



www.housingconnections.org

Marketing Your Units on Housing Connections

In order to help you better market your units on Housing Connections, our staff has been compiling renter feedback and conducting renter focus groups. Now we want to pass along this valuable information to landlords/property managers to help you fill your vacancies. Following the tips below will help attract renters to your listings.

1. Photos!

All of our focus group renters stressed that they were more likely to read a listing if it had a photo. They also stressed that they liked photos of the outside as well as the inside of the unit. They said they were much more likely to call a landlord if they provided a picture.

Housing Connections staff can help you upload your photos if you have a digital camera. Call our landlord hotline for instructions. If you do not have a digital camera, you can send your print photos to Housing Connections, 421 SW 6th Ave, Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97204. Staff will scan your photos and send them back to you. Remember to include the unit address on the back of each photo.

2. Applications and Screening Criteria

Focus group participants loved printing out applications and reading screening criteria. Every group thought that the additional information made them more likely to apply for the unit. They are impressed with how much time it will save them. Rental applications are the most frequently printed out information on Housing Connections.

It is easy to upload your documents, if you have them saved on your computer in WORD or PDF format. Housing Connections staff can help walk you through the instructions. If you do not have a scanner, you can send these documents to Housing Connections, 421 SW 6th Ave, Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97204. Staff will scan and upload these documents for you and send them back to you.

3. Add a Personal Touch

Even though you are using technology to market your units, renters still found that they wanted a personal touch to each listing. They said they were drawn to listings where on-site manager names were used in the contact information, when specific shopping centers were referenced in the additional details and when they could tell that landlords added more information to make their unit stand out.

This is easy to do on Housing Connections. Staff can assist you in writing your property description in the additional details. We know that renters want more than, "nice, quiet neighborhood close to shopping" to find out what a unit is really like. There is no word limit, so use the space to really describe how fabulous your unit is.

4. Contact Information

One of the biggest frustrations we hear from renters is the lack of correct contact information. Before you confirm your listing, make sure you have double-checked the phone number. Also, renters have said they like when a name is provided. The other feature they liked to read is a limited set of hours in which to call. They found that they were more likely to get a call back or to talk to someone live when the contact information included specific directions for someone to call. Limiting the times of when to call is also helpful for you. Renters often become discouraged if they do not get an answer, and may not call you back or leave a message. Therefore, if you limit the number of hours to when you will most likely be near the phone, there is a better chance that you will connect with the renter who wants to apply to your unit.

5. Cross Reference Housing Connections in your other marketing efforts

One of the benefits of Housing Connections is that you have a large amount of space to let renters know all about the details of your unit. If you use additional marketing efforts where space is restricted, refer renters to your unit specific web address! You can find this at the bottom of your homepage when you are logged into Housing Connections.

6. UPDATE!

The biggest frustration for renters is out of date listings. They hate to get excited about a potential unit only to hear that it has been rented weeks ago.

Housing Connections has tried several ways to keep our information fresh for renters. When they see a listing, they can also see the last time you have updated that listing. Also, if you have not been updating regularly, your unit will expire and renters cannot view it. Staff sends emails to remind landlords, but if you have questions, please call our landlord hot line: 503-823-4141.

The staff of Housing Connections welcomes your comments and suggestions on how to make the website work better for you. Feel free to contact us!