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Unpacking multifamily package management solutions

Executive summary

Online shopping has never been more appealing. And like the rest of the population, your residents are buying more online than ever before. No matter how basic or oversized the purchase may be, their packages are arriving to your communities in droves.

For apartment communities, this is where the convenience of online shopping ends. The daily flood of packages creates hours of work for on-site teams. And cluttered community offices regularly look like a warehouse. For residents, retrieving a package can be inconvenient, and packages are subject to damage or theft.

To fix these problems, many multifamily communities are embracing package management solutions. **This guide breaks down every option that multifamily communities can use for better package management, as shown in the table on the next page We also outline the entire package management process and share some guidelines for picking a suitable solution for your community.**

Package management solutions comparison chart

		On-site teams manually handle packages	Package management apps	Package lockers	Smart package rooms	Third-party package delivery services
Pros	On-site teams retain full control	✓				
	On-site teams see time savings from automation		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Delivery notifications are integrated into property app or resident portal		✓	✓	✓	
	Contactless pickup		✓	✓	✓	
	Gives resident flexibility with pick up			✓	✓	✓
	Provides security for packages			✓	✓	✓
Cons	Error prone	✓				✓
	Large burden for on-site staff	✓				
	Pickups limited to office hours	✓	✓			
	Requires large upfront capital			✓		
	Requires dedicated space	✓	✓	✓	✓	

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Why your communities have more packages than ever before

Online shopping has been a rising trend across every industry for more than a decade. As an apartment operator and an online shopper yourself, this isn't a surprise.

Everyday, carriers like UPS and FedEx are unloading massive quantities of packages at your communities. And like the majority of multifamily communities, the uptick in package deliveries is causing strain on your on-site teams.

Even before the pandemic hit and consumers had no worries about venturing into a store, packages were crowding the mail rooms and offices in your communities. But now, the problem is steadily getting worse. For many residents, online shopping has become the preferred method to buy what they need.

So just how much are we relying on online shopping? Here are some stats that might blow your mind about package deliveries:

- **The amount of <u>ecommerce sales globally</u> was $3.53 trillion in 2019 and is projected to reach $6.54 trillion in 2022.**

- **Just in the US, package delivery has increased from 11 billion delivered in 2018 to <u>16 billion in 2020.</u>**

- **There are 1.8M packages delivered per hour in the United States or more than 30,000 packages delivered every minute**

Your on-site teams probably wouldn't be surprised by these figures. After all, they are the ones in the crosshairs of the daily package debacle. And in recent times, the problem that was already consuming their day has gotten far worse.

With COVID every day is like the Christmas rush

Just a few years ago, the holiday season might have been the only time that packages were overwhelming the community. But the pandemic has drastically altered our buying behaviors.

Many apartment renters are trying to limit their in-person interactions. Instead of buying basic supplies at the store, they're relying on the convenience of Amazon Prime or other online retailers.

That's putting more pressure on your on-site teams than ever before. The non-stop deliveries have made every day since March 2020 reminiscent of the holiday rush. Data from UPS proves how much home deliveries have surged. **In April 2020, UPS reported that home deliveries [accounted for 70% of its shipments](#) versus the usual 50% before the pandemic.**

Even after the pandemic ends (whenever that may be), it doesn't seem like excessive package delivery will halt. In a

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session at [APTVirtual,](#) an executive at Bozzuto Management cited a survey across their resident base about online shopping. **Eighty-nine percent of respondents said they will continue to rely on online shopping for most items even after the pandemic.**
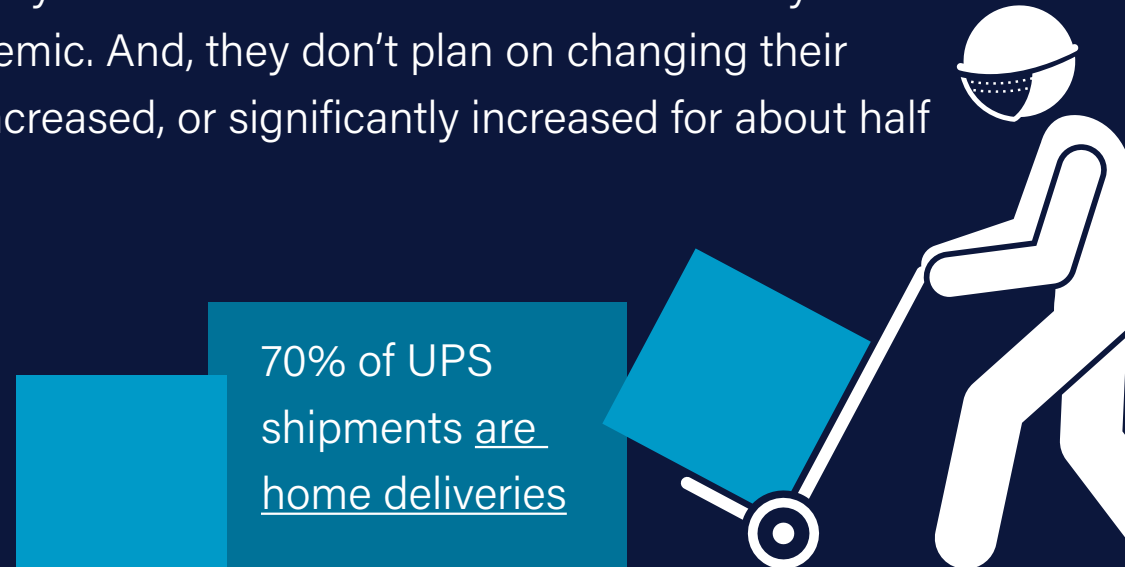
COVID has made people more comfortable with the convenience and ease of online shopping. Factor in the benefits of contactless payments, and the demise of many brick-and-mortar stores, and it's bound to cause a permanent behavioral shift towards digital purchases.

And it's not just tech-savvy millennials and Gen Zers who are relying on e-commerce during the pandemic. Gen C, - a newly defined group of consumers, - might very well be the driving force behind it all. Generation C is a uniquely defined group that gathers together all those who are "connected consumers". Gen C is not bound by age. They integrate technology into every aspect of their daily routine. Whether it's online shopping, using smart devices, or wearing a Fitbit, Gen C demands a connected lifestyle.
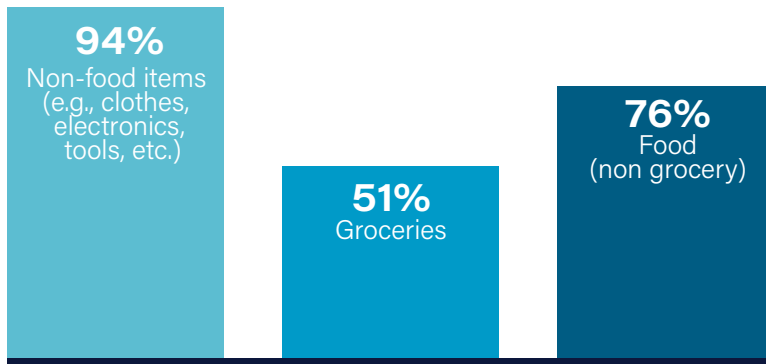
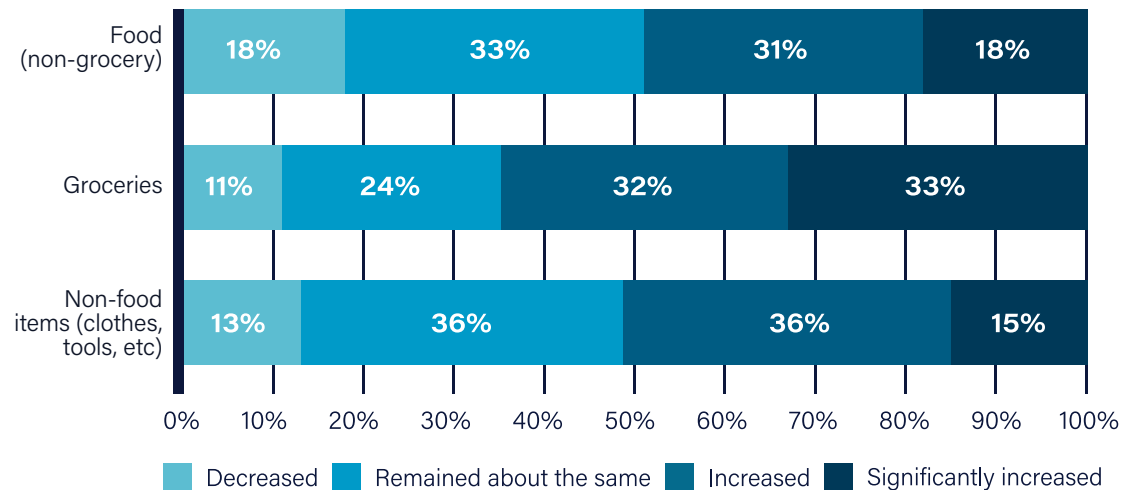# Renters' online shopping behavior during the pandemic

During a session at APTVirtual, Bozzuto Management shared the results of a survey they conducted among their residents. The majority of their residents admit to dramatically increasing online shopping during the pandemic. And, they don't plan on changing their buying habits anytime soon. Ordering has increased, or significantly increased for about half the residents during the pandemic.

89%

89% of Bozzuto resident survey respondents will continue to rely on online shopping post-pandemic.

70% of UPS shipments are home deliveries

What type of goods have you ordered online while living in the community?

94%
Non-food items (e.g., clothes, electronics, tools, etc.)

51%
Groceries

76%
Food (non grocery)

How have your online purchases changed?

	Decreased	Remained about the same	Increased	Significantly increased
Food (non-grocery)	18%	33%	31%	18%
Groceries	11%	24%	32%	33%
Non-food items (clothes, tools, etc)	13%	36%	36%	15%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Decreased   Remained about the same   Increased   Significantly increased

Package delivery hassles that drive residents away

Clearly, online purchases are now a normal part of life. For some, it's more routine than putting gas in the car or walking into a grocery store. So imagine the discontent residents may feel when their community doesn't fully accommodate such a regular part of modern life.

Residents want timely notifications about delivery

Timely and effective package management is not a perk. Residents see it as a necessity. And for certain demographics, like Millennials and Gen Z, it can be a dealbreaker if there are too many points of friction in the process. Easy and secure access for receiving online orders has become an expected need for this growing generation of renters.

It goes beyond being able to get a package at their home. There are many points of friction in the package management process that can potentially disrupt resident satisfaction.

Thanks to Amazon, we've all gotten accustomed to fast turnaround. A study done by Clutch found out exactly how much Amazon's speediness has altered our expectations surrounding delivery. **In 2016, consumers expected to wait 4.8 days for an online order to be delivered. Fast forward to today where the majority of consumers want an order in hand in under 3 days.**

Unfortunately, that puts added pressure on your on-site teams to alert residents about their package. Even if there's a deluge of packages to process, residents still expect a prompt notification that their package is ready for pickup.

The longer it takes for them to be notified it's ready, the longer it is until they can come claim them. This is especially true if residents have to come into the community office during regular business hours for a package pickup.

Without a prompt notification, residents may not have enough notice to be able to retrieve the package before the office closes. That adds another day until their order can get into their hands. And if your policies often lead to delays before residents can get their packages, it may cause dissatisfaction with their community.

Residents expect their packages to be secure

Package security is a basic expectation for residents of apartment communities. When packages are lost, stolen, or even damaged at your community, the result is unhappy residents and a lower retention rate.

The most obvious reason: no one likes to lose money on packages that are lost or stolen. Sometimes, a stolen package can equate to a big loss for a resident. **According to NMHC, more than three-quarters of residents (76 percent) say they order high-value items that are shipped to their apartment community**. Residents expect that once a package is on community premises that it's the management company's responsibility to keep it safe until it can be claimed.

But probably the most important reason to ensure package security is that it can lead residents to question their overall safety in the community. If packages are stolen, they may fairly assume that their community is vulnerable to other crime. And when safety is questionable, they are likely to look for another community when it's time to renew their lease.

Resident delivery demands

3 days = The amount of time consumers expect their packages to be received by

36% 36% of apartment residents receive perishable deliveries at least once a month

76% have high-value items shipped to their apartment

76%

Residents don't want their perishables to spoil

It's one thing to not immediately have access to a new article of clothing. But there's a short time frame to use some of today's most popular deliveries. Meal kits and other temperature-sensitive deliveries are growing increasingly popular. **The National Multihousing Council cites that 36% of apartment residents are receiving a temperature-sensitive box at least once a month.** Most of these deliveries can only stay fresh for a day, maybe two without refrigeration.

It's become essential for communities to have a refrigerated area to store these types of deliveries. However, many communities lack this kind of storage area. So if your teams aren't quick to log the package and notify the resident...well, they may be coming to pick up spoiled food. Or wilted flowers. It's just another reason why timely delivery notifications are essential

What challenges are your on-site teams facing?

Ultimately, your goal is to improve package management at your communities. But there are numerous pain points associated with this task, both for residents and your on-site teams. Before you can pick a solution that might work best for your communities, it's important to understand the full scope of problems. Here are the most pressing issues.

So. Many. Packages.

Amazon Prime is awfully handy in the midst of a pandemic, isn't it? Residents (and likely you, too!) have been taking full advantage of the membership. That's only the half of it. Between online shopping, meal kit subscriptions and grocery deliveries, packages are overwhelming community offices.

C+R Research conducted an e-commerce survey in 2019 and found that on average, consumers had 45 packages delivered to their residence per year. For Amazon Prime members that number is slightly higher at 51. Let's use the smaller end of that estimate to construct how that might impact a community of 100 units.

- 100+ units, including a two bedroom apartment, could easily mean **250 people living in the complex**

- 250 people receiving 45 packages per year = **11,250 per year**

- Saturdays and Sundays excluded, means that **each workday your community has 44 packages delivered.**

For large, high-rise communities, NMHC reports 20% receive more than 400 packages a week! What's even more astonishing is that both of these estimates are from 2019 - pre-pandemic times. It's highly likely in 2020 and 2021 that communities are receiving many more packages on a daily/weekly basis than these estimates.

Not enough storage space

More than likely, some of the communities in your portfolio were built when e-commerce didn't exist. Or when its impact was still minimal. Even buildings constructed in the past three years couldn't anticipate the explosion of online ordering thanks to lockdown orders.

Unfortunately that means when the daily tsunami of packages arrives, your team is struggling to find a place to put them. And if packages from the day before (or beyond) are still unclaimed, then your spaces are bursting at the seams. Plus, residents have more oversized packages than ever before. Rugs. Treadmills. Mattresses. These are things that clog an already-full office.

With a lack of space, there's usually no choice but to pile packages on top of one another. Or in a hallway or another area that packages were never intended to go. This disorganization puts parcels at a greater risk of becoming damaged or misplaced.

The fact is, most community offices don't have enough room to accommodate today's volume of packages. Those offices become even more jam packed when residents don't pick up their package in a timely manner.

Processing a deluge of packages dominates their day

Adequate space is an issue for many communities. But an even bigger pain point for on-site teams? The amount of time it takes to process these packages.

According to a panel of multifamily operators at the 2016 NAA Education Conference, it takes on-site personnel five to six minutes to process a single package. That is roughly one hour for every 10 packages. If we use the estimate from earlier about how many packages your community receives, it's possible that your associates are spending up to 4 hours a day on package management!

With package management requiring so much time, it's easy for bigger priorities - like leasing, and resident satisfaction - to get neglected.

Notifying residents is necessary but takes time

Once a package is received and logged by your property comes the task of notifying your residents. If you don't have an automated solution, this can eat up a lot of time for on-site teams. On-site teams must:

- Look up the resident in their system

- Send an email or a text message (maybe both) depending on the resident's preferred communication method

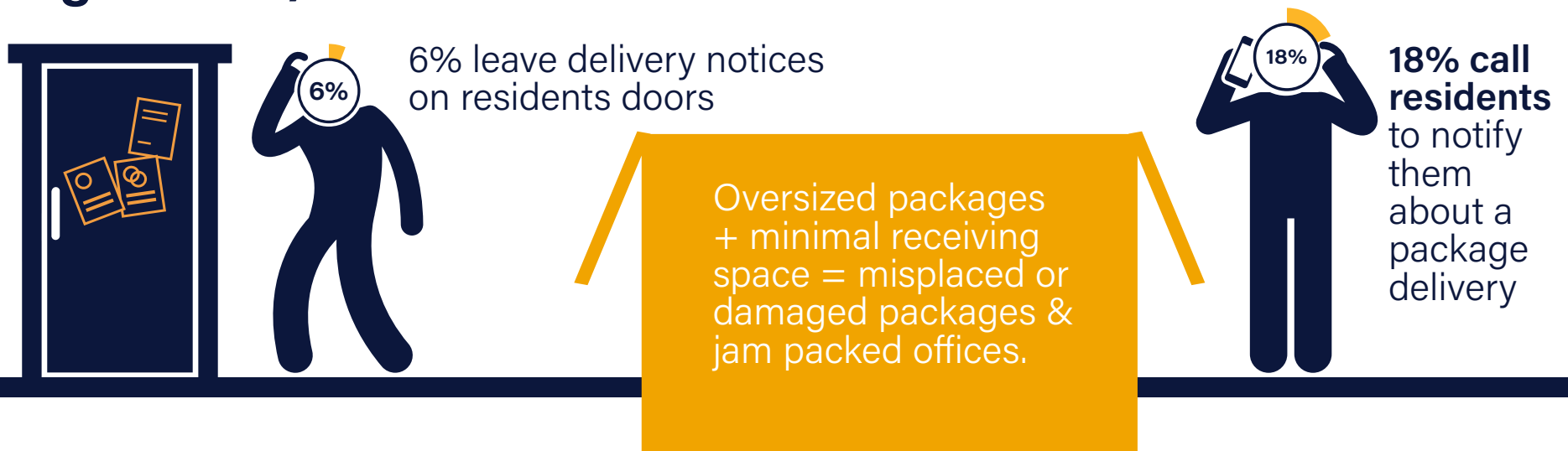- In some cases, associates make a note of the day and time the notification was sent

There are some communities that use even more tedious measures for package notification. **NMHC's Package Delivery survey found that some communities are still providing high-touch notifications like leaving delivery notices on residents' doors (6 percent) or calling residents (18 percent).** Regardless of the method of management, notifications can take considerable time, especially if you have a high volume of packages.

On-site staff package pain points:

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In 2019, Amazon prime members **received 51 packages per year**

20% 20% of high-rise **communities receive 400 packages a week**

5-6 minutes

= the time it takes to process a single package

6 minutes per package **x 44** packages/day = **4.4 hours a day spent processing packages**

High-touch, tedious notification methods:

6% 6% leave delivery notices on residents doors

Oversized packages + minimal receiving space = misplaced or damaged packages & jam packed offices.

18% **18% call residents** to notify them about a package delivery

Solutions for better package management

Package deliveries don't have to burden your staff. Or be an inconvenience for your residents. There are multiple options that streamline the package management process. Finding what's right for your communities starts with learning about today's options for package management. There are five strategies you can use to handle deliveries at your community:

1. On-site teams handle all package management (the traditional way)
2. Package management apps
3. Package locker systems
4. Smart package rooms
5. Third-party package management and delivery vendors

1. On-site teams handle all package management

First, let's walk through how on-site teams have traditionally handled deliveries. It may be the process many of your communities use already. **In 2018, NMHC found that 67% of respondents to their Package Delivery Survey were managing packages using this method.** Outlining this process is helpful so you can compare it to the new systems that the industry is steadily gravitating to.

In this scenario, on-site teams do not use any sort of technology to help with package acceptance. There are several steps involved and they all fall on the community manager to accomplish.

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How on-site teams handle package management manually:

1. The shipping carrier brings packages to one central point in a community (office, lobby, etc.)

2. An on-site team member reviews each package to ensure it belongs to a current resident

3. Packages are signed for by the on-site team member

4. On-site staff logs each package (usually on paper)

5. Packages are moved to a designated storage space - closet, mail room, etc.

6. On-site employees notify residents, frequently via email, of their delivery

7. Employees will individually fetch packages when residents arrive to receive their packages

8. Residents sign package log indicating time and date they claimed it

# The benefits and drawbacks of your on-site team handling package management

Benefits	Drawbacks
Residents know who to turn to if there are questions about their packages: Since on-site teams are so hands on with deliveries, residents have someone to turn to if they have any questions.	**Higher risk of human error, misplaced packages:** Since there are so many steps involved in this process there's inevitably room for error. And by relying on paper-based systems for tracking, there's a higher possibility packages can be misplaced.
On-site teams have full control over the process: Once packages are delivered by a carrier, on-site teams handle every aspect of the process.	**Hard to manage during COVID:** This is a highly hands-on process, which isn't ideal for the times. Many community managers are working remotely or limited hours, which means residents will experience delays with retrieving a package.
	Incredibly time consuming: Out of all the options for package management, this model by far places the most constraints on your on-site teams.
	Residents have to retrieve packages during office hours: If residents are relying on a community associate to hand off their package, then that means they can only come in during office hours. This is not always possible so some residents may be irritated at this package policy.

2. Package management apps

While you probably want to automate as much of the package management process as possible, it may not be feasible for your communities to have lockers or smart package rooms.

Package management apps are excellent for bridging this gap. They offer on-site teams automated resident notifications, which shaves a significant amount of time off package management.
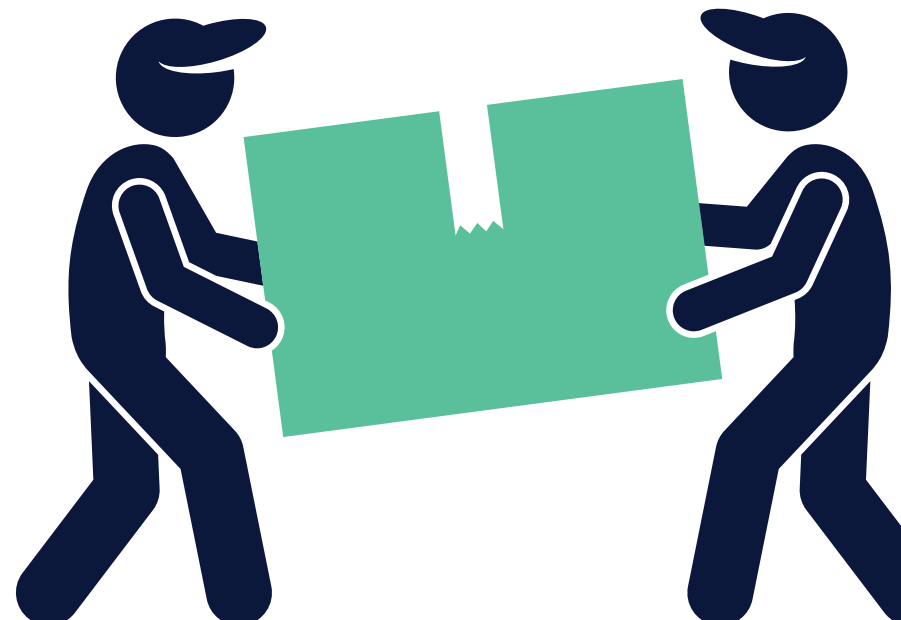
It makes the experience better for residents, too. Residents appreciate being notified as soon as a package is logged into the community office.
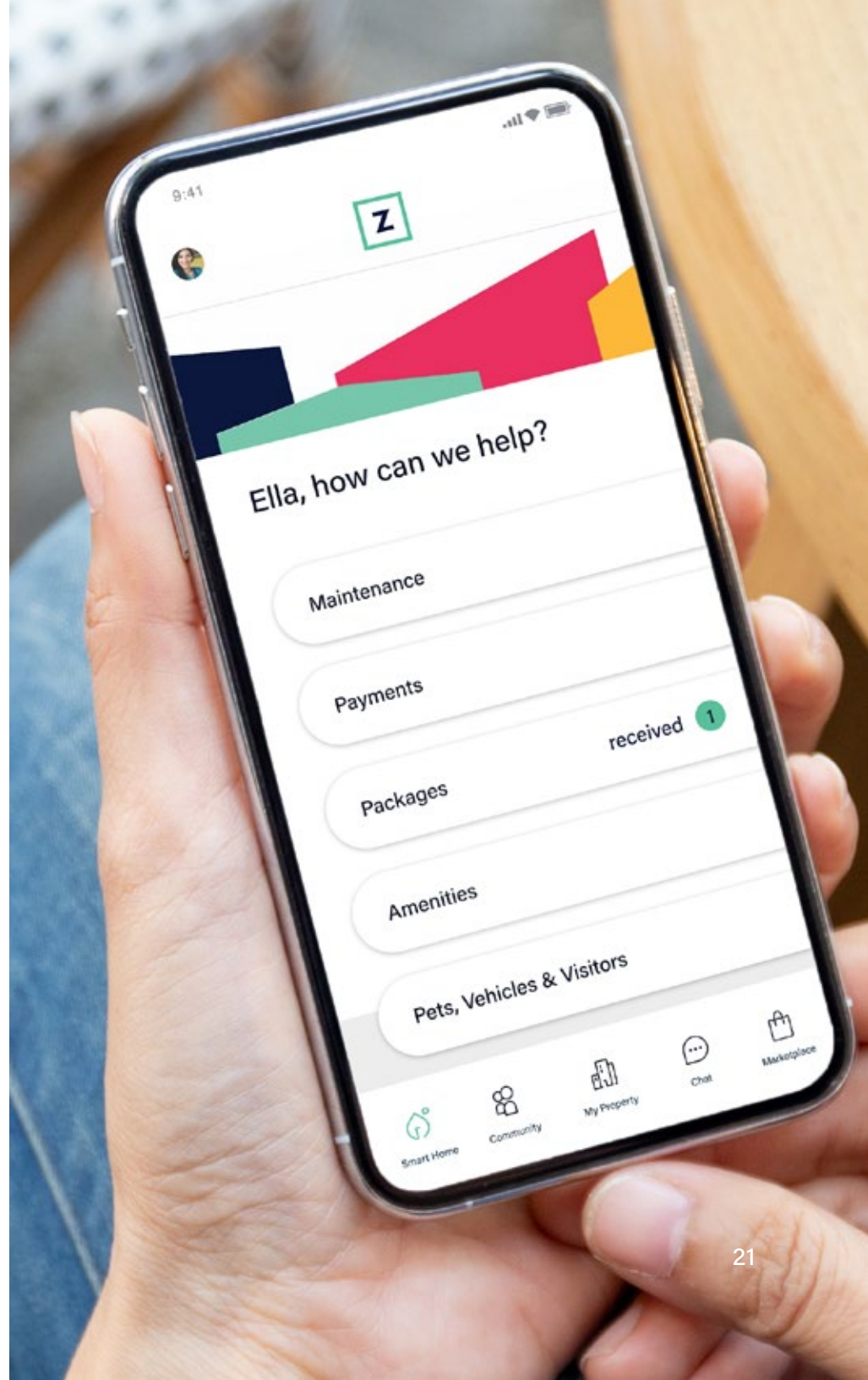
How package management apps work

1. Carriers deliver packages to the community office

2. On-site teams use the scan in functionality on their app to read package labels

3. The scanner automatically triggers a push notification to the resident

4. Resident retrieves their package from the community office

5. On-site associates logs the package as being delivered

The benefits & drawbacks of package management apps

Benefits	Drawbacks
Improves documentation of packages: A paper-based tracking system is not ideal for packages. Apps digitize the process for better record-keeping.	**Residents still need face-to-face interaction with on-site teams:** Residents who come in to pick up their package will still need to claim them from an on-site associate.
Reduced workload for on-site teams: Notifying residents about their deliveries is especially time consuming. Package management apps take this step entirely off their plate.	**On-site associates still have to log packages in:** Even though you will be removing the time-consuming step of notifications, associates will still need to scan packages upon arrival.
Cost effective: Apps allow you to automate part of the package management process at a much lower cost than lockers or smart package rooms.	

3. Package lockers

The biggest pain points of package management - processing time, storage space, and resident convenience - can be tackled with the help of package lockers. Package lockers let carriers place resident deliveries into individual lockers that keep the items secure until a resident retrieves it.

And there's no worry about managing physical keys. Thanks to automation, residents are assigned a temporary code that opens the corresponding locker. This lets them retrieve packages around their schedule and not when community managers are working.
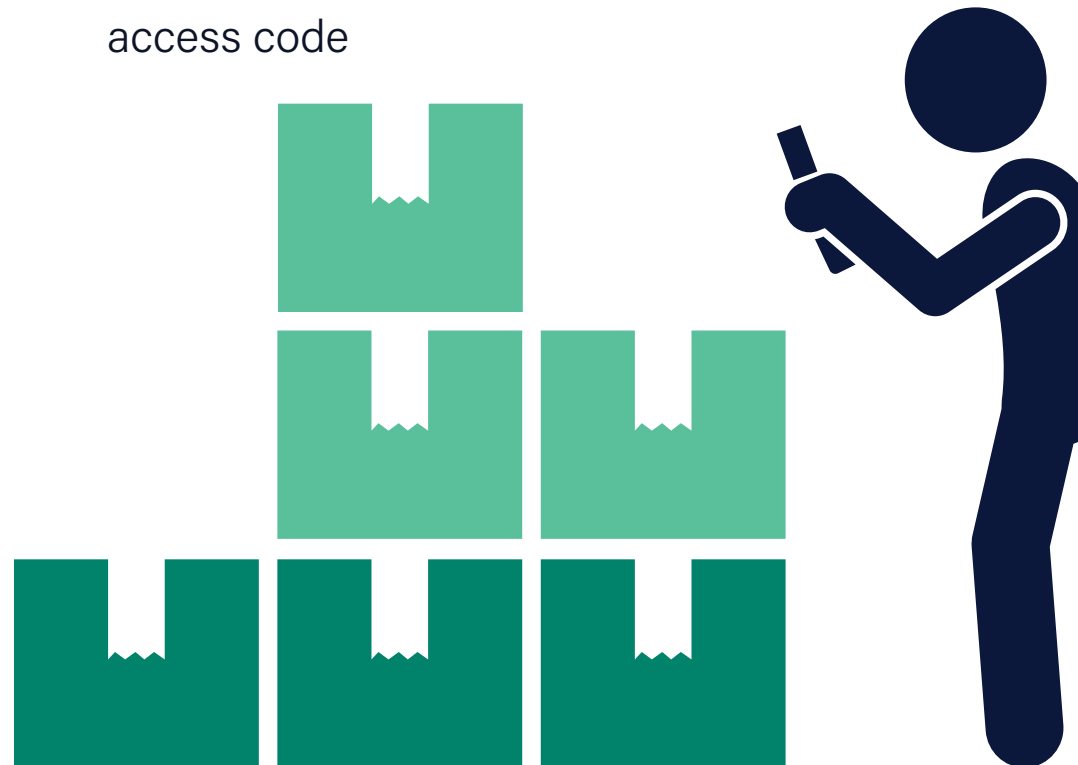
Community managers find this solution desirable because it relieves them of every aspect of package management. Plus, they provide convenient, on-demand access to packages for residents. **NMHC's 2019 Package Delivery Survey reported that the majority of property managers (57%) think that package lockers are the best solution for getting deliveries to residents.**

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How package lockers work

1 Carriers (e.g. UPS) bring packages to the package locker location

2 Carrier utilizes easy scan-in functionality to add packages to lockers which automatically triggers an email/text to be sent to the resident

3 Residents receive notification of their package arrival and a secure access code

4 Residents retrieve package using their access code

The benefits and drawbacks of package lockers

Benefits	Drawbacks
Integration: Some locker systems integrate with community mobile apps. This lets residents see package updates in the same place they manage the rest of their apartment-related tasks (paying rent, submitting work orders, etc.)	**Space intensive:** Package locker units come in a variety of sizes, but you still need to allocate quite a bit of space for each unit. Some companies find they fit best within their parking garage, allowing them to move packages out of the office.
Secure: Lockers offer secure storage for packages until residents are ready for them to be claimed. And because they have a one-time access code for each package, it limits residents from opening lockers when they don't have items to claim.	**May not accommodate all oversized items:** There are many configurations that allow room for oversized items. But you never know how big some packages will be. Or if you'll have enough oversized lockers to accommodate larger items.
Contactless: With social distancing still being needed, package lockers eliminate face-to-face contact between community managers & residents.	**Cost:** Package lockers are an investment. Depending on the size and configuration, you're likely to spend at least $10,000 per unit. And if you need multiple units, that will increase what you need to spend. Luckily, there are options to lease lockers if you are not able to pay for them all at once, which is what many companies opt to do.
No work for on-site teams: Package lockers that are built for multifamily communities save on-site teams from logging in a package and notifying residents.	
Convenient: Lockers allow residents to retrieve their deliveries on their own time & without the assistance of a community manager.	
Offers storage for temperature-sensitive packages: Some package locker systems offer units that can be refrigerated.	

4. Smart package rooms

Like lockers, smart package rooms also let management companies streamline many elements of receiving deliveries. When a carrier arrives, they place all packages into one secure room.

The room is run through an access control system which lets residents claim their package on their own schedule. But the catch is that they are only granted access when there is a package waiting for them. Video surveillance with access logs maintains security and accountability.

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How smart package rooms work:

1. Carriers (e.g: UPS) bring packages into the building

2. Carrier utilize easy scan-in functionality to add packages to a secure, locked room within the apartment complex

3. Residents receive notification of their package arrival and a secure access code

4. Residents enter in the secure access code to a tablet stationed outside the package room, which unlocks the door and grants access to the room

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The benefits and drawbacks of smart package rooms

Benefits	Drawbacks
Cost effective: Due to its simplistic nature, package rooms are about half the cost of a locker system	**Space intensive:** Smart package rooms need a large amount of consolidated space that may not be available at your communities.
No work for on-site teams: Smart package rooms automatically generate notifications for residents and let them retrieve them without burdening community associates.	**Temperature-sensitive packages still need appropriate storage:** Within your smart package room, you'll need to determine where perishable items will be stored. Some companies buy refrigerated lockers that go inside their smart package room.
Contactless: Like lockers, smart package rooms eliminate face-to face contact between residents and community managers	**Less secure than package lockers:** In smart package rooms, every parcel is openly displayed in one room. Even though there is a digital paper trail and video footage of who comes and goes, ultimately it's possible for residents to take packages that don't belong to them. For residents who are concerned about security, smart package rooms may not be appealing.
Convenient for residents: Residents can pick up their packages at any time, without needing assistance from a community manager	

5. Third-party package management and delivery delivery vendors

What if your on-site teams never had to spend another minute managing packages? That's the goal for some property management companies. In the past few years, third-party package management companies have increased in popularity.

Their approach to managing packages offsite and directly delivering to residents is appealing to some. While it's not a scenario that will be a fit for every community, some like the hands-off approach to package management.

How third-party package management and delivery vendors work:

1. An apartment community partners with a package delivery partner.

2. Residents order their packages to be delivered to these companies office - not their home address

3. Residents receive a notification when the package is delivered to the company

4. Residents schedule when they would like the company to deliver the package to them (often nights or weekends)

5. The company will deliver the package to residents

The benefits and drawbacks of third-party package management vendors

Benefits	Drawbacks
No resources needed to devote to package management: Since packages are delivered to an offsite location, on-site teams don't spend time logging deliveries or notifying residents. There's also no need for communities to have separate space for packages.	**On-site teams cannot help when issues arise:** While some companies like their on-site teams to be hands off, this is problematic if a problem arises with the delivery company. And, it can lead residents to become unhappy with their community's package policy. On-site teams have no insight into deliveries, leaving residents to fend for themselves.
Residents get packages delivered to their door: Probably the biggest advantage from a resident perspective is that they do not have to make a stop into the community office each time they have a delivery. They can schedule it to arrive at a time they will be home.	**Potentially unstable solution:** Package delivery companies are fairly new businesses. However, several have gone out of business in a short period of time. So there is a chance you may not have a long-term solution.
	Confusing for residents: Residents have to use an outside address to ship their packages to. This causes confusion, & sometimes adds a delay. Packages that are accidentally marked with their home address are usually returned to the sender.
	Slower delivery times: Remember, residents expect a fast turnaround on packages. Inserting a middle man adds time onto the delivery process. And as mentioned above, if they accidentally use their home address, the package gets returned.
	Added cost for residents: While they are getting white glove service with their deliveries, it costs residents. Many feel irritated to pay for something that's considered an expected amenity.

How to choose a package management solution

The good news is that there are several options for communities to manage package overload. But it might feel like a gamble deciding on what strategy will be best for your communities. So how do you determine what will be the best fit? Here are some things to ask yourself as you weigh the options.

1. Will the solution accommodate the number of units?

2. How does it impact resident experience?

3. What are my spacing constraints?

4. Will the benefits justify the costs?

5. How will it integrate?

1. Will the solution accommodate the number of units?

A good starting point is to consider how many units your property has. **More units inevitably means more packages. So an automated process makes most sense to alleviate manual work for on-site teams.** Apps, lockers, smart package rooms, and in some cases, package delivery companies can all be a good fit for large communities.

If you have a smaller property, there's a good chance you don't have full-time staff working there. While there may not be anyone drowning in packages, it also more likely packages aren't being stored securely making them more prone to theft. Locker systems usually benefit smaller communities because they keep packages secure without creating additional work for

whoever is working at the property.

Of course, not every community can devote space to lockers. Or, they may not have the means to invest capital expenditure for lockers or smart package rooms. If this is the case, an app should strongly be considered. This gives on-site teams an immediate way to automate package management logistics.

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2. How does it impact the resident experience?

Considering the operational impacts of managing packages is a top priority. But equally important is how it's going to impact the resident experience. Since receiving a package is now an everyday part of life, you want it to be a frictionless process for your resident. And depending on the community, residents may have varying priorities about their packages. Here are some questions to consider for each community.

Is safety a concern?

Of course, we all want our packages to be safe and secure. But if your communities have had security problems before, or are located within a high-crime area, then you may want to prioritize security over anything else. Package lockers are usually the best bet to minimize instances of theft.

Will they find it convenient?

The goal is for residents to be able to claim their packages quickly and without barriers. Even if you automate the

process of checking in packages and sending notifications, will it be easy for residents to claim their items? The more control residents have over retrieving a delivery, the more likely they will find the solution (and their community) convenient.

Will notifications be timely?

Clear communication about package deliveries is important to residents. So how will the solutions you're considering notify them? How long does it take? If you are considering package management apps, package lockers or smart package rooms, check it's integration to make sure there are no communication delays. Additionally, make sure residents can designate their preferred communication method (email, text, or both) to make sure each notice is received.

If you're not sure what is most important to your residents about receiving packages, just ask them. Conducting a survey at each community can give you valuable insight into what solution will make residents happiest.

3. What are my spacing constraints?

Square feet are precious in real estate. And it's part of the reason package management is so complicated for multifamily communities. If you don't have enough room to store your packages, then you might assume that there's not enough space for lockers or a smart package room.

But luckily, many locker system vendors are able to find creative ways to make space. For instance, many of the most popular locker systems are heavy duty enough that they can be placed outside. Then you are not looking for an entire room within the community to devote to packages. Plus, compartments are specially configured to accommodate many more packages than meets the eye.

What's certain is that before you invest in anything, you'll want to have a vendor give you a consultation. This will ensure you buy equipment that's the right size and that will give you the most storage for your dollar.

If space is truly at a premium, for instance, San Francisco, New York City, you may find package delivery services are the best option. That would allow packages to be stored off site where they won't take up room at the property. Communities that are more spacious have more flexibility and would be able to accommodate lockers.

4. Will the benefits justify the cost?

If you're bringing technology into the picture to help with package management, of course there are going to be some initial, and perhaps, ongoing costs. The costs can vary substantially given your needs.

For starters, there are equipment costs. This applies to locker systems and smart package rooms. With smart package rooms, you'll need to install smart locks if you don't have them already and most likely shelving systems that will fit deliveries of various sizes.

Lockers can be a big cost depending on the size, configuration, and if you want any special paint or design. Most companies want you to purchase lockers, however there are options to lease. Amazon Prime offers lockers that can be leased, but are solely for Amazon packages. But since Amazon Prime is responsible for a large chunk or package deliveries, these lockers can eliminate a substantial workload for on-site teams.

Another consideration should be the cost of NOT streamlining your package process. Every hour your on-site teams spend on processing packages is an hour you are paying them to forego other tasks that contribute to keeping residents happy and maintaining the building. Those hours add up quickly!

Or if you consistently have a large volume of packages, the cost of keeping someone on staff full-time to manage that process can be a large investment, too.

Charging residents to recoup costs

To recoup costs associated with a package management solution, sometimes property management companies charge residents a package acceptance fee. Usually, it's a monthly fee for every resident in the community. Some companies charge a one-time fee upon move in.

Additionally, you may elect to assess penalty fees if a package isn't claimed within a certain time frame. This motivates residents to not leave packages lingering in a locker or storage room for very long.

While monthly fees will help you offset some of the costs, you may want to consider how you frame it to your residents. Some residents may see package acceptance as a right and will resent paying a fee. However, offering a convenient and secure package acceptance solution is valuable service. It's also not a service that every community offers. So if you choose to bill back residents, it will help to explain the benefits of having a package management solution. You might want to explain the drawbacks of not having one.

5. How will it integrate?

Integration is a key component of package management solutions. Reliable integration will automatically keep resident status up to date, and keep the system functioning smoothly. Move-ins, move-outs, and any other resident updates should be accurately reflected in both your property and package management systems.

Locker systems or smart package rooms sometimes integrate with community apps too. This is desirable, even if an app isn't currently used in your community. Because down the road if you ever want an app, you'll need a smart room or locker system that already offers that functionality. It'll be easier to have equipment that can accommodate that rather than trying to replace it with something that does not.

An app integration comes in handy so residents can get updates about their package. Most apps are already used by residents to perform other apartment-related tasks (paying rent, controlling smart devices, placing work orders).
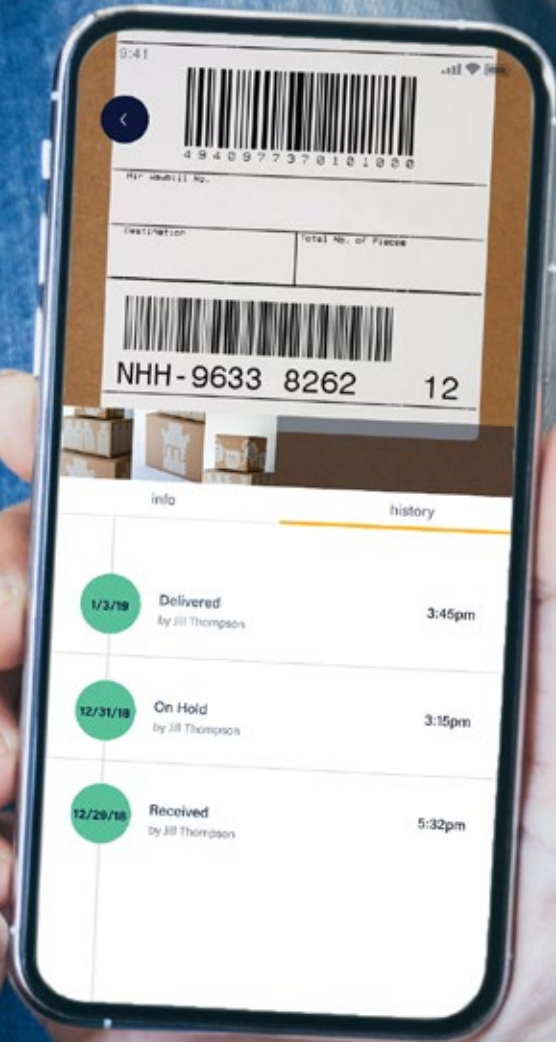
It can be easier... even when package volume rises

There was once a time when using a clipboard and pen was an adequate way to manage resident packages. But now, deliveries overwhelm your on-site teams on a daily basis. And since that trend is not going to let up, your communities are desperate for a more efficient solution.

Luckily, you can relieve the package pain points of both your residents and on-site teams. That starts with finding a package management solution that best fits your communities.

Online shopping is going to keep getting easier. Like the rest of us, your residents will rely on that convenience more than ever. So do your residents and on-site teams a solid. With the right package management solution residents will have a positive interaction each time a package arrives. And your on-site teams will have time for more valuable tasks.

Solutions that solve the package management problem:

🔔 Automate notifications so communication with residents is clear and timely

📱 Allow residents to self-serve so they don't burden on-site teams

⚙️ Integrate with your existing software so the experience is seamless

🔒 Provide security so that resident packages aren't damaged or stolen

Schedule a demo with a Zego rep today to learn more about how the Zego Engage™ mobile app can help you master package management.

Schedule a demo

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Zego is a property technology company that frees management companies and community associations to go above and beyond for residents. We're evolving with the residential landscape, making a difference in how our customers work by building connections and easing friction. We offer technology that creates a sense of community and inclusion while also supporting and empowering on-site staff.

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