

# ✓ The Checklist

The "Checklist" provides you with handy tips and ideas for handling common issues.



Russell Munz

## Faster Response Anyone?

By Russell Munz

### *Efficient Service Aided by Technology*

Community Association Management is a service business. There is no more important aspect of a service business than its response to the customer. Customers want responsive service – period. We find our ability to utilize technology to aid response has increased client satisfaction dramatically.

Technology speeds the flow of information and can decrease the response time to the customer. There are 4 basic technologies today that managers utilize to improve communication, they are: 1) digital cameras 2) emailing reports 3) ability of manager to work remotely from your property and 4) smart phones.

1) **Digital Cameras** - A picture says a thousand words. Community boards and managers both can take pictures of an area of the community that needs repair to decrease the amount of time something takes to get fixed. Proposals for less complicated jobs can be solicited faster – emailing contractors the picture and a list of work; maintenance workers can sometimes plan ahead for supplies required to do the job to reduce time involved and cost. Tip: put a measuring device in your picture to give perspective.

2) **Emailing Reports** – everything can be emailed these days. Financial reports, delinquency reports, unit owner rosters, etc. can all be sent by email. This reduces the delivery time of the information to the customer, saves paper, postage and other costs and takes up less space in the Board's file cabinet. Tip: Reports can be sent in Adobe Acrobat (a free downloadable software) that everyone can open on their home computer.

3) **Managers Work Remotely** – Working remotely means the ability for a manager to hook up to the management company's computer system from anywhere with an internet connection. Why does this help communities? It allows managers to access up to date information while meeting with the customer during site visits or office hours. This provides instant response to board and unit owner questions. Tip: Communities that invest in providing internet access to managers will get more productivity out of their management dollar, as long as their management company has the tools.

4) **Smart Phones** – Smart phones are a phone and personal digital assistant in one. The manager has access to their calendar, contacts, vendor, board member, and unit owner contacts at their fingertips. Just like remote working, managers can get emailed reports from the company and view digital pictures attachments. Tip: use the computer/phone calendar to organize your day and few items will fall thru the cracks.

The ability to have instant access to information makes customer service more efficient. Efficient customer service means a faster response. Faster response means a happier customer.

If you are interested in these communication tools, ask your management company to integrate some of these ideas into how your community does business. ■

*Mr. Munz is a former US ARMY Captain where he learned the importance of providing clear guidance and delegating to teammates. Prior to military service, Cornell University business programs taught him the importance of focusing time on tasks that have the greatest impact. Now he works with Pyramid Real Estate Group. Email your questions and comments to [russell@pyramidregroup.com](mailto:russell@pyramidregroup.com)*

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