

## Reputation Management:

### *Your Online Presence Says A Lot About Your Business*

by Amy Hitchingham

Everyone has an opinion. This statement has always been true, but in today’s ultra-connected, social media-oriented world, opinions are much easier to share (and harder to erase). Why is this important to self storage operators? The image that you project online is one of the primary reasons that people will choose to rent from your facility. The opinions shared on review sites, social media and even your own online Yellow Pages listing can tell a story about your business...and you want it to be a positive one! Here are some quick ways that you can keep tabs on your facility’s online reputation and manage the image that your customers and potential customers will see.

### Opinion and Review Sites

Websites like Yelp.com and InsiderPages.com are growing in popularity as a way for customers to check out a business, restaurant, hotel, etc. before buying. Consumers feel that they can trust the reviews from “real people” who have had an experience with a product or service. According to Yelp.com, their site averages around 71 million unique visitors per month and by listing your business on their site, you are tapping into this traffic whenever people search for self storage in their local area. Customers are able to post their reviews of your business with a simple 1-5 star rating and their comments. Positive reviews will help draw new customers to your listing, and hopefully then to your door!

The downside, of course, is that customers may also post a negative review of your facility, and perhaps even share a long-winded rant about a bad experience that they had with one of your employees. I feel that the best way to deal with these negative reviews is to face them head-on. If a bad review isn’t responded to, other users will see it and accept it as truth, even if the reviewer may have “embellished” the

facts a bit in the heat of the moment. Yelp and other sites allow the owner of a business to respond (either privately or on a public thread) to any and all comments that are posted about them. When a manager or owner takes the time to address the negative review, apologize and share their side of the story, it can take the sting out of the negative review and show that the company is listening to criticism and showing a willingness to improve. As long as you remain professional and polite, even a negative review can show your business in a positive light.

The unfortunate reality is that a customer is far more likely to post a review when something bad happens, rather than when they have a good, or even great, experience with your business. In order to encourage your customers to share their positive experiences, consider offering a special discount to current customers who write a review of your facility or share it on their social media pages. This will keep a positive buzz going about your facility and give people a reason to learn more about your business.

### Social Media

Facebook and Twitter are quickly becoming a dominant way for people to communicate with one another. This is important to businesses because consumers are increasingly likely to reach out to a company via their Facebook or Twitter pages to receive support or customer service. Consumers want their concerns addressed quickly and social media gives them an opportunity to voice their issues in a very public way, which usually gets results! Just last year, an Argus staffer was having difficulty with her cell phone provider and could not resolve the issue with customer service representative over the phone. She decided to send a message to the company’s Twitter account explaining the problem and her frustration with the service. In less than one hour, the issue was addressed by the company’s social media staff who



then promptly took care of the issue. While I'm not suggesting that every self storage facility have a dedicated staff person to watch out for complaints on Twitter or Facebook, I do think it is important to have a presence on these sites to make sure you aren't missing out on opportunities to provide great customer service. When your facility's comments and responses show up on a person's Facebook or Twitter feed, all of their friends and followers will see it as well and that can give you an even bigger reach in your community.

Aside from being a great venue to provide customer service, social media helps you stay in front of your customers on a regular basis. Encourage people to "like" your Facebook page by offering a coupon or giveaway. You'll be able to share news, specials and event information with your followers that will hopefully enhance your facility's brand within your local area.

### Community Involvement

We all know that the majority of a self storage facility's customers come from roughly a 3-5 mile radius around the property. This makes maintaining a high profile within your local community even more important. Self storage facilities have a unique ability to offer both financial support and physical use of the property to local organizations. Consider sponsoring a local sports league or community event, or offer the use of one of your vacant units to collect items for a food

or clothing drive. Check with your local Chamber of Commerce to see if there are any events planned that need sponsors - blood drives, car seat checks and community yard sales are all a great way to drive traffic to your location and raise awareness about the services that you offer.

In some states, your local Self Storage Association might also be a great resource. This fall, the Colorado Self Storage Association is teaming up with 9Cares/Colorado Shares, a statewide food drive that supplies non-perishable items to over 125 food banks in the area. Over 50 self storage facility members of the association have signed up to participate and serve as drop-off locations for the food items. This will be a great way for community members to visit and interact with local storage operators while showing the entire industry in a positive light – everyone benefits!

The bottom line is that you do have control over the image that your facility projects, both online and out in your community. Facilities that are successful at reputation management will find themselves in a position to grow their business and adapt to the changing needs of their customer base. In today's world of information overload, make sure your message rises above the chatter to promote the image that you want people to see! **MM**

*Amy Hitchingham, Vice President of the Argus Self Storage Sales Network, can be reached at 800-55-STORE or amy@argus-realestate.com.*

The Argus Self Storage Sales Network is honored to once again receive the **Inside Self Storage "Best of Business"** award! A sincere thank you to all of our clients who voted for Argus as the Best Real Estate Brokerage for the second year in a row!



Argus and our team of over 40 Broker Affiliates nationwide will continue to provide world class service and advice to self storage owners, buyers and sellers. Thank you for your continued support!



# Property Showcase

## Alamogordo, NM • \$4,250,000

- 618 Units
- 84,450 RSF
- 10.245 Acres
- Largest self storage facility in Alamogordo
- Consistently high occupancy, especially in climate control units
- High visibility location at major intersection in an area with strong demand



**Noel Woodwell**  
915-491-9610  
nwoodwell@hotmail.com

## Chapin, SC • \$2,875,000

- 2-Property Portfolio
- 394 Total Units
- 54,500 Total RSF
- 7.1 Total Acres
- Facilities located 2 miles apart
- Modern and well-maintained
- Excellent opportunity in the Columbia, SC area



**Joey Godbold**  
704-632-1027  
jgodbold@pmcre.com

## Mesilla Park, NM • \$550,000

- 130 Units
- 11,900 RSF
- 1 Acre
- Site is a corner lot with expansion potential on 2 acres that can be purchased separately
- High visibility location with easy access to new I-10/I-25 interchange and NMSU
- Area for apartment adjacent to office



**Noel Woodwell**  
915-491-9610  
nwoodwell@hotmail.com

## Lewisville, TX • \$5,200,000

- 516 Units
- 78,210 GSF
- 8.2186 Acres
- Great location on Hwy 121, just east of I-35E
- 70 parking spaces included and 38,772 SF of outside parking available
- Ample room for expansion



**Richard Minker, CCIM  
& Tyler Trahant**  
817-335-5600  
rminker@casecre.com,  
trahant@selfstorage.com

## Shirley, NY • \$5,700,000

- 411 +/- Units
- 38,680 RSF
- 1.79 Acres
- Excellent location in Suffolk County
- Expansion potential within current building
- Rental rate upside
- Well maintained facility



**Linda Cinelli, CCIM**  
908-722-5661  
linda@lcrealtyusa.com

## Mauston, WI • \$425,000

- 103 Units
- 17,000 RSF
- 5 Acres
- Nicest facility in the area
- Concrete drives and 4 security cameras
- Rents have not been raised since 2009
- Excellent visibility on Hwy 82
- Over 80% occupied



**Chris Hitler**  
262-236-0612  
chris.hitler@ires-llc.com



# Sells Self Storage Nationwide!

Check out our current inventory of 76 properties listed in 25 states and contact the listing broker for more information or visit [www.argus-selfstorage.com](http://www.argus-selfstorage.com)!

## Alabama

Eight Mile	\$825,000	Bill Barnhill/Stuart LaGroue	251-432-1287
Jasper	\$1,250,000	Bill Barnhill/Shannon Barnes	251-432-1287
Mobile	\$3,800,000	Bill Barnhill/Stuart LaGroue/ Shannon Barnes	251-432-1287

## Arizona

Blk Cyn City	\$1,500,000	Jeffery A. Gorden	480-331-8880
Lakeside	\$2,600,000	Jeffery A. Gorden	480-331-8880

## Arkansas

Fort Smith	\$1,100,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641
Gravette	\$800,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641
Siloam Springs	\$1,515,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641

## California

Chester	\$299,900	Tom de Jong	408-282-3829
Orland	\$2,099,000	Tom de Jong	408-282-3829
Vallejo	Make Offer	Tom de Jong	408-282-3829

## Colorado

Cortez	\$1,150,000	Joan Lucas	720-855-6587
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## Florida

Live Oak	\$599,999	John W. Hill	386-362-3300
Maccleddy	\$1,725,000	W. Frost Weaver	904-265-2001
Malabar	\$475,000	Adam Rathbun	321-752-1199
West Melbourne	\$249,000	Adam Rathbun	321-752-1199
Wildwood	\$849,000	Reggie Caruthers	352-748-1182
Wildwood	\$799,000	Reggie Caruthers	352-748-1182

## Georgia

Canton	\$300,000	Bill Barnhill/Allen Barnhill	770-487-9006
Canton	\$650,000	Bill Barnhill/Allen Barnhill	770-487-9006

## Illinois

Crete	\$400,000	Bruce Bahrmassel	312-518-3550
Freeport	\$1,175,000	Bruce Bahrmassel	312-518-3550
Metamora	\$1,499,000	Bruce Bahrmassel	312-518-3550

## Maryland

Baltimore	\$2,300,000	Grady Riggs	301-468-0606
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## Michigan

Albion	\$370,000	Jim Soltis	810-494-2062
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## Mississippi

Meridian	\$2,795,000	Bill Barnhill/Stuart LaGroue	251-432-1287
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## Missouri

Farmington	\$2,890,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641
Mount Vernon	\$1,170,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641
Ozark	\$1,200,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641
Sedalia	\$775,000	Larry Goldman	913-339-0641

## Montana

Sidney	\$950,000	Larry Hayes	406-544-1921
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## New Hampshire

Claremont	\$290,000	Joe Mendola	603-668-7000
Rindge	\$900,000	Joe Mendola	603-668-7000
Sunapee	\$900,000	Joe Mendola	603-668-7000

## New Jersey

Branchville	\$2,300,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Montague	\$1,600,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Pemberton	\$975,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Pennsauken	\$1,300,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661

## New Mexico

Alamogordo	\$4,250,000	Noel Woodwell	915-491-9610
Albuquerque	\$750,000	Noel Woodwell	915-491-9610
Las Cruces	\$625,000	Noel Woodwell	915-491-9610
Mesilla Park	\$550,000	Noel Woodwell	915-491-9610
Santa Fe	<b>SOLD</b>	Joan Lucas/ David Etzold & Noel Woodwell	720-855-6587 915-845-6006

## New York

Hicksville	\$4,200,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Islip	\$3,400,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Lynbrook	\$2,550,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Middletown	\$450,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Newark Valey	\$349,000	Guy Blake	845-522-5900
Peekskill	\$4,500,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Port Jervis	\$1,600,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Shirley	\$5,700,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Yorktown Hgts	\$2,450,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661

## North Carolina

Fayetteville	<b>SOLD</b>	N.J. "Joey" Godbold	704-632-1027
Statesville	\$695,000	N.J. "Joey" Godbold	704-632-1027

## Ohio

Cleveland	\$2,300,000	Bob Brehmer, CCIM	216-455-0920
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## Oklahoma

Oklahoma City	Make Offer	Jared Jones	918-665-1210
Commerce	\$585,000	Larry Goldman/ Jared Jones	913-339-0641 918-665-1210
Hugo	\$1,650,000	Jared Jones	918-665-1210
Tulsa	\$1,200,000	Jared Jones	918-665-1210

## Pennsylvania

Bechtelsville	\$1,350,000	Chuck Shields	610-828-0100
Glen Mills	Call Broker	Chuck Shields	610-828-0100
Matamoras	\$1,100,000	Linda Cinelli	908-722-5661
Olyphant	\$850,000	Chuck Shields	610-828-0100

## South Carolina

Camden	\$895,000	N.J. "Joey" Godbold	704-632-1027
Chapin	\$2,875,000	N.J. "Joey" Godbold	704-632-1027

## Texas

Flint	\$599,000	Richard Minker/TylerTrahan	817-335-5600
Forest Hill	\$2,450,000	Richard Minker/TylerTrahan	817-335-5600
Gonzales	\$3,200,000	Bill Brownfield	713-366-3134
Horizon City	\$350,000	Noel Woodwell	915-491-9610
Houston	\$950,000	Bill Brownfield	713-366-3134
Lewisville	\$5,200,000	Richard Minker/TylerTrahan	817-335-5600
Missouri City	\$2,500,000	Bill Brownfield	713-366-3134
Richmond	\$1,850,000	Bill Brownfield	713-366-3134

## Virginia

Christiansburg	\$510,000	Ben Harris	540-250-0612
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## Wisconsin

Egg Harbor	\$289,000	Chris Hitler	262-236-0612
Greenville	\$1,515,000	Chris Hitler	262-236-0612
Mauston	\$425,000	Chris Hitler	262-236-0612
Milwaukee	\$450,000	Chris Hitler	262-236-0612
Spring Green	\$1,150,000	Chris Hitler	262-236-0612

# Argus Sales

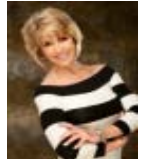
Congratulations to the following Argus Broker Affiliates on their recent sales!



**Larry Goldman, CCIM** of RE/MAX Best Associates sold Ensign Storage in Bonner Springs, KS!



**David Etzold & Noel Woodwell** of Etzold & CO and **Joan Lucas** of Joan Lucas Real Estate Services sold Rodeo Road Self Storage in Santa Fe, NM!



**Richard Minker, CCIM & Tyler Trahant** of CASE Commercial Real Estate Partners sold Friendly Self Storage in Allen, TX!



**N.J. "Joey" Godbold** of Percival McGuire Commercial Real Estate sold Carolina Village Storage in Fayetteville, NC!



## Contact an Argus Broker Affiliate

### NORTHEAST

Guy Blake, CCIM  
Linda Cinelli, CCIM, CEA & Sean Bortel  
Joseph Mendola  
Chuck Shields

### Company

Pyramid Brokerage Company  
LC Realty  
NAI Norwood Group  
Beacon Commercial Real Estate

### Phone

845-522-5900  
908-722-5661  
603-668-7000  
610-862-1645

### Territory

Upstate NY, Western CT  
Northern NJ, NY (NYC, Long Island)  
MA, ME, NH VT, Eastern CT  
Eastern PA, Southern NJ, DE

### SOUTHEAST

Bill Barnhill, CCIM  
N.J. "Joey" Godbold  
Ben Harris, CCIM  
Frost Weaver (FL Commercial Brokers Network)

Omega Properties, Inc.  
Percival McGuire Commercial Real Estate  
Harris Commercial Realty, LLC  
Weaver Realty Group, Inc.

888-801-4534  
704-632-1027  
540-639-1617  
904-733-0039

FL Panhandle  
NC, SC  
MD, VA  
North, Central & South FL

### NORTH CENTRAL

Bruce Bahrmassel  
Robert K. Brehmer, CCIM  
Larry Goldman, CCIM  
Mike Helline & Paul Grisanti, CCIM  
Peter Hitler & Chris Hitler, MBA  
Jim Soltis

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Northern IL, Northern IN  
OH  
KS, MO, Southern IL  
KY, Southern IN  
WI  
MI

### SOUTH CENTRAL

Bill Barnhill, CCIM  
Bill Brownfield, CRE, CCIM  
David Etzold & Noel Woodwell  
Larry Goldman, CCIM  
Mike Helline & Paul Grisanti, CCIM  
Jared Jones, CCIM  
Richard D. Minker, CCIM & Tyler Trahant

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502-253-1811  
918-665-1210  
817-335-5600

AL, MS  
South & Central TX  
West TX  
AR  
TN  
OK  
North TX

### WEST

Jim Berry, CCIM  
Steve Boldish, CCIM  
Alan Davidson, CCIM  
Tom de Jong  
David Etzold & Noel Woodwell  
Jeffery A. Gorden, CCIM  
Larry Hayes  
Joan Lucas  
Jason Wilcox, CCIM

CRG Utah  
Coldwell Banker Commercial NW  
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Colliers International  
Etzold & Co.  
Eagle Commercial Realty Services  
Hayes & Associates  
Joan Lucas Real Estate Services, LLC  
Gleason & Company Commercial Real Estate

801-560-5601  
541-776-1031  
949-424-1680  
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915-845-6006  
602-778-5134  
406-728-0088  
720-855-6587  
206-919-7643

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