

RHR Information Services, Inc.

Select Rent News

Editor's Note



This month we celebrate Memorial Day which was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic and was first observed on May 30, 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873.

Have you been successful in advertising your rental prop-

erty? Check out some advertising tips on page 2.

Articles about ID thefts remind us of their presence in our society and their spread into our workplace.

"Could you become a landlord" is a title of an article focusing on pros and cons of becoming a landlord.

Please contact me with any questions, concerns and/or suggestions.

Thank you, Jana Castillon

Inside this Issue:

ID Thefts Prevalent at Work	1
Effective Ways to Advertise Your Property	2
Landlord References	2
Could You Become a Landlord?	3
Verification Passport for the Victims of Identity Theft	4

ID Thefts Prevalent at Work

More than half (51 percent) of all identity thefts occur in the workplace, according to a recent study by Michigan State University.

Organizations that carelessly process and store personnel records create perfect opportunities for "inside jobs," according to Guillaume Deyback, president and CEO of Washington-based Worldwide Assistance, a provider of identity-theft resolution services.

Workplace settings have become increasingly attractive for identity

theft because criminals are aware of the personal data stored there, such as birth dates, Social Security numbers, bank-account numbers and credit-card information, among others, he says.

The annual cost of such identify thefts to corporations and consumers is about \$50 billion, says Deyback, and innovative criminals have developed techniques that exclude almost no one from the scourge of stolen information created by the prevalence of personal data.

However, organizations are becoming more aware of the problem.

Just a few years ago a stolen laptop was viewed as a loss of hardware. Today, organizations and individuals are acutely more aware that the sensitive data a laptop contains is of different, greater value.

Read More: <http://www.hreonline.com/HRE/story.jsp?storyId=10889049&sub=false>

Effective Ways to Advertise your Property



Getting your rental filled is of primary concern when you are turning over rental units. Landlords understand that a vacant unit is translated to profit loss. This is why having a sound marketing strategy is so very important.

Simply filling the unit is not enough; savvy landlords view the marketing effort as the first step in screening tenants.

An efficient and proper marketing campaign is the best method for landlords to reduce the risk in choosing the best person to rent the unit. They want to be sure that the person they contract with can pay rent on time and fulfill the obligations of the lease.

Having to choose a marginal tenant because of lack of options can prove to be costly. The cost evictions, turnover and repairs can be devastating.

The easiest and best way to market your rental property is the time tested "For Rent" sign. Simple as it may be, this method capitalizes on the idea that renters will drive around desired communities in search of future housing.

To enhance visibility, it is recommended that more than one sign be placed on the property. Many landlords place a small box on one of the signs to place

flyers with rental details.

This will allow for the landlord to disqualify prospects by revealing price, policy and expectations. Qualifying prospects will save much time by cutting unnecessary phone calls and showings. Signs must reveal contact information clearly and in large print. To make the signs stand out more, tie two or three balloons. Adding simple balloons to the "For Rent" sign in front of your rental can increase the effectiveness of the sign by 150%.

Another way to market your rental is by offering other tenants, friends and associates a referral commission if they refer a new tenant. Customary referral rewards range from \$50-\$200. This allows landlords the ability to shorten vacancy time.

One of the most effective ways to market your rental is "online ads".

Online ads can be effective when people relocate from outside the area of the rental. People considering a move generally go to the internet for housing information.

Online ads allow for the landlord to post much more information to better pre-qualify prospects. This information is available to prospects anytime prospects connect to the internet.

The internet has many rental sites that vary in price. A good starting point is to start with an inexpensive ad <http://www.usrentallisting.com> in order to test the ad without risking too much. If it proves to generate rentals, then the testing ends.

Generally these websites are promoted through pay for click and organic search strategies along with print ads. If a landlord manages many properties they may consider getting their own site with individual pages devoted <http://www.myresidentportal.com> to every aspect of every rental.

These sites are used as a property management tool in addition to the obvious marketing uses. It is never too late for landlords to develop a sound marketing strategy for their rental. Landlords cannot afford to limit their number of qualified prospects for their rental.

For more information please visit <http://www.Landlord2Landlord.info>

Landlord References

One of the objectives of the screening process is to make a reasonable guess at how the prospect may pay his rent in the future. Thorough verification of the tenant's references will yield more information about the future landlord-tenant relationship. Eviction from one's residence is

very different from something even as catastrophic as repossession of a car.

A good rule of thumb is to insist that the applicant disclose the name and address of at least two landlords, and go back at least three years.

RHR conducts phone interviews with previous landlords to obtain move in/out dates, payment history and to check for any lease violations and possible damage history.

Contact us at 888-389-4023

Could You Become a Landlord?

Excerpt from a Wall Street online article
With home prices retreating from fever-pitch highs, a new breed of real-estate investor is eclipsing the speculator: the landlord.

More Americans are hanging out "for rent" signs. Some were forced into the business after buying investment houses or condos at top dollar during boom times that they now can't sell. But many are discovering their inner landlord on purpose, often buying properties well below prices from a year or two ago.

It can be lucrative. For the first time in several years, rents are rising in many places, in part because the subprime-lending crisis is making it harder for people with marginal credit records to secure mortgages, increasing rental demand.

Shantay Wakefield and Gerald Taggart, a couple in Fairview Heights, Ill., have bought two rental properties in the past two years. The two 30-year-olds figured they would be income-generating investments, though they didn't foresee the pitfalls.

"You find out quickly that this is not easy," says Ms. Wakefield, a high-school teacher. They expected repairs to one of their rentals to take four weeks; they took seven months, and costs piled up.

Nevertheless, she says, "The sense of accomplishment, that's what we've enjoyed."

At the National Association of Residential Property Managers in Virginia Beach, Va., membership in the past year has increased by more than 20%. In

Nashville, Tenn., Wilson Group Real Estate's property-management-services arm has nearly doubled to 250 clients in the past year, thanks to the landlord boom.

Getting into real estate remains relatively easy. Despite the difficulties in the loan market for higher-risk, subprime borrowers, there are lots of financing options available for investment real estate, assuming your credit is good.

But that doesn't mean it is a good idea for you. Think of it like operating a small business, even if it is just a single condo. Tricky tax laws, obscure local ordinances and other imponderables can turn what looked like a no-brainer rental into a money pit.

Keep in mind that "you're buying an income stream, not a pretty house," says Paul Howard of the Florida Landlord Network, which provides services to landlords in the Sunshine State. A house will attract only so much rent. If you overpay, you can raise the rent only so much before your property starts sitting vacant.

Mr. Howard says he recently took a call from an engineer in Maryland who had just bought a waterfront Florida home and was looking for help finding a renter. "I ran the numbers," and "even if this guy got top dollar for rent, he was still underwater by \$800 a month," Mr. Howard says. "He overpaid, and now he's got problems."

Be prepared! A typical mistake is to underbudget for repairs. Keeping the home in good con-

dition helps attract quality tenants. "It's just so silly to scrimp on maintenance," says the Florida Landlord Network's Mr. Howard. "When you're a landlord, you're in the retail business, not real estate. You don't want to lose your good customers."

Insurance is another concern. An injury to your tenants or their guests on your property could mean a lawsuit. A good insurance agent and lawyer can help determine how best to structure your business to limit your personal liability.

Rental real estate also comes with a dizzying array of tax breaks, deductions and write-offs, perhaps more so than just about any other investment. You have deductions for interest, insurance, repairs, even for the mileage accumulated driving to the bank to deposit the rent checks. It is worth the expense to hire an accountant with rental-income expertise.

Overall, aim for an annual return of at least 10% to 12%. Remember, you can earn 5% in risk-free U.S. Treasury bonds, so you should make more to compensate for the headaches of being a landlord, such as the Christmas Eve phone call informing you of a broken toilet.

RHR Information Services, Inc. will help you with all your tenant screening needs. Please contact your Representative to find out more or visit our website at www.rhris.com

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"When you're a landlord, you're in the retail business, not real estate".

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The Right Path to the Right People



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Verification Passport for the Victims of Identity Theft

Excerpt from an article in www.cincinnati.com

Identity theft still tops the complaint list reported each year by the Federal Trade Commission. An estimated 3.7 percent of U.S. adults were victims of this crime just last year. Among them, an Ohio man who says it has destroyed his life.

"I'm wanted in Florida for fleeing and alluding the police and criminal damaging," said Brad Chaney. "I also got a phone call from a rental car company that was involved in the accident, wanting to know when I was going to pay them."

In fact, the man Florida police arrested, and whom they still seek, is not Chaney, but rather a man who pretended to be him - and even took out a driver's license in Chaney's name.

That identity thief has now been arrested and

jailed, but it hasn't helped Chaney with those Florida charges.

"They have no way of dropping the charges, or changing them from one person to another and just expunging my record. They have no way of doing it," Chaney said.

A letter from Florida authorities shows they know their defendant is not Chaney but, because the warrant is still active, Chaney's driver's license is suspended.

In addition, he can't get a job because, although he states he's never been arrested, potential employers run a criminal background check and reject him.

"I have a criminal record. Every place I apply for work they can't hire me because I have felony convictions on my record," he said.

Chaney was sent to the Ohio Identity Theft Verification Passport Program set up by the

state attorney general's office.

He has been given an Identity Theft Passport and he is once again able to legally drive a car because his driver's license has been reinstated.

In addition, the attorney general's office claims Chaney's criminal record in Florida is about to be wiped clean so Chaney will be able to get a job.

Now people in Ohio who have been the victim of identity theft should contact their local police to get enrolled in this program.

While such a program may not be available in all states, each state's attorney general has helpful tips on their Web site as does the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov.

Please contact RHR Information Services if you have any questions or concerns.
888-389-4023