

Client Success Q & A

Legend Management Group has served greater Washington's most discerning residents for nearly three decades. Hear from Megan Adams on how their commitment to exceptional customer care has earned them a Top Rated online reputation since 2020 in addition to National Resident Satisfaction recognition for nine consecutive years.



Megan Adams
Director of Marketing

Q: Congratulations on your SatisFacts Resident Satisfaction Award. In your opinion, why is it important for companies to have a customer feedback strategy?

A: Understanding what our customers are experiencing when they come to our communities and live at our communities is extremely important. We need to know what we're doing well, but we also need to know where we're missing the mark on delivering the exceptional customer care that we aim to deliver to all of our customers. Customers also just want to be heard. They want their voice heard; they want to share what they love and what they don't love about living at our communities. Giving them this opportunity to share feedback through the Insite Surveys is extremely important so that they feel valued. If they have a concern, we can address it right away rather than it stewing for a whole year until renewal when they might tell us something that they haven't loved. It's also great for them to share the things they do love because they're proud of where they live and proud of living at a Legend community. So the surveys just give them an opportunity to have their voices heard, and then for our company to respond as necessary, whether it's for praising our teams or if there's something that we need to recover from, we know right away that we need to do so.

Q: What process and or goals do you have in place to ensure thoughtful and timely review responses across your review platforms?

A: At Legend, our goal is that all reviews are responded to within 24 hours. Our marketing department takes care of responding to all reviews. We take that off of the on-site teams, where an emotional response might come from the on-site team since it's about their work, and we can take the emotion out of it. Positive reviews are easy to respond to quickly. We like to highlight some of the things they say, we thank them for leaving their positive review. And then for more negative reviews, we will talk to the team about what's happening to try and formulate a good response. We always try to take heated residents offline, so we try to remove that conversation from going back and forth online. We have a WeCare email account where residents can email us with additional concerns and we can respond and go back and forth with them, work with the regional manager, work with a property manager, but the goal is that every customer gets a response from us within 24 hours.

Q: How has the Verified Resident Program helped your communities build a more authentic online reputation?

A: The Verified Resident Program has been very important in building an authentic online reputation. When prospects are deciding what community to go to, they can look at ApartmentRatings and they see verified resident reviews next to anonymous reviews or reviews with a random name. I think that the verified resident title in reviews helps the customer understand these are actual residents. It's not someone's friend leaving a review. It's not our team leaving positive reviews. They're not fake positive reviews to try and boost our score. Prospects know this is a resident that lives there and this is their experience. We've had times where some residents might create multiple accounts to leave negative reviews, and I think customers see through that when it's kind of the same thing over and over. The prospect knows that this is a trusted resident that is sharing what their actual experience is like, which is more authentic. People don't want all five star reviews when they're buying something. You want to see the good and the bad and this program has helped with that. It's also helpful that when the resident is finished with their Insite Survey, the fact that we're asking them, "Will you take an additional step to leave a review on ApartmentRatings as a verified resident?" is great. We've really seen more reviews come through since it was implemented, so it's really been great for our company.

Q: How does your team utilize SatisFacts Insite Survey feedback to evaluate performance and how has it been useful in decision making processes?

A: We all know that customers are deciding on move-in day if they're going to renew next year based on how their experience went. Our surveys help us see if the keys were ready, if the lease docs were ready, if a move-in inspection happened, and if everything looked great and worked in the apartment home. And if it did, that's great. We celebrate that success through our scores that we track monthly. If it didn't, we can recover right away. We can determine if something is wrong in our turn process. If a team is missing the mark on something, we can recover quickly and get them the training that they need so that future move-ins go exceptional. With the service request Insite Surveys, we can see if there's any trends or patterns in what might be happening at a community. We can also see how our service team is performing. Our goal is that service requests are completed within 24 hours. Many of our teams are getting 98% completed in 24 hours or above 90%. When we're not meeting the mark, we know that perhaps more training is needed for particular service team member. It's also important to know if our team responding quickly to not only fixing the service request but following up to make sure it was done correctly. Are we communicating if there's a delay? Communication is so important and if we find through surveys that our teams aren't communicating when there might be a delay, we know that we need to do some more training on that. It's all about meeting our customers' expectations and if we're not able to meet them, making sure that we're communicating when we will be able to meet them. Both of those survey programs are so important because they're sent out weekly and on a weekly basis, we can see how each team is doing in regards to our move-ins and our service requests. We always know if we're meeting expectations or not, and again, can recover quickly if we're not, but also celebrate our teams when they are meeting those expectations.

Q: What has been the effect of the eplQ index on your business and how do you use it to measure & evaluate the performance of your communities' online reputation?

A: The eplQ Index has had a great impact on our company. Fortunately, we've been ranked number one in our portfolio size multiple times, and we are very proud of that and we share that everywhere and on everything. I think some of the things that go into the eplQ ranking have helped us focus on more areas than just the resident rating. We've always had a goal of achieving 4.5 or higher, an exceptional score, in all surveys that we receive. We were not always as focused on how many surveys were being completed, and now that the number of surveys per unit count is part of the eplQ ranking, we are more focused on that. We've implemented some programs to try and get more reviews and survey responses from our residents. We've shifted what day of the week surveys go out to the new move-ins and the residents who have had a service request completed. We're really focused on trying to get more reviews. The more feedback we get on the surveys, the better we know what's going on at each of our communities. Some of the things that we've implemented were postcards that our service team can leave. It has a picture of a service team member and it thanks the resident for allowing them to service their apartment home and asks them to leave a review and to mention that team member by name. We've also implemented a bonus program, so anytime a team member is mentioned by name through a verified resident review on ApartmentRatings, they get an extra bonus at the end of the month.

As I mentioned, we always are on top of responding to 100% of the reviews within 24 hours, but I think it's important that is part of the eplQ score, as a review left unattended to could make other prospects question what's going on there. Why aren't they responding? Do they really care? So I think all of those things wrapped up into the eplQ score have made an improvement on how we look at our online reputation overall and not just the actual rating. The eplQ ranking has also had a great impact on our leasing activity. We are able to tell our customers that we are #1 in the nation in our portfolio size due to our resident satisfaction scores. We have a number of teams in the top 10 and those teams are able to tell their customers that our actual community is a top 10 leading property in the industry. Of course, customers will want to live at a community that they know they're going to be taken care of by an exceptional top 10 ranked community in the industry. It's very helpful for our teams to sell how focused we are on delivering exceptional care and why their community and Legend are great places to live.

Q: How has the ApartmentRatings and SatisFacts Education team helped your company to achieve your resident satisfaction and online reputation goals?

A: The ApartmentRatings and SatisFacts education team has been amazing. We have been fortunate enough to have Lia Nichole Smith come to a number of our company meetings to not only speak with our teams and celebrate our successes, but also to help us see where we are a little bit lower than we'd like to be in order to achieve that exceptional score across the portfolio. She shares what she's seeing as trends in the industry, what customers want, what our residents value, and then we are able to turn our focus onto those things to continually achieve high ratings from our residents. I think also the trainings that the education team does monthly and the celebrations of the eplQ scores build excitement and momentum for our teams to continue to find new ways to deliver exceptional experiences.