



## **Any Easy Way to Save Money and Reduce Staff Burden – Are You Doing This?**

*By Susan Saldibar*

One of my favorite innovations these days is the ability to store documents online. Recently I took a few crates of old bills and bank statements to one of those free “document shredding” events. As a result, my 4-drawer filing cabinet has really lightened up, and I now find myself telling my husband, after he spends an hour looking for a document, “Wait a minute! We have it online now!” What a great feeling!

It makes me wonder why are senior living communities, one of the most document-intensive industries, are still lagging so far behind.

Not all of them are. The Wilkinson Family of Companies was an early adopter of electronic document management. And they are glad they made the move. Wilkinson develops and manages multifamily, student housing, offices and senior living centers. They are a large corporation with properties located all over the country. So, when they decided to go paperless, they had a lot of 4-drawer filing cabinets to clean out.

**Within the first year, Wilkinson saved 50% off paper, toner and other printer-related expenses.**

According to Wilkinson’s Kelli Mattingly, they looked at several providers of electronic document management systems, even though they were already using the OneSite® Leasing and Rents system from [RealPage](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner). They were determined to be objective and get the very best, regardless of the vendor. Unsurprisingly, the hunt for the best lead them right back to RealPage.

Once the system was installed, the benefits quickly became obvious. In addition to significant cost savings, here are some other stand out benefits:

- **Ease of access.** Staff no longer has to hunt through folders for documents. They are always exactly where they need them.
- **Available 24/7 from anywhere, any device.** Managers don't need to be on site to access forms and documents. They are able to pull them up on their laptops, iPads and other devices, wherever they are, in the middle of the night if necessary.
- **Built-in security.** Multiple levels of security ensure that only those authorized can access the files they need.
- **Virtually invulnerable to compromise or loss.** In the event of property damage from fire, flood or other act of nature, all forms and files are safely stored online.

What added even more value, according to Kelli, was having the document management piece integrated with the RealPage OneSite® Leasing and Rents system. "On the customer side, docs are involved at every stage of the leasing and renewal process and on the management side, it's hard to name a function that doesn't touch a form or report of one sort or another," says Kelli. "Having your doc management dovetail with your property management software from the same vendor really pays off. And, if you're using RealPage's Leasing and Rents, adding the doc management system is pretty much a no brainer."

### **Given all the obvious benefits, why is it so hard to get people on board?**

I'm sure that most of you would agree that moving to an electronic document management system makes a lot of sense, for all the reasons above and more. So why are so many senior living communities still clinging to their papers, folders, and file cabinets?

Kelli Mattingly hears this a lot. And she's experienced it herself. "People don't like change and you're going to have resistance whenever you're radically transforming something as central as working with forms in a form-heavy business," she says. True, but to me, it's hardly a good excuse in a world where there is so much great technology available.

### **This is about much more than "going green".**

What's even more compelling about the Wilkinson story is that what started out as a mission to cut down on waste turned into something much more valuable. "We started out wanting to go green and ended up reaping all kinds of benefits that continue to this day," Kelli noted.

And, they can say with utmost satisfaction, "We have that document online now."

Can you?



This article has been brought to you by [RealPage](#) in partnership with [Senior Housing Forum](#).

