than half — highlighting how regional exposure can materially impact portfolio-level risk.

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LEGAL REALITY

Premises liability reinforces one principle: what you knew, or should have known, determines your exposure. Complaints, observed behavior, and prior incidents all establish knowledge. Failure to act on that knowledge creates liability.

Case Law Precedent:

- Uccello v. Laudenslayer (California): Landlord held liable after failing to act on known dangerous behavior.
- Strunk v. Zoltanski (New York): Liability established without a prior bite based on observable behavior and warnings.

PET DAMAGE: THE HIGH-FREQUENCY COST DRIVER

While liability claims draw attention, pet-related damage is the silent profit drain. There is an observed performance gap:

- Non-customers: 36% of units incur pet damage annually
- Screening customers: 26% of units incur damage annually

That 10% reduction is not incremental. It is structural. The average cost per Incident is \$567 per unit.

For a portfolio of 100,000 units with 70 percent pet ownership:

- Estimated pets: 70,000
- Gross annual liability exposure: \$2.45 million to \$7 million
- Net retained exposure: \$700,000 to \$1.75 million

Even with insurance, meaningful risk remains on the balance sheet.

WHY WAITING INCREASES COST

Delaying pet screening does not hold risk constant. It increases it. Three dynamics drive this:

- Accumulation of undocumented risk: Unauthorized pets

compound over time, increasing both damage frequency and incident probability.

- Lack of defensible documentation: Without structured records, operators lose the ability to demonstrate awareness and action, increasing legal exposure.
- Operational blind spots: Teams make daily decisions without full visibility, increasing the likelihood of preventable incidents. In practice, this means more damage events, higher likelihood of severe incidents and greater legal vulnerability when incidents occur.

RISK REDUCTION THROUGH STRUCTURED SCREENING

Implementing structured pet screening directly impacts both frequency and severity of risk:

- Reduces pet damage incidence by ~10 percentage points
- Increases pet disclosure and reduces unauthorized animals
- Enables proactive intervention on high-risk pets
- Creates a defensible compliance record

Financial Impact:

- Liability reduction: 25 to 70 percent
- Damage reduction: ~28 percent relative decrease (36 percent to 26 percent)
- Total impact: millions in avoided cost annually at scale

Dog-related liability is measurable, scalable, and reducible. Case law consistently shows that knowledge and failure to act are key drivers of liability. As pet ownership increases, so does exposure, making proactive risk management not just a compliance measure, but a material financial lever that reduces both total liability and downside risk. 🏠

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Anne Lackey is the co-founder of HireSmart Virtual Employees, hiresmartvirtualemployees.com, a full-service HR firm helping others recruit, hire & train top global talent. She has coached and trained hundreds of people in the U.S. and Canada in creating successful businesses to be more profitable and to create the lifestyle they desire. She can be reached at anne@hiresmartvirtualemployees.com or at meetwithanne.com.

The battle for your best thinking

There are two “attention economies” running in our lives right now. One of them is enormous, algorithmically optimized, and funded by some of the most sophisticated engineering in human history. The other one lives completely within our heads, and it's the only one that actually determines how our businesses function.

Every morning, we make a choice about which one gets our focus. If we reach for our phone before we've gotten out of bed, reading something alarming or urgent before we've even brushed our teeth, we've set a tone for the day and reinforced an attention system designed to capture us.

Obviously, this attention battle isn't unique to property management. But what's specific to property management is the real cost of losing that battle. Even without big-tech entering your field of vision, you're

processing are feeling that pressure, and those workers represent a significant portion of the people who rent residential property. You don't need to know exactly how this plays out to recognize that the financial stability of your tenant population is worth paying attention to.

But knowing the context is different from drowning in it. Reading one more economic forecast or breakdown of what AI might do to the job market next year rarely changes what you should do today. But it will make you more anxious about things you can't control.

That means every hour spent scrolling through economic forecasts you can't verify and breaking news that will be reframed by tomorrow is an hour your business didn't get. That's the cost. Every doom scroll holds opportunity cost, and the losses

I choose to treat information consumption like food. I treat it as a meal to be scheduled. I decide in advance what I'm going to consume and when, and when that time is up, I close it. Anyone can do this, but it takes some discipline.

already stretched thin in terms of mental bandwidth, right? Your work already competes for your attention from every direction, from owners, tenants, vendors, and maintenance emergencies. It all feels urgent. So, if you layer a constant stream of anxiety-provoking headlines on top of that, the signals that actually tell you something important about your business get buried.

That's why attention discipline is so vital for property managers. So, let's talk a little about that.

WHAT THE OUTSIDE ECONOMY COSTS YOU

No doubt, the economic uncertainty people are feeling right now is real. All you have to do is stroll down the meat section at a grocery store to feel the pain of inflation. The job market is also shifting, and nobody can say exactly where it will go as automation moves through entire occupational categories.

Workers in logistics, customer service, and data

compound over time. It's truly worth fighting against, not just for your business but for your sanity.

SCHEDULING YOUR INFORMATION LIKE A MEAL

Do you remember when news arrived on a schedule? You picked up the newspaper in the morning, read what mattered, and put it down. In the evening, you watched 30 minutes of news, and then it was over. That rhythm was a structure that protected your ability to think about everything else in your day without a continuous stream of urgency running underneath it.

We'll never see that structure again as a society. But that doesn't mean you can't choose it as an individual. Why not be intentional in scheduling your information consumption? The feed is always open and serving something new, and the default is to check it whenever there's a spare moment,

Continued on next page

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which means the spare moments that used to go to quiet thinking and noticing what's happening in your business, or having a real conversation with an owner, can be absorbed instead by whatever the algorithm decided you should see next.

I choose to treat information consumption like food. I treat it as a meal to be scheduled. I decide in advance what I'm going to consume and when, and when that time is up, I close it. Anyone can do this, but it takes some discipline. Just remember that the rolling buffet that's available every waking hour is truly a rusty hook for your mouth. It's a fishing lure. So don't be the fish!

And think carefully about what goes on your information menu. A property manager's informational diet should be heavy on things that are local, specific, and actionable. What's happening in your market? What are other property managers seeing? What is your own portfolio telling you if you're quiet enough to hear it? The national headlines may be loud, but they're rarely the most useful thing on the table.

WHAT ATTENTION ACTUALLY REVEALS

When you control the attention economy in your brain, you can focus more on the people who need your attention. Think about the owner who hears from you only when there's a problem and has quietly started to experience every call from you as bad news. Owners who feel genuinely informed make better decisions when conditions get hard. They panic less and stay with a property manager they trust instead of making a change at exactly the wrong moment. The trust that produces that behavior is built during conversations that didn't need to happen, which is precisely why most property managers never have them. Don't let the outside attention economy rob you of time better spent.



When you beat the algorithms, you can notice your team more clearly, such as the person who's been slightly off for two weeks, or the one handling a workload that's grown without anyone formally acknowledging it. Those signals are easy to miss when your attention is fragmented, and they're usually cheaper to address early than to manage after someone burns out or leaves.

THE CALMEST PERSON IN THE ROOM

When financial stress rises in the broader economy, the people around you feel the pressure of an uncertain moment in ways that affect their judgment and their behavior, and they will look for someone who seems to have a clear head.

That person can be you. And it starts with informational discipline. You don't have to be the person with the answers nobody else has, but you are the person who directed your focus to tending to owner relationships and looking at your portfolio and your staff with honest eyes.

You fed your mind things that built clarity instead of things that built anxiety. Each of those was a small daily decision that didn't feel significant at the time. But a healthy informational diet and focused mental exertion lead to real fitness, just like healthy

food and exercise do.

We know the big-tech powers will keep seeking algorithmic conquests over the precious minutes of our day. They're really good at being loud and making noise feel like information. But every morning you get to decide which "attention economy" has power in your life that day: yours or theirs. Most people never frame it that way. But the ones who do tend to be the steadiest people in the room when steadiness is what everyone around them needs most.

Here's to winning the battle for your best thinking. I know you can do it! 🏠

Continued from page 21 "Positioning"

WHY THIS MATTERS RIGHT NOW

Peak season creates opportunity, but it also creates noise. More inquiries do not automatically translate into better growth. In many cases, they simply increase the number of conversations without improving the quality of those conversations.

Firms that stand out are not the ones generating the most leads. They are the ones attracting the right leads and converting them with clarity and confidence.

Positioning is what makes that possible.

In a crowded market, the goal is not to be everything to everyone. It is to be the obvious choice for the right owners. When your messaging reflects that, growth becomes more predictable, more profitable, and far more sustainable. 🏠

Continued from page 25 "Foundation"

self-managing, exploring options, or trying to minimize costs.

Without a structured lease-only offering, these leads are often lost.

By contrast, when lease-only is positioned as a professional, well-defined service, it creates an opportunity to build a relationship. It allows property managers to demonstrate their processes, communication style, and expertise without requiring a full-service commitment from the outset.

Over time, this often leads to conversion. When challenges arise or priorities change, the property manager who handled the leasing is already the trusted resource.

Unbundled services are not about doing less — they are about offering the right service at the right time.

Lease-only fits naturally into this approach. It allows property managers to expand their reach, diversify revenue, and create entry points for clients who may not otherwise engage.

For those of us who have always offered lease-only, the opportunity lies in shifting how we think about it. Rather than treating it as a one-time transaction, it can be approached as a strategic service — one that supports both immediate results and long-term growth.

Lease-only is not just about placing a tenant. It is about establishing the foundation for a successful lease and opening the door to a lasting client relationship. 🏠

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