

THE POWER OF AN ATTRACTIVE LOBBY

Nothing that happens in New York City is done halfway – **EVERYTHING** is **bigger, better, bolder** and more. And that goes for the lobby of your condo or co-op too.

THINK ABOUT IT

YOUR LOBBY IS YOUR BUILDING'S CHANCE TO MAKE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION ON A PROSPECTIVE RESIDENT.

And just as you might typically arrive at an initial judgment about a person within the first few seconds, so it goes with a lobby, too. So what impression do you want to impart? Stylish and modern? Classic and grand? Fun and upbeat? Your lobby can convey all of this – and more.

And on the flip side, it can convey just the opposite. A shabby lobby with outworn features tells visitors and residents that this is a place where there's little care and even less when it comes to service.

As a board member, you have the opportunity to influence the aesthetics of your lobby, how it appears and how it operates, too. It's a big responsibility, so we're here to help out with a few tips.

1 Create an effective mail packaging and handling system.

This is an area where form should converge with function. Package delivery and pick-up is a daily occurrence, and you'll want to plan for it accordingly. Be sure you've created an adequate space for this service so it balances efficient delivery or pick-up of packages in a way that won't interfere with other lobby activities. Front desk staff, if you employ them, can be trained to implement a sign-in system for packages and provide notifications to residents methodically. For non-staffed lobbies, a secure and separate space for lock boxes is the order of the day. Either way, technology can help with automated notifications in this area as well. This is also one of the offerings within the front desk control options through FirstService Residential's FSRConnect.



MAIL



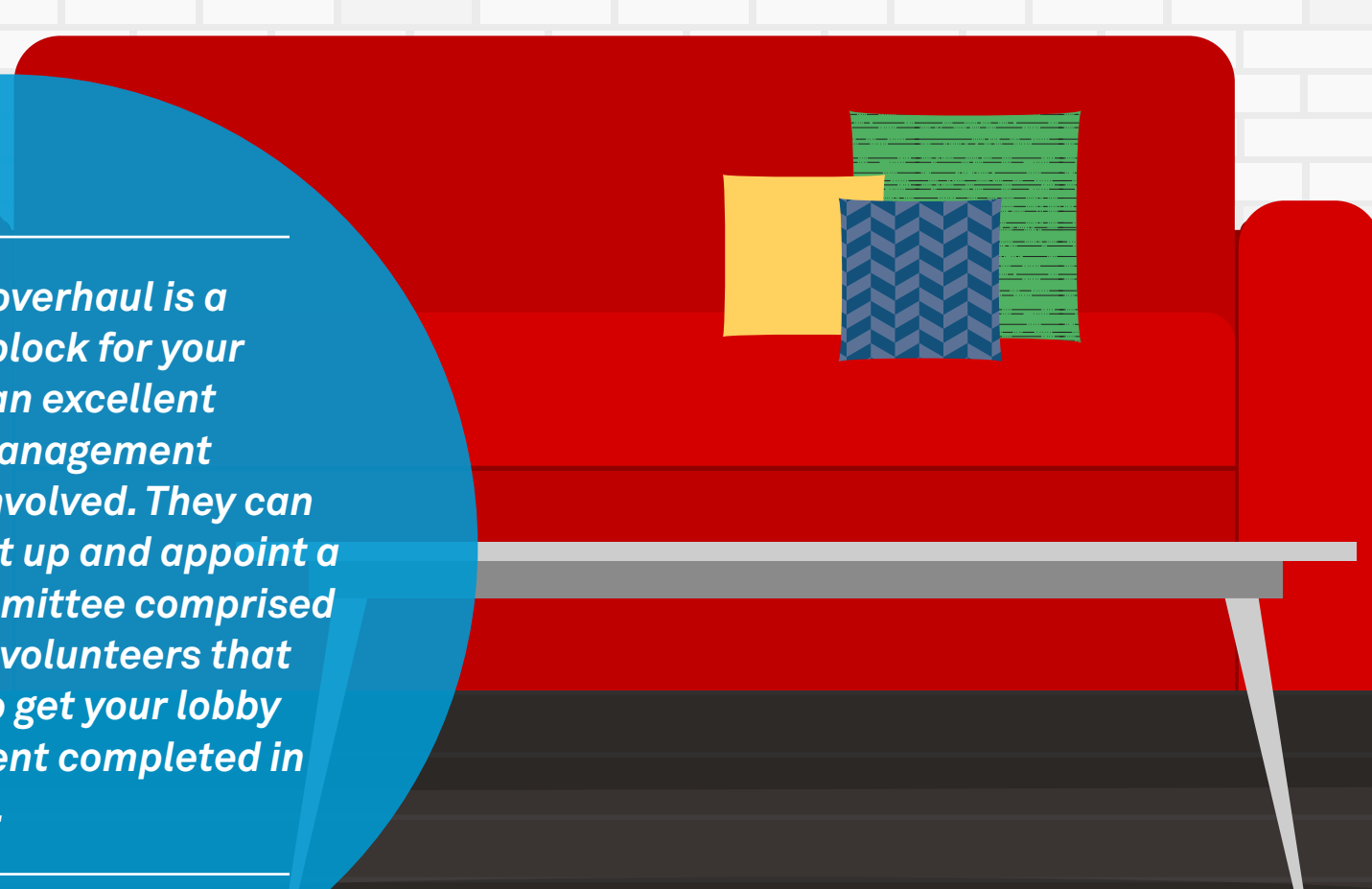
Your mailroom may pose another potential challenge. Just because this is a functional area doesn't mean it should be at odds with your building's overall aesthetic. Consider modernized, progressive mailroom centers that combine ease of use with design elements that are visually pleasing too, to maintain consistency throughout your lobby area.

2 Your decor says everything.

Don't mistake a lobby as a place that's just for passing through. Ideally, it's a destination unto itself, and you'll want to decorate it accordingly. The right approach will make it a welcoming place for your residents and an intriguing one for prospective unit owners. It can also serve as a nexus of activity for both residents and guests. And even if most individuals don't spend a lot of time there, the right decor furthers your building's brand and creates the kind of immersive environment that speaks to the care provided to your residents.

So where do you begin? You don't have to be a design expert. Consider erring on the side of smaller, lighter pieces that feature clean lines and don't occupy too much visual space. This gives your lobby a feeling of openness. Of course, if your building is of an older, grander style, stay true to that ambience with your furnishing and decor. Remember that you can also increase your visual space with glass and mirrored elements. This will create more visibility which can contribute to making your lobby area more secure.

If a design overhaul is a stumbling block for your board, get an excellent property management company involved. They can help you set up and appoint a design committee comprised of resident volunteers that can work to get your lobby enhancement completed in short order.



3 Start at the bottom.

You can't underestimate the importance of flooring. Not only is it an essential aesthetic consideration, but it's also critical to how livable the space is. Choose flooring that not only complements your decor, but is also durable and requires minimal upkeep.

Safety is important too. Given New York City's long, slushy winters and rainy springs, you'll want to avoid surfaces that get slippery. If you choose to forego carpet, be sure to provide non-slip mats in wetter weather (this also protects your flooring underneath). Most of all, keep in mind that a resurfacing doesn't have to break the bank. Vinyl flooring, wood laminates, hardwood, concrete and stone are all options that provide both durability and beauty, too.

4 Maximize security and service.

Make no mistake: the first function of your lobby is to provide protection. This space plays a crucial role – it serves as a protective barrier against unauthorized visitors. However, in a place like New York City, there are additional challenges, such as higher foot traffic thanks to housekeepers, pet walkers, corporate tenants or party guests. Partnering with the right management company can help mitigate these challenges as your property manager will be able to offer you and your building staff suggestions on how to implement effective entry and guest-tracking protocols.

