

Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

Chapter 486: Additional Services of Sloth Apartments

After inspecting the property in person, Pei Qian had Xiao Sun take Liang Qingfan to a hotel to rest, while he himself returned to the office at Shenhua Prestige.

At this point, Pei Qian had already put multiple layers of insurance in place for Sloth Apartments.

The floor plan looked flashy and unique, but in reality it was highly impractical.

To prevent wealthy buyers from becoming interested, he had deliberately chosen a minimalist decorating style instead of the luxurious "garden villa" aesthetic favored by rich homeowners.

Moreover, the business model itself—buying an entire building and renting it out—was unlikely to recover its costs for many, perhaps even dozens, of settlement cycles, regardless of whether the apartments could be rented successfully.

Each unit, including furnishings, cost around 3.5 million yuan.

Even if the monthly rent were set at 8,000 or 9,000 yuan, and the apartments remained occupied continuously, it would still take three to four hundred months to recoup the investment after deducting cleaning costs and other operating expenses.

As far as Pei Qian remembered, the rental yield of residential properties in China had never been particularly impressive. Many people bought homes primarily because of the associated household registration benefits, school district access, and the property's future appreciation potential.

Of course, real estate generally retained or increased its value.

But as long as Pei Qian never sold the property, that appreciation could never actually be converted into cash.

For Pei Qian, the possibility of appreciation was actually a negative factor.

Fortunately, regardless of how much the property increased in value, the system would still calculate it using the fixed-asset conversion ratio of ten-to-one at settlement.

As long as he wasn't greedy and kept the total value of fixed assets below half of the system's starting funds, there would be no major problems.

Therefore, whether Sloth Apartments succeeded or failed, became popular or remained obscure, it was still an excellent deal from Pei Qian's perspective.

Of course, it would be best if it never became popular.

That way, he could lose an additional hundred thousand yuan or more in potential rental income every month.

Still, this wasn't enough for him.

He wanted even more ways to drive away his target audience—namely, those young people who appreciated trendy, middle-class lifestyles.

The method was simple:

Raise the price. Raise it aggressively.

Under normal market conditions in Jingzhou, a unit like this would reasonably rent for around 6,000 yuan per month.

Shared among four to six tenants, that would come to just over a thousand yuan per person.

The rent would already be somewhat higher than comparable properties on the market, but considering the full renovation and complete furnishing package, it would still be entirely reasonable.

If he actually priced it at 6,000 yuan per month, someone in a city as large as Jingzhou would definitely rent it.

However, the system prohibited him from setting prices far above reasonable market levels unless he provided services of corresponding value—regardless of whether tenants actually wanted those services.

So Pei Qian decided to add extra services.

Housekeeping

All Sloth Apartments units would come with mandatory housekeeping services.

You didn't have to use the service.

But you still had to pay for it.

A certain number of cleaning staff would be hired, providing minor cleaning every three days and major cleaning every seven days, effectively matching hotel-level service standards.

Property Butler Service

Each building would have a dedicated property manager.

The manager would handle various issues at any time, maintain detailed records on all tenants, prevent unauthorized individuals from entering, and do their utmost to protect residents' rights and interests.

If any problem arose within an apartment, the property manager could immediately use Sloth Apartments' funds to arrange repairs.

President Pei would be delighted.

Regular Upgrades

At regular intervals, the apartments would be upgraded.

This could include installing the latest smart-home devices, providing new gaming equipment, purchasing newly released games, and subscribing to various video-streaming services.

Of course, all of these items belonged to Sloth Apartments.

Tenants had no right to take them with them when they moved out.

After adding all these services, Pei Qian consulted the system once again.

Eventually, he succeeded in setting the monthly rent at 9,000 yuan.

The apartment technically contained five bedrooms.

However, one of them was relatively small and unsuitable for living purposes, so Pei Qian planned to convert it into a study.

As a result, each apartment would effectively contain four bedrooms.

Assuming a thirty-day month, the daily rental cost per bedroom worked out to roughly 80 yuan per day.

While this was still cheaper than most mid-range and high-end hotels in Jingzhou, it was already more expensive than 99.9% of the city's rental properties.

Viewed from that perspective, if short-term rentals were allowed, the apartments might still offer a certain degree of value for money.

So, Pei Qian still had one final trump card.

No room-sharing, and no short-term rentals!

All apartments had to be rented as entire units. Every tenant and visitor had to register their information with the property manager.

Rent could be paid monthly, and no security deposit was required. However, lease agreements were available only in six-month or one-year terms, and tenants were expected to stay for the full duration.

Of course, tenants could terminate their lease early without any penalties and would receive a refund for the remaining rent. The catch was that they would be barred from staying in any property under Sloth Apartments for the next year.

With those rules in place, anyone hoping to treat Sloth Apartments like a hotel would probably give up immediately.

Given the current salary levels in Jingzhou, the only people who could comfortably afford Sloth Apartments would be wealthy individuals.

But if they were wealthy, why would they rent instead of buying their own homes?

As for ordinary office workers, probably only employees of Tengda Group could afford the rent.

But expecting Tengda Group employees to pay rent to live in Sloth Apartments? Not a chance.

Pei Qian's plan was to initially prohibit Tengda Group employees from renting there. After he had confirmed that Sloth Apartments truly couldn't make money, he would begin large-scale construction and then arrange for Tengda employees to move in, using employee benefits to offset the rent.

That way, he would get double the happiness!

Of course, the system required that only a small portion of Sloth Apartments units could be used as employee housing. Presumably, this was to ensure that the project still had a chance of turning a profit and that its nature wouldn't fundamentally change.

But as long as Pei Qian built enough Sloth Apartments, there would eventually be enough space to house all of the company's employees.

At that point, a small portion could be used as staff housing, while the vast majority remained vacant and unrented. Wouldn't that mean losing money at an astronomical rate?

Finally, Pei Qian needed to find someone to take charge of Sloth Apartments.

Previously, the managers of new projects had all been transferred from other departments. This time, Pei Qian decided to try a different approach.

Wouldn't it be a good idea to put the architect, Liang Qingfan, in charge of Sloth Apartments?

Of course, Liang Qingfan was still an employee of Gaoling Design, but Pei Qian firmly believed that if you swung the hoe hard enough, no corner was impossible to poach.

Having a young architect manage an apartment complex seemed rather unrelated to his professional expertise, didn't it?

Naturally, whether or not to recruit him still required further observation.

If Sloth Apartments developed exactly according to Pei Qian's expectations, if Liang Qingfan followed every one of his instructions to the letter, and if he showed absolutely no talent for management or marketing, then Pei Qian could seriously consider poaching him.

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Thursday, April 14.

Managed Fitness.

The trainers sat or stood around the lounge area, looking somewhat lost and unsure of what to do.

There were twenty trainers in total—fourteen men and six women—all personally screened and hired by Guo Licheng after a rigorous selection process.

Jingzhou's fitness industry wasn't particularly large, and Guo Licheng knew quite a few people in the field. Through referrals and recommendations, he simply explained the salary and benefits offered by Managed Fitness, and the positions were filled almost immediately.

Guo Licheng had also followed President Pei's instructions to the letter when hiring. Every trainer he selected was highly qualified and professionally competent—honest, straightforward people who, like himself, disliked flashy sales talk.

"Brother Guo, are we really not going to hand out flyers or do any promotion?" asked a sweet-looking female trainer with an attractive, curvy figure.

Her name was Li Yaling. What people saw at first glance was only the surface. If she took off her jacket, they would discover bulging biceps and four sharply defined abdominal muscles—a perfect embodiment of the phrase: *one punch from me might actually kill you*.

The other trainers also stared at one another, waiting for Guo Licheng to make a decision.

Guo Licheng nodded.

"The boss said we don't need to do anything. Just wait for customers to come to us."

Li Yaling let out a soft sigh.

"Can we really trust the boss on that?"

"Nowadays, which gym in the country *doesn't* rely on handing out flyers and pushing memberships and training packages?"

"We've all done that kind of work before. We may not like it, but that's just how the job is."

"I think no matter what the boss says, we should still take the initiative and find something productive to do."

Guo Licheng hesitated for a moment, but soon reaffirmed his conviction.

"No. President Pei seems different from other bosses."

Li Yaling sighed helplessly.

"Bosses only *seem* different. Some are strict, some are easygoing, and some look like they're easy to talk to, but in reality they're all the same. They all want employees to take initiative and work harder."

"This place doesn't require us to sell memberships, and the pay is much higher than at other gyms. Just sitting around waiting like this doesn't feel right."

But Guo Licheng still shook his head.

“Even if handing out flyers brings customers in, so what? Think carefully about our gym's membership system.”

“Members are required to come a certain number of times each week, and they also have to purchase the fitness meals as part of the package.”

“How many people attracted by flyers would be willing to accept conditions that strict?”

Li Yaling was momentarily speechless.

“Then... then what are we supposed to do?”

Guo Licheng looked around at everyone and said:

“If we can't figure out what the boss is thinking, then we should simply follow his instructions exactly.”

“President Pei definitely has his own plans. None of us are particularly good at marketing anyway, so let's not interfere blindly.”

“In short, don't overthink it. If President Pei ends up blaming us, I'll take responsibility for whatever consequences come.”

“Since there are no customers right now, go warm up and get some training in. These are excellent machines, so don't let them go to waste.”

“And remember to come try the fitness meals in a little while.”

Since there were no customers in the gym, the trainers had nothing much to do. They dispersed and began warming up on their own.

All of the equipment had just been purchased. They weren't the most expensive machines available, but they all came from world-class commercial fitness equipment brands. They were durable, stylishly designed, and incorporated modern ergonomic principles.

At present, only a handful of luxury hotel gyms in Jingzhou were equipped with machines of this caliber. Ordinary people rarely had the opportunity to use them.

Guo Licheng had also ordered uniforms for all the trainers. Their bright yellow color made them especially eye-catching.

Meanwhile, a dedicated staff member from Moyu Delivery was responsible for regularly delivering fitness meals to the gym. Since there were no customers yet, however, only the trainers' meals were being delivered.

The Food Laboratory had not yet been fully established, so these fitness meals were the first version created by Moyu Delivery's chefs. They successfully achieved the goals of being low in oil and low in salt, but there was still plenty of room for improvement.

Guo Licheng planned to have the trainers sample them over the next few days, gather feedback, and gradually refine the recipes.

At noon, a Moyu Delivery courier arrived.

Guo Licheng and several other trainers arranged the healthy meals in the lounge area and waited for everyone to gather for lunch.

The gym's original lounge area had not been particularly large. It had mainly been used for selling memberships and training packages.

Now, however, to accommodate customers who would be eating their meals there, Guo Licheng had slightly expanded the lounge during the renovation planning process. He had also purchased additional high-end tables and chairs to ensure that customers could comfortably dine there in shifts.

Just as Guo Licheng was about to call the trainers who were still exercising over for lunch, he spotted a familiar figure pushing open the door and entering.

President Pei had arrived!

Guo Licheng hurried over to greet him.

After entering, Pei Qian first surveyed the surroundings.

Some trainers were preparing to eat, while others were using the equipment for their own workouts. There wasn't a single customer in the entire gym, and none of the trainers had gone outside to hand out flyers.

Hmm...

What a thoroughly satisfying sight.