



**TO SPARK
BETTER RESULTS,
TUNE YOUR
MARKETING
STRATEGY TO
"TRA-DIGITAL".**

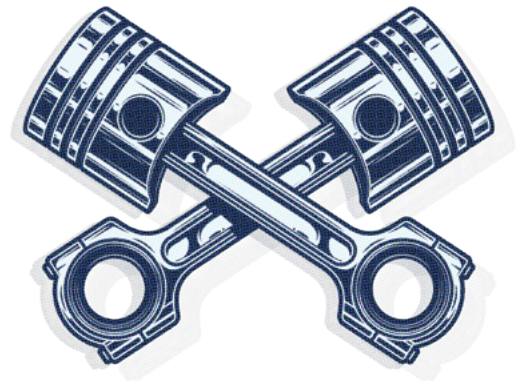




Retirement community marketers already know the importance of carefully diversifying their marketing mix and lead generation strategies by using reliable and targeted tactics. Optimal results depend on making good decisions.

Combining traditional and digital tools provides an integrated approach that can reach the right prospect, right where they live, work or play — locally, regionally or nationally.

With apologies to the shift towards electric vehicles, consider an analogy relating your strategy to the cylinders in an engine. Each cylinder represents a single marketing tactic. More tactics working together in sync drive your marketing engine to greater output, thus providing the performance necessary to fill your community. As any good “gearhead” will tell you, “there’s no replacement for displacement” when it comes to generating power.



Resist the urge to chase the newest gadgets and the vendors selling their most profitable products and services. Demand tangible proof that they can generate qualified leads, without the volume of noise that can come from scatter shot approaches.





AT A MINIMUM, YOUR **BALANCED STRATEGY** SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING TACTICS:

→ **Search Marketing**

When a potential prospect is “searching” for a solution to their challenges, your search strategy cannot be a copy/paste approach. Rely on both paid search tools like Pay-Per-Click (PPC) and search engine content optimization (SEO) for unpaid, or organic, search results. Search competitiveness requires consistent efforts for page one visibility and Pay-Per-Click budgets need to be well funded. These tactics must be constantly nurtured to achieve desired results. It is not a set it and forget it model.

Ensuring your brand maintains a prominent position with any search engine requires a commitment to managing vendors and not taking traffic reports at face value or as accomplishment.

→ **Social Media**

More senior living marketers are using Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and increasingly TikTok. However, the most effective and more trusted channel remains YouTube. To state the obvious, we live in a video-centric world and YouTube remains the second most popular search engine on the planet. And, it’s owned by Google!

Great content tells your great story, in your words or that of your residents and their families. It presents your brand in an authentic way if you take precautions and really understand the core aspects of your brand.

Remember, your video content doesn’t need to be a “Spielberg production”. The most powerful video tool you own is likely in your back pocket — your phone. With a few low-cost and easy to use tools, you too can be a budding and successful video content star.

→ **Email & Content Marketing**

Email marketing can be a cost-effective component of your integrated strategy for connecting with prospects. Done well, it fosters loyalty and drives conversions in the form of inbound calls, contact forms, event attendance and information downloads. CAUTION: don’t become an inbox annoyance by sending too many emails too frequently.

Content marketing can also position your community as a trusted resource in senior living and an aging services authority. Consider adding credible content from high-quality, third party organizations to further prove your expertise in solving aging related challenges your prospects and their families are facing.





Traditional Media

Don't let fear cause you to reject this reliable lead generation tactic. Executed well, you will undoubtedly find value in print media, including newspaper and magazines (digital versions count). Consider TV and perhaps even out-of-home depending on geography. Always remember to include strong response based elements that offer high value to increase ROI and brand value.

Direct Mail

Despite the tidal wave of digital dominance in our lives, direct mail remains relevant for its tangible, and tactile impact. This is especially true for today's seniors, who still get their physical mail regularly and respond to its contents, unlike younger age cohorts. One potential driver is the fact that while email inboxes are filled with, let's call most of it junk, mail boxes are sparsely populated yet catalogs and flyers continue to appear. Additionally, many senior prospects still fear online scams and identity theft and as such may not engage in your digital content unless they are familiar with and trust your brand.

In order of importance the three key ingredients to a successful direct mail campaign are: the list, the offer and the message/creative execution and packaging.

Brand

If your brand and presentation of your brand are weak, unremarkable and forgettable, don't expect rock star performance from any combination of the tactics presented. Being memorable and relatable are essential in marketing any product or service. In senior living this is even more profound given most people would rather choose home over community life nearly all the time.

Artificial Intelligence

When will AI be ready for senior living, or is senior living ready for AI? A simple Google search for "Pros and Cons of AI in marketing" reveals many articles that highlight how AI can help with the challenges you will likely face trying to implement a successful plan. There is no questioning the impact AI will have on marketing outcomes. As with many newer technologies (like electric cars), the bugs need to be worked out before you add them to your marketing garage. Especially if it comes at the expense of other proven tools that will produce results when you need them the most — like now.





ADAPTABILITY, ADOPTABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND ADJUSTABILITY:

Remembering these 4A's when considering emerging trends is crucial if you want to thrive in the ever-evolving senior living marketing landscape.

As competition for new residents intensifies, retirement community marketers are advised to add as much horsepower to their strategies as they can afford. Adopt an integrated, multi-channel approach combining tra-digital tactics and avoid the lure of single tactic solutions.

Your prospects are leaving digital footprints, even when using traditional tools and linking them to your digital strategies. Be sure to track, measure, report and revise as needed.

Check the data: What is the conversion rate for each strategy? What tactics touched the inquiry, and which one may be their true source? Adding additional digital tactics such as geotargeting and geofencing may have value – but not at expense of more reliable approaches. The real challenge is balancing the amount of budget spend on each tactic to maximize results and effectiveness.

Finally, don't take shortcuts or fall prey to false promises. Do your homework, mine the data, know your customer and beware of the quintessential advertising disclaimer: **"Results may vary."**

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