



Sterling Services, Inc.

Newsletter

Winter
2009—2010

Happy Holidays!

Continued positive changes at the Management Office

Based on the positive feedback on the Thanksgiving "thank you" flyer, I thought it prudent to send over a Sterling Services, Inc. (SSI) newsletter. I again need to start off with a big thank you in selecting Sterling as your "partner". Our goal is to be the premier partner for volunteer Trustees who are working to improve their condominium properties. *But what does it mean to strive to be the premiere partner for condo management?*

As noted in our proposals, our company's mission is to provide sophisticated condo management services within a personal relationship. This is based on a per-

ception that people don't care what you know, until they know that you care. Thus as Sterling continues to grow, one of my core responsibility is to find creative ways to continue to create a friendly corporate culture. This is accomplished by hiring talented people who have the empathy to deliver "sterling" service. I need to provide these professionals with the right technology, so that they can efficiently provide this premiere service. This newsletter is a critical tool in keeping the volunteer Trustees, now in 20+ properties, updated on recent and pending changes.

David J. Levy, President

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Sterling Services, Inc.

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For those new to Sterling, it is important that we clarify that **our business model—we provide service via two associates / staff members on each account.** The property manager's primary roles are supporting the Trustees, unit owners with special needs (real or perceived) and the service providers (contractors and consultants).

To allow the property managers to focus on these critical aspects of property management, they need a team member who is focused on the administrative needs of the unit owners. This customer service professional is called the property administrator. While it is nice to see that some other firms are finally starting to see the value of this 2-person team model, Sterling has always taken this model a bit beyond the changing industry norm. We are able to do this due to our extremely efficient back-office, in accounting, owning our own building and having an additional revenue source, our maintenance division.

Who is who?

For more information please see our web site and hit the tab, about us, and then look at the option, our team.



Maintenance division upgrades in 2009!

In 2004, we purchased and remodeled an abandoned office building to support an enlarged, but stabilizing condo management core business and the pending launch of a maintenance division. Please see our photo gallery on our web site & hit the photo gallery tab to see the transformation of the office building.

In 2007 a Director of Maintenance, Jay Gentili, was hired to add experience and expertise to this division. In 2008 a carpentry foreman and a "large box" truck were added, which created a mini-hardware store on 6-wheels. In 2009, also on a 6-wheeled truck, we added a "watering" truck for mobile power washing of vinyl siding and decks. We added two very skilled seasonal helpers to give Sterling more capacity to support the growing needs of our expanding customer base, including insurance remodeling work for single family home owners after Service

Master completed emergency water and/or fire soot removal. In 2009, we also had several employees add certifications (see related article on page 3), so that we are creating a company "culture" of "continued improvement", not just in the office, but also in the field.

While the vast majority of repairs will be done by firms like Village Green for landscaping, Coating Corps for house painting and P&E for roof replacements/repairs, there are many situations where Sterling's in-house maintenance division is a win-win-win option for the Trust, Sterling, and the home owners.



Technology updates Web Sites, Automated Phone "Blasts" & Scanning Supplier Invoices



In a prior newsletter, we introduced some of our technology partners. We also introduced a phrase called "condo centric". But what does "condo centric" mean? It means solutions designed specifically for the "niche" of property management called association (condo) management.

By using the leading condo centric software, from T.O.P.S. (see www.212software.com for more details), Sterling has access to third party condo centric service firms that electronically "match-up" to TOPS. The most recent example is **scanning supplier invoices**, via a firm called Strong Room, and this is being tested by Tracey on her portfolio. This service is being provided at no cost to the client.

(www.strongroomsolutions.com)

In the area of web sites, we have gone live with web sites via the leading firm, Athomenet (www.athomenet.com). Please go to our web site for more information.

In the area of non-condo-centric technology, we are testing out automated phone blasting via a firm named N-Tech (www.ntecllc.com). Our new controller, Leslie, is working with Tracey and Barbara to leverage this proactive service. This service is billed at cost for those properties who wish to add on this service, with Sterling's labor not billable, as we want to encourage Trustees to consider proactive communications with the unit owners.

As Phyllis came from a CPA firm with 200+ employees and NO filing cabinets, she has been very helpful in our evaluation of copiers / printers that also scan. Sterling now has three high speed scanners, two of which can handle color.

Major professional recognition - Tracey, Barbara, Chuck, Bob and "Daveed" all obtained certifications

SSI is committed to investing in proven industry specific training which helps each employee provide better service to "their" customers. The primary educational resource for condo managers (and Trustees) is CAI, Community Associations Institute. CAI is the international non-profit research organization that represents the very best in the condominium industry.

In the area of manager training, CAI has created a 3-tier certification program. On behalf of her co-workers, it is my honor as owner of the firm to announce that after many years of hard work, both in the field and in the class room, Tracey Rhodes has met all of the requirements to be awarded CAI's 2nd tiered designation; the coveted "AMS". Barbara, who has recently been

awarded her 1st tiered certification is on her way to her AMS for 2010!

What is an AMS? Please see side bar >>

Chuck, Tracey and Bob also sat for and passed the State's UNRESTRICTED construction supervisor's license, which covers residential and commercial buildings. Daveed passed the challenging State Certified Pool Operator's license.

When you see Tracey, Barbara, Bob, Chuck, and/or Daveed, please congratulate them on their personal success!



"What is an AMS?"

**AMS stands for
Association
Management
Specialist."**

**Staffing Upgrades
Phyllis, Rogeria, and Leslie join SSI**

In a service business, the #1 asset of the firm is the employees. These employees must be technically competent, customer friendly, and able to leverage an accelerating pace of technology upgrades.

As a firm, we are very pleased to announce that Sterling will have **100% client retention in 2009**, which is unheard of in the condo management industry. However, These results were due to constantly looking for ways to improve.

To that end, an internal review of the staff indicated that our continued success justified making some upgrades within our technology AND our personnel. Thus, in four key areas, reception, customer service, internal controls and use of technology, we needed to make some staffing changes.

In the area of receptionist (and bi-lingual customer service), Rogeria Roberti joined Sterling in July. Rogeria brings a wealth of experience in property administration and customer service and has the ability to support Barbara's promotion to property manager and web master. Please see our new web site at www.sterlingservicesinc.com for clarification.

In the area of customer service and internal controls, Phyllis McDonald joined the team. Phyllis has been instrumental in delivering strong customer service for many of my properties and has also been involved heavily in the maintenance division development.

In the area of internal controls and use of technology, Leslie Saporetti came on board as the controller for Sterling Services. Her background in general office management also included the use and implementation of technology driven solutions, further supporting the progress of Sterling leveraging the technology offered by existing and new technology partners.

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*SSI and its employees
wish you and your
family happy holidays
and a healthy 2010!*



Company mission:

As this newsletter clarifies, everyone at Sterling is trying to live up to the company mission—provide sophisticated condo management services within a personal relationship.

This newsletter provides some insight into the investments, being made on your behalf, to allow service levels to be maintained, and where margins allow, be enhanced.

These investments include, but are not limited to:

- Training opportunities for ALL employees and where practical, leveraging CAI educational opportunities.
- Relentless use of innovative, yet proven technology to increase automatic integration of data without costly & error prone data re-entry.
- Continuous investments in tools and equipment to support high-quality, yet cost-effective maintenance and remodeling work by our expanding maintenance department.

As always, I look forward to your feedback. I am just a Nextel call or mouse click away!

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