SPECIAL REPORT
At Your Service
Residents and tenants can click their way to customer service

Identity Crisis
Real estate managers cope with fastest growing crime in America

Wide Open Spaces
Mobile technology encourages open-office formats

Virtual Reality
Advanced technology helps pre-lease and pre-sell buildings

Technology Survey

Southeast makes connections
Cities in Southeast go wireless

Third-party challenge
Investment in technology pays back third-party managers

E-mail makes for friend or foe
Communicating electronically can make and break business relationships
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Come together—with technology

I am a self-described Beatles fan and "techno-junkie." For now, I will defend the latter. My passion for technology is not limited to devices I use in my personal life; it is evident in how I conduct my business.

Even when my real estate management company was smaller, we started using e-mail when few others were. We invested in fax machines when they cost $3,000. My staff feared the use of technology would inevitably lead to staff cuts. My staff thought, with computers doing what they used to do, I wouldn't need as many people on payroll.

In reality, staff reduction isn't always a foregone conclusion. To take away feelings of job insecurity, I've asked my staff to provide higher levels of customer service instead of manual tasks. I even bring out old ledger cards during staff meetings to remind everyone how tedious our work used to be.

A decline in meaningful contact with clients and residents is another consequence commonly associated with technology. It's ironic, but "impersonal" technologies like e-mail and the Web have actually created more opportunities for client contact. In today's 24/7 response culture, clients expect quick replies to questions and queries, and property information to be accessible online. As a result, I've had more questions from clients and therefore, more chances for interaction.

Technology not only helps us connect with our clients, it helps residents and tenants connect with one another. As highlighted in one of this issue's features, "At Your Service," property Web sites are increasingly vital to facilitating meaningful interactions among those living or working within a building. At the same time, they enable real estate managers to provide more efficient service to those clients.

One powerful misconception about technology is because results aren't guaranteed, the initial financial investment isn't worth it. Embracing technology and incorporating it into your daily operations is undoubtedly a significant investment. But in the end, making that investment will help you provide better customer service and in effect, improve your company's long-term outlook. The 2006 JPM software survey featured in this issue will help you select software that best meets your needs.

As IREM Members, let's tap into technology in all its forms—from cell phones, iPods and the Internet, to smart buildings, wireless access and mechanized work orders. These will provide the best service to ourselves, our owners, investors, residents and tenants. With technology, it's easy to—like the Beatles said—"Come Together."
features

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41 2006 RealFoundations/JPM Technology Survey
Increased federal legislation assists Gulf area

The Gulf Opportunity Zone Act, signed by President Bush in December 2005, provides a number of helpful tax benefits for individuals and businesses in the Gulf region.

The act authorizes Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi to issue Gulf Opportunity Zone (GO Zone) bonds as tax-exempt facility bonds or qualified mortgage bonds. Ninety-five percent of the net proceeds of such bonds will be used for the cost of qualified residential rental projects and the cost of acquisition, construction, reconstruction and renovation of nonresidential real and public utility property in the GO Zone. The bill also increases amounts and allocations of the low-income housing tax credit for 2006-2008 in the GO Zone.

Another of the act’s beneficial real estate provisions includes a 50 percent depreciation bonus allowance for GO Zone business properties in service on or before December 31, 2007, or December 31, 2008, for nonresidential real and residential rental property. The bonus allowance is in addition to the traditional depreciation rate owners apply to the value of their properties. The increased depreciation allowance is exempt from the alternative minimum tax. The act also increases or allows additional expensing allowances for GO Zone depreciable business property, demolition and cleanup costs in the GO Zone, and environmental remediation costs. The law also increases the tax credit for expenditures to rehabilitate buildings and historic structures in the GO Zone made prior to January 1, 2009.

In mid-February, the president sent a third disaster supplemental funding request for $19.8 billion to Congress. This includes $202 million for HUD’s disaster voucher program; an additional $4.2 billion specifically for Louisiana to be allocated through the Community Development Block Grant Program; $9.4 billion for FEMA assistance; an additional $1.3 billion for Small Business Administration disaster loans; and $1.5 billion for the Army Corps of Engineers to rebuild levees. The previous supplement also provided $1.6 billion for the U.S. Agriculture Department’s Rural Housing Service.

President signs revised violence against women act

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, signed by President Bush in January, contains a new housing title, creating new requirements for how property owners must treat victims of domestic violence.

Under the new law, incidents of domestic violence cannot constitute a lease violation against a victim. Victims of domestic abuse can, however, be evicted for other lease violations not connected to domestic violence. To determine if a particular incident is related to domestic violence, property owners and managers can require certification from a third party. HUD is expected to promulgate regulations to implement the new law, and IREM will work with HUD to develop these rules.
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*Maytag Commercial front-load washer compared to commercial top-load washers.
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IREM Members' lobbying efforts and issues take form

At press time in March, IREM Members were planning to lobby on the following issues during their visit to Capitol Hill in April. Look for updates on the progress they made at the meetings in upcoming issues of JPM and on the legislative news section of the IREM Web site.

OCC enters banks in real estate debate

New rulings by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency represent efforts to dramatically expand the real estate powers of national banks. The comptroller’s office issued several opinions in December 2005, authorizing national banks to invest in real estate projects involving the development of office buildings, hotels, residential condominiums and windmill farms. These actions represent a marked departure from what is permitted by the National Bank Act, the comptroller’s regulations and previous comptroller rulings regarding the types of real estate activities in which national banks may engage.

IREM has sent letters to the House and Senate committee leaders asking them to hold hearings to review these rulings. IREM members also received a Call to Action from the National Association of REALTORS® on this issue.

Small business health plans expected to move soon

In March, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee approved the Health Insurance Marketplace Modernization and Affordability Act (S. 1955), Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) chaired the committee. Co-sponsored by senators Ben Nelson (D-Neb.) and Conrad Burns (R-Mont.), S. 1955 authorizes the creation of fully insured small business health plans. In addition, the bill establishes a set of federal coverage mandates for small group insurance plans and a process for harmonizing the states’ small group insurance regulations for both small business health plans and traditional small group insurance products.

Budget reconciliation

Among a host of issues related to the Bush tax cuts of 2001, the House and Senate have differing versions of budget reconciliation. Items of interest to IREM Members include efforts for measuring the depreciable life of buildings more accurately; decreasing the length of depreciable lives for tenants’ improvements; and reducing the tax on depreciation recapture to the capital gains tax rate of 15 percent, among others.

Indiana governor expected to sign forced access bill

Indiana IREM chapters issued a Call-to-Action to their members in late February, urging them to contact legislators and leaders of the state legislature to remove a mandatory access provision from fast-moving Telecommunications Act legislation.

Two identical bills—HB 1279 and SB 245—rewrite Indiana’s telecommunications laws and provide for mandatory access to office buildings and retail spaces. The IREM Indiana chapters asked members of the state legislature to remove the mandatory access provision from the legislation before it reached the Governor.

In late February, however, the Indiana House concurred with Senate amendments to HB 1279, and the legislation moved to the Governor, who is expected to sign it. Office buildings and office parks are included; however, apartment buildings, condominiums and subdivisions are not included.

Given telecomm’s progress in Indiana, similar proposals are expected to be introduced in other states. To find out if a related proposal has been introduced in your state, search the IREM State Legislative Database, available in the Public Policy section of the IREM Web site at www.irem.org.
Are you wireless?

Anyone not living under a rock knows wireless Internet access is becoming more accessible—and more necessary. Whether at home, the office or the local coffee shop, wireless technologies have allowed people to go online almost anywhere.

Intel recently conducted the third annual “Most Wired Cities” survey, which ranked the top 100 U.S. cities and regions with the greatest wireless Internet accessibility. The survey revealed that wireless access has sprawled beyond the home, office and café, and into skate parks, gas stations, bowling alleys and even golf courses. Look below to see if your city measures up!

Top 10 most wired cities
2. San Francisco-San Jose-Oakland, Calif.
3. Austin-San Marcos, Texas
4. Portland, Ore-Vancouver, Wash.
5. Toledo, Ohio
6. Atlanta, Ga.
7. Denver, Colo.
8. Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, N.C.
10. Orange County, Calif.

Source: Intel

Strong Office Demand

The U.S. office market is experiencing a considerable increase in the demand for space, according to CB Richard Ellis. The company’s U.S. Vacancy Index indicates downtown and suburban markets across the country posted a seventh straight quarter of positive absorption with a combined total of 24.3 million square feet absorbed in the fourth quarter of 2005. The three major metropolitan areas leading the way were Washington, D.C., Atlanta and Boston, with more than 4.9 million square feet of combined absorption.

The index shows vacancies remain tighter in downtown areas than in the suburbs. In fact, nationally, downtown vacancy declined over 30 basis points to 12.7 percent, as suburban vacancy dropped to 14.6 percent from 15.1 percent in the third quarter of 2005.

Additionally, downtown construction activity reportedly remained low, at just over 1.1 million square feet delivered. Thus, CB Richard Ellis predicts a trend of minimal construction combined with increasing absorption should enhance the rental performance of the downtown office markets through 2006.

Asking rents continue to climb in United States

The year 2006 is almost half over, and while asking rents for various apartments in some U.S. cities continue to thrive and become higher in demand, others continue to fall short. According to the Marcus & Millichap 2006 National Apartment Report, the asking rents of all major cities go up yearly, but only a few are forecasted to make a huge leap by the end of 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cities with highest forecasted monthly rents by year-end 2006</th>
<th>Cities with lowest forecasted monthly rents by year-end 2006</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NYC-Manhattan: $3,148</td>
<td>1. Tucson, Ariz.: $612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Boston: $1,635</td>
<td>2. Columbus, Ohio: $636</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Orange County, Calif.: $1,445</td>
<td>4. Indianapolis: $641</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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Whew: Tampa Bay

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Where: Tampa Bay
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- Trends
  - Mixed-Use Development
  - Demographics
  - Innovative Marketing
  - International Markets
  - Capital Markets

- Professional Skills
  - Smart Negotiations
  - Managing Technology
  - Stress and Life Management
  - Managing Customer Relationships
  - Personal Empowerment

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- Entertainment by the Little River Band, with 25,000,000 records sold and nine top-10 singles

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## Registration Form

**Deadline for discounted registration fees is August 15, 2006!**

### Registrant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Name for Badge</th>
<th>Firm Name</th>
<th>Firm Address</th>
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(this address will appear on the conference roster)

- City ____________________________
- State / Province ____________
- Zip / Postal Code ____________

- Business Phone ____________________________
- Business Fax ____________________________
- E-mail address ____________________________
- Guest (must register) ____________________________

### Registrant Information

Are you a (check all that apply):

- CCIM Member
- IREM Member
- RCA Member
- BOMA Member
- IFMA Member
- MAI Member
- Non-Member

### Registration Fees

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>By August 15</th>
<th>After August 15</th>
<th>*How Many</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Member</strong> (includes CCIM, IREM, RCA, BOMA, IFMA, MAI)</td>
<td>$625</td>
<td>$725</td>
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<td><strong>Non-Member</strong></td>
<td>$775</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Day-Pass Member</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td>$100</td>
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- **Day Attending:**
  - 10/17
  - 10/18
  - 10/19
  - 10/20
  - 10/21

*Fee includes one ticket to continental breakfast and lunch (Friday & Saturday) and Friday Evening Extravaganza. Guest fee also includes one ticket to the guest event on Friday.

### Separate Fee Events

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<tr>
<td>Additional Friday Evening Extravaganza Ticket</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday Evening Wrap Party Ticket</td>
<td>$75</td>
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*Total Payment: $_______

### Payment

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<th>Credit Card Type</th>
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<th>Q American Express</th>
<th>Q Discover Card</th>
<th>Q Corporate Card I.D.</th>
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<td>Name on Credit Card</td>
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<td>State / Province</td>
<td>Zip / Postal Code</td>
<td>Country</td>
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<td>Credit Card Number</td>
<td>Expiration Date</td>
<td>Signature</td>
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</tr>
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### Event Information

(use this section to register for conference activities-check all that apply)

- CCIM Business & Governance Meetings
- IREM Business & Governance Meetings
- Presentation Skills Lab on Friday at 2:45pm
- Presentation Skills Lab on Saturday at 9:00am
- Financial Analysis Lab on Friday at 10:45am
- Financial Analysis Lab on Saturday at 3:00pm
- PowerPoint Lab on Friday at 10:45am
- PowerPoint Lab on Saturday at 3:00pm
- Friday Evening Extravaganza
- Lunch on Friday
- Lunch on Saturday

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### Green Energy

The acquisition of solar energy is not only clean and renewable, but could reduce your tax credits. In the United States, the government has implemented several incentives to promote the use of renewable energy. By installing solar panels, homeowners can receive tax credits and rebates that can help offset the cost of installation. Solar energy projects can also qualify for federal tax credits and incentives. These incentives can help reduce the cost of solar energy projects and make it more affordable for individuals and businesses to transition to renewable energy.

### Sun Valley Solar Initiatives

Sun Valley, a city in Nevada, is taking its solar energy initiatives to new heights. The city has launched a Solar Initiative program aimed at promoting the use of solar energy in the community.

The project will provide a renewable and sustainable energy solution for the city's needs, reducing its reliance on non-renewable energy sources. The initiative aims to increase energy efficiency and decrease energy costs for residents and businesses. The city hopes to become a leader in sustainable energy practices, setting an example for other communities to follow.

This initiative is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy, creating job opportunities in the renewable energy sector. It will also contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, helping to combat climate change and create a more sustainable future.
Green breeds green
Green not only conserves natural resources, it can also save you money. The energy-tax credits signed into law last year are now in effect and designed to improve your energy efficiency. These credits are available for the purchase and installation of efficient appliances and products, as well as the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles. Tax credits will allow consumers to reduce future tax bills on a dollar-for-dollar basis. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, consumers who purchase the most fuel-efficient vehicle could reduce their carbon footprint by up to $3,400, and those who install certain products like efficient windows, insulation, doors, roofs and heating and cooling equipment in their home receive up to $500 off their federal tax bill.

Specific tax benefits for a home include:
- for installing a highly efficient furnace or boiler
- for installing energy-efficient windows
- for installing a highly efficient central air conditioner, heat pump or water heater
- for all qualifying solar equipment
- for manufacture energy-efficient appliances like dishwashers, washing machines and refrigerators

The answer is blowing the wind
For a company whose products are made with natural ingredients derived from plants and animals to become an alternative energy leader. So is the case for Tom’s of Maine, maker of natural personal care products, which recently partnered with New Energy and Clean Air-Cool to utilize wind energy. The company’s manufacturing and fulfillment facility has recently moved to 100 percent renewable wind energy. The switch will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1.5 metric tons per year, equivalent to planting 214 acres of trees or removing 138 cars from the road.

Energy for Tom’s of Maine’s 10,000 square-foot manufacturing facility in Sanford, Maine, is being generated by the Ainsworth Wind Energy Facility in Nebraska. Tom’s of Maine is using 130,000 kilowatt hours of energy per month, or approximately 1,150 megawatts of renewable energy certificates from the wind farm.

Sun worshippers
Sun worshipping is taking its penchant for sun worshipping to innovative and environmentally friendly heights. The California Public Utilities Commission recently announced the California Solar Initiative, a 10-year, more than $2.9 billion program designed to help reduce the amount of installed solar capacity on rooftops throughout the state by 3,000 megawatts of solar electricity during the next decade. The program is expected to make solar energy more affordable, reduce air pollution and cut heat-trapping gas emissions.
Famous Properties

Tall Order

As world’s tallest, most technologically advanced building, Taipei 101 stands alone

by Diana Mirel

Usurping the title of world’s tallest building is just one of many features of Taipei 101 in Taipei, Taiwan. When describing the 508-meter skyscraper—with its 101 stories above ground and five stories below ground—terms like best, highest, fastest and revolutionary come to mind; along with the honor of being named one of the “Seven Wonders of Engineering” by the Discovery Channel. This monumental tower has become a symbol of the city and also a leader in building technology and construction design world-wide.

“For our shareholders, Taipei 101 has become the pride of Taiwan,” said Cathy Yang of Taipei Financial Center Corp., the building’s developer. “They feel proud to have invested and participated in creating such a landmark.”

The building, which officially opened in December 2004, is composed of three parts: the office tower, the shopping mall and the observatory. It currently has about 25 tenants, and the developer expects to have about 80 tenants when the tower is fully occupied.

“Our tenants are mostly financial institutions and multi-nationals,” Yang said. “The theme for our shopping mall is fashion and food. It is the most upscale retail complex in town; therefore, our tenants are mostly international brand names. We also have a wide selection of fine dining.”

The developer looked for an architect able to blend the local culture with modern building technologies, which led them to architecture firm C.Y. Lee & Partners. As one of the most technologically advanced buildings ever constructed, Taipei 101 features fiber-optic and satellite Internet connections, and the world’s fastest elevators, which travel about 3,314 feet per minute.

“We had the best consultants and contractors from all over the world working on the construction of this building,” Yang said. “It showcases all of the latest building technology; it is the safest building built in an earthquake zone; and it is above international standards in hardware, structure, mechanical-electrical-plumbing systems, and software services and programs.”

Building and managing such a high-profile skyscraper poses many challenges, both structurally and financially. Taipei 101 resides in an earthquake zone and was built to withstand this obvious geological challenge. A 660-metric ton tuned mass damper—a device mounted in structures to prevent structural failure—stabilizes the tower against earthquakes, typhoons and wind. The damper is said to reduce up to 40 percent of the tower’s movements.

“We have to ensure everything works smoothly in the building, and that requires a strong team in building management and operation,” Yang said.

At press time, the Taipei Financial Center Corp. was managing the property, but searching for a property management firm. Yang said they were looking for property management firms with extensive experience managing commercial properties, a solid knowledge of building systems, the ability to handle multiple building and tenant issues, good publicity and marketing skills, and exceptional people skills.

“We look for companies with experience in super high-rise buildings and a good track record with international networks,” Yang said.

Regardless of who manages the building, the benefits of being involved with a high-profile property like this are manifold.

“We get to work with the best people in the building industry, such as designers, consultants and contractors,” Yang said, “and we get to meet interesting people, whether they are visitors, tenants or customers.”

Diana Mirel is a contributing writer for JPM. Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.
Fast Facts

- More than 2,500 office buildings, schools, hospitals and public buildings—representing 482 million square feet—received Energy Star status for superior energy and environmental performance last year.

- More than 152 million Mother's Day cards are expected to be given in the United States, making Mother's Day the third-largest card-giving holiday. Nearly 95 million Father's Day cards are expected to be given, making it the fourth largest.

- Only one of the Seven Wonders of the World still survives: the Great Pyramid of Giza.

- Playing cards were known in Persia and India as far back as the 12th century. A pack then consisted of 48 instead of 52 cards.

- A scientific satellite needs only 250 watts of power, the equivalent used by two-hour light bulbs, to operate.

- 63 percent of single-family homes have a personal computer; 41 percent of multi-family homes have a personal computer; and 40 percent of mobile homes have a personal computer.

- Half the world's population earns about 5 percent of the world's wealth.

Search Me

www.itbusinessedge.com

IT Business Edge provides in-depth reports covering the most important trends in a variety of business technology topics affecting companies. By combining the strength of advanced online search techniques with the critical thinking of experienced industry journalists, this Web site offers the information relevant to various professional niches.

wwwidtheftcenter.org/workplace

The Identity Theft Resource Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to identity theft and ways to prevent it. Offering updates on identity theft laws, scam and consumer alerts, and a reference library, this Web site provides support and advises companies on the steps they can take to minimize risk factors.

www.nolo.com

Nolo offers do-it-yourself legal solutions for consumers and small businesses by helping people handle their own everyday legal matters—or learn enough about them to make working with a lawyer a more satisfying experience. The "property & money" tab offers legal advice on topics like how property managers can reduce their taxes on their rental income, tenant eviction etiquette and how to avoid potential maintenance problems before they start.

Pulse Points

Log on to www.irem.org/jpm to answer this issue's online survey. Real-time results will appear on the site, and a final tally will be published in the next issue.

Question

Which tenant service listed below would benefit property managers the most if offered online via a tenant portal or Web site?  
A. Building community  
B. Rent payment  
C. Maintenance requests  
D. Common area reservations

The results are in from last issue's poll

Based on your experiences or observations of the disasters hitting the Gulf Coast in 2005, do you think your properties have adequate property insurance coverage?

Yes  51.23 percent (62 responses)  
No  48.76 percent (59 responses)  
Vote Total 121

This year, the oldest of the baby boomers (the generation born between 1946 and 1964) will turn 60 years old. Among the Americans celebrating their 60th are President George W. Bush, President Bill Clinton, Cher, Donald Trump, Sylvester Stallone and Dolly Parton.

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Half the world's population earns about 5 percent of the world's wealth.
Southeastern makes connections
Southeastern sector of United States keeps pace with wireless Internet accessibility
by Brian Rogal

With more U.S. cities going wireless—ensuring residents and businesses can stay connected in our techno-driven society—Southeastern cities are no exception. They have been keeping pace with the rest of the country, according to experts.

"I wouldn't say [the Southeastern region's wireless access] is either further along or behind the rest of the country," said Dan Reed, vice chancellor for information technology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In a recent Intel survey rating cities' wireless Internet—also called Wi-Fi—accessibility, business and research centers like Atlanta and the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill triangle scored high, coming in at numbers six and eight among the top 100 metropolitan areas. Beyond that, sixteen cities in an arc from Virginia to Texas made the top 50, including Charlotte, S.C., at seventeen and Baton Rouge, La., at nineteen.

Some cities have left network building to private groups, while others have formed partnerships with property owners and technology companies. As most of the networks are new, the benefits are not yet easy to measure; however, city officials and employers remain optimistic.

McKinney Inc., a national advertising firm headquartered in Durham, N.C., recently put in a wireless network. Joni Madison, the company's chief operating officer, said installing the network was a huge leap forward for the company.

"I can't imagine working without it now," Madison said. "No one's tied to their desks anymore. McKinney needs a creative environment, and it's important for employees to be able to take laptops outside or find a quiet corner."

City uses Wi-Fi to expand
McKinney is not alone. Since 2004, six separate areas in downtown Durham have become so-called "hotspots"—places where anyone with a laptop computer can log on to the Internet for free.

Private developers are responsible for three of the six hot spots, and the city government has installed the others, said Bill Kalkhof, president of Downtown Durham Inc., a business development group. He said the city plans to finish work on a new Wi-Fi-equipped downtown plaza within a year. By 2007, he said wireless Internet will hopefully cover the entire downtown.

"There is a political commitment in Durham to at some point have Wi-Fi throughout our community," Kalkhof said. "Durham has reinvented itself from a tobacco town to a center for medical research and high-tech companies."

The cornerstone of the private effort was a sixteen-acre site of former tobacco warehouses that have been converted into mixed-use facilities, Kalkhof said. Roughly 1 million square feet was vacant from 1987 until 2004, he said, but the vast space now houses high-tech companies and includes an open courtyard, an artificial river and Wi-Fi access throughout—all paid for by the developers.

And while Wi-Fi continues to spread in Durham, officials in another part of North Carolina have even bigger plans. Laurin Easthom, a member of the Chapel Hill Town Council, said planning has just begun to transform Chapel Hill into a free or reduced-cost hotspot. Unlike nearby Durham, Chapel Hill does not have a publicly funded system. However, a university study found 70 percent of downtown business owners were interested in a city network.

"If we have that," Easthom said, "it shouldn't be too hard to sell the benefits."

Developers restore sense of community
While other Southeastern cities have not had as much government backing as cities in North Carolina, they are still prominent players in the Wi-Fi world.

Memphis took 68th place on Intel's list of Wi-Fi accessible cities. Larry Henson, vice president of research at the Memphis Chamber of Commerce, said he was surprised at Memphis' ranking.

Aside from planning assistance
provided by the Center City Commission, a quasi-public group, he said the creation of wireless networks was mostly developer and user-demand driven.

The centerpiece of the Riverside city's wireless expansion has been the renovation of Court Square Center Park. An in-kind donation of equipment from a wireless provider made the entire park a hotspot, said Andy Kitsinger, director of planning and development for the Center City Commission. Even laptop users tapping away in the park can have an effect on community development, he said.

"It's important to have as much animation in public areas and bring life to the street; it has a ripple effect on the quality of life in an urban area," Kitsinger said.

**Small cities keep pace**

Although not officially ranked, many cities in the region—too small for the Intel survey—have also shown great success with Wi-Fi access. Roanoke, Virginia, a city with a population of about 94,000 people, placed first in the 2005 Digital Cities Survey by The Center for Digital Government, a national research group.

With financial help from the city and Cisco Systems Inc., a coalition of area colleges put up antennas in 2003, allowing free Wi-Fi access in an area about ten blocks long and two blocks wide, said Gordie Zeigler, executive director of the Roanoke-based New Va Corridor TechnoTechnology Council trade association. The initial cost was minimal, and the annual upkeep, paid mostly by the city, is less than $20,000 dollars. Although Zeigler said he's not quite sure how to quantify the payback, he has a general idea. Like many cities in the region, Roanoke is known as a place for retirees attracted by the moderate climate and an affordable housing market. He said the city thought Wi-Fi access might attract a younger demographic.

The possibility of Wi-Fi becoming obsolete is one reason, however, Zeigler and others say they will handle expansion carefully. Wireless providers have already developed a new technology, called Wi-Max, to replace Wi-Fi, said the University of North Carolina's Reed. Before it hits the market, providers need to agree on uniform standards, he said. He also said Wi-Max will initially cost more; on the other hand, Wi-Max will have far greater range.

"Whenever there's a technological shift, there is the question of when to jump in," he said. "Figuring that out is an art." □

Brian Rogal is a contributing writer for JPM. Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.
It's hardly surprising so few third-party management companies effectively invest in technology. They have little incentive to innovate and find ways to save owners—and ultimately residents and tenants—money.

On the other hand, internally managed companies—with long-term goals and management in mind—reap the rewards of investing in technology. This is the main reason most leading real estate analysts put greater value on internally managed public real estate companies rather than companies employing third-party management firms.

Because third-party management companies are separate entities from owners, they must determine how much to invest in technology—often unaware of any tangible benefits from such an investment. And because owners may not be willing to commit to long-term business relationships with managers, managers can often come out on the losing end of that investment.

While third-party managers might not see technology's direct incentives, fulfilling their contracts and finding ways to increase their margins are incentives they can't ignore. As more customers and tenants begin making technical demands, third-party managers must step up to the plate and be innovative; otherwise they risk increased turnover and vacancy—even terminated contracts.

By using technology, third-party management companies can differentiate themselves in the market and eventually make more money; it requires a commitment and taking on added risk. But some management companies are witnessing how investing in technology pays off.

More companies are investing in tenant portals so tenants and residents can submit urgent or routine requests to the management office—an amenity clients increasingly demand. Sixty to 70 percent of customers are adopting the use of such technology and prefer making requests via an online portal rather than a phone call. These applications create internal efficiencies in managing customer needs and can increase billable tenant requests.

Although they are among the few, some management companies are redefining engineering activities by deploying building-level network operating centers to manage and monitor building control systems and technology. These centers allow engineers to do what they do best—work on maintaining and supporting the building, while the remotely located centers provide oversight of building performance and status of critical building equipment.

In all these cases, third-party management companies paid for the initiatives to increase the quality of services they offer, differentiate themselves in the market and increase their operating margins. Spending as little money as possible on technology is short-sighted:

As more customers and tenants begin making technical demands, third-party managers must step up to the plate and be innovative.

Owners and third-party managers will ultimately find themselves losing market share or rushing to catch up with the market leaders to maintain occupancy.

Third-party managers and their owners must talk about becoming business partners and establishing mutually beneficial, long-term relationships. Working together and recognizing the valued interests of both parties can only lead to better tenant services and more valuable properties in the marketplace. ☐

Scott Morey (scottmorey@realfoundations.net) is managing director of RealFoundations Inc.
WHY AM I PLAYING THIS GAME?
I don't have an efficient way to track escalations in our leases.
E-mail makes for friend or foe
Communicating via technology is a necessity requiring forethought and care
by Jeff Williford, CPM, CCIM

Earlier this year, my e-mail crashed for about 24 hours. By the time it was back up, I had accomplished nearly double what I typically do on any given day.

What a difference not having e-mail made: I spoke with everyone I needed to and found I was much more efficient on the phone—live conversation resulted in quick closure instead of the back and forth e-mails often accompanying electronic exchanges.

Another unexpected benefit of the e-mail crash was rediscovering the power of letter writing. Communication with clients and tenants should always be professional. With e-mail often replacing letters, communication is regularly reduced to short, poorly written content, sent without proper review and consideration.

However, in spite of the potential for lost efficiency caused by overuse or improper use of e-mail, the world has moved forward, and much of our communication has forever moved to the electronic highway.

Using a bit of forethought and common sense can help navigate this road:

- Consider whether e-mail is the most appropriate way to convey a particular message.
- Print out any e-mails possibly requiring future documentation.
- Review e-mails before sending to be sure thoughts are well organized and content is grammatically correct.
- Never send an e-mail while angry: E-mails written in the heat of the moment should be saved and re-read once temperaments have cooled, to ensure a fiery message doesn't negatively impact business.
- When in doubt, pick up the phone or write a well thought-out letter for better results.
- Combine several messages to send to the same person in one e-mail.
- Never send e-mails in all capital letters. This is considered the equivalent of screaming at the recipient.
- Abstain from adding "cute" pictures and symbols in e-mails.
- Be aware of companies' business protocols regarding use of e-mail. Most organizations have specific rules on what is acceptable e-mail etiquette and behavior.
- E-mail aside, another form of electronic communication—instant messaging—is also growing in popularity in some office environments where instant, virtual collaboration is necessary and supported by management.

E-mail is not only here to stay; it provides significant benefits and efficiencies in the course of conducting business.

- Some employees see instant messaging as an opportunity to send personal notes, so its use should be monitored. In the event business is being conducted via instant messaging, paper and electronic trails are lost, unless a firm invests in software to monitor the messages.

As much as I enjoyed my 24-hour break from my e-mail account, e-mail is not only here to stay; it provides significant benefits and efficiencies in the course of conducting business. The brief amount of time it takes to evaluate communication methods can make the difference between just getting a message across and making an impressionable impact through artful delivery in the proper format.

Jeff Williford, CPM, CCIM (jeff@williford group.com), is president of Williford Property Group and a senior investment adviser at Sperry Van Ness.
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Technical alliance
Technology helps property managers address crime-related property damage

by Diane Haislip, CPM Candidate

Crime-related property damage has negatively impacted the maintenance and repair budgets of many property management companies. Destruction of property has driven up costs and harmed portfolios coast-to-coast.

Properties affected by damage from criminal activity often suffer from reduced curb appeal, increased resident apathy toward property maintenance and depreciated property value. Simply put, crime-related property destruction affects an organization's bottom line and jeopardizes its ability to attract the most stable and desirable residents.

The Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County, where I work, and other property management firms in Anne Arundel County, Md., recognized the need to protect our investments as well as our residents, and turned to technology for the solution.

By collaborating with the local police department, we linked our agency's existing computer hardware with the county police department's computer-assisted dispatch system software.

When one of our residents makes a 911 emergency or non-emergency call, the call information recorded by the police dispatcher is not only entered into the police department's system, but is automatically entered into our system, too. We are able to view and print the call information generated from each property in our housing inventory.

Each morning a designated employee retrieves the secure data from one of our computers installed with the software. The notes tell us whether any incidents—like domestic disputes or noise violations—occurred on our property. Access to this data has allowed us to implement proactive security and enforcement strategies for reducing crime and property destruction in our communities.

We now have the capacity to retrieve police call information for all of our properties, giving us the ability to monitor, assess and rapidly respond to criminal incidents impacting our property assets and security. This partnership forged between our agency and the county police department provides us with the data needed to identify and investigate crime-related lease violations; initiate banning procedures; and invoice resident accounts for property damages when applicable.

Our affiliation has resulted in a reduction of the number of reported crime-related property damage incidents by more than 30 percent, and netted significant reductions in maintenance and property repair costs.

Another unforeseen benefit of this upgrade in technology has been demonstrated by residents' increased willingness to make timely reports of crime-related property damage. Previously this type of information went unreported or remained undisclosed until discovered during a routine property inspection.

Budget restraints, dwindling resources and the fiscal impact of crime-related property damage will continue to challenge management companies across the nation for years to come, and will necessitate new and creative approaches. The combination of technology and focused collaboration allows us to manage our properties efficiently and ensures that our housing inventory remains viable and fiscally productive.

Diane Haislip, CPM Candidate (dhaislip@hcaac.org), is the director of property management at the Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County.
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Identity Crisis

Pervasiveness of identity theft and potential liability cause property managers to reconsider how they handle the personal records they access and discard on a regular basis by Michael Whiteley
One of the nation's most celebrated cases of identity theft—triggering identity theft legislation and a Lifetime women's network movie—started with an apartment application being left on a property manager's desk in San Diego.

In 2000, Michelle Brown, age 29 and an international banker at the time, testified before Congress about the unraveling of her life as a result of identity theft. Brown said she first learned her life had been plundered when a bank's loan officer called her in January 1999, regarding her first payment on a new truck—one she'd never purchased.

Brown soon learned a perpetrator had stolen and copied her apartment application a year earlier and went on a spending spree, amassing more than $50,000 in goods and services. The thief's graduation to drug trafficking eventually got Brown arrested and spawned a bogus prison record.

Brown's case might be exceptional, but identity theft is not: It is the nation's fastest growing crime, according to information from the Federal Trade Commission. Awareness of the problem is growing among real estate managers because of the nature of the crime—the theft of sensitive information they often access and throw away.

**PAPER TRAILS PAY OFF THIEVES**

Identity theft comprised 37 percent of consumer fraud complaints filed with the Federal Trade Commission in 2005. The commission puts actual losses for the complaints it received between January and December of 2005 at $680 million, based on more than 680,000 cases of consumer fraud and identity theft. Linda Foley, founder of the Identity Theft Resource Center in San Diego, said the average stolen identity nets thieves about $17,000.

While the publicity surrounding the crackdown on identity theft has focused on high-tech schemes to steal computer data over the Internet, 90 percent of identity theft victims lost sensitive records through non-electronic channels in 2005, according to the Javelin Identity Fraud Survey, released in January 2006 by the Council of Better Business Bureaus Inc.

"People should continue to be cautious of fraud online," said Javelin founder Jim Van Dyke. "But what people also need to understand is they need to be just as cautious everywhere else."

Lost or stolen wallets, credit or debit cards, and checkbooks are the most common source of information breach, according to the survey. Friends, acquaintances, relatives or in-home employees, as well as corrupt business employees stealing information, were the next major sources of identity theft.

Identities stolen from overall property rentals, however, represent a little more than one in every 100 complaints filed with the Federal Trade Commission. One percent of identities were stolen from the garbage in 2005—a statistic probably closely related to people increasingly shredding documents, according to the Javelin survey.

"It doesn't seem [like] the biggest burden is on our industry," said Jeanne Delgado, vice president of multifamily housing for the National Multi Housing Council, of the crackdown on identity theft.

**TAKE SHREDDING PERSONALLY**

While identity theft incidents might not be overwhelming the property management industry, real estate managers should exercise caution with the personal information they maintain on residents and applicants, said Chuck Achilles, vice president of legislation and research for the Institute of Real Estate Management.

Potential liability and legislation are spurring real estate managers to consider how they manage their records and what
to discard, when. Achilles said property managers should store residents' or applicants' sensitive records—those with social security and credit card numbers or other vulnerable information—in a private, secure system.

Dallas-based Lincoln Property Co., which owns or manages 87,000 units in New Hampshire, beefed up its security of sensitive documents several years ago. Lincoln recently hired a data security firm to safeguard its computer files and warns residents to watch their mailboxes for break-ins.

"Credit checks and applications are kept under lock and key—actually under two sets of locks and keys," said Bob Dickson, Lincoln's vice president of risk management. "They're generally in a locked filing cabinet behind a locked door. None of our offices are vacated without those files being locked up."

Achilles said property managers should retain documents for only as long as they need the information and then, rather than pitch the documents in the trash, destroy them via shredding, burning or pulverizing, or erasing electronic copies.

"It's common sense," Achilles said. "As consumers—and we're all consumers—we would want anyone who has our personal records to destroy them as well."

**BROAD RULES REQUIRE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Achilles said real estate managers should not rely solely on the intentionally broad record disposal rules added to the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA) of 2003.

The act was initially designed to ensure all citizens are treated fairly when applying for a mortgage or another form of credit. The disposal rules were added to the act in 2005—requiring people who keep and maintain sensitive consumer information to "take reasonable measures to protect against unauthorized access to or use of the information in connection with its disposal."

Real estate industry leaders are pleased with the act's current record disposal rules, Achilles said, because they don't impose burdensome or specific regulations. He said real estate managers need to proactively and properly dispose of sensitive documents on their own, though, to guard against stricter legislation and requirements.

"We are very happy with how simple they are," he said of the current rules. "Any time the government sets up rigid regulations, it becomes more difficult for small businesses."

**FACTA IS A FACT OF LIFE**

The disposal rules' implications are profoundly impacting property managers, and they should not be taken lightly, said Robert Johnson, executive director of the National Association for Information Destruction Inc., a Phoenix-based lobby of document shredders who helped write the first set of new rules behind the act.

"With the [disposal] rules, you're the victim as soon as your information is thrown out," he said. "That really is a red flag now, and the lawsuits that are happening are getting attention. The ability for civil action and class action [based on disposal] are the big triggers in this new law."
Dickson, of Lincoln Property Co., said the disposal rules and the potential liability of exposing a client's personal information are reasons to step up document security.

"FACTA is a fact of life," Dickson said. "We're really cognizant of keeping sensitive information such as social security and drivers' license information under lock and key."

With cases like Michelle Brown's and others bringing suit against those requiring and maintaining such personal and sensitive information, identity theft experts say everyone, including property managers should be cautious.

"When you're talking about property managers and rent applications, it's the same thing as job applications. Lock them up," Foley said. "Do a criminal background check on employees. Spend the extra few dollars to protect people who may have been good tenants for many years. If you've inadvertently hired someone who's stolen their identity, those tenants may not be able to pay their rent, and you're not going to be able to pay your mortgage."

Michael Whiteley is a contributing writer for JPM. Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.

The IREM publication, Spotlight on Security, Second Edition, provides in-depth coverage on identity theft and related security issues. This can be found at www.irem.org.

**STATES NARROW DISPOSAL RULE REQUIREMENTS**

Just as the federal FACTA legislation is impacting property managers, the new tougher laws passed in Arkansas, California, Georgia, New Jersey and Texas are affecting everyone from the mega-corporations managing thousands of apartments to the owners of four- and six-unit complexes who may turn out to be the most exposed.

The identity theft law that took effect in September 2005 in Texas, requires businesses to destroy all "sensitive personal information," defined as any document containing a person's first and last name combined with a social security number, a driver's license or government-issued identity number, or an account or credit-card number. The protection is void if the data is available from public record.

The Texas attorney general is allowed to seek fines between $2,000 and $50,000 for each violation, and businesses are required to immediately notify victims in the event of a breach. The law also allows local prosecutors to seek jail time for the offending owners of businesses.

California apartment owners are now battling lawsuits over when they must tell potential tenants of criminal background and rental history checks under the state's Investigative Consumer Reporting Act.

Debra Carlton, senior vice president of public affairs for the California Apartment Association, said the lawsuits could take years to settle. In the meantime, she said, neither FACTA nor the California disposal law has caused noticeable problems for her members.

"We don't have reports of any negative repercussions or any inordinate amount of work to be done," she said. "When we reported to them that they would have to shred all documents that have identity information, the world didn't come to an end."

**IDENTITY THEFT HITS METRO AREAS**

The major urban areas of California, Florida and Texas appeared to dominate the nation's landscape for identity theft in 2005, with Arizona's retirement hub leading the way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>Complaints</th>
<th>Per 100,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.</td>
<td>6,406</td>
<td>178.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Las Vegas-Paradise, Nev.</td>
<td>2,499</td>
<td>158.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, Calif.</td>
<td>5,308</td>
<td>145.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, Texas</td>
<td>7,892</td>
<td>141.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, Calif.</td>
<td>17,312</td>
<td>134.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, Fla.</td>
<td>6,967</td>
<td>131.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.</td>
<td>5,433</td>
<td>130.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Texas</td>
<td>6,502</td>
<td>128.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, Calif.</td>
<td>3,559</td>
<td>121.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. San Antonio, Texas</td>
<td>2,168</td>
<td>119.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ranked by identity-theft complaints per 100,000 people filed with the FTC during 2005 for Metropolitan Statistical Areas of 1 million people or more.

Source: Federal Trade Commission
[ SPECIAL REPORT ]

Enhanced property Web sites offering tenant and resident amenities improve customer service

by Emma Johnson

At Your Service

Enhanced property Web sites offering tenant and resident amenities improve customer service by Emma Johnson
The Internet's marketing advantages for property management have been well extolled: It's a great way to entice potential renters to a location, wow them with high-pixel images, expedite the application process and gain a higher profile over less techno-savvy competitors.

In addition, increasing numbers of property managers are using their Web sites to better serve the tenants and residents they already have. Web sites for individual properties can help streamline maintenance requests, as well as provide online rent reminders and payment options. They can also offer opportunities to build community—helping renters do everything, from selling used sleeper sofas to forming social outlets like TV-viewing parties and volleyball teams.

Several property management companies using Web sites incorporating such features have seen a boost in customer satisfaction, a drop in overhead related to paper processing and a leap in lease renewals. In an age when air conditioning and satellite television have people holed up in their homes, technology is also the optimum vehicle for unifying neighbors and building management-tenant relationships.

"[The Web] is the future for all facets of property management," said Miles Orth, executive vice president of College Park Communities, based in New Town Square, Penn. "People want to improve service, create efficiencies and cut costs. This all gets back down to convenience. In the property management world, if you make things more convenient for the customer, you're going to win."

**REDUCING REPAIR DESPAIR**

To make things more convenient for the customer, as well as the property manager, Web sites can streamline service requests—one of the most time- and money-consuming property management tasks.

Gale Global Facility Services, a commercial real estate company based in Florham Park, N.J., has slashed company and tenant expenses by using a sophisticated Web-based maintenance request system called "Angus Anywhere."

Tenants can log on to a Web site to report maintenance problems, like elevators getting stuck or heating and cooling systems breaking down. When a tenant does so, the program immediately taps into its property-specific database and reviews pertinent information—like the brand name and exact location of the elevator, or the maintenance history of the heating and cooling system.

The program incorporates those details into the repair-request interface to help create a specific work-order request. A call center technician then reviews the order and sends it directly to an on-site maintenance technician's Blackberry or wireless two-way pager.

Once the technician completes the order, he or she wirelessly closes the ticket, and the program automatically sends an e-mail updating the tenant. Alternatively, if delays are necessary, the system sends an e-mail to the tenant giving an estimated time of completion.

"We continue to keep the tenant in the loop," said Ian Marlow, president of Gale Global. "By adjusting their expectations, we give a higher level of customer service, and that means a higher level of satisfaction."

One reason the system is so efficient is the tenant's exact request is sent electronically to the repair technician—cutting out any intermediary who might inadvertently muddle the message.

"This increases the accuracy of what the client would like you to know," Marlow said. "It's completely empowering to the end user. The satisfaction rating from tenancy has skyrocketed."

Gale Global and its clients can measure the value of its system in more tangible ways. In one instance, it was able to reduce the call center personnel of one of its large, single-tenant clients from a staff of seven full-time employees to two, as well as slash its call center budget by nearly 70 percent. That particular client uses the Web for 90 percent of its maintenance requests.

College Park Communities uses a similar system to help property managers keep up on inventory. Employees log supplies into the system as they make repairs, and the program then generates a database of products to be ordered.

While these complex, integrated systems have been extremely effective for large companies, they might not be right for everyone. Start-up expenses can exceed $1,000 per year for just one Blackberry—and not all companies have had such stellar tenant participation.

BECO Management owns and
Manages 3.5 million square-feet of office space in the Washington, D.C., area. BECO officials said they have had a hard time motivating clients to use the Internet for maintenance requests—even though the option has been a feature on the company’s Web site since its inception eight years ago. The company still aspires to increase client participation.

Tenant-friendly Web features

- Credit card rent payment, including autopay
- Account information: deposit, outstanding fees, rent paid and due
- Rent reminder
- Events calendar
- Listing of area restaurants and shops
- Maintenance requests
- Lease renewal
- HVAC controls
- Roommate finder
- Security access for guests
- Emergency drill announcements
- Classified listings (items for sale, services offered)
- Common area reservations
- Utility connections
- Links to renter insurance vendors
- Tenant coupons or discounts with merchants

“The majority of people want to talk to a human being. It’s hard to get away from that,” said Madeleine E. Abel, CPM, and BECO’s vice president of property management.

Saving time on the dime

While many property managers use online maintenance requests as a timesaving tool, several managers are using their Web sites to collect rent and process expenditures, which saves money and generates even more money.

The Hamilton Group uses its Web site to help manage 5,000 residential units as well as other facilities in the Boston area. Carl Valeri, Hamilton president, said the company’s bad debt related to tardy payments dropped from 2.2 percent to 2 percent since launching its online rent payment option three years ago.

The company’s bank account is credited almost immediately after the payment is made, eliminating the delay associated with tendering paper checks. The float in the bank has improved, and fewer people are focused on the drudgery of the business, he said. With staff now more available to focus on growing the company, Hamilton has grown its parking lot rental business by 20 percent.

Gale Global uses its Web site to simultaneously key contractor and vendor expenses onto its own portal and onto those of its clients.

“There is a drastic reduction in personnel to process paper and [a] reduction of duplication of entry,” Marlow said. “With our system there is speed of delivery, reduction in error, and [the clients] are not employing staff to key in that accounting information—they’re able to track expenses of running real estate.”

The property management division of Brandywine Realty Trust, a REIT, deliberately opted not to offer automatic rent payment to their 2,000 office tenants. Most of their tenants’ companies use paper-based accounts payable systems for which online autopay would be an anomaly.

“We realized that [autopay] would be for our convenience, not our tenants’ convenience,” said Thomas G. Caputo, vice president of Brandywine’s tenant services. “That would make things harder for them, not easier.”

Getting connected

While online maintenance requests and rent payment can make life easier for residents and tenants, property Web sites can also make life more fulfilling for residents—connecting them with one another through online community building.

College Park Communities reported a re-sign rate of 43 percent last year—a bonanza attributed largely to the strong community its Web site has helped foster through on-site activities.

One year ago, Apartment Investment and Management Co.’s Riverside Park in Alexandria, Va., employed Innercircuit, an online portal aimed at helping properties build communities. The system operates...
much like a closed, password-protected Craigslist—a Web site hosting local community classifieds and forums for various cities.

Residents have responded positively to the Innercircuit program, which promotes property activities, puts people in touch for social activities, allows them to find roommates and helps them sell household goods, said Justin Wendel, resident relations manager. Recently, Riverside Park used the program to promote a poker-night, a trip to Atlantic City and a children's movie event.

Also part of the Innercircuit system is the "My City" link, which connects residents to nearby bars, churches, grocery stores and other businesses in the property's suburban Washington, D.C., area. The site allows people to post personal profiles listing their interests. A resident can search the database for neighbors interested in trying a new restaurant or attending a sporting event.

Innercircuit allows residents to establish their own clubs—ranging from scrapbooking groups, to ping-pong clubs, to martini-tasting parties. Wendel, who is also a resident, partakes in the golf group, which gathers regularly during warm-weather months.

"In a big city you'd think it wouldn't be a problem to find people with similar interests, but it's not that easy," Wendel said. "Through this Web site, it's very simple for people to get to know their neighbors. Plus, there's always a more positive vibe from residents where there are activities going on."

Wendel estimates about 500 people at the 1,222-unit property use Innercircuit's functions.

"It brings us a lot closer to the resident," he said. "In our business, communication is very important. The more you have, the more satisfied residents you're going to have, which translates into more people staying here."

Statisfacts Research, which provides research on the multifamily industry, revealed while providing a sense of community to residents certainly can't hurt, paying attention to residents' units is most important.

"All the research we do and everything we read says social activities are fine and dandy, but what impacts [residents] staying is basic fixing of toilets," said Doug Miller, Statisfacts founder and president.

**INVESTMENT OPTIONS**

Whether it's to streamline maintenance requests or to unite residents, establishing a basic Web site with a

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### Online services prove handy around office

Just as residents in multifamily complexes are gravitating toward property Web sites, office building and commercial tenants are interested in online property services, too.

Investing in tenant-pleasing Web features can pay off for building owners and real estate managers with substantial cost-saving benefits—from decreased personnel overhead to increased renewal rates. Some companies, however, concentrate on less tangible, value-added benefits.

Brandywine Realty Trust—one of the country's largest full-service real estate companies—views its Internet portal—called eTenant—as setting its office spaces apart from the competition.

When it launched its tenant site several years ago, the site "tried to be a Yahoo," with real-time stock quotes and weather reports, said Brandywine's vice president Thomas Caputo. That didn't take off.

What did take off were the genuinely unique and handy features—like giving tenants the ability to control their heating and air conditioning systems through the Internet, which drastically reduced its number one work order.

Today 90 percent of Brandywine's tenants use its Web site, and Caputo said the HVAC control feature secured at least one significant new client. Tenants have also been keen on the ability to e-mail guest information to the security staff—a feature facilitating secure access to the building.

Although the company made a significant investment in its Web site features, Brandywine is not focused on making up that investment directly in cost savings, per se.

"One of our goals is to make eTenant a market differentiator for us," he said. "It's not an inexpensive weapon in our arsenal. But our focus is not cost saving—we're trying to deliver a better service."
few tenant-pleasing features can be done for a little or a lot of overhead.

Those using a personal designer can expect to pay a couple thousand dollars for the initial design, plus hosting and domain name registration fees. Time and expense for training personnel to maintain the site should also be factored into the budget.

College Park Communities customized an off-the-shelf program. It attained a 75 percent penetration of its 50,000 residents for work orders and about a 40 percent penetration for online payments—many of which are made by student-residents’ parents who can also access the site.

Several software programs with tenant and resident service features are available specifically for property managers. Property Solutions International, based in Salt Lake City, Utah, charges $99 per month with no setup fee. That price includes the design, hosting, e-mail addresses and a few hours of maintenance each month.

Innercircuit charges $50 to $199 per month, depending on the number of features offered on the client’s site. Setup fees average about $200 and include custom design, hosting and training.

All interviewed said most properties can benefit from tenant-friendly Web sites. Michelle Christensen, Innercircuit’s executive vice president, said the size of the property dictates what features are most appropriate for a property’s Web site.

Christensen said most real estate managers with 10 to 15 units are at least interested in collecting rent online and receiving service requests through e-mail. Real estate managers with 50 or more units might be more interested in building a sense of community within their properties to actively retain residents.

While management companies like Hamilton—specializing in serving college students—might be the obvious investor in Web sites, Internet-savvy customers are found across all demographics, including older residents.

Statfacts’ Miller said to keep units leased, keeping residents and tenants online is important.

“All the research we do says residents want to go online,” he said. “It doesn’t matter if it’s an A, B or C property. People want access to service 24/7.”

Emma Johnson is a contributing writer for JPM. Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.

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Cubicle-ridden offices transition to more open-office formats—a result of advanced mobile technology and innovative office design by Diana Mirel
Many of today's office designs and layouts are shifting from a sea of Dilbert-like cubes to open formats, thanks to advances in mobile technology.

"The biggest trend changing the entire work environment is technology—wireless technologies, in particular," said Bob Porter, studio director at Vocon, a commercial design and architecture firm in Cleveland. "This new generation of workers has grown up totally on computers, so they are much more mobile. Therefore, workspaces become more fluid, dynamic and flexible."

Open offices commonly house multifunctional, wireless, shared spaces. They are typically designed with lower-paneled workstations and common rooms, rather than corridors and private offices. They involve modular furniture and, often, more natural light.

While the open-office concept is not new, advanced technology offers more efficiency and inventive functions than ever before. Large public corporations and small private firms alike are clamoring for such spaces, and real estate managers are realizing the advantages of these open layouts.

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING OFFICE

Over the last five years, the average office space per employee has shrunk by more than 20 percent, according to surveys conducted by Marcus & Millichap Real Estate Investment Brokerage Co. According to its information, the average rentable square foot per employee is currently estimated at 190 square feet.

However, with alternative work strategies, the average rentable square foot per person might range between 100 and 150 square feet, resulting in savings for tenants, said Dan Cooke, senior vice president of strategic consulting for Jones Lang LaSalle.

Brad Blankenship, vice president of global real estate advisory firm, The Staubach Company, once helped a client save $3.4 million in real estate and operating costs over its 15-year lease term by transitioning from a 100 percent closed, hard-wall office to a 50 percent closed, 50 percent open environment. This savings came from adopting an open design and scaling down 30,000 square feet.

"The two greatest costs of any company are salaries and compensation, and real estate costs," Blankenship said. "If you can reduce your real estate costs, you're reaching into the big numbers."

Eric Beichler, managing partner at Mohr Partners, a corporate real estate services company, said most of Mohr's clients—and the office market in general—have transitioned to a one-third hard-wall and a two-thirds open-office ratio. He said the tremendous movement frequently occurring at corporations, with their hiring spurts and downsizing, spurred the need for flexibility, and in turn, open-office spaces.

"It really changes the whole landscape of how you deal with contraction and growth at companies," Beichler said.
“The flexibility gives you a lot more opportunities to make changes internally without having to move.”

**OPEN OFFICES REPLACE OPEN-DOOR POLICIES**

Such a shift in office design stems from vast advances in more compact and mobile technology.

The widespread use of laptop computers, wireless technology and voice communications available over the Internet, referred to as voice-over IP, has increased flexibility and openness in offices. Thus, sharing conference rooms and unassigned workstations is gaining popularity because people can set up virtual offices almost anywhere, Beichler said.

“It becomes much easier for employees to work where they want and still be connected,” Cooke, of Jones Lang LaSalle, said. “Technology around data lines has really opened it up for people to work most anywhere.”

Open-office workstations are centered on a wired workstation spine—the central axis and chief support of the workstation. Spine connections eliminate the need to provision individual offices, and they can accommodate a variety of easy-to-change workstation setups.

Marc Margulies, principal of Margulies & Associates, an architecture and interior design firm in Boston, said his office and many offices the company designs have transitioned from having individual walls to having a spine powered with a series of components that can be readily and flexibly arrayed.

“People are trying to move as far away from the rigidity and isolation that goes along with [individual offices] to gain a higher degree of collaboration and flexibility for both work and space purposes,” Margulies said. “This more flexible concept really meets those needs.”

**TECHNOLOGY’S SMALL FOOTPRINT HAS BIG IMPACT**

The constantly shrinking nature of computer hardware has also played a major role in open-office design, said Brigitte Preston, design principal at lauckgroup, an interior architecture firm in Texas. She said the proliferation of flat screens has had the biggest impact on workspace size.

The use of flat screen monitors enabled Preston to save space at Green Mountain Energy headquarters in Austin,

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This area in Vocen's Ross Environmental Project allows executives to utilize and share a common, collaborative work environment, serving as an extension of their private offices.
Texas, by furnishing the area with 120-degree, boomerang-shaped workstations, rather than 90-degree corner units to save space.

Using 120-degree workstations can drastically increase the number of workstations capable of fitting on a floor or, instead, decrease the amount of space needed overall.

Replacing space-consuming file cabinets with electronic databases is another technological development contributing to decreased office space requirements. Architect Tom Polucci, vice president and director of design for interiors at HOK Chicago, said traditional file cabinets can have a big impact on real estate costs.

A workplace strategist employed by one of Polucci's clients determined every file cabinet costs the company $1,000 a year in terms of its footprint and the rent the company pays for the footprint. A request for 30 file cabinets then translates into $30,000 a year in rent, he said.

Polucci said more clients are using electronic filing systems with saving space in mind. He said the elimination of paper records via databases has allowed companies to save money by maximizing office space and reducing the need for large file rooms.

"To best utilize the square footage you have, you want to make it more for your people than your stuff," he said. "You become much more effective. People are using technology not just for storage but for the accessibility of information."

TECHNICAL AMENITIES NEED ADAPTABLE HOME

Building owners and managers must realize advanced electronic and telecommunication technology presumes the presence of physical building requirements to support them, industry experts said.

One significant building advance is a raised floor system housing all the data, phone and electrical cabling—historically stored in ceiling trays. Underfloor systems can benefit real estate managers because they smooth the transition from tenant to tenant. Modern carpet paneling atop underfloor systems enables a company to remove floor coverings and gain access to the underfloor to reconfigure cabling if necessary.

Koll Development Corporation in Addison, Texas, is currently creating prototype LEED-certified office buildings called Intellicenters, which combine open floor plans with sustainable design principles. One of the trademarks of these buildings is their 14-inch raised-access flooring.

"Raised flooring gives you access to cabling and power, and allows end users that have a lot of change in their space and their people to accomplish that efficiently, quickly and for little cost," said Mike Rosamond, senior vice president at Koll.

Advances in acoustic technology systems have also paved the way for effective open-office space designs. Preston said raising the heights of workstation panels never really increased privacy or reduced surrounding office noise, as initially intended.

White noise technology, which emanates low-frequency sound throughout the office via a sound system, is often a good solution. Fiberglass ceiling tiles can also manage noise levels. Preston said sound masking can cost approximately $1 per square foot.

"The biggest paradox in workspaces is people usually want to collaborate, but on the other hand, people also want acoustic privacy," Preston said. "When you put those two things together you usually have a combination that is exclusive. A lot of times [white noise technology] really is a good solution."

DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY

While advances in mobile technology are making the open-office trend much more viable, Cooke of Jones Lang LaSalle said people still want—and need—to come into the office, and the trend is not indicating a slowdown in the office market.

"I originally thought we would see less of a need for space, over time," said Cooke. "But that is certainly not the case. We have not seen any type of impact that would suggest [they] are reducing the need for space; they just provide different and more flexible uses of space."
As a result, real estate managers in the office sector can embrace, rather than reject, the open-office concept and the mobile technology making it tick.

"People who are working in a modular environment are not necessarily leasing less space," said Blankenship of The Staubach Company. "Their companies are growing and they may actually need more space. But they're using their space more efficiently."

One common challenge facing property managers is wiring and rewiring the spaces for new corporate tenants’ technology needs. But because open-office spaces are in high demand, they are often more appealing to prospective tenants and actually require less preparation for new tenants.

Typically, a tenant is responsible for pulling the cable and wiring out when leaving a space, but with the new wiring systems, a property manager will often make an agreement with a tenant to leave enough slack in the line for the next tenant, Beichler of Mohr Partners said. That makes the space even more attractive because the tenant saves money when rewiring the office.

"A lot of people are taking these open-office spaces as is," Beichler said. "Ultimately, that means more money to the landlords because they don't have to put as much money into it. They're probably carpeting, painting, cleaning and maybe reworking the reception area. That is why open spaces are easier to lease."

**SAVING SPACE, SAVING MONEY**

More money going into real estate managers' pockets sounds ideal, but investors must also consider how much they will have to spend to keep up with innovative design and advanced technology.

Many industry insiders said both the build out and operation of open-office spaces cost less. Blankenship said a hard-wall plan will probably run real estate investors between $22 and $23 a square foot because of excess materials like drywall, doors, hardware and light systems, while an open plan can be built for $16 per square foot.

Modular furniture systems and technology are the two highest costs associated with open-office formats. Technology, however, is also one of the highest costs of running a hard-walled office, industry experts said.

Of course, changing everything about the way a company works, and designing offices accordingly, can be costly. If a company overhauls its hard-walled space—considering HVAC, zoning issues and electrical complications—the costs of designing an open office can run high.

"The initial cost to accommodate that new way of working may be a little bit more expensive," Blankenship said. "But you save in long-term flexibility—in cost for churn and movement of employees."

When Cooke of Jones Lang LaSalle worked for Agilent Technologies, he helped transform the environment from a full-service office with individual workstations into a mobile environment, allowing almost 80 percent of the company to work remotely.

"Open offices offer huge value and huge cost savings. It is buying flexibility and peace of mind that you have the ability to contract and expand."

—Eric Beichler, managing partner at Mohr Partners

Cooke said when the office was packed with employees working on-site daily, the company spent around $7,500 to $8,000 per employee, per year. However, when Agilent reduced the footprint of the workstations and set up a mobile environment where employees could come into the office when necessary and work in unassigned, shared workstations, the new cost was between $3,000 and $3,500 per person, per year.

"Open offices offer huge value and huge cost savings," Beichler said. "If you need to hire four employees, you could have four cubes up, wired and ready to go. It is buying flexibility and peace of mind that you have the ability to contract and expand."

Many real estate experts said technology not only promotes the open-office format, but it is also crucial for effectiveness.

"The key is not just the physical environment and space, it is the support and services that go along with that," said Cooke. "If you can get that piece, the rest of it falls into place."

Diana Mirel is a contributing writer for JPM. Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.
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Stafford Commons is a new development in Lake Oswego, Ore., with both office and retail spaces.

Virtual Reality

As pre-leasing and pre-selling buildings under construction takes off, property owners and managers turn to virtual tours and other advanced technology to recruit residents and tenants.

by Darnell Little
ass by any condominium or office building construction site, and the odds are many of the units were sold to future tenants before the first brick was laid. Pre-selling or pre-leasing buildings under construction is not just a desirable way for owners to pocket some tenant cash up front; it is now often required by lenders before they will consider funding a new development.

"The developers really have to be knocking on doors and getting lease commitments from prospective tenants before they can even start breaking ground on a project," said Lynda Clarke, CPM, and vice president of property management for Oregon-based real estate firm Norris, Beggs & Simpson. Despite the growing number of investors nationwide willing to pre-buy—hoping to get in early on a potentially lucrative investment—selling residential or office space in a nonexistent building hasn't gotten any easier.

Convincing potential building occupants of the virtues of living in a space they can't see, touch or walk through can be a tough pitch. And often, offering units at a discounted price is the trade-off for signing tenants up early.

But advances in computer technology—like high-quality computer renderings showing realistically detailed floor layouts and virtual tours allowing prospective tenants to cyber walk through a computer-generated building—are helping building owners lease up space without decreasing rent prices.

"[Technology] has enhanced the traditional sales model," Clarke said. "I can imagine—based on the tools we have today—that it must have been really difficult [back in the day] to be able to sell an empty building or a building that doesn't even have steel going up in the air yet."

**DIGITAL TOOLS GIVE VISION**

Because today's digital tools have proven so effective, more real estate investors are spending money on technology. Clarke said owners and managers formerly relied mostly on blueprints to walk potential investors through a property to help them visualize their spaces. Now, more companies use advanced computer renderings to show floor plans to prospective tenants.

"The black and white of those blueprints can now be modeled on the computer as a 3-D image," Clarke said. "It's as if prospects are standing in the finished product. [Digital models] take it one step further than what the blueprint can convey."

Digital models, available on the Web or burned on CD, reveal the views from various windows and give aerial images of the building's exterior. With the click of a mouse button, users can change the visual perspective from which they view the building.

The Equity Company, a residential properties developer in the Boston area, is using computer renderings for its latest project—The Residences at Franklin School, a former school being rehabbed into 20 two- and three-bedroom condos. The building is scheduled for completion in June. It is the first project for which Equity has created all of the building's marketing illustrations on a computer.

"[Most buyers] are not that visually oriented when it comes to what they will be seeing when the space is finished," said Equity's president, Rick Williams. "It is important to find tools that help them imagine the value in the space or their homes, when finished."

Williams said the renderings have created a certain level of excitement among the sellers and brokers involved in the project—a level of excitement printed brochures failed to create on other projects. He said he believes the computer renderings will positively affect his bottom line.

"Historically, you would see some price reductions if you bought before construction was completed," Williams said. "But certainly, the more you can get people to appreciate what the property will actually look like and what the perceived value will be, I'm sure that reduces the amount of discount you have to provide to get people to make a commitment before the property is completed."

**VIRTUAL TOURS, REAL PRICES**

Computer renderings aren't the only way to get prospective tenants or residents to appreciate the lay of the land: Virtual tours offer a bird's-eye view of a property for a range of prices.

Rich Hegarty, founder of Tube Media Productions, a Boston-based video and multimedia production house, has created computer renderings and virtual Web tours for several real estate clients. He said the cost for enhanced computer models varies widely, depending on the features included.

Computer renderings can cost between $10,000 and $40,000, while a package containing renderings, a virtual
LISTING PROPERTIES ONLINE IS ON THE RISE

While using the Web to drum up sales is nothing new for residential property managers, Michigan-based Village Green Companies took matters to an unusual level when they auctioned off a one-year apartment lease on eBay.

In July 2005, Village Green listed a unit at the company's Village Green of Troy apartments in Troy, Mich., on the eBay Web site—starting the bid at 99 cents per month. With no minimum sale price, if the final bid was a mere $2 a month, Village Green would have had to live with it. It was a risk the company was willing to take, said Megan Fike, public relations manager for Village Green Companies.

"We thought we'd try something new and be an innovator in the industry, and this is something that hadn't really been done before," Fike said.

Fortunately for Village Green, at the end of the 30-day auction, the winning bid for the apartment was $735 per month—just about the market rate for that particular apartment.

While many companies might not be rushing to bid out apartments on eBay, property managers can use several other online outlets to get their properties noticed.

Rent.com is an online rental listing service. Potential residents can navigate around the site, searching for properties by city and move date. They also have the option to narrow their searches by rent amount, number of bedrooms or permissibility of pets.

Craigslist.com is a no-fee Web site where property managers can post their properties on the site's homepage. Craigslist.com is available to the public and receives more than 3 billion page views per month. The site also allows the option of re-posting, editing or removing the listing at any time.

Village Green of Troy, managed by Village Green Companies, used a popular online source to rent one of its units.

Tour and a promotional video can cost upward of $60,000, Hegarty said. He said that range isn't a precise estimate, though, because clients can use varying degrees of technology to determine the price. Ten years ago, the range was pricier, he said—between $50,000 and $70,000.

"Because we're all digital now, the overhead is a lot less," Hegarty said. "The technology has become a lot more affordable."

Landers Symes, president of Symes Associates, a Massachusetts-based residential developer, said the company recently sold more than 60 percent of its units at Wakefield Crossing, a multibuilding condominium development in Wakefield, Mass., before the project was near completion—thanks in part to a Web site touting computer renderings and a sales video including a virtual tour.

Symes said he plans to use computer-generated material for all his major projects, now that such technology is more affordable for his company. He said the cost of offering virtual tours on his various developments' Web sites runs, on average, between $3,000 and $5,000. Overall, his projects' Web sites cost between $10,000 and $15,000, on average. However, Symes said the technology pays off.

"You'd be hard-pressed to say these virtual tours don't help you on presales," he said. "You've got to be able to do something to sell these units that aren't built, and I think Web marketing and virtual tours are a good way to do it."

HARD COPIES, HARD SELL

While using technology to market properties has a price tag, the price of not selling out units can be more costly.

David Gilkie, vice president of the commercial real estate firm Nordblom Company, has been marketing commer-
cial and industrial space for more than a decade. He said using renderings and virtual tours as marketing tools is effective because tenants are so concerned with the look of a building—including how common areas will be set up, and how lighting and wall treatments will look.

“The best way to tour a property is to visit it. But the next best thing to do is a virtual tour,” Gilkie said. “Pictures are worth a thousand words, and virtual tours are able to create that picture. You’re selling something that doesn’t exist, and to give someone an understanding about what the property is going to ultimately look like is very important.”

Advances in computer design technology can go beyond helping building owners market their projects. Those advances can potentially change how owners decide to design future buildings, said Pradeep Chintagunta, a marketing professor at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.

“You can use this [technology] as a way of testing to see whether the market prefers one design to the other,” Chintagunta said. “What you could do is put three possible designs out there and then see the design that consumers seem to like much better; it gives an opportunity for companies to experiment without going through expensive marketing research.”

No matter how real estate professionals decide to use them, today’s digital tools hold far more potential than the ink-and-paper methods of the past.

“I know some of the materials people were using 20 years ago [were] hand sketches of the building,” Clarke, of Norris, Beggs & Simpson, said. “But considering where computer technology was back then, that was the best people could do. There’s a big difference now. We’re just seeing the tip of the iceberg in terms of tools that will be available to developers and brokers.”

Symes, developer of Wakefield Crossing, said investors have come to expect such technology when considering buying into a property.

“The days of handing out black-and-white flat pieces of paper with floor plans...are over,” he said. “People are expecting this, so if you don’t do it, you’re going to look like you’re behind the times.”

Darnell Little is a contributing writer for JPM. Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.
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### 2006 JPM Guide
### Enterprise Solutions

#### 5. General Ledger: Transaction Processing
- Automatic intercompany transactions
- Automatic recurring journal entries
- Automatic reversing of entries
- Transaction entry in batch or real-time mode
- Uniquely identifies each transaction processed

#### 6. General Ledger: Budgeting
- Accommodates budget variance reporting
- Budget forecasting
- Budgets by property
- Budgets by tenant
- Generates budgets/forecasts based upon lease information
- Identifies source of Intercompany transactions
- Occupancy cost information based upon budgeted data
- Tracks budget information by fund
- Tracks budget information by lease
- Tracks budget information by unit
- Tracks multiple revisions to the budget

#### 7. General Ledger: Consolidation
- Consolidates by fund
- Consolidates for a group of properties
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- Waterfall (% ownership) accounting and reporting capability

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- Record quantities, prices, terms, dates, etc.
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- Tracks P.O. commitments contracts
- Tracks vendor retention

Status:
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### 2006 JPM Guide
**Enterprise Solutions**

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Has feature

Future release

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<td>Annual 1099 updates</td>
<td>Has feature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Produces a pre-1099 report for editing before 1099s are produced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single vendor master file across all entities/companies/properties</td>
<td>Has feature</td>
</tr>
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<td>Asset distinction by geography, property type and lifecycle parameters</td>
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<td>Supports inquiry functions for fundamental fixed asset data</td>
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<td>Supports multiple depreciation methods</td>
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**2006 JPM Guide**

**Enterprise Solutions**
## 2006 JPM Guide
### Enterprise Solutions

### 14. Payroll
- Automated time management system
- Charge time from different cost centers based on % or hours incurred
- Handling of various labor union requirements
- Interfaces to 3rd-party payroll services
- Interfaces with A/P, job cost and G/L systems
- Interfaces with automated payroll direct deposit systems
- Interfaces with external electronic payroll service bureaus
- Labor costs distributed to individual jobs, projects, departments or divisions
- Maintains employee ID, history, status, adjustments, benefits, codes
- Reports labor stats, attendance, benefits, salaries, wages, hours & turnover
- Tax rate tables supported for federal, state, county and city schedules

### 15. Internal Report Writing
- Display reports on screen
- Import/export with spreadsheet programs (i.e. Excel)
- ODBC-compliant report writer/query tool
- OLE or DDE compliance with external software
- Print to file
- Real-time, ad hoc queries to native database
- Report graphics
- Report management
- Report writer module

### 16. Space Management
- Allow unit and zone records for the same designated space
- CAD-based drag and drop moves, adds, changes
- Complete audit trail of moves, adds, changes
- Create allocation journal entries based on space usage
- Drawing file check-in/check-out
- Dynamic interface with third-party applications
- Independent assignment of unit records to company and business unit
- International units of measure
- Multiple space planning scenarios of the same space
- Native application stacking and blocking optimization algorithms
- People and space record association
- Polyline changes within the application
- Property, building, floor, unit asset record tables

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</table>
2006 JPM Guide
Enterprise Solutions

### 17. Project Management
- Actual project cost tracking
- Independent assignment of project records to company & business unit
- Integrated contract management
- Integration with P.O., HR/PR, G/L and A/P
- Interface with third-party applications
- Multiple budgets for the same project
- New project approvals: route requests through funding & approval process
- Percentage completion tracking
- Project funding request/construction loan draw tracking
- Project milestone data tracking
- Project to property and space record associations

### 18. Property Types
- Company/property security
- Differentiation among retail, industrial, office & residential properties
- Independent assignment of property records to company & business unit
- Industrial real estate system functionality
- Multi-family residential property
- Multiple-office system functionality
- Office-specific screen & data element configuration
- Retail real estate system functionality
- Single-family residential property

### 19. Property and Lease Record Management
- CAM budgeting
- Independent assignment of lease records to company & business unit
- Lease clause information tracking
- Lease to property and space record associations
- Multiple property and lease budgets for the same period
- Recurring lease payables and receivables
- Rent roll and production processing
- Tickler system capabilities
- Track brokerage and commission fees

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<td>- Division of labor work orders based on cost type</td>
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<td>- Integrated call center</td>
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<td>- Preventive maintenance schedules</td>
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<td>- Scheduled work orders</td>
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<td>- Self-service work order request (demand maintenance)</td>
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<td>- Work order budgeting</td>
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<td>- Work order templates</td>
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<td>- Associate tenant improvements to leases</td>
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<td>21. Lease Administration Processing</td>
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<td>- Automatic receipt application and processing (lockbox processing)</td>
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<td>- CPI lease processing</td>
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<td>- Late fee processing</td>
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<td>- Receivables aging</td>
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<td>- Recurring payments processing</td>
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<td>- Sales report tracking</td>
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<td>- Security deposits tracking</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sublease processing</td>
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<td>22. Technology/Systems/Internet &amp; Wireless Architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Integration with PDA (handheld) devices</td>
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<td>- Open integration with third-party systems</td>
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<td>- Platform independence</td>
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<td>- Server-based architecture</td>
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*Note: The diagram and features listed are placeholders for illustrative purposes.*
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### Point Solutions

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<td>Custom application development</td>
<td>Demo data provided</td>
<td>Online help</td>
<td>On-site systems administration</td>
<td>On-site training</td>
<td>Screen customization tools</td>
<td>User-defined help</td>
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<td>Audit trail by user/data/time stamp</td>
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<td>Field level</td>
<td>Menu level</td>
<td>Property level</td>
<td>User/data/time stamp</td>
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<td>ASP/Hosted application model</td>
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<td>File import</td>
<td>Web-based operating environment</td>
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<td>Data transfer from subsystems in detail or summary</td>
<td>Designate accounts inactive or non-posting</td>
<td>Funds from operations calculation (FFO)</td>
<td>Interface to third-party applications</td>
<td>Maintain multiple chart of accounts</td>
<td>Mass account number maintenance</td>
<td>Multi-currency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online inquiry with drill down</td>
<td>Retain unlimited historical information</td>
<td>Supports multiple entities</td>
<td>Track cash and accrual transactions per property</td>
<td>Tracking of statistical information</td>
<td>Transaction import/export</td>
<td>Transaction posting restrictions</td>
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**Legend:**
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## 2006 JPM Guide
### Point Solutions

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- Complete asset set-up with descriptions, initial costs, acquisition dates, additions, improvements and disposals
- Interface to third-party applications
- Provides audit trail and user security for data entry
- Records and classes gains and losses upon disposition
- Supports depreciation on tax basis, book value or other methods
- Supports inquiry functions for fundamental fixed asset data
- Supports multiple depreciation methods
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<td>Interfaces to third-party payroll services</td>
<td>Has feature</td>
<td>Feature not available</td>
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<td>Interfaces with A/P, job cost and G/L systems</td>
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<td>Labor costs distributed to individual jobs, projects, departments or divisions</td>
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<td>Future release</td>
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<td>Maintains employee ID, history, status, adjustments, benefits, codes</td>
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<td>Reports labor stats, attendance, benefits, salaries, wages, hours &amp; turnover</td>
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<td>Future release</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tax rate tables supported for federal, state, county and city schedules</td>
<td>Has feature</td>
<td>Feature not available</td>
<td>Feature not available</td>
<td>Future release</td>
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</table>

#### 15. Internal Report Writing

| Display reports on screen | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Import/export with spreadsheet programs (i.e. Excel) | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| ODBC-compliant report writer/query tool | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| OLE or DDE compliance with external software | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Print to file | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Real-time, ad hoc queries to native database | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Report graphics | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Report management | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Report writer module | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |

#### 16. Space Management

| Allow unit and zone records for the same designated space | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| CAD-based drag and drop moves, adds, changes | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Complete audit trail of moves, adds, changes | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Create allocation journal entries based on space usage | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Drawing file check-in/check-out | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Dynamic interface with third-party applications | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Independent assignment of unit records to company and business unit | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| International units of measure | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Multiple space planning scenarios of the same space | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Native application stacking and blocking optimization algorithms | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| People and space record association | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Polyline changes within the application | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |
| Property, building, floor, unit asset record tables | Has feature | Feature not available | Feature not available | Future release | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available | Feature not available |

- **Has feature**: Feature is currently available
- **Future release**: Feature is planned for future releases
- **Feature not available**: Feature is not available in this version
## 2006 JPM Guide
### Point Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17. Project Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actual project cost tracking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent assignment of project records to company &amp; business unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated contract management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration with P.O., HR/PR, G/L, and A/P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interface with third-party applications</td>
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<td>Multiple budgets for the same project</td>
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<tr>
<td>New project approvals: route requests through funding &amp; approval process</td>
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<td>Percentage completion tracking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project funding request/construction loan draw tracking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project milestone data tracking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project to property and space record associations</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18. Property Types</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Company/property security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiation among retail, industrial, office &amp; residential properties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent assignment of property records to company &amp; business unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial real estate system functionality</td>
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<td>Multi-family residential property</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple-office system functionality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office-specific screen &amp; data element configuration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail real estate system functionality</td>
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<td>Single-family residential property</td>
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<th>19. Property and Lease Record Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>CAM budgeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent assignment of lease records to company &amp; business unit</td>
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<td>Lease clause information tracking</td>
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<td>Lease to property and space record associations</td>
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<td>Multiple property and lease budgets for the same period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recurring lease payables and receivables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent roll and production processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickler system capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track brokerage and commission fees</td>
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</table>

*Has feature* | *Future release* | *Feature not available*
### 20. Work Order and Preventive Maintenance
- Association of asset records with work orders
- Division of total work order cost across multiple cost types
- Independent assignment of work order records to company & business unit
- Integrated call center
- Integrated with PDA (handheld)/wireless device
- Preventative maintenance schedules
- Property survey results tracking
- Scheduled work orders
- Self-service work order request (demand maintenance)
- Work order budgeting
- Work order templates

### 21. Lease Administration Processing
- Associate tenant improvements to leases
- Automated receipts application and processing (lockbox processing)
- CAM reconciliations
- CPI lease processing
- Integration with billing module
- Late fee processing
- Percentage rent processing
- Receivables aging
- Receivables process
- Recurring payables processing
- Sales report tracking
- Security deposits tracking
- Sublease processing

### 22. Technology / Systems / Internet & Wireless Architecture
- Integration with PDA (handheld) devices
- Open integration with third-party systems
- Platform independence
- Server-based architecture
- Universal, real-time access to application
- User-defined workflow processing
- Web-based architecture

---

**Legend:**
- **Has feature**
- **Future release**
- **Feature not available**
### Enterprise Solutions

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<tr>
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<th>Software</th>
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<td>SLM</td>
<td><a href="http://www.accruent.com">www.accruent.com</a></td>
<td>310.526.5700</td>
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<td>ACS, A Domin-8 Enterprise Solutions</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.acsoftware.com">www.acsoftware.com</a></td>
<td>800-527-9449</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Dog Software Group, Inc.</td>
<td>BDProperty</td>
<td><a href="http://www.blackdogsoft.com">www.blackdogsoft.com</a></td>
<td>866-423-7638</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domin-8 Enterprise Solutions</td>
<td>Paradigm RPM</td>
<td><a href="http://www.domin-8.com">www.domin-8.com</a></td>
<td>513.492.5800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenark Business Systems</td>
<td>Jenark</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jenark.com">www.jenark.com</a></td>
<td>888-711-3393</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mainstream Software</td>
<td>CrossForm</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mainstreams.com">www.mainstreams.com</a></td>
<td>800-337-2645</td>
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<td>Manhattan Software</td>
<td>MANHATTAN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.manhattansoftware.com">www.manhattansoftware.com</a></td>
<td>212-843-1815</td>
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<td>Netintegrity, Inc.</td>
<td>INFO-Tracker Property &amp;</td>
<td><a href="http://www.netintegrity.net">www.netintegrity.net</a></td>
<td>800-231-5162</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Maintenance Management System</td>
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<td>Oracle Corporation</td>
<td>Oracle Enterprise One</td>
<td><a href="http://www.oracle.com/solutions/real_estate">www.oracle.com/solutions/real_estate</a></td>
<td>404-439-5768</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.oracle.com">www.oracle.com</a></td>
<td>650-560-7000</td>
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<td>Oracle Corporation</td>
<td>Peoplesoft Real Estate</td>
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<td>PMAS - A Domin-8 Enterprise    Solutions Company</td>
<td>RealProperty PLUS</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pm-associates.com">www.pm-associates.com</a></td>
<td>800-783-2603</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROMAS Landlord Software Center</td>
<td>PROMAS Landmaster</td>
<td><a href="http://www.promas.com">www.promas.com</a></td>
<td>800-397-1499</td>
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<td>PropertyBoss Solutions, LLC</td>
<td>PropertyBoss</td>
<td><a href="http://www.propertyboss.com">www.propertyboss.com</a></td>
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<td>Property Boulevard</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.PropertyBoulevard.com">www.PropertyBoulevard.com</a></td>
<td>888-333-1811</td>
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<td>RealPage Inc.</td>
<td>OneSite</td>
<td><a href="http://www.realpage.com">www.realpage.com</a></td>
<td>877-325-7243</td>
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<td>Skyline/ SS&amp;C</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.skyline2.com">www.skyline2.com</a></td>
<td>312-443-7531</td>
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<td>Accounting System Version 2006.1</td>
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### Point Solutions

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<td>360 Facility</td>
<td>The 360Facility System</td>
<td><a href="http://www.360facility.com">www.360facility.com</a></td>
<td>847-425-3600</td>
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<td>Corrigo</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.corrigo.com">www.corrigo.com</a></td>
<td>800-664-7114</td>
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<td>Database International Group, Inc.</td>
<td>Aware Manager</td>
<td><a href="http://www.awaremanager.com">www.awaremanager.com</a></td>
<td>617-542-8555</td>
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<td>Fields &amp; Screens, Inc.</td>
<td>Work Order Wonder</td>
<td><a href="http://www.screens.com">www.screens.com</a></td>
<td>972-450-6527</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indus Systems, Inc.</td>
<td>iDrawings</td>
<td><a href="http://www.indus-systems.com">www.indus-systems.com</a></td>
<td>800-891-2689</td>
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<td>Integrated Business Systems, Inc.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ibs.com">www.ibs.com</a></td>
<td>973-575-4950</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPM Software, Inc.</td>
<td>CornerStone</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ipm-software.net">www.ipm-software.net</a></td>
<td>800-944-5572</td>
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<tr>
<td>NetFacilities, Inc.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.netfacilities.com">www.netfacilities.com</a></td>
<td>866-979-4300 x121</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.propertyautomation.com">www.propertyautomation.com</a></td>
<td>800-964-2792</td>
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<td>Realeum, Inc.</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.realeum.com">www.realeum.com</a></td>
<td>800-999-0350</td>
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<td>Sage Company</td>
<td>Sage Timberline Office</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sagetimberlineoffice.com">www.sagetimberlineoffice.com</a></td>
<td>503-690-6775</td>
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</table>
Written by law enforcement expert Lawrence J. Fennelly, CPO, the second edition of *Spotlight on Security for Real Estate Managers* covers the latest measures available for protecting your building and its occupants. This updated and expanded edition addresses the significant changes in building security since the events of 9/11.

Also features:

- New chapters dealing with mailroom security, handling confidential waste, managing computer security risks, and physical security guidelines
- Security checklists for any property type
- FAQs about security
- Recommendations of additional reading materials

"At the end of the day...the number one priority of the security professional is still the protection of life and physical assets."

Lawrence J. Fennelly, author

IREM, 2005, softcover, 289 pages
ISBN: 1-57203-111-5 • Order # 778
Regular Price: $69.95
Member Price: $55.95

Go to [www.irembooks.org](http://www.irembooks.org) or call (800) 837-0706 to order.
Landing the deals

- Divaris Real Estate Inc., which comprises Divaris Property Management Corp., AMO, announced the following deals:
  - Coastal Investment Group LLC leased 4,515 square feet of office space in the Windwood Centre, located in Virginia Beach, Va.
  - Planning and Learning Technologies Inc. (Pal-Tech) leased 7,000 square feet of office space located in Newport News, Va.
  - Small Smiles of Richmond LLC leased 6,663 square feet of retail space in the Brookhill Azalea shopping center in Richmond, Va.

- JRT Realty Group, along with its strategic partner Cushman & Wakefield, AMO, announced the following deals:
  - It finalized 11 lease agreements, totaling approximately 60,000 square feet of executive office space at 780 Third Ave., in midtown Manhattan.
  - It was appointed the exclusive leasing agent for Embarcadero Center West in San Francisco.

- The Detroit Southeast Michigan office of Trammell Crow Company, AMO, sold two ExxonMobil service stations:
  - Grove-Ypsilanti Development LLC of Keego Harbor, Mich., purchased a 21,780 square-foot property.

- ContraVest Management Co., AMO, along with its newly formed entity Courtney Estates LLC purchased a 14-acre tract of land in Raleigh, N.C., with plans to break ground in May 2006 on a 300-unit luxury apartment community. The first units should be available in early 2007.

- Charles Dunn Company, AMO, has assumed management of two office buildings totaling 30,690 square feet, located in Sherman Oaks and Toluca Lake, Calif. Both properties are owned by Granite Falls Holdings Inc.

On the Road Again

IREM Officers will be making stops at the following chapters:

May 11
Northern Ohio Chapter No. 41
Location: Cleveland, Ohio
Visiting Officer: Fred Prassas, president

May 16
Region 3: Greater Metropolitan Washington Chapter No. 8, Northern Virginia Chapter No. 77 and West-Central Maryland Chapter No. 92
Location: Washington, D.C.
Visiting Officers: Fred Prassas, president; Robert Toothaker, president-elect; Reggie Mullins, secretary/treasurer

May 23
Greater Phoenix Chapter No. 47
Location: Phoenix, Ariz.
Visiting Officer: Robert Toothaker, president-elect

May 25
Milwaukee Chapter No. 13
Location: Milwaukee, Wis.
Visiting Officer: Reggie Mullins, secretary/treasurer

June 6
Orange County Chapter No. 91
Location: Tustin, Calif.
Visiting Officer: Fred Prassas, president; Lynn Disbrow, senior staff member

June 8
Columbus Chapter No. 42
Location: Columbus, Ohio
Visiting Officer: Pam Monroe, senior vice president
Career Moves

- Trammell Crow Company, AMO, appointed Michael J. Irwin as senior property manager at the company's Detroit Southeast Michigan office. Irwin has more than 30 years of leasing and property management experience. He will be responsible for managing the Dime Building and the Topinka Retail Plaza Center, both in Detroit.

- Karen Tepera, CPM, joined JPI Management Services as vice president of business development. She has 23 years of experience in property management and will be responsible for securing additional third-party clients for JPI Management Services.

- Divaris Real Estate Inc., which comprises Divaris Property Management Corp., AMO, appointed Elizabeth C. Newbill as the office leasing and sales associate at the Interstate Corporate Center in Norfolk, Va., which is managed and leased by Divaris.

- Norris, Beggs & Simpson, AMO, announced the promotion of Lisette C. Levich, CPM, to associate vice president and manager of property management operations. Levich will aid in the transitioning of all new properties into the management portfolio.

Student Developments

A new Web site for students and young professionals interested in real estate management can be found at [www.GetRealGetReady.org](http://www.GetRealGetReady.org). IREM created this site to reach out to increasingly Web-savvy younger generations and create awareness about careers in real estate management. The site includes salary data, advice for getting started in the industry, a real estate college degree search and much more.

IREM is looking for members who would be willing to share testimonials, stories or advice about their career experiences in real estate management. Those interested may contact Karen Kazmierczak at student@irem.org or at 312-329-6057.

Awards and Recognition

Midwest Management Co., AMO, was named Property Management Company of the Year for Mid Michigan at the Glastar Awards for excellence in the multi-family housing industry. Glastar, a highly recognized industry award, is presented annually by the Property Management Association of Michigan as a tribute to Michigan's multi-housing industry.

Connie Rankin, CPM, of Customized Real Estate Services, won the prestigious 2006 Star Award, which is awarded to women business owners who have proven success in business, community and leadership by helping other women-owned businesses achieve success. Rankin was presented this award by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and the Houston chapter's Women's Business Enterprise Alliance.


International News

IREM Members in Japan surveyed on critical issues

Japan's chapter held its annual meeting and conference in February. President Fred Prassas and IREM's chief executive officer and executive vice president Russ Salzman attended.

More than 150 attendees addressed the issues they face in their real estate business at the conference. Members in Japan completed scanning surveys, and according to the surveys, the major challenges facing property managers in Japan are:

- Radical changes in financial markets and their impact on the valuation of properties
- Tenant relations and high vacancy rates
- Differentiating management services
- Enhancing the level of professionalism of property management
- Developing staff skills

The meeting also included the induction of new members and the installation of 2006 officers. Prassas appointed 15 new CPM Members to the chapter, bringing the total number of members to 83. Noriaki (George) Shim, CPM, is the new chapter president, and Katsuyoshi Ishibashi, CPM, is president-elect.

Korea chapter welcomes new members, installs new officers

Leaders from IREM, the CCIM Institute and the Appraisal Institute traveled to Seoul, South Korea, in February to discuss opportunities for collaboration among the members of the three organizations there.

"All three of our organizations have established a strong presence in South Korea, and we all share a common commitment to enhance the level of professionalism in the Korean commercial real estate market," said IREM President Fred Prassas. "There is every reason to believe our progress toward this goal will be much faster by working together."

With this in mind, the officers of the three Korean chapters joined their colleagues from the United States to discuss cooperative programs, including a possible joint conference in 2007.

While in Korea, Prassas spoke at the annual meeting of Korea Chapter 112—IREM's newest chapter. Prassas installed 15 new CPM Members, bringing the total number of chapter members to 108. Newly elected officers for the chapter were announced, with Simon Shim, CPM, introduced as the new chapter president.

Meetings also took place with representatives of Korea Land Corporation, Samsung Life Insurance Company, the Korean Ministry of Construction and Transportation, and housing officers at the U.S. military base in Seoul.

Courses Listings

MAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>BDM602</td>
<td>May 1-2</td>
<td>Nashville, TN</td>
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<td>MPSA01</td>
<td>May 3-4</td>
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<td>CPM001</td>
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**COURSE CODES KEY**

- ASM603 - Investment Real Estate Financing and Valuation - Part One
- ASM604 - Investment Real Estate Financing and Valuation - Part Two
- ASM605 - Investment Real Estate Financing and Valuation - Part Three
- BDM601 - Maximizing Profit: Growth Strategies for Real Estate Management Companies
- BDM602 - Property Management Plans: The IREM Model
- CPMEXM - CPM Certification Exam
- CPM001 - CPM Certification Exam Preparation Seminar
- ETH800 - Ethics for the Real Estate Manager
- FIN402 - Investment Real Estate: Financial Tools
- HRS402 - Human Resource Essentials for Real Estate Managers
- MKL404 - Marketing and Leasing: Retail Properties
- MKL406 - Marketing and Leasing: Office Buildings
- MNT402 - Property Maintenance and Risk Management
- MPSA01 - Management Plan Skills Assessment
- RES201 - Successful Site Management
**Tools of the trade**

Real estate managers take notice of high-tech maintenance tools, but don’t necessarily invest

by Kristin Gunderson

Richard Forsyth, CPM, and president at Westerra Realty and Management, still relies on a mostly manual system to address his commercial properties’ maintenance issues.

Pictures and diagrams drawn to represent his properties’ major operating systems, and paper files with lists of maintenance items needing to be checked on or completed within the year are a couple ways he keeps maintenance in order.

He also relies on his company’s basic software—Excel and Word—to organize items needing to be addressed month by month, so nothing is overlooked.

“I keep a record of what’s going on, on the property, but it’s not sophisticated,” he said.

Many property managers find themselves in the same position as Forsyth; relying on manual systems or basic computer programs to keep up with their vast and far-reaching maintenance issues, despite advances in technology like computerized maintenance management software.

**HISTORY IN THE MAKING**

Computerized maintenance management software—a tool for managing and tracking preventative maintenance so facility managers can prevent rather than react to maintenance issues—has yet to fully penetrate the real estate management industry.

Even though about 300 computerized maintenance management solutions are available on the market, larger firms, for the most part, are the real estate management companies using such technology. Because property managers don’t always directly oversee the facility managers at larger firms, they aren’t always involved with facility management decisions—like investing in software.

And while computerized maintenance management software might undoubtedly make sense for facility managers, property managers often want something more integrative, meeting more than just maintenance needs.

With management functions for work orders, preventative maintenance, materials and inventory tracking, as well as project and utilities tracking, facility management seems ideal for the real estate management industry.

Work order management is the cornerstone of most maintenance management software, said Dustin Taylor, chief operating officer for TMA Systems. TMA develops software solutions for organizations wanting to effectively manage their physical assets and facility maintenance operations. It involves workflow, scheduling, work assignments and closing work orders.

The technology gives users a historical reference, detailing and tracking all the past maintenance issues on a property, and helps users foresee or plan for maintenance problems in the future, said Devin Ellis, client solutions director for CyberMetrics, a developer and supplier of maintenance management software and products.

“Technology has really made things more visible,” Ellis said. “It has helped property managers get a broader picture and possibly see more [about their properties] than they have ever been able to. You lose the overall glance of a facility’s history [without technology]. It’s high dollar, but it’s technology.”

**IF IT’S NOT BROKEN, FIX IT**

At a time when an industry culture shift is occurring and preventative maintenance is preferred over reactive maintenance, that historical glance at a property can be important.

Reactive maintenance, in which real estate managers put out fires, so to speak, has been the traditional facility management operational mode. While it has lower initial costs, it often increases costs overall for reasons like unplanned downtime of equipment, excessive labor costs and overhaul—rather than upkeep—of equipment.

“Being preventative is going to cost less in the long run than being reactive or waiting for a failure to occur,” Ellis said. “That’s a shift that’s been a long time coming.”

Maintenance management software includes preventative maintenance functions like scheduling devices that trigger reminders to check on and maintain certain systems or maintenance items.
Anything from calendars and meter readings to certain events or condition readings coming directly from equipment can trigger the reminders. These are supposed to be proactive functions so managers don’t wait for systems to fail before giving them a second glance.

"It’s cheaper to maintain a property and its component parts on a consistent, regular basis than it is to catch up," Forsyth said. "If you procrastinate on the maintenance process, it’s going to cost more down the road."

**DECISIONS, DECISIONS**

In spite of its seemingly practical nature and intention to streamline maintenance, Taylor said property managers have been reluctant to spend the money on TMA software. He said the systems can cost more than $50,000 to implement and an additional $2,000 to $3,000 each year to maintain.

TMA’s client base is best represented by those in education, corporate and healthcare sectors with relatively large profit margins. Cornell University, American Airlines and the Mayo Clinic are all clients of TMA.

Because real estate managers’ needs are so complex, most facility maintenance software alone won’t do, said Ellis of CyberMetrics. While CyberMetrics has some property management clients, like Jones Lang LaSalle and Trammell Crow, he said heavy manufacturers are more likely to rely on his company’s products.

Ellis said property managers want software to address more than just maintenance issues: They want their software to account for space as well as address accounting issues like third-party and customer billing, among other things. A more integrative and customized solution is what property managers want, he said, but it’s what most facility management software doesn’t offer.

If property managers do decide to invest in facility management software, Ellis said they need to first determine how much they’re willing to spend, how many people need access, whether it should be Web-based and whether it needs to be integrated with other systems.

Forsyth said for now his company is sticking to its more basic system using Word and Excel. But he said if the right product came along—making the maintenance process easier, more efficient and cost effective—he would consider using or implementing the software. While a product might already be out there, he said, it’s a matter of the software coming to his attention.

Ellis said as long as a system is in place—technical or not—money will be saved and maintenance issues will be less overwhelming to the business.

He said preventative maintenance is a decision, and installing high-end software won’t do property managers any good if they don’t use it to its full potential.

"Microsoft Outlook is no less a technology," Ellis said. "Even if you’re using Excel or Outlook, you’re vastly improved over a pencil and paper system."

Questions regarding this article can be sent to kgunderson@irem.org.
Decontaminate any room

The Remedial In-Room Decontamination System (RIDS) from Steril-Aire Inc. is a mobile unit equipped with multi-patented, high-output, ultraviolet technology. It's intended to safely and effectively decontaminate surfaces infested with mold, viruses and bacteria, without using chemicals or producing ozone or other toxic contaminants in the decontamination process.

The user wheels the RIDS unit into the infested area, leaves the room and turns on the unit remotely, allowing the energy from the high-output UVC Emitters™ to decontaminate walls, tabletops and other surfaces. A 12’ x 12’ area can typically be decontaminated in approximately 24 hours and multiple units can be used for larger areas. RIDS is effective in any type of residential, commercial, industrial or institutional building.

For more information, call 1-800-2STERIL or visit www.steril-aire.com.

Lighting the way to safety

Watt Stopper/Legrand’s Miro lighting control network can now interface with common residential electronic devices, thanks to the development of house and room scene interfaces.

The interface accepts signals from maintained inputs like switches or momentary inputs, like garage door openers, motion sensors, alarm systems and time clocks. Modules are available for individual room- or house-level control.

When a signal is received from an interfaced device, like a garage door opener, the interface activates a lighting scene—a pathway from the garage to the upstairs, for example, for safety and convenience.

For more information, visit wattstopper.com.

Tenant energy usage revealed

The ION® 6300 Wireless Energy Meter helps property managers control energy costs by offering an energy monitoring solution for large commercial properties—including office buildings and retail malls.

The meters form a wireless network that automatically reports energy consumption on each tenant space for individual and aggregate billing purposes. Property managers can then use this information to help manage accounts, conserve energy and recover energy costs.

Each tenant is equipped with a wireless ION 6300 socket-mount meter to record usage. An ION Wireless Gateway is installed nearby to receive radio signals from up to 100 meters away. The gateway then converts the energy data into industry-standard XML format for export to a spreadsheet where the property manager can monitor usage.

For more information, visit www.pwrm.com/products/ION6300.

Find potential building damage instantly

The BCAM® infrared camera by FLIR Systems offers a non-invasive means to monitor and diagnose building conditions—providing immediate high-resolution thermal imagery, revealing potential structural and moisture issues, energy efficiency and rodent or pest discovery.

This infrared camera can detect and document water intrusion into buildings, missing insulation, plumbing blockages and leaks, post-flood and fire water-damaged material, and energy use inefficiency. The BCAM immediately reveals building problems easily missed by relying on the naked eye or traditional moisture probes and meters.

The BCAM features an automatic color alarm to quickly alert users to moisture-laden areas during a building scan—detecting potential mold growth, as well as verifying when structures are moisture-free during the drying out process.

For more information, call 1-800-464-6372 or visit www.flirthermography.com/cameras/camera/10911.
**The Humidex APT is**
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- Fits any home decor
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  - Basements
  - Crawl Spaces
  - Slabs
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- 165 Vans with Truck Mounts
- 12,000 Air Movers
- 563 Production Personnel
- 3,600 Dehumidifiers

These services can help ensure your property and belongings are restored to pre-loss condition when possible while providing peace of mind in knowing normal business functions can resume in a timely manner.

Our track record of results has earned us the trust of businesses across the country and in one unforgettable instance, even the Pentagon. SERVPRO® Franchise Professionals are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to help you get back in business.

**Service Response Guidelines**

1. Within one hour from notice of loss, a SERVPRO® Franchise Professional will contact you to arrange for service.
2. Within four hours of loss notification, a SERVPRO® Franchise Professional will be on-site to start mitigation services.
3. Within eight business hours of on-site arrival, a verbal briefing of the scope will be communicated to the appropriate person.

"Service Response Guidelines - Exceptions may apply under certain conditions, such as a local catastrophic event or storm situation.

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THANK YOU FOR MAKING US A LEADER IN CLEANUP AND RESTORATION.
Foundation scholarships promote workforce diversity

The IREM Foundation is dedicated to achieving workforce diversity by offering the Minority Outreach Scholarship and the George M. Brooker Collegiate Scholarship for Minorities. Through these scholarships, the foundation helps fund real estate management education to CPM candidates and academically successful college students from underrepresented ethnic groups in the field.

The IREM Foundation is taking action to increase the number of minorities within the Institute. In the past 2 years, it has awarded 25 Minority Outreach Scholarships totaling $123,500: Twelve scholarship recipients have earned the CPM designation. Investing in a much-needed pool of talent is a surefire way of developing next-generation leaders and a strong workforce.

Because of changing demographics, the real estate industry must recruit more minorities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2004 American Community Survey, approximately 34.8 million African Americans (12.2 percent of the population), 40.5 million Hispanics or Latinos (14.2 percent of the population) and 12.1 million Asian Americans (4.2 percent of the population) live in the United States.

The number of Americans who belong to minority groups currently accounts for 39 percent of the United States' population. And since minority workers create much of the current growth in the American workforce, being culturally diverse makes good business sense for real estate professionals.

Companies wanting to strategically place themselves at a distinct, competitive advantage must realize over the next couple decades, women and minorities will account for a large portion of the growth in the labor force. Hiring more minorities and women will no longer be an option, but a necessity.

It's important real estate managers reflect the increasingly diverse communities they serve. Realizing that work needs to be done to achieve this level of diversity, the foundation is proud to fund two scholarships attracting top minority performers worldwide, while addressing the evolving needs of our ever-changing workforce.

The George M. Brooker Collegiate Scholarship for Minorities is named in honor of the late George M. Brooker, CPM, who furthered the involvement of minorities in real estate management by serving as an exemplary role model and leader. The scholarship is designed to assist minority students—on the basis of academic excellence—who are committed to a career in real estate, specifically real estate management, upon graduation.

The Minority Outreach Scholarship is designed to assist minorities in their pursuit of the CPM designation. The focus of this scholarship is to give real estate professionals and prospects the access, equity and quality education needed to better serve their communities.

It is important IREM and its foundation continue creating opportunities for minorities. When you make a donation to the IREM Foundation, you're making it possible for us to do just that. Make a donation online at www.iremfoundation.org or call IREM's customer service department. Make checks made payable to the IREM Foundation and mail to IREM Headquarters at 430 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

To learn more about these scholarships and other programs supported by the foundation, or to download applications, visit www.iremfoundation.org. Applications can also be requested by contacting IREM's customer service department at 1-800-837-0706 extension 4650.
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