



PRODUCT BUILD | UX | APPLICATION MODERNIZATION

Major Property Rental Provider: Let Yourself In Remodel

Real Estate

Our client engaged gravity9 in providing a vast modernization of internal and customer-facing digital systems, with the intent of becoming a truly digital-first operator in the American property rental sector.

The Let Yourself In remodeling project involves streamlining and enhancing the Let Yourself In service experience, which allows potential residents to view client properties contact-free by requesting access online. The existing service suffered several “friction points” for the user, including cumbersome sign-up and verification processes that navigate the user away from the service.

gravity9’s User Experience team analyzed the current customer experience, mapping the journey and conducting stakeholder interviews to identify key pain points. They then proposed a re-imagining of the service through storyboarding and conceptual prototypes, providing a basis for the development team to then create an improved Let Yourself In service.

The re-imagined experience reduced key steps in the login and verification process and provided better guidance throughout the process, advising users of what to expect as they use it and enhancing scammer protection. This reduced customer friction and the interaction cost to achieve the goal of viewing a potential new home.



Review of Challenges

Our client is one of the largest suppliers to the property rental market in the United States and has partnered with gravity9 for some years, asking that we consult and enable a wide-scale program of modernization across their business as part of a pivot to embrace technology and pioneer a digital approach to business in the property market not previously seen. This case study addresses just one part of that larger initiative.

The Let Yourself In experience allows potential residents looking for a new rental home to view client properties contact-free by requesting access to homes via the client website. Following feedback from potential customers and a reduction in successful Let Yourself In requests, the client recognized that issues existed in the user experience.

gravity9 was asked to investigate further and improve the service, and our product and UX discovery process found distinct problems. For example, initial registration and verification required multiple user

interactions – even navigating away from the service - before the customer could begin using Let Yourself In. This high interaction cost throws up frustrating barriers to entry for the customer that could potentially cause them to browse away from the client, impacting business success.

The service needed improvements to security to combat scammers intent on targeting customers and client properties. Furthermore, the Let Yourself In experience was inconsistent across various channels (mobile, web, and external vendors), creating confusion for users.

Our client’s goal was straightforward: improve the Let Yourself In user experience, improve protection against scammers, and increase the likelihood of a successful rental journey.

Utilized Technology Stack

Cloud: Microsoft Azure

Database: Microsoft Azure SQL, Azure Cosmos DB

Backend: .NET

Frontend: HTML, CSS, React

Our Solution

gravity9 delivered a thorough reimagining of the Let Yourself In service, leveraging modern technologies and UX best practices to give our client's customers a simplified yet more powerful and secure service when trying to view a potential rental home.

Improvements begin right at the start, with verification and sign-up processes both being better integrated and streamlined for a less "painful" entry into the service, avoiding the "feeling" of having to sign up, as well as better consistency regardless of how users enter the service (mobile, web, external vendors etc.).

Throughout the Let Yourself In journey, users receive a better guided experience, with key information made available from start to finish, setting expectations of what will happen next at every step. Improved alerts are implemented to warn against scammers, protecting customers from potential scams while using the service.

Our Approach

Our client understood that the Let Yourself In service had to evolve but needed help understanding the specifics, turning to gravity9 to evaluate it, provide recommendations, and build the next iteration of the service. gravity9 provided a product design team that worked with client stakeholders on this and other projects across a wider era of modernization.

The UX team met with key stakeholders to understand what challenges our client was facing and its goals, assessing the current state of the customer journey to work towards an improved experience. As a part of this process, they visited the client on-site for live demos of the existing system and carried out persona mapping to understand different types of customers. Customer journey mapping established the distinct stages of the customer journey, with storyboard techniques framing key problem areas to be solved. Competitor analysis studied similar services across the same and unrelated industries, noting what works well and what doesn't to understand how similar challenges have been solved (or not). These recommendations were presented to the client, including high-level technical problem statements, mapped user journeys, storyboards, high-fidelity designs, and supporting information so that both our client and gravity9 agreed about the challenges and options to address them.

With the agreed-upon plans, the UX team provided gravity9's development teams

with high-fidelity prototype designs with key technical annotations to aid the development process, providing a walkthrough of improvements to be made. This allowed UX, development, and QA teams to develop the new and improved service rapidly. Rapid development was made possible via Scrum methodology in two-week sprints, with new changes tested and rolled out through LaunchDarkly's feature flags function, allowing features to be toggled easily in the event of issues or changes.

The user authentication process was completely rebuilt using Azure B2C services that are better suited to protect customer data and delegate identification management to cloud services, a more secure approach than custom local solutions.

To ensure a reliable user experience, a seamless switch was needed to move users from the old experience into the new one. For this, LaunchDarkly was selected, thanks to its useful feature flag capabilities that allow user transfer without downtime. gravity9 was able to monitor to ensure data consistency and a successful transfer, with the safety net of backward compatibility in the event of any issues.

gravity9 also provided suggestions for future improvement beyond the initial project scope, like improved search functionality to filter properties available to a search's results (currently, this information is only available on a properties' individual page) or information to tell users at what stage they will need to verify their ID to fully access the service.

Our Approach

gravity9 successfully delivered a revised, modernized approach to the Let Yourself In service, which meets our client's project goals.

End customers can now enjoy a simplified experience with reduced steps to accessing a home. The previously cumbersome sign-up and verification processes have been replaced with a streamlined three-step approach with integrated verification that speeds up the time to access the service.

Security is increased, with better scammer protection and guidance to the customer for avoiding scams. New guidance is present to help the user navigate through the Let Yourself In journey with a consistent experience, regardless of the channel into the experience. Customers have easier, quicker access to a streamlined, helpful service that's built with their needs at its core.

For the client, the re-imagined Let Yourself In experience reduces customer pains and, in turn, the resources needed to support them. This means better returns for the business, with more customers requesting property viewings with and better word-of-mouth publicity following improved experiences too.



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