

Curb Appeal: Made You Look!

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What exactly is Curb Appeal?

It is all about the “Power of the Visual First Impression”. If the customer does not like what they visually observe — they will move on to the next community. The customer’s “drive-through” is a reality in the multifamily business plus it is a proven fact that a property’s appearance can either make or break the success of any real estate asset. The better the appearance of the community is directly correlated to a higher value of the investment’s return.

The exterior of community should positively attract, draw-in, create an interest, influence, grab attention and pull in future residents with a sense of declaring, “Welcome Home – We are glad that you are finally here!”

Once the potential resident arrives it is ideal to extend this desired “appeal” beyond the front entrance to continue to build a positive experience throughout the community’s grounds, amenities and features. The initial draw along with the customer’s appreciation of the property up-close-and-personal will result in a memorable encounter that they will want to call home.

The easiest way to advertise your community in through the largest billboard readily on hand: Your abundant landscaping, maintained exteriors, lighting, and various types of signage. Whatever the chosen curb appeal approach, it should align with the overall style of your community whether it is urban, residential, natural, tranquil or tropical. The community grounds require a sharp eye and an on-going focus to keep all efforts fresh, tight and at optimal performance. Communicating the importance of the customer’s first impression of the community to the leasing, service and grounds keeping team to broaden their understanding of the marketing goals and reasoning behind it. Such as explaining why it is a team effort in trash pick-up on the model tour route and tightening the banner daily is critical task for a positive customer experience. Consider a monthly Curb Appeal Inspection and annual property contest motivating a crisp and well maintained community.

Ideas on How to Improve Charm

Signage Trends:

- Window Visual graphics and fresh photo lifestyle signs
- Graphic Construction Skirt on fences and trailers for new construction
- Utilize unused prime-time space to stretch exposure opportunity on construction fence, walls, rooftops, barriers and other high traffic areas.
- Vertical Boulevard sign mounted from building or light poles or attached to aligning fence
- Maximize your fence space: Attaching signs to improve viewing
- Starburst statements on Buildings, etc

Monument Sign:

It has been demonstrated that the customer's perception of the quality of the community is determined partly on the type, condition and quality of the sign.

Landscaping:

- Utilize bold colors and use different elements in landscaping such as large garden stones, tropical and desert plants unique.
- Use Sculptures & Artwork to catch the eye and create memorable moments. It is common for local artists to search for locations to display pieces.
- Water features such as "creeks" or waterfalls generate a tranquil surrounding and produce a remarkable focal point
- Arbors & Trellises allow landscaping to take unusual forms and take the eyes vertically or even follow a length of property along a walkway or major entrances,
- Lighting: Adds a whole new dimension to the grounds plus extends the appeal into the evening hours still getting the attention
 - Up-lighting on trees and buildings: Shining lights upward create a sense of height and drama
 - Focal Points highlighting elements at night such as artwork
 - Pathways and steps provides better vision at night and charming walks
 - White lights always create a festive and classy atmosphere year around
 - Solar options is an easy alternative with no need for wires or cords plus great for the environment

The Last Word on Curb Appeal...

When considering the use of signs and flags:

- Consider who will see the signs and flags. Will your current resident appreciate the message?
- Where are the sign or flags positioned? Do you know your area's sign ordinance?
- What is the message on the sign? Will people be able to read it? Don't forget your URL! Website addresses are easier to remember than phone numbers.
- How will you maintain optimal performance of the tools such as a tight banner and balloons? Who is responsible for the ownership of the quality?
- Bandit signs that are straight with strong stakes to keep them grounded
- If an A-Frames is an option contemplate one that can be interchanged or the panels swapped out for changing needs or demands
- Switch signs and flags out frequently to maximize "pop" effect
- Be unusual and unique to set yourself apart
- Look around to see what other industries are doing and how you can twist it to make it work for you.

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