

Monthly Newsletter

September 2013

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California West's online advertising efforts help ensure maximum occupancy.

California West is always looking to improve our marketing techniques and ways to approach prospective tenants. With current technology, it is not only possible but vital to use many different online marketing approaches. With that said, here are some of the tools we have been using:

- **Website:** we have had a website since 1995 and it is where we direct most people to start looking for housing.
- **Craigslist:** for many years, Craigslist has been our biggest source of referrals for prospective tenants.
- **E-mail marketing:** before the Internet, there was, and still is, direct mail which is where you receive advertising in your mail box. With the Internet, California West is now using e-mail marketing in much the same way. We provide a link in an e-mail which allows whoever is receiving it to click on the link and go to our website. In a recent trial, we were impressed with the results. Around 65% of the recipients read the e-mail and went to our website to see our listings.
- **Social media:** California West has implemented a Facebook and Twitter account. We use these tools mostly to advertise when new listings come out, showing times, etc.. Our traffic from these channels is still small (around 5%-10% per month), but more than that, it is important to be able to connect through these channels and "be there." We have been contacted by prospective tenants through social media and also know that our posts have been seen, and in some cases shared by other people. We are one of the very few real estate management businesses taking advantage and fully using social media tools.

In sum, we are constantly working on improving our marketing strategies and are happy with what we have accomplished so far.

California West's standard rental agreement requires that tenants reimburse property owners for any fines resulting from tenant misconduct.

California West's rental agreement provides that tenants must pay all fines assessed as a result of violations of governmental law or ordinance.

The San Luis Obispo police department recently sent out yellow notice cards to property owners in San Luis Obispo informing them of double fines for noisy tenants between September 20 and September 29 (i.e. during the start of school at Cal Poly). During this period, a first citation for a noise violation is \$700 to a tenant and \$700 to a property owner. Unruly gathering citations were set at \$1,400 to a tenant and \$1,000 to the property owner.

Many of our property owners contacted us upon receiving these notices and asked whether California West's rental agreement has any protections to ensure that tenants are responsible for paying such fines.

In fact, our standard rental agreement provides as follows:

Tenant shall not violate any governmental law or ordinance relating to the use of the premises. Tenant shall pay all fines assessed as a result of such violations committed by Tenant or guests of Tenant.

Of course, we do our best to screen tenants and avoid problems. Nonetheless, there will always be tenants who do incur fines for noise or other infractions. In such cases, we do attempt to protect our property owners by requiring tenants to pay those fines.

Cal Poly's president proposes increasing enrollment by 4,000 to 5,000 students.

According to a recent newspaper article in The Tribune, Cal Poly's president Jeffrey Armstrong told faculty and staff that the university should continue to grow enrollment, and will hopefully reach 24,000 to 25,000 students by the year 2022. The current enrollment is 19,800 students.

According to the 2010 Census, San Luis Obispo's total population is 45,119.

No doubt, over the coming years Cal Poly will attempt to build more on-campus housing to diminish the impact on the community of these potential new students.

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