

Apartment Locating Website Tips

Apartment locating is no longer just about helping people find apartments; renters can do that themselves online. Successful apartment locators build systems, automate their follow-up & communication, automate commission collection, integrate all of their systems together, write informative and educational articles, track and measure every aspect of their business, and run a website as an e-commerce portal.

We have helped 100+ locating brands launch websites since 2016 and the locators who make \$150K - \$200K+ per year are the one's who don't just launch a website, they run a business. The website is the front-end billboard of your business, but the back-end is where you generate wealth.

If you're an apartment locating professional and considering building a website, we understand it's a big decision. The sole purpose of a locating website is to make money by generating leads. Your website must convey trust, credibility, and professionalism within about 10 seconds of opening your home page.

These are my tips to build a lead generating apartment locating business:

- **Buy - Don't Rent Your Website:** There are several built-it-yourself website platforms and real estate website builders with low-cost monthly fees. There is nothing wrong with using one of these builders to do it yourself, but keep in mind you are renting your website - you don't own it. You will have to pay the monthly fee forever, and some don't allow custom programming so integrating with other systems that automate emails or follow up tools isn't possible. To do this later, you will need to build your site again because these platforms don't allow you to move the content. In most cases you will lose SEO when you start over so the move could be costly. When you purchase our custom apartment locating WordPress website, you own it, and you never need to rebuild it. You can move it to any hosting company, or we can host it and maintain it.
- **Apartment Listings:** Your website must solve a problem from your client's perspective. Insurance websites must provide online quotes, and hotel websites must show the cost of a room. An apartment locating website must show pricing and availability. The absence of property listings on your website can result in significant missed opportunities. Users could have difficulty believing you have relationships with relevant properties, resulting in frustration, and leaving your site all together. A website without searchable listings may give the impression of outdated practices, possibly negatively impacting your overall brand perception. In a competitive rental market, lacking modern search functionalities puts you at a disadvantage, as competitors with more user-friendly websites and interactive listings are likely to attract and retain more clients. Apartment locating professionals can easily add searchable apartment listings to their website with our IDX or use our standalone IDX web page.
- **Content Is King:** Google is adamant that your content is the biggest contributor to your website rank. If you want to outrank your competitors quickly, publish hundreds of property listings using our data feed. In addition to property listings, you also need to ask Google what the most popular questions people ask about searching for an apartment in your area and then answer those questions by writing an article about it. A blog is just a collection of articles answering questions about your industry, so Google knows when to put your website in the search results. You can write the content yourself, use ChatGPT to write it and you edit it, or hire someone to write the content. The faster you can post articles, the faster your rank will climb to page one of the search results.
- **Update Frequently:** When Google reads your website every week, it records the date the information was last updated and assigns a "freshness date". Google confirms the freshness date will contribute to your rank if your website shows listings. A listing site is a site that promotes real estate, cars, shoes, hotel rooms, clothes; any inventory that changes frequently. When you

purchase our custom apartment locating website and we host and maintain it, we run the data feed every week to keep your listings up to date. Not only will your website have hundreds of property listings but they will be updated weekly with our data feed so you can outrank your competitors.

- **Keep It Simple:** Clever doesn't sell. As an apartment locating professional you must build relationships with as many strangers as possible so keep your content and lead capture forms simple and easy. Confusing explanations on your website or multi-step lead capture forms will kill your lead generation.
- **Offer A Dynamic Experience:** Realtors have long benefited from searchable MLS features on their websites, recognizing that enabling users to explore properties in real-time generates more leads. In today's competitive market, providing a dynamic and user-friendly experience through searchable apartment listings is not just a convenience but a necessity for driving business growth and staying ahead of your competitors. A renter looking for a penthouse high rise apartment is going to expect to go to your website and see what penthouse high rise apartments are available in their price range and see photos, amenities and pick the one's they like. Our IDX takes care of this for you with endless combinations to display apartments on your website.
- **Automate Your Lead Conversion: *Fortunes are made in the follow-up.*** The only way to make \$200K+ per year apartment locating is to automate your lead conversion process. Your website is a lead generating system and your contacts and potential customers should be taken on an automated journey to help them decide they want to be a client. Our custom apartment locating website is integrated with our IDX that comes standard with email auto-responders and tools to automate the customer journey. If you already have a CRM with email auto-responders written, we can connect your website to your existing CRM.
- **Invest In Systems:** You can't build a financially successful business with one \$50/month apartment database and a free Gmail email address. Locators fail quickly in this business because they don't invest in systems. They go broke trying to locate like the old days and refuse to learn new tech skills. You don't need to become a tech genius, but technology is required for any business these days so you either need to learn how to do it yourself or pay someone to do it for you which isn't cheap. Having a job gives you a paycheck but running a business requires investment and I see many, many locators with no resources to invest so instead they go find a job. Making money as a locator is not easy, but it can be a lot of fun if you take it seriously and invest in systems. I built the Locator IDX system to give locators access to lead generation tools, website design, apartment MLS, online leads, and CRM email automation all in one system. You will still need an accounting system like Quickbooks online or Xero which allows you to email and track all of your invoices while predicting your income and tracking revenue for your taxes. I have no intention of designing Locator IDX to be an all-inclusive system for locators. I do one thing really well and I leave tasks like invoicing and email marketing to the experts in those industries.
- **Create Lifetime Clients:** Locators lose approximately \$50K per year if they don't have a consistent email marketing program. On average a client will rent for 10 years before they buy a house, and they have 7-8 friends who will also rent for 10 years before they buy a house. Without a consistent email marketing system to inform, educate, and refer previous clients, you will stay on the lead generation hamster wheel and never achieve predictable annual revenue generated by repeat and referral clients. Locators who focus their efforts primarily on finding new clients rarely achieve \$100K+ annual revenue. Create lifetime clients by figuring out how you can continue to provide value after the lease is signed and the commission collected. Email marketing is easier and more consistent than social media. When social media platforms change their algorithm, you often lose visibility to your audience. Email marketing is a direct line of communication to your audience and your email database is one of the most profitable assets you own but is most likely underused.

- **Measure Results:** Your goal doesn't have to be page one of Google. It can be 10 more leads this month than last month. However, you need to know your position on Google compared to other apartment locating websites. How often do you read your Google Analytics report? Which pages get the most engagement? Unless you spend time, each month evaluating your position and results, you can't improve your results consistently.
- **Advertise:** After the website is launched, Rental Advisors does not advertise or market your website to drive traffic to the site. The site will include every element Google requires to rank your site organically, but it takes more than that to actually show in the search results and generate leads. I've built many sites that never made any money because the locator didn't advertise or market the site. I am exceptional at technology, websites, and data, but you will need to hire someone else to help create a marketing strategy. Decide where your audience is and how to get in front of them on a regular basis. Social media, email marketing, Google advertising, are just a few options. I will work seamlessly with your other vendors because a financially successful apartment locating business requires a team of people with different skill sets. Luckily, no one has better skills with locating technology than Rental Advisors and we would love to be on your team.

Data Feed Checklist & Cost

Step 1	Hours
Gain access to your domain and WordPress account	1
Set up Locator IDX account.	1
Step 2	
Create a URL naming structure for neighborhood pages.	1
Create a custom taxonomy structure for custom post types and property listings.	1
Create a Google Analytics tracking code and install on every page of website and a monthly traffic report to the client.	1
Step 3	
Create a Locator IDX account and ask the client to choose the properties they want displayed on their website.	1
Set up the Data Feed and map the properties to the custom post types and taxonomies created in Step 2.	4
Incorporate the low competition/high volume keywords from Step 2 into hundreds of property listings to maximize organic SEO quickly.	4
Install lead capture forms integrated with the IDX on every property listing.	2
Install the property photo gallery on each property listing.	2
Import unlimited property listings from the data feed chosen by the client.	4
Import neighborhoods with corresponding properties located in that neighborhood.	6
Import amenities and make searchable on the front-end.	2
Step 4	
Activate the search tool/search bar on the home page so website visitors can search property listings.	6
Integrate lead capture forms with IDX or other CRM.	4
Total Hours	40
Hourly Rate	\$75
Total Cost	\$3,000

Step 2 (Optional Add-On)	
Research local SEO using SEM Rush to identify competitors and low competition/high volume keywords.	2
Evaluate local SEO search terms relating to apartment locating and identify terms that can be used to beat existing locating websites.	3
Use the research to create a URL naming strategy for hundreds of apartment listings.	1
Total Hours	46
Hourly Rate	\$75
Total Cost	\$3,450

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