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The Mission of NARPM is to support professional and ethical practices of rental home management through networking, education, and certification.

New Year's Resolution: Be FEP!

By Rick Ellis, CPM®

When it comes to setting your New Year's resolutions, aim to become the kind of individual that can reach all your lofty goals. Make a resolution to renew yourself, to more fully utilize your personal strengths and talents. Most important in this business, resolve to do what it takes to enhance your "people skills." In 2003, be FEP!

FEP represents three characteristics which epitomizes the personality and character of the property manager that owners and residents need.

FEP STANDS FOR:

Friendly • Enthusiastic • Professional

THE THREE WORDS THAT MAKE UP FEP:

Friendly — Nothing can replace a warm smile and a cheerful disposition. No matter your position within property management, friendliness is the foundation for positive working relationships and effective customer service. The friendly person is not hung up on power or status. They are approachable and interested in others no matter what they can or cannot gain from that other person.

Remember, it is not enough to "be" friendly; you must be "perceived" as friendly by your fellow property management professionals, the residents, and rental prospects. Anyone who encounters a truly friendly individual recognizes it immediately. It is as though there is a big neon sign over the person's head that says "I'm friendly, I'm approachable, I'm interested, and, yes, I will help!" In this business, it is easier to teach a friendly person good property management fundamentals than to take a knowledgeable but grumpy individual and try to teach them to be friendly! People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.

Professional — At the end of FEP giving the term balance, is the letter P for Professional. Professionalism refers to how the property management person looks, but, more importantly, it refers to how you "be." It is what is inside an individual that gives him the discretion and polish to be credible and masterful in the profession.

Professionalism is a result of knowledge that comes from experience and education. The pro-

fessional uses knowledge with integrity and fairness, realizing that in the big picture a good reputation is the one thing that cannot be bought with money or taken away. Perhaps, the best and clearest definition for this characteristic is possessing the skill and inclination to do or say the right thing at the right time to the right person in the right manner, right now! The Professional develops superior and responsive decision-making skills. The Professional knows how and when to make the right decision.

Enthusiasm — The middle letter holds the entire word and its united meaning together. To the first Century Greeks, enthusiasm implied "relationship" or being "in relationship." Enthusiasm is not simply hype and rah-rah. It is not necessarily the person jumping around bouncing off walls and ceilings! Real enthusiasm is from the heart and is seen in the way one creates and maintains healthy relationships. The enthusiastic person may or may not be a boisterous and highly animated individual.

Enthusiastic people exude hope and truly believe in people. They understand forgiveness and know when a second chance is appropriate. By their very nature enthusiastic people bring out the best in those around them. Employees produce better, customers get better treatment, and personal relationships are full and meaningful. Enthusiastic people are excited about life. They realize that everything hinges on having the right kind of relationship. Their inspiration propels others to their best performance and behavior. Think enthusiastically about everything, especially about your job. If you do, you'll put a touch of glory in your life. If you love your job with enthusiasm, you'll shake it to pieces.

Don't discard all those noble New Year's resolutions. It's great to resolve to exercise more, stop smoking, go back to school, etc. Just realize that a decision to be FEP will enhance your success with all your resolutions. Have a great New Year!

Rick Ellis is one of multihousing's foremost consultants and educational speakers. You can reach his company at 972/256-3767 or www.epmsonline.com.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we have celebrated the holidays and are into our New Year, it is with great honor and respect that I greet you as your National president for 2003. These are exciting times full of opportunities and growth; on behalf of all your NARPM leaders, we wish you all the best and great success for 2003!

NARPM's growth and future are strong and in good hands. Your board of directors is strong, committed, and up to the challenge that our new strategic plan lays out for us. As we prepare for the first ever Leadership Conference in Austin, Texas in January, the board will be looking at the strategic plan and making decisions as to what will be our one-, two-, and three-year goals. We will take these decisions and share them with our committee chairs and the membership, so that together we can continue the growth of NARPM.



NARPM President
Chris Hermanski

This year we are committed to **Building your Future!** This can be done in many ways. The first is with education; take that class or workshop, begin work on your designation, attend the Leadership Conference, local chapter meetings, or go to the Convention. Using these programs that NARPM provides will help you increase your professionalism. I can attest to the value that is earned by attending classes and workshops, having your designations, and attending national events. Every class, every workshop, every effort I have made in NARPM has benefited me, and our company, in many significant ways.

How can you make the year 2003 better than 2002? If you have an active chapter, become involved. NARPM 2002's theme was "Make a Difference." There is no better place to be involved, carry the NARPM passion, and make that difference, than in your own chapter. Another suggestion is to become involved in a national committee. As our association matures there is a constant need for more members to become involved and increase our pool of volunteers. So much needs to be done, and there is a great reward for those who get drawn in. Look at your directory for a list of committee chairs and make that call today.

Our crowning point in 2003 will be our 15th Annual Convention on the Big Island of Hawaii. We are so excited to be going. This milestone event and awesome location have been anticipated for several years. During the convention we will be looking back over the last 15 years and reflecting on NARPM's rich history; bring your fondest memory from past conventions and share them with the rest of us. The location is beautiful, and the preliminary program is outstanding. The chapter members there are looking forward to sharing their paradise with us; you'll be sorry if you don't make this event. This is heaven. What a treat to be able to meet and network with fellow property managers, take classes, earn designations, and become more informed, educated and professional all in paradise!

Please take this opportunity to join together with all of NARPM and help all of us to **Build your Future!**

All the Best for 2003!

Chris Hermanski, MPM®

OFFICERS

Christopher Hermanski, MPM®
President
chris@mainlander.com
503/343-0141

Andrea Caldwell, MPM®
President-elect
Finance Chair
By-laws Chair
agetto@aol.com
408/978-8100

Marc Banner, MPM®
Vice President
Convention Chair
mbanner@rentalsinboise.com
208/377-8889

Rose Thomas, MPM®
Treasurer
rose.thomas@pmpbiz.com
301/694-6900

Wendell Davis, MPM®
Secretary
Legislative Chair
wendeld04@aol.com
904/737-2455

Michael Mengden, MPM®
Past President
Nominations Chair
mmengden@terrasidential.com
713/895-9966

DIRECTORS

Karen Hull, MPM®
khull@prop-mgmt-experts.com
209/465-5000

Bill Jackson
Education Chair
bill@protocolpropertymgmt.com
425/467-7785

Luke Kaufmann, MPM®
luke@partnersmgmt.com
404/876-8700

Jim Smith, RMP®
jimsmith@propmngt.com
512/255-7575

John Taylor, RMP®
Marketing Chair
jtaylor4767@aol.com
504/488-8988

Robert Winger, MPM®
robert@sacramentorentals.com
916/446-6663

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Greg Fedro, RMP®
Certification Chair
greg.fedro@reacar-realtors.com
512/345-9886

Betty Fletcher, MPM®
Membership Support Chair
betty@fletcherpm.com
501/907-7091

Dave Holt, MPM®
Long Range Planning Chair
rpmanagement@msn.com
612/379-7890

Harold Kalles
Affiliates Chair
harold@kallesproperties.com
253/848-9393

Darryl Kazen, RMP®
Professional Standards Chair
dkazen@1stchoicepm.com
817/281-1300

Raymond Scarabosio, MPM®
Editorial Chair
landlordSF@aol.com
415/379-9035

NARPM HEADQUARTERS
P.O. Box 140647
Austin, TX 78754-0647
Exec. Director: Roy Bohrer
Exec. Assistant: Sherri Beck CPS

Tel: 800/782-3452
512/381-6091
Fax: 512/454-3036
E-mail: info@narpm.org
Internet: www.narpm.org

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NEW MEMBERS

Welcome new NARPM members! The following is a list of new members who joined NARPM from November 1 to November 30, 2002.

Susan Barrett
Barrett Properties, Inc.
150 Cleveland Road
Bogart, GA 30622
706/353-7627

Jennifer Bloss
Bloss Property Management
PO Box 83976
Phoenix, AZ 85071
602/544-4566

Yeong (John) Chao
Action Properties
660 W Dana Street, Ste. 1
Mountain View, CA 94041
650/967-8700

Marinell Dal Porto
American River Property Management
a Division of Paul Dal Porto Corp.
2530 J Street #203
Sacramento, CA 95816
916/442-8580

Kathleen Gallagher
Gallagher Homes
3531 NW Loop 820
Fort Worth, TX 76106
817/625-8061

Jackie Hummel
Compass Property Management
6314 19th Street W #13
Tacoma, WA 98466
253/566-8388

Willis Hunt
W.G. Hunt & Company, REALTORS
1721 E 12th Street
Austin, TX 78702
512/478-3451

Dave Leyland
Manatee Realty Services, Inc.
8710 Brayton Drive
Hudson, FL 34667
727/514-7653

Matthew Madden
Critchley & Associates Realty, Inc.
711 Pinellas Street
Clearwater, FL 33756
727/442-9578

Valna Roberts
IRP Realty
585 NE Ocean Blvd.
Stuart, FL 34996
772/225-0110

Judy Rose
Morris Property Management, Inc.
413 Welshwood Drive, Ste. 200
Nashville, TN 37211
615/833-5117

Robert Smith
Property Network, Ltd.
75-5799 B-3 Alii Drive
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
808/329-7977

Nancy Taylor
Aberdeen Realty Inc.
323 W Heron
Aberdeen, WA 98520
360/533-7100

Mike Washington
Elite Real Estate Group, Inc.
4905 N Union Blvd., Ste. 102
Colorado Springs, CO 80918
719/264-6400

AFFILIATES

Jennifer Houlihan
Lease Place, Inc.
140 N Orlando Avenue, Ste. 150-27
Winter Park, FL 32789
407/644-8181

Wendi Skornik
National Bank of Arizona
3101 N Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85012
602/212-8814

AFFILIATE MEMBERS LISTED BY SERVICES

Access Controls:

Marwest Access Controls, Inc.
Risco Lock Box Company

Accounting:

Thomas C. Roberge & Company

Advertising:

Rentalhouses.com

Business Products:

Landlordsource.com
National Bank of Arizona
Peachtree Business Products
Professional Office Services of ID, Inc.

Claim Services:

Claim Source One
Home Claim Services

Inspections:

Service Access, Inc.

Internet Tools:

Escapia, Inc
HomeRentals.net
Lease Place, Inc.
Mayaco Marketing & Internet

Legal Services:

Law Offices of DeMartini & Walker
Law Offices of Heist & Weisse, P.A.

Maintenance:

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C&G Contracting, Inc.
Handyman Matters
Mr. Handyman International
Northern Electric, Inc.
Omega Termite & Pest Control
Pro Source Wholesale Floorcoverings

Marketing:

Home Management Network

Software:

Copper River Technology Solutions
PROMAS Landlord Software Center
Property Automation Software Corp.
Small Computer Services, Inc.
Winning Edge Software Solutions
Yardi Systems, Inc.

Telecommunications:

AMI Telecommunications Corporation

Tenant Screening:

Merchants Association of Florida, Inc.
National Credit Reporting
Orca Information
SafeRent, Inc.

For more affiliate information, please visit the
NARPM Web site www.narpm.org.

Safety, Landscaping, & the Property Manager

By Rick Ebert, MPM®

To most property managers, good landscaping on a rental means that the grass isn't 12" tall, and they drive away pleased. To those of us that think safety, we look at the landscaping with a different set of eyes. First, we give the property to the tenant in the manner in which we expect the tenant to maintain it and to return it to us.

With regard to landscaping that means that not only is the grass neat and trim, but the shrubs around the house are trimmed in a manner that would not be conducive for criminals to conceal themselves, and so that the tenants inside the home could look outside the window and see the driveway or street. Specifically, shrubs can be trimmed at the base, 3' up from the bottom, in a "V" pattern so that criminals can't use thick foliage as a place to conceal themselves. Shrubs growing under windows should be trimmed in a manner that will allow the tenants to easily look out the window. Trees are beautiful when they branch out and are full, but often they can become

so thick that they block the light from nearby street lights or from lighting located on the property. In these instances, trees become a liability to the property manager as a darkened entrance or darkened yard is a natural habitat for a criminal.

The astute property manager will provide trimmed shrubs and trees upon move-in with strong lease language making the tenant responsible for their maintenance. Be sure not to provide shrub and tree service if your lease calls for the tenant to be responsible for these services or you will have modified the lease through your actions. Thus your failure to perform these services in the future may cause you to be held liable for damages to the tenant caused by perpetrators of criminal acts who used overgrown landscaping as a device to create a crime.

Rick Ebert, MPM®, is a founding NARPM member and has been an instructor of the RMP® Maintenance Class for several years. He has authored over 100 hours of property management classes and is a frequent lecturer, instructor, and author.

Some Time Savers By Dr. Donald E. Wetmore

In my time management seminars, which I have conducted for more than 100,000 people from around the globe, I show people how to get more done in less time, with less stress; to help them have more time for the things they want to do in their work and business lives.

If you can recapture a wasted hour and redirect it to a more productive use, you can make great increases in your daily productivity.

Here are five of the techniques I share in our time management seminars, each one of which will help you to get at least one more hour out of your day of additional productive time.

1. **Maintain Balance.** Your life consists of seven vital areas: health, family, financial, intellectual, social, professional, and spiritual. You will not spend equal amounts of time in each area or time every day in each area. But, if in the long run, you are spending a sufficient quantity and quality of time in each area, then your life will be balanced. But ignore any one of your areas, (never mind two or three!) and you will get out of balance and potentially sabotage your success. Fail to take time now for your health and you will have to take time for illness later on. Ignore your family and they may leave you and it would then cost you a lot of time to re-establish relationships.
2. **Get the Power of the Pen.** A faint pen has more power than the keenest mind. Get into the habit of writing to do lists using one tool (a Day-Timer, pad of paper, Palm Pilot, etc.) Your mind is best used for the big picture rather than all the details. The details are important, but manage them with the pen. If you want to manage it you have to measure it first. Writing things down helps you to more easily remember all that you need to accomplish.
3. **Do Daily Planning.** It is said that people do not plan to fail but a lot of people fail to plan. Take the time each night to take control of the most precious resource at your command, the next 24 hours. Plan your work and then work your plan each day. Write up a To Do list with all your have tos and all of your want tos for

your next day. Without a plan for the day, you can easily get distracted, spending your time serving the loudest voice rather than attending to the most important things for your day that will enhance your productivity.

4. **Prioritize It.** Your To Do list will have crucial and not crucial items on it. Despite the fact most people want to be productive, when given the choice between crucial and not crucial items, we will most often end up doing the not crucial items. They are generally easier and quicker than crucial items. Prioritize your To Do list each night. Put the #1 next to the most important item on your list. Place the #2 next to the second most important item on your list, etc. Then tackle the items on your list in order of their importance. You may not get everything done on your list, but you will get the most important things done. This is working smarter, not harder, and getting more done in less time.
5. **Control Procrastination.** The most effective planning in the world does not substitute for doing what needs to be done. We procrastinate and put off important things because we don't sense enough pain for not doing it or enough pleasure to do it. To get going on something you have been putting off, create in your mind enough pain for not doing it or enough pleasure to do it. I prefer the pleasure approach. Take a procrastinated project and turn it into a game. Work with one thing in front of you at a time so other things won't distract you. Remember the old saying, out of sight, out of mind? Break it down to little, bite-sized, manageable pieces. Get it started, take the first step, and you will likely continue it to completion.

Receive free Timely Time Management Tips on a regular basis. Sign up now for your free "Timely Time Management Tips." Just go to: <http://www.topica.com/lists/time-management> and select "subscribe." You can e-mail the author at cstem@msn.com or view the Web site at <http://www.balancetime.com>.

Dr. Donald E. Wetmore is a professional speaker for the Productivity Institute, and a professional member of the National Speakers Association since 1989. Copyright 1999. To contact the author, call 800/969-3773.

Confessions of a Respondent (Part I of II)

By Judy Cook

In all of my columns exploring the ins and outs of Federal Fair Housing Law, I never told you the story of the time I was personally named in a HUD Fair Housing Complaint. There's nothing like first-hand experience to make you realize you never want to be involved in that process!

It happened several years ago, when I was managing a fairly large (200+ unit) condominium homeowners association. The association is located in Reno, NV, and comprised of about 20% owner-occupants and 80% absentee owners. For those of you who have managed associations, you know how difficult it can be for boards of directors to enforce rules and regulations with renters when the association's only recourse is through the unit's owner. That owner may or may not pass through warning notices and fines to the renters. Rules enforcement can be a real challenge!

One of my duties as manager of this association required that I send out violation notices and levy fines for rules infractions, as guided by the board of directors. The association had a five-member board; all but one lived on the property. The board members made it their job to walk the community once or twice a week, and prepare lists of rules violations. Typical violations included the wrong color draperies, personal property left in the common area, illegal parking, etc. The board would give me their list each week, and I would prepare and send the notices, assessing owners' accounts for fines, as applicable.

The first rules infraction was typically a warning letter. The second, a \$25 fine; the third, a \$50 fine, and so on. Once in awhile, we'd get a response from an owner. Most of the time, the fines were simply paid, and most violations corrected. We (the board and I) had no way of knowing whether the tenants were ever notified of the association's actions, as it was not this association's policy to copy the residents with notices to the owners.

On a bright and sunny Monday morning — a day I'll never forget — I received a hefty envelope from the San Francisco HUD office. I opened it to find a Fair Housing Complaint. Much to my surprise, the complaint named the association, the unit's owner, the board members individually, my company, and ME! The complaint alleged discrimination on the basis of familial status and race in the association's issuance of violation notices and fines. The name of the complainant was unfamiliar to either me or the board members. In reading through the complaint, it became clear that the complainant was a former renter at the community.

In looking through the records for the unit in question, the paper trail documented numerous fines levied over a one-year period. The fines were always paid by the owner. The number of fines indicated that the rules infractions were rarely, if ever, corrected. It seems the owner may have never notified the renter of the association's notices and fines until the renter vacated the unit. When the renter vacated, the owner deducted hundreds of dollars in association fines from the tenant's deposit.

Both the board and I quickly decided that this was not an issue to be overly concerned about. We could easily prove that we had no knowledge of what transpired (or didn't!) between the owner and renter. We could also show that we had no knowledge of the familial status or race of the renter. We kept no records whatsoever on renters. We had good documentation of the rules infractions and could show that notices and fines were levied on this unit in the same manner they were with all other units in the community.

Those facts did nothing to prevent the ordeal that transpired during the HUD investigation of the complaint. The sequence of events I'll lay out for you next month was a real eye-opener!

In the meantime, have you spotted any weaknesses in the system that, if corrected, might have prevented this complaint? E-mail me judy@cookcompany.net with your thoughts.

NARPM Members, if you would like to submit questions or comments for discussion in an upcoming column of "Fair Housing Corner," please send your suggestions to judy@cookcompany.net. DISCLAIMER: Judy Cook is not an attorney, but a speaker and trainer in property management issues. This article is written from that perspective, and is not to be construed as legal advice.

Chuck Cordero
Sales Support Specialist

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CHAPTER NEWS

1ST WOMAN PRESIDENT — WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

Dedicated to Making a Difference — Washington State Chapter of NARPM has a Star Spangled President for the 2002 – 2003 year. Theresa Reed, MPM®, is her name and property management is her game. Dedicated to this industry for over 10 years she is now focusing on helping other property managers with their quest for success. “Continuing Education for property managers is essential,” says Theresa. “I want to make it easier for *all* property managers, whether members of NARPM or nonmembers, to receive continuing education in this industry.”

Theresa Reed, MPM®, is friendly, easy to approach, and has quite the sense of humor, which makes anyone and everyone feel at ease. I interviewed Ms. Reed in the relaxing environment of her spacious country home snuggled in trees on Whidbey Island. At her feet rests her faithful companion Duke the “wonder dog.”

What attracted you to NARPM?

“Desire for continuing education in the property management field. Camaraderie is also essential. You meet other property managers who are friendly and easy to talk to. You find out that ‘you aren’t alone in this business.’ There really are others that care and will give you a helping hand. I can call on a fellow member at any time of any day with any problem. Someone is always there for me.”

In your opinion what is the number one issue facing property managers today?

“Lack of respect! R-E-S-P-E-C-T, this is what I mean — historically property managers have been considered substandard by the real estate industry. The real estate sales people have never considered our industry to be a serious business. Through NARPM we members are held to a higher standard. Why? Because the organization has a standard of professionalism and a code of ethics that holds us ‘head and shoulders’ above all of our peers.”

I understand you are the first woman voted in as WA State President of NARPM. Do you think you can administer better than or differently than the preceding presidents who were male?

“The past presidents have been excellent. I am honored to be given this opportunity to serve an industry that has given so much to me. My real hero though is the NARPM National Past President Melissa Prandi, MPM®. She is my idol. She is the most motivating, enthusiastic, dynamic leader of *any* organization of which I have ever been a member. Why? Because she has put her heart and soul into her

continued on page 12

Contribute to the Residential Resource

Issue Date	Submission Due Date
April, 2003	February 15, 2003
May, 2003	March 15, 2003
June, 2003	April 15, 2003

If you are interested in writing an article, please e-mail an attachment of your article in Word or text format to Jessica Jacobs jjacobs@assnmgmt.com or send her a Word or text file on 3 1/2" diskette to P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647. All articles are subject to editing and approval of subject matter.



Ambassador Program

The Ambassador Program was designed a few years ago to reward our current members for referring new members to our organization. Who better to spread the word of the benefits of NARPM than its members.

If you refer five new members in one year, you will receive an awards certificate that may be used toward your next year's dues or for events for the coming year. Just follow the simple steps outlined here:

- ★ Call NARPM Headquarters at 800/782-3452, and request membership application forms. Headquarters, upon request, will mail the application directly to the prospective member but will not fill in the "referred by" line.
- ★ The 12-month membership period for the five new members starts the day your first new membership application is approved by headquarters.
- ★ When Headquarters receives the fifth new membership, an Awards Certificate will be issued and dated. A Recognition Certificate will also be issued, and you, as the "Ambassador," will be recognized in the *Residential Resource*.
- ★ The Awards Certificate can be used to pay NARPM annual dues, or like amount can be applied toward National Leadership Conference or National Convention.
- ★ It must be used in full at the time of use and attached to your dues or registration for Leadership Conference or Convention. The value of the Awards Certificate is equal to what the national dues were at the time the Awards Certificate was issued. It also must be used within 12 months of the issue date.
- ★ A member can earn only one Award Certificate per 12-month period. However, a member can earn unlimited Recognition Certificates.

Ambassador Program

November 2002 New Members

<u>New Member</u>	<u>Ambassador Member</u>
Robert Smith	Linda Vermeire
Kathleen Gallagher	Pauline Gallagher
Marinell Dal Porto	Ted White, MPM®
Willis Hunt	Mrs. W. G. Hunt
Dave Leyland	Jim Waddell, RMP®
Judy Rose	Harold E. Morris
Yeong (John) Chao	Arlene Lopes, RMP®
Matthew Madden	Joseph Critchley
Nancy Taylor	Sandra Burkhamer, MPM®
Jackie Hummel	Paul Elkins
Mike Washington	Wini Hulterstrom

The PROMAS Landlord Software Center™

Breaking News

PROMAS Landlord Software Center and HomeRentals.net have announced a joint venture to publish statements and documents on-line that can be viewed by owners in a secure password-protected environment.

Mike Anderson, HomeRentals.net states, "This on-line capability opens up an entire new way of communicating with owners. We partnered with PROMAS because of their longtime dedication to the residential property management market. We will be extending the on-line interface to tenant and vendor communications in the near future."

Mike McCall, PROMAS, comments, "Publishing on-line is the best alternative to mailing the owner statement. In conjunction with HomeRentals.net we provide the controls and security necessary to provide timely and accurate information to your owners. You can look forward to more exciting on-line capabilities in the coming months."

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Is It Time for a Web Site Makeover? By Mike Anderson

At some point, you've probably logged on to a favorite Web site to discover it has recently had a complete makeover. It's common for companies to recreate their Web sites periodically. It may be time for you to makeover your Web site. Ask yourself if any of the following scenarios describe your situation since your Web site was created.

YOUR BUSINESS HAS CHANGED

If you have experienced major changes in your business, your Web site should reflect them. Do you focus on a different or wider demography? Do you offer new services or plans that were previously unavailable? Has the overall image of your business changed?

Perhaps you started your business with a homey "small company" feel, but it has become more "corporate" because of the type of owners you have attracted. Your Web site makeover should consider a more "corporate" look. Perhaps you started out looking corporate, but have decided it's important to your owners that you have a "small company" feel. Change your Web site to be more personal and less "corporate."

You may have created your Web site when you offered a one-size-fits-all management solution, but your business has changed and you now offer multiple solutions based on the needs of the owners. Make sure your Web site fully reflects all of your service offerings. As a part of NARPM, you've learned about cutting-edge programs like periodic property surveys, protection plans, alternative security deposit management, and alternative maintenance charges. If you've adopted any of these programs since your Web site was created, ensure your makeover takes these into account.

YOUR MARKETING HAS CHANGED

As your business matures, your marketing matures. You may have discovered a new way to say something — a way that makes more sense. Your color scheme and logos might have changed to help you establish a more unique recognizable brand. You may accentuate certain components of your service while diminishing those that are less profitable or cause more headaches. When your offline marketing changes, your Web site should change accordingly. It's important that all your marketing is consistent and unified for maximum effect.

YOUR WEB SITE AUDIENCE HAS CHANGED

When you created your Web site, your business may have targeted a certain group of owners, perhaps individuals completely new to the idea of professional management. As time goes on, you may find that your abilities and confidence have increased, and you now wish to target a different class of owners. You may have identified your market niche since the inception of your Web site and need to better target that niche with your Web site.

You may have created your Web site with the idea that tenants were easy to come by, but have found that changes in the economy have made them a scarcer commodity. Your Web site makeover should do a better job at attracting and informing tenants.

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAWS HAVE CHANGED

Sometimes laws change that affect your Web site. While these are occasionally laws that affect the Web site design, like the way you

state your company name or its position on the Web page, they are more often laws that change the content of your Web site. Your state may have changed its fair housing policies, and your Web site needs to reflect that to avoid a lawsuit. Regulations concerning procedures, fees, rents, security deposits, or social assistance change from time to time, and if your Web site does not change with them you could be in trouble. If you have to change an internal company document or form for legal compliance, at the same time consider any required changes to your Web site.

TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED

When your Web site was created, the technology to do what you wanted may not have been available or widely used. As new browsers have been released and Internet connections have become faster, new technology may be available for your Web site. A year ago it did not make sense to have a dynamic menu system on your Web site. Now that nine out of 10 Internet users are capable of viewing a dynamic menu, it begins to make sense. When your Web site was created, technology may not have allowed you to perform functions or include other types of dynamic content. The general rule of thumb is that when 90% of Internet users have a compatible system, it's safe to implement new Web site technologies.

You may have created your Web site with the idea in mind that it was nothing more than a virtual brochure. A Web site can be much more than that. You can dynamically display your available properties, receive feedback from Web site visitors, include real-time calculators and tools, password protect pages for authorized-only access, and even include real owner statements in your Web site. If your original site did not allow for any of this, factor it into your makeover.

PREVAILING STYLES HAVE CHANGED

Although not always the best reason, this seems to be the most common reason Web site makeovers occur. Like hairstyles and clothing fashions, Web site fashions change. While we may not agree with the prevailing style, these styles are implemented by the trendsetters and they set the expectations of Web surfers. Even if you have a very nice Web site, looking out-of-date can cause you to lose potential business. By keeping your Web site with the times, you will maintain the image that you are a modern, progressive company.

SUMMARY

Whether or not to change your Web site is a business decision that you should analyze from time to time. Remember that while keeping your Web site the same for too long can cause you to miss things and not receive maximum value from your Web site, conversely a complete makeover too often can confuse you, your employees, and your Web site visitors. It is wise to avoid either extreme. If you are still unsure of the value of a Web site makeover, take some time to look deeper and consult with both your Web master and your professional peers.

Mike Anderson of HomeRentals.net prepares this column. If you have a question you would like answered, e-mail him at mike@homerentals.net.

Conquer Telephone Tag

By Donald E. Wetmore

I love technology. I am not a technical person but I admire the techno-things that have helped my business, productivity, and profitability. Things like laptops, the Internet, and e-mail have cut costs and boosted productivity and profits dramatically during the last decade.

With almost all new technological breakthroughs, there is a period that is heralded as the answer to all our problems followed quickly by a learning period during which we figure out how to best capitalize on this new way of working.

Voicemail fits this paradigm. Voicemail — the culprit that heightened “telephone tag” to an art form.

Ten years ago, I had to pay the salary of a receptionist or acquire the services of an answering service to handle incoming telephone calls. Or I could have used an answering machine with a limited recording capacity. I opted for the live receptionist. More personal, more real, I thought.

Then along came voicemail, a way of accepting incoming phone calls at a low cost with more options than an answering machine and a way of handling phone calls more effectively than before, giving the caller the opportunity to receive answers to their inquiries without talking to a real person.

Multiple menu options surfaced (if you would like sales, press 2; if you pressed 2 and would like to receive a copy of our catalog, pressed 4; if you pressed 4 and would like our winter catalog, press 5, but if you would like our spring catalog, press 6...). I actually timed a menu option maze recently, and it took over a minute and a half to get to the option that I wanted for the information I needed.

Voicemail also creates a new opportunity for people to duck your calls. Many people rarely answer a phone when it rings, waiting until you have slogged through their voicemail menu then they play your message back and decide whether or not to return your call. Of course, when they call you back, they get your voicemail system, and then you have to listen to their messages and decide whether or not to return their calls. Hmmm. Telephone tag — and you’re it!

We need a better system. Here are a few suggestions to better deal with voicemail and avoid telephone tag.

Use an alternative to telephone. People you call are going to duck your calls via voicemail, so use a different mode of communication that might have a better rate of success of getting through. Fax your message, e-mail it, or even send a first-class letter. Some of those “old” methods are better than the new technology.

Don’t spill the beans. Want someone to call you back? Don’t give them the entire spiel in your voicemail. Less is more. A little intrigue. Teasers. “Debbie, please give me a call to talk about how to make your job easier” vs. “Debbie, I found a new online course for only \$259 that will show us how to get a lot more done in less time with a lot less stress. The problem is I can’t afford to buy it on my own.

Would you be willing to kick in half of this and we could share the program? Let me know if you want to do this.”



Be specific. If you want a return call, don’t end with “Call me as soon as possible” or “Call me soon” or “Call me when you can.” Everyone has “too much to do.” You are then just one more thing to do. Those vague requests wind up in the “as soon as possible” pile of Never Never Land that rarely gets acted upon. Instead, give a specific day and time to call back. Don’t give two or more choices because that will necessitate a call back from that person to confirm which date and time is best to return the call.

For example: “Joe, this is Don. I need to speak to you about how to make the Anderson research run more smoothly. Give me a call back on Tuesday, the fifth at 9:00 a.m. I blocked that time for you. If this doesn’t work for you, please give me a call to reschedule and leave a message on my voicemail with at least two alternate dates and times for us to

talk.” Gutsy? Offensive? Well, 95% of the time you will not hear back from this person to change the date and time you have selected, and you will accomplish what you intended to do on the date and time you have selected.

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Dr. Donald E. Wetmore is a professional speaker for the Productivity Institute, and a professional member of the national Speakers Association since 1989. Copyright 1999. To contact the author, call 800/969-3773.

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Wish You Were HERE?

Celebrate NARPM's 15th Anniversary in Hawaii



You can't miss this one! Look at these unbeatable hotel and event prices for Hawaii! Start watching for lowered airfare rates now. Plan on making it a vacation trip. Note "free time" afternoons. Families welcome! It's going to be a *big* one! We will have suggestions to help you with pre and posttrip options and your travel.

LOCATION

Our 2003 Annual Convention and Trade Show will be at the beautiful **Outrigger Hotel Waikoloa Beach**, 69-275 Waikoloa Beach Drive, Waikoloa, HI 96873. (Photo on reverse side taken by Chris Hermanski.) The Outrigger Waikoloa is set on 15 prime oceanfront acres of the Big Island, overlooking picturesque Anaehoomalu Bay and a half-mile crescent of golden sand. It is 18 miles north of the Kona International Airport. Across the street is Kings' Shops with over 40 stores, boutiques, restaurants, and entertainment.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT

National Association of Residential Property Managers
Sherri Beck CPS, Executive Assistant
PO Box 140647, Austin TX 78714-0647
800/782-3452 or 512/381-6091
Fax: 512/454-3036 E-mail: info@narpm.org
Web site: www.narpm.org



NARPM GIFT CERTIFICATE

The gift that *Makes a Difference*. NARPM is offering a brand new product through the NARPM store: Gift Certificates that can be purchased by individuals, companies, or chapters. The certificate can be redeemed for any national NARPM expense and can be purchased in any dollar amount. It's the perfect gift for any NARPM member!

Redeem For

- Event Registration Fees
- Designation Candidacy Fees
- Designation Classes
- Membership Dues
- NARPM Products

Use Them As

- Referral Fees
- Birthday Gifts
- Anniversary Gifts
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- Appreciation Gifts
- Raffle Prizes
- Contest Prizes
- Scholarships
- Leadership Awards
- Other (be creative)

To order go online to the NARPM Web site at www.narpm.org or mail your check to NARPM at PO Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647. Please allow two weeks for delivery.

2003 RMP®/MPM® Certification Classes

Date	Location	Class	Instructor
February 20	Longmont, CO	RMP® Tenancy	Peter Meer, MP®
February 19-20	Longmont, CO	MPM® Personnel Practices & Employee Relations	Sally Backus, MPM®
May 20-21	St. Augustine, FL	MPM® Owner/Client Relations	Wallace Gibson, MPM®
May 21	St. Augustine, FL	RMP® Office Automation	Jean Storms, MPM®

To register for classes, complete the registration form and mail or fax with payment to NARPM Headquarters. For more information call Headquarters at 800/782-3452.

Interested in Sponsoring Certification Classes?

Opportunities are available to chapters that would like to further member education, promote certification, and increase their chapter funds by sponsoring a certification class. However, it takes time to plan a class — so give your chapter five to six months lead time if you wish to sponsor one of these events.

Please find out more by calling Bill Jackson, RMP®, at 425/467-7785 or e-mailing him at bill@protocolpropertymgmt.com. Bill can provide you with the details you need to make a Certification class a successful venture.

RMP®/MPM® Class Registration

FEES

RMP® Classes	Preregistration*	On-site†
Member	\$195	\$225
Nonmember	\$250	\$280

MPM® Classes	Preregistration*	On-site†
Member	\$395	\$450
Nonmember	\$450	\$505

* To receive the preregistration price payment must be postmarked, faxed, or e-mailed 30 days prior to the class.

† Attendees must pay the on-site fee when registering on-site or sending payment in less than 30 days prior to the class.

CLASS INFORMATION

- On-site registration begins at 8:00 am. Class hours are 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.
- RMP® classes qualify for 6 hours of NARPM certification.
- MPM® classes qualify for 12 hours of NARPM certification.
- All materials will be given to students on the day of the class.
- All attendees are required to make their individual hotel reservations.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations must be received in writing. If cancellation notice is received at least 30 days prior to the class, a full refund will be issued less a \$25 processing fee. If cancellation notice is received less than 30 days before the class, a 50% refund will be issued. No refunds will be made on the day of class; however, the registration fee can be applied to a later class with a \$25 transfer fee.

Due to low registration, a class may be cancelled with 15 days prior notice. Registration fee would be credited to a future class.

(Please print or type)

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

List Classes

Name of class	Class Date	Cost
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
		Total \$ _____

Method of Payment

I have enclosed a check for \$_____ Ck/M.O. #_____ Date_____

Please charge my credit card in the amount of \$_____ as follows:

VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Name of Cardholder _____

Billing Address _____

Signature _____

I authorize NARPM to charge my credit card.

Two Easy Ways to Register

1. MAIL your form with payment to NARPM, P.O. Box 140647, Austin, TX 78714-0647.

2. FAX your form with credit card payment to 512/454-3036. Please do not mail the original.



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Chapter Corner

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work, NARPM leadership. I pray that I can give to our state chapter what she has given at the national level.”

What has been your most important achievement as a property manager?

Receiving my Master Property Management designation. I am the only property manager in the four north counties (Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan) that has achieved this designation.

What words would you like written on our epitaph?

“Buried 20 feet down because deep down I am a very good person.”

What is the next big NARPM event in our state?

“Northwest Regional Conference will be held on March 21-23 at the Skagit Valley Casino located in Bow, WA. Three days of continuing education, friendship, networking, and I may add — lots of fun and entertainment. Don’t miss it!

Theresa Reed, MPM® — Washington State’s president has owned and operated her own company, Whidbey Residential Rentals since December 1996. She founded the Northwest Chapter of NARPM in 1999. With her as Chapter president, they received their “Chapter Excellence” award the first year. On the state level she has served as treasurer, vice president, and most recently as president. She holds the Membership Development chair position at the National level. Under her direction, three new chapters in the Northwest have been established — North Olympic Peninsula, Spokane, and Roseburg, OR. Theresa was recently a speaker at TREND Conference 2002 — the largest property management conference in the Northwest.

Written by: Rebekah Near of Orca Information

2003 NORTHWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE — BOW, WA

“Success Is More Than Luck” • March 21 – 24

Mark your calendars today to attend the NARPM 2003 Northwest Regional Conference & Vendor Trade Show. There will be 15 local and national vendors. *Classes will include:* RMP® Office Automation for the New Millennium, Ethics, and MPM® Owner/Client Relations.

The Conference will be held at “The Skagit” Valley Casino Resort in Bow, WA (one hour north of Seattle), the Northwest’s premier boutique hotel and casino with first-class accommodations. The new convention center has over 11,000 square feet of meeting and banquet space, an indoor pool, dry sauna, hot tub, and fitness room.

For more information call April Sanders, RMP® at 360/331-7100.

SPRING HILL CHAPTER

The Spring Hill Chapter wants to officially announce that one of its members, Marie C. Buerkert, RMP®, has been honored by her peers at the West Pasco Board of Realtors. Marie has been inducted into the National Hall of Fame as a Property Manager. This honor is held by only a few throughout the country. Marie deserves it for all she has done to promote the profession. Our Chapter has decided to grow itself through increasing our property management basis, acquiring more active affiliates, and spreading the word to our community that professional property managers are here to manage their most valuable assets. We are putting together many interesting programs to educate our membership.