

Client Success Q & A

Oculus Realty specializes in the pre-development and lease-up of new multifamily communities, repositioning and management of conventional and rent regulated apartment buildings in urban environments, developing best-in-class residential property management operating teams, and meeting the specialized needs of long-term, privately owned real estate portfolios.



K. David Meit, CPM[®]
Principal

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

A: At Oculus, we always believe that a complaining customer is our best customer and what we mean by that is that we're always looking for feedback to improve on how we're able to deliver our services and create an exceptional experience for our customers.

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 use SatisFacts surveys for every time we touch a customer. We're constantly looking for feedback so we can improve our services and how we go about delivering the customer experience. When we get the surveys back, we do two things. We look at them over a period of time, let's say a quarter or maybe even a year, to see how we're scoring and how we can make improvements on things such as how quickly we turn over an apartment, how fast a service request is responded to, or how well a moving process went. We use it for training with our staff. We do share all the responses that we get with our entire staff so they know exactly where they're scoring because we believe that accountability is a big part of being able to provide exceptional service to our customers.

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

A: We've been customers of SatisFacts for a long time and before VRP was created the service was great for our training for internal understanding on how we could do things better, but ApartmentRatings and other rating sites online basically tended to be populated by those who were either extremely happy or extremely unhappy. The Verified Resident Program really changed all of that by driving all those great responses to the ApartmentRatings website, which just increased our reputation within the marketplace. We've also won lots of eplQ awards, which is also fantastic.

Q: What has been the effect of the eplQ index on your business and how does your company use it to measure and evaluate the performance of your community's online reputation?

A: Our online reputation is extremely important to us as part of our overall marketing campaign. Being able to win awards and be one of the most highly rated properties within our state and country, within our portfolio size of 1-9, has been a huge game changer for us because we've been able to win these awards. We've been able to accrue several kudos from our colleagues, from our industry, and most importantly from our prospective and current residents who are providing these great reviews that help retain our residents and attract new prospects.

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

A: We actually have SatisFacts respond to all of our reviews and that comes from working with your sales team in crafting responses that are in our voice as a company and so far we've been very pleased because the turnaround is within 24 hours.

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

A: The SatisFacts education team is very hands-on and they're constantly looking at our scores, as I'm assuming they do with all their clients, and helping us on a quarterly basis, if not biannual basis. They work with our team to address any shortcomings that we might have or give us ideas on how to expand our reputation within the marketplace. We've just got a great partnership with the SatisFacts education team.

Q: What is one eye opening thing you've learned about your residents using the SatisFacts surveys?

A: One of the more interesting things that I've learned from our resident feedback is how much they appreciate the service that we provide. We manage class-A luxury and that customer base is traditionally demanding. Being able to have the feedback directly from them really helps us sharpen our pencil. We try to provide a resort-like experience for our residents and every little nuance that they respond to through the surveys helps us be able to deliver that product and makes us a better company.

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Linda Mayo
Director of Administration

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

A: Your complaining customer is your best customer. The person who is not unhappy living there, but either would like to report something that they experienced or does have a legitimate complaint or wants to send in a work order. Their communication with you is key to being able to identify areas of deficiency in your service because otherwise you can't implement any kind of measure to correct it, repair it, and eventually eliminate whatever the complaint may have been.

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

A: The Insite survey feedback is an important tool in helping your team determine both how to manage themselves and what their roles are for the property, and managing resident expectations. Our goals are always receiving the top possible number or score in any kind of service. If it's a one to five measure, our goal is always to get at least a four and if we don't get that, then we need to see what the issue is. Where do we fall short? We read all of our survey feedback because everything that someone sends in is a little piece of the pie to help us understand our community better. Even when people send in a score of five, I don't just look at the five and say "Great." I scroll down and see what their individual responses are.

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

A: We try to respond to all comments, in particular, the negative ones as it goes back to the complaining customer or person who sends in a report of an issue. They are some of your best residents because they are giving you feedback for the few areas that you may not do well or realize are important to your residents. By responding to online comments, it shows a prospect that you have enough confidence in your mission, which for us is to create value for our residents.

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

A: The eplQ Index allows us to measure our performances with industry standards. It allows us to see comparable management companies and what they're doing across the country. It's also a way of sharing our accolades; legitimate ones. It's a source of pride to see that you're nominated for an eplQ award. We posted our most recent window clings on our doors and posted on our social media. It's a way to show that we are recognized by SatisFacts and by most of our residents.

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

A: Our responses have been crafted very carefully to echo or mimic our voice exactly how we would normally respond in person. We've crafted this very carefully with SatisFacts so that when the response goes out immediately, we're confident that they are getting a response that will address their issue. That's as personal as you can get and lets your residents know that they were heard and their feedback was used to improve these issues.

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

A: Partnering with ApartmentRatings and SatisFacts has allowed us to measure our success in ways that we otherwise wouldn't have. It helps us measure the success of our own goals that we set against other industry benchmarks. Going back to the survey goal, whatever the top score that you can attain is, it's our goal to achieve it. Partnering with SatisFacts and ApartmentRatings allows us to look at our scores across the industry, with the standards of the industry and not just our own personal goals.

Q: What is one eye opening thing you've learned about your residents using the SatisFacts surveys?

A: Different things matter to different residents and the resident experience can be so unique for each of them. That's why we read all the feedback. Even if you get a five, you don't stop there. You have to scroll and look to see what the comments say and it amazes me what stands out.