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HOME
CASE STUDY

Village Realty Leverages Real-Time
Notifications And Property Status

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By:
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 **PointCentral**[®]

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A CASE STUDY BY STAN EARNSHAW, VICE PRESIDENT OF POINTCENTRAL

Running a vacation rental management company is an operational challenge – to put it mildly. For Village Realty, with 600 properties along 40 miles of beach on the Outer Banks, the challenges are greatly magnified, which is why they decided to look into Smart Home to see how it could help.

I spoke with Laik Le Pera, director of hotel operations at Village Realty, who was intimately involved in their Smart Home project. I asked him why they decided to install Smart Home and what it has meant for Village Realty.



The Smart Home Vision

“Two years ago, Village Realty had a mix of keyed and keyless locks. We saw the smart home movement on the horizon,” said Laik, “and decided we needed to have all of our property owners on a single platform for consistency and efficiency. As the management company we needed to see all the locks and thermostats in real time, so we could easily manage all of the properties we represent.”

“Homeowners were starting to install smart thermostats, and we could see lots of potential for complications with 600 individuals controlling the locks and temperatures. We were aware of several keyless providers in the market, but saw that the keyless lock was just the tip of the spear leading to an enterprise Smart Home solution. When PointCentral introduced us to the possibility of energy management and real-time status information for every property, we could clearly see benefits for our owners, our guests and efficient operations.”

Moving To Smart Home

“Lower energy costs for our homeowners and more convenience for our guests were our goals. Asset management is an often overlooked part of a property manager’s responsibility, and Smart Home gave us a platform to monitor and measure, with future potential for a smarter house. The tipping point in favor of PointCentral was their use of the robust cellular system as opposed to the home Wi-Fi.”

“Wi-Fi routers are a relatively frequent cause for a maintenance call, “ said Laik. “Connecting Smart Home technology to an unreliable device just didn’t make sense.”

“Initially, we thought we might be able to install everything ourselves, but we decided to bring in the PointCentral team to handle the install, and it was the right choice. PointCentral brought in a team for the north and one for the south and had over 550 properties up and running in 2 weeks.”

The Vision Takes Shape

Village Realty wanted to take advantage of the automated notifications such as guest departure, cleaning and inspection status, and early arrival for the next guest. Village Realty has been a leader in the vacation rental industry in customer service and next generation technology improvements that benefit our owners and guests, and the Smart Home platform holds a bright future.

Guest and Homeowner Reaction

“Guests really enjoy keyless entry,” stated Laik. “But the best feedback we’ve had is the automated notification when their home is ready early. Even if it’s just an hour, guests love being able to immediately go to the property and start their vacation, because that’s what it’s all about.”

“Our homeowners enjoy the added security knowing there aren’t duplicate keys that haven’t been returned by vendors or guests. They love the online reports we give them that show who has been in their property and when. We really like how vendors and maintenance have their own closing codes so we can get a handle on how long work orders are taking, and if the vendor really did go to the property. We anticipate being able to measure energy savings for the property owner, and the convenience for the guest, (and occasional owner) who is locked out is phenomenal.”

Real-Time Data Saves the Day

“I was at our reservation desk one day when a guest called in to let us know the air conditioning wasn’t cooling properly. So we went online to look. This particular property has 3 thermostats. We could see that the downstairs thermostat was going up a degree every 30 seconds. The reservationist asked the guest to check the bottom level entry door. While they were on the phone, the guest went downstairs and discovered the door was wide open. Normally, that would have resulted in a call to maintenance and a tech driving over there, only to find the door open. But we were able to troubleshoot it over the phone, which wouldn’t have been possible without the real time data PointCentral provides.”



The Future Looks Smart

Bob Oakes, owner of Village Realty added, “By implementing PointCentral Smart Home, we are able to track access information much more efficiently and quickly, we’ve eliminated the potential liability of physical keys, and we think we can save significant energy dollars for our property owners. We look forward to further integration with our HomeAway V12 and Glad To Have You software, and the continued benefits of Smart Home for our owners and guests.”

PointCentral thanks Bob Oakes, Laik Le Pera and the Village Realty team for their contributions to this article.



PointCentral, headquartered in Vienna, Va. with offices in Portland, Ore., designs, manufactures and markets Smart Home hardware and software products for the vacation rental management and residential property management markets. PointCentral products provide customers in these markets with the ability to monitor and control access and temperature across all the properties in their inventory – reducing risk, improving security, controlling assets, reducing energy costs and improving guest/tenant satisfaction.



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