

The Perception Gap:

Why 76% of Seniors
Aren't Considering
Your Community
(And How to Change
Their Minds)



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Bridging the Great Divide in Senior Living

The senior living industry is facing a fundamental disconnect with its target audience.

While operators have developed diverse communities designed to meet a spectrum of needs, a staggering **76% of seniors have not considered moving to any type of senior living or retirement community.**

This finding reveals a market that is not proactively planning for future care but is instead anchored to the powerful emotional and practical desire to age in place. This report will unpack the data-driven reasons behind this sentiment, providing senior living operators with a clear, actionable roadmap to bridge the gap between their offerings and the deeply held beliefs of seniors and their caregivers.

The insights in this report are drawn from a survey of 700 respondents, predominantly composed of seniors in the 65+ age group (556 responses). The analysis also includes the crucial perspective of caregivers (20% of respondents, or 140 responses), whose views often contrast sharply with those of the seniors they support, particularly regarding financial preparedness and the necessity of future care. The core challenge for the industry is rooted in a pervasive mindset of optimistic denial. The data reveals two distinct attitudinal segments: “Independents,” who constitute a remarkable 70.7% of seniors in the study and believe they will not or probably not need care as they get older.

“Planners” make up the remaining 19.3%. For senior living communities, this is the single most important insight: the vast majority of your potential market does not believe they need your product. Marketing and communication strategies must therefore shift from selling a solution to educating a population that has not yet acknowledged the problem.

This resistance is compounded by four significant barriers that will be explored in detail throughout this report:

- 1. The Overwhelming Perception of Unaffordability:** A majority of respondents (58.6%) do not view senior living communities as “affordable.” This is not a vague concern; 46% expect a community to cost “much more” than living at home with comparable support. This financial anxiety is the primary driver in decision-making and the top reason for disqualifying a community.



- 2. A Reactive, Crisis-Driven Decision Process:** The search for both assisted living and senior living is not a planned life transition for most. The largest group of respondents (29.1%) stated they would only consider moving “when care is needed.” This reactive approach means communities are often engaging with families under some level of duress, limiting the time to build relationships and effectively communicate value.
- 3. A Critical Communication and Knowledge Gap:** The industry’s own terminology is a barrier to entry. The majority of consumers are unfamiliar with core concepts, with 67% unaware of “Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC)” and 80% having minimal or no understanding of the phrase “Life Plan Community.”
- 4. A Market Unprepared for Its Own Future:** When asked if they have a plan in place for future care needs as they get older, 61.3% of respondents do not actively affirm that they do. You are marketing to an audience that, for the most part, is unaware of their needs.

This report provides a data-backed analysis of these challenges and offers strategic recommendations for marketing, sales, and community development. By understanding the consumer’s deep-seated motivations, financial fears, and decision-making triggers, senior living organizations can begin to craft messages and experiences that resonate, build trust, and ultimately bridge the great divide between aging in place and embracing community living.



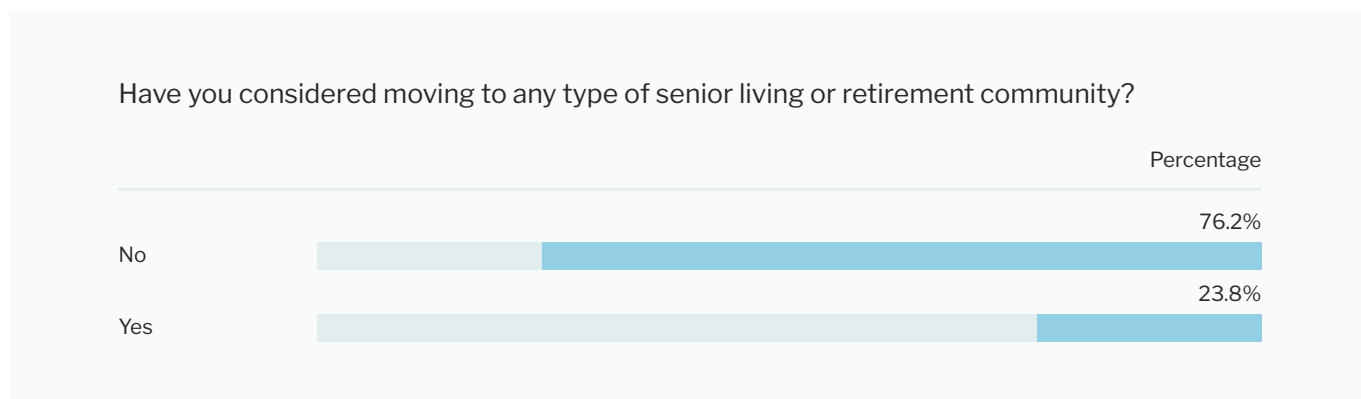
The Mindset of the Senior Consumer: A Story of Independence, Denial, and the Power of Home

To effectively communicate with seniors and their families, senior living sales and marketing leadership must first understand the deeply ingrained psychological and emotional factors that shapes their worldview.

The data reveals a consumer base that is not actively seeking change, but is instead fiercely protective of its autonomy and current living situation. The prevailing mindset is not one of proactive planning but of optimistic denial, creating a significant hurdle for an industry built on preparing for the future.

The Overwhelming Preference to Age in Place

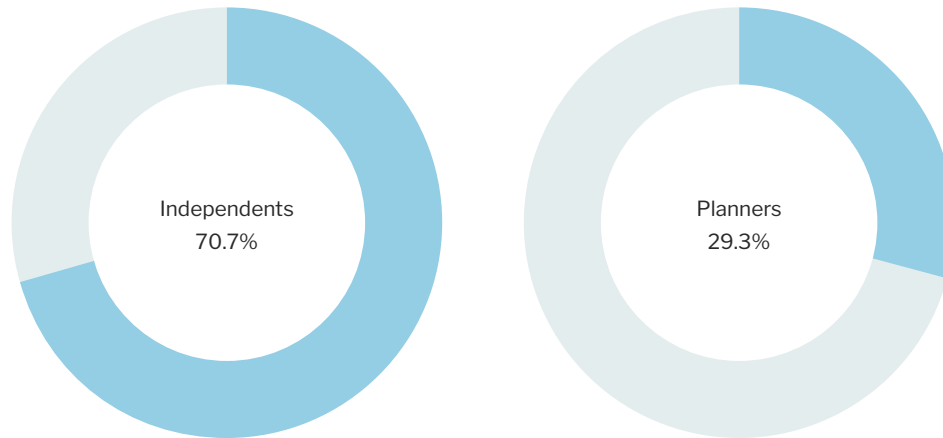
The single most dominant finding from the survey is the profound attachment seniors have to their current homes. A staggering **76.2% of seniors have not considered moving to any type of senior living or retirement community**. This is not a passive statistic; it represents an active and deeply held conviction.



Insight for Leaders: Your primary competitor is not just the community down the street; it is the powerful emotional concept of “home.” Marketing messages that lead with the idea of “moving” or “leaving” are likely to trigger immediate resistance. The strategic imperative is to reframe the conversation away from leaving a home and toward enhancing a lifestyle, like gaining freedom from the burdens of home maintenance, increasing social connection, and ensuring future security, all elements that the current home may no longer provide.

The “Independents” Mindset: “It Won’t Happen to Me”

Fueling the desire to age in place is a powerful form of optimistic denial. The study identifies that **70.7% of seniors are “Independents,”** meaning they state they will “not” or “probably not” need additional care as they get older. They are confident in their ability to remain independent, a belief that directly conflicts with the statistical realities of aging.



Insight for Leaders: You cannot effectively sell a solution to a problem your audience doesn’t believe they will have. Traditional marketing focused on “levels of care” or future health needs will not resonate with this 70% majority (though it may resonate with caregivers). The concept of care must be positioned subtly, as a background “safety net” that provides peace of mind, rather than the primary reason to move. The lead message must be about lifestyle, wellness, and vibrant living, which are benefits they can enjoy today, while the availability of care is the reassuring insurance policy for tomorrow.



The Powerful Pull of Home, Health, and Family

When asked why they haven't considered moving, the reasons given by seniors are deeply personal and emotional. The survey's qualitative data, visualized in word clouds, is dominated by terms like **"home," "healthy," "live," "family," "independent," and "happy."** They represent the core values and fears of the senior consumer. They fear losing their independence, their health, their connection to family, and the comfort of the home they have known for years.



Insight for Leaders: Your marketing vocabulary must mirror this emotional language. To overcome the fear of loss, you must demonstrate tangible gain. Use authentic stories and testimonials that show current residents who are more independent, have stronger family relationships (because they are no longer dependent on them for care), and have found a new, vibrant sense of “home.” Directly addressing and reframing these core values is the key to breaking through their resistance.

The Paradox: High Satisfaction Among the Few Who Move

While the vast majority are resistant to moving, a crucial paradox exists: for the small minority (7.1%) in our survey who currently live in a senior living community, the experience is overwhelmingly positive. A combined **78% of these residents rate their living situation as “Excellent,” “Very good,” or “Good.”**

Insight for Leaders: This is your most potent marketing asset. The reality of community living shatters the negative preconceptions held by the “Independents” majority. The positive experience of your current residents is the social proof needed to overcome the fear and uncertainty of prospective residents. Your marketing strategy should be built around amplifying the voices of these satisfied residents. They are your most credible and persuasive salespeople. By showcasing their stories, you allow prospects to see a reflection of a future they had not dared to imagine—one that is not about loss, but about gain.

The Affordability Barrier: Why Cost is the Ultimate Gatekeeper

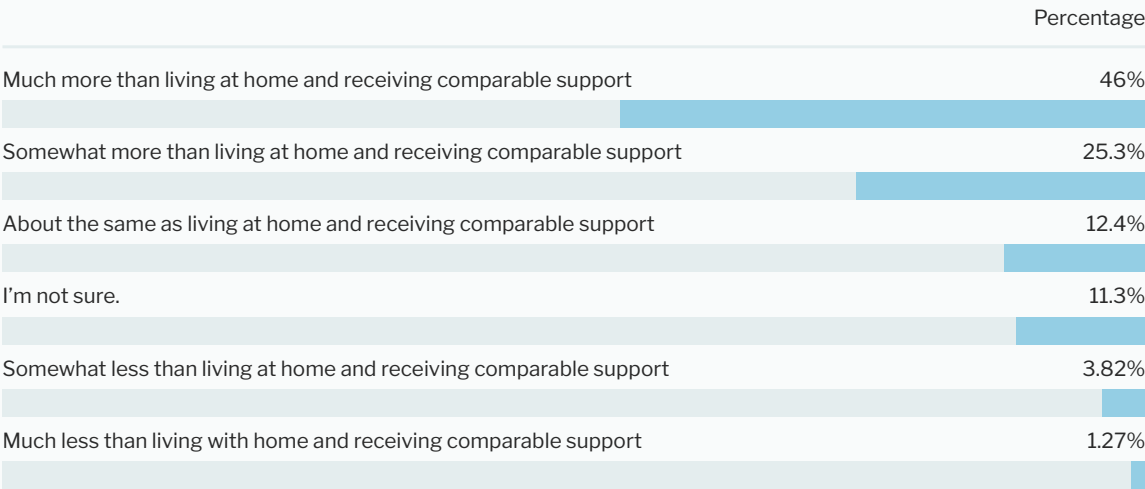
While the emotional attachment to “home” forms the psychological backdrop for senior decision-making, it is the stark reality of cost that builds the most formidable wall between seniors and community living. The data is unequivocal: financial anxiety is not just a contributing factor; it is the primary lens through which the vast majority of seniors and caregivers view the industry. For senior living communities, understanding and addressing this affordability barrier is the most critical step in converting interest into action.

The Widespread Perception of Unaffordability

The perception that senior living is financially out of reach is both deeply entrenched and widespread. A clear majority of respondents, 58.6%, do not believe that senior living and retirement communities are affordable. This belief is not abstract; it is a firm conviction, with nearly 30% “strongly disagreeing” with the affordability statement.

This perception is further reinforced by their expectations. When asked to compare the cost of community living to aging at home with comparable support, a combined **71.3% of respondents expect a senior living community to be more expensive**, with a dominant 46% believing it will be “much more” expensive.

What would you expect a senior living community to cost, relative to living at home and receiving comparable support from family members, home health aids, housecleaners, landscapers, etc.?

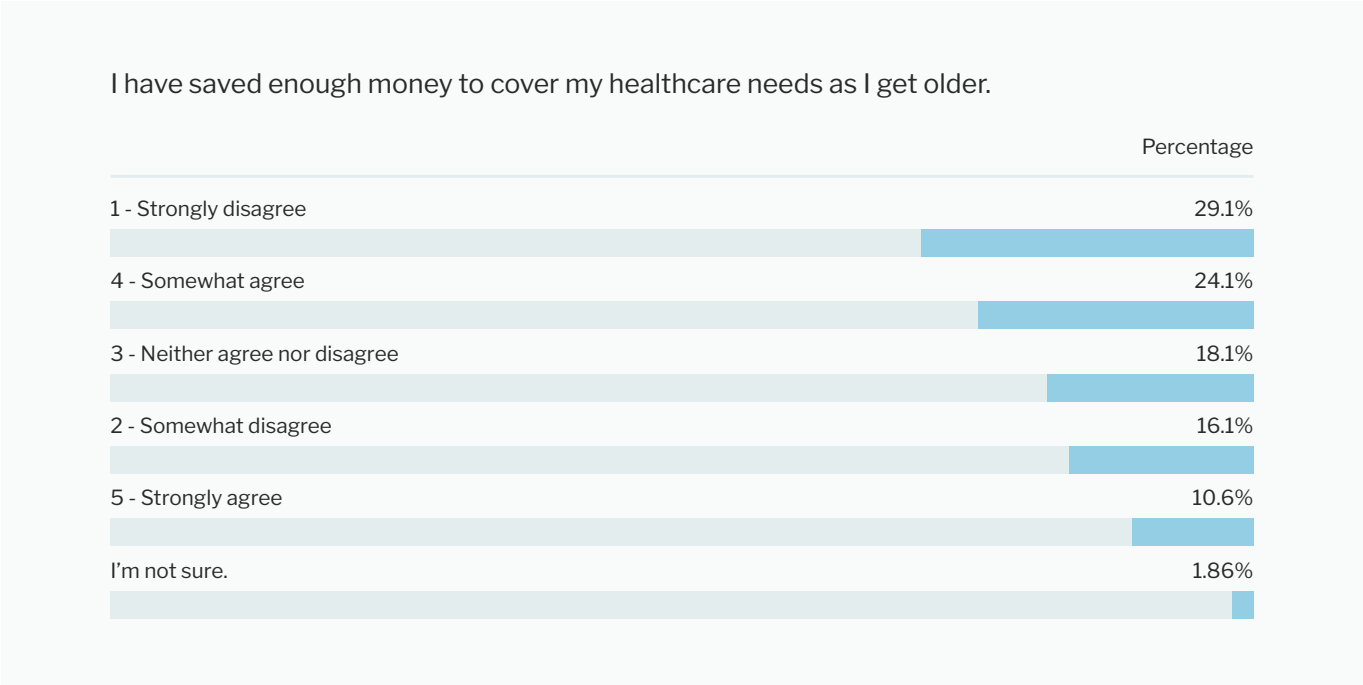


Insight for Leaders: The cost conversation is happening in the consumer’s mind long before they ever contact you, and they are starting from a place of skepticism. Hiding or obscuring pricing on your website only confirms their suspicion that it is unaffordable. The most effective strategy is to address cost head-on. Develop clear, easy-to-understand content that frames the value proposition in terms of an all-inclusive lifestyle. Create a “Cost Comparison Calculator” that allows prospects to compare their current, often-underestimated expenses (mortgage/rent, utilities, property taxes, home maintenance, groceries, transportation, in-home care) against the predictable monthly fee of a community. This shifts the narrative from a high “cost” to a high “value.”

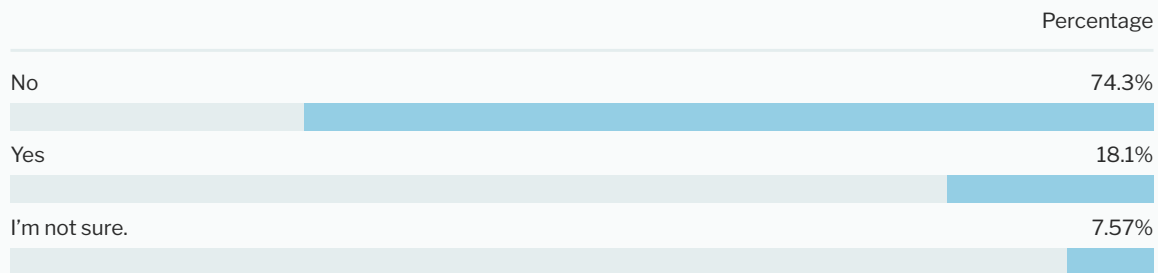
The Reality of Financial Unpreparedness

The perception of high cost is magnified by a widespread lack of personal financial confidence. The data reveals a significant portion of the population feels unprepared for the financial realities of aging.

- Over 45% of respondents disagree with the statement, “I have saved enough money to cover healthcare needs as I get older.”
- This is compounded by the fact that 74.3% of seniors do not have long-term care insurance, the very financial tool designed to fund **healthcare needs**.



Do you have long-term care insurance?



Insight for Leaders: Your audience feels they cannot afford your communities because, in many cases, their personal balance sheets support that conclusion. This requires senior living organizations to move beyond the role of service provider and into the role of trusted financial navigator. Your website and sales process should include resources that help families understand their options. This could include information on Veterans' benefits, utilizing long-term care insurance, guidance on using life insurance conversions or bridge loans, planning the moving process, and partnerships with certified elder-care financial planners. The possibilities here are endless. By providing solutions, you build trust and demonstrate that you are a partner in their journey, not just a transaction at the end of it.

The Financial Divide: Senior Polarization vs. Caregiver Pessimism

The survey reveals a stark financial divide between seniors and their caregivers. The senior population is deeply polarized: **39.3% of seniors feel they have saved enough for future healthcare needs**, while an almost identical 40.4% feel they have not. This split creates a market of two distinct mindsets: the confident and the concerned.

A Clear Mandate for Predictable Payments

Given the pervasive financial anxiety, it is no surprise that consumers crave predictability. When asked about payment structures, nearly 79% of seniors indicated a preference for paying a predictable monthly rent rather than a large, lump-sum entrance fee.

Insight for Leaders: This is a direct mandate from the market. Models that rely on large, upfront buy-in fees create an immediate and often insurmountable financial and psychological barrier for the majority of prospective residents. In your marketing, prominently feature the simplicity and predictability of an all-inclusive monthly fee. If your model includes an entrance fee, the burden is on you to clearly and compellingly articulate the long-term value, ROI, and security that this investment provides. Without that clarity, you risk losing the conversation before it even starts.

The Decision-Making Journey: A Reactive Path Paved with Digital Research

For the 76% of seniors who have not considered moving to any type of senior living or retirement community, the journey toward senior living does not begin with a leisurely exploration of options. Instead, the data shows it is most often a reactive, needs-driven process triggered by a change in health. Once activated, this journey is characterized by intensive online research where transparency, social proof, and cost are the primary gatekeepers.

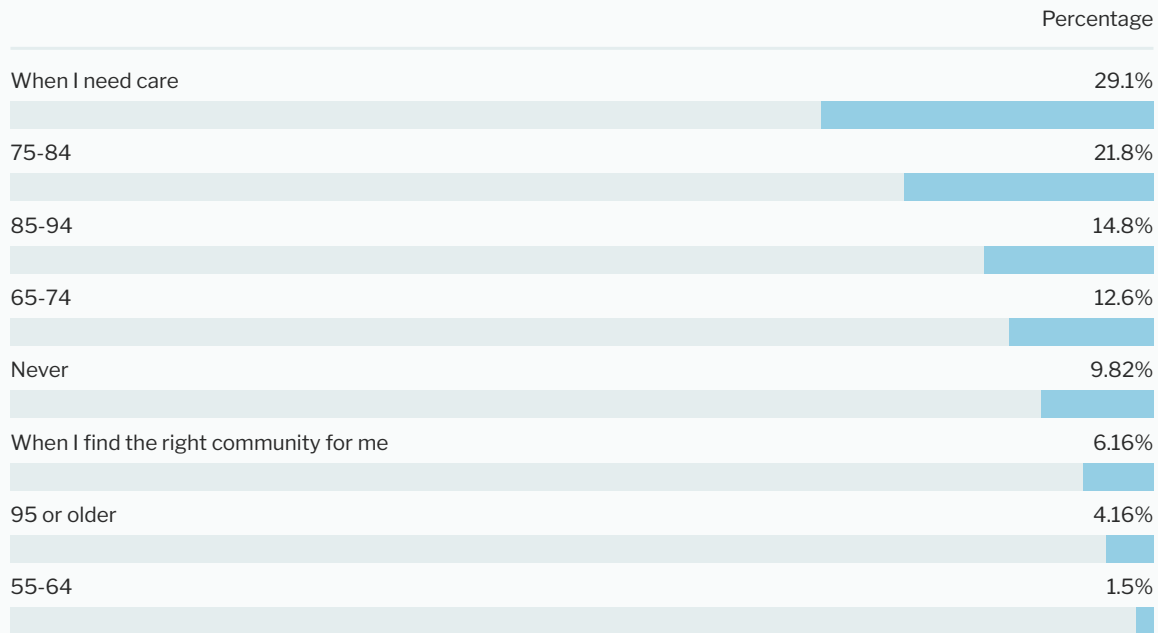
Senior living communities which fail to meet consumers on this digital-first, high-stakes path risk being eliminated before a single conversation occurs.

The Trigger: The Shift from “When I’m Older” to “When Care is Needed”

The transition from passive denial to active consideration is rarely prompted by a milestone birthday. The most significant trigger is the tangible, undeniable need for care.

- The largest group of senior respondents (29.1%) would only consider moving “when care is needed,” suggesting a reactive, often crisis-driven, decision-making process.
- This is followed by those who plan to move within specific age ranges. 21.8% of respondents say that they would consider moving into a senior living community between the ages of 75-84, and 14.8% of seniors say that they would consider moving into a senior living community between the ages of 85-94. Only 12.6% say they would consider moving into senior living communities between the ages of 65-74.

Barring any medical issues that would require special care, at what age would you consider moving to a senior living or retirement community?



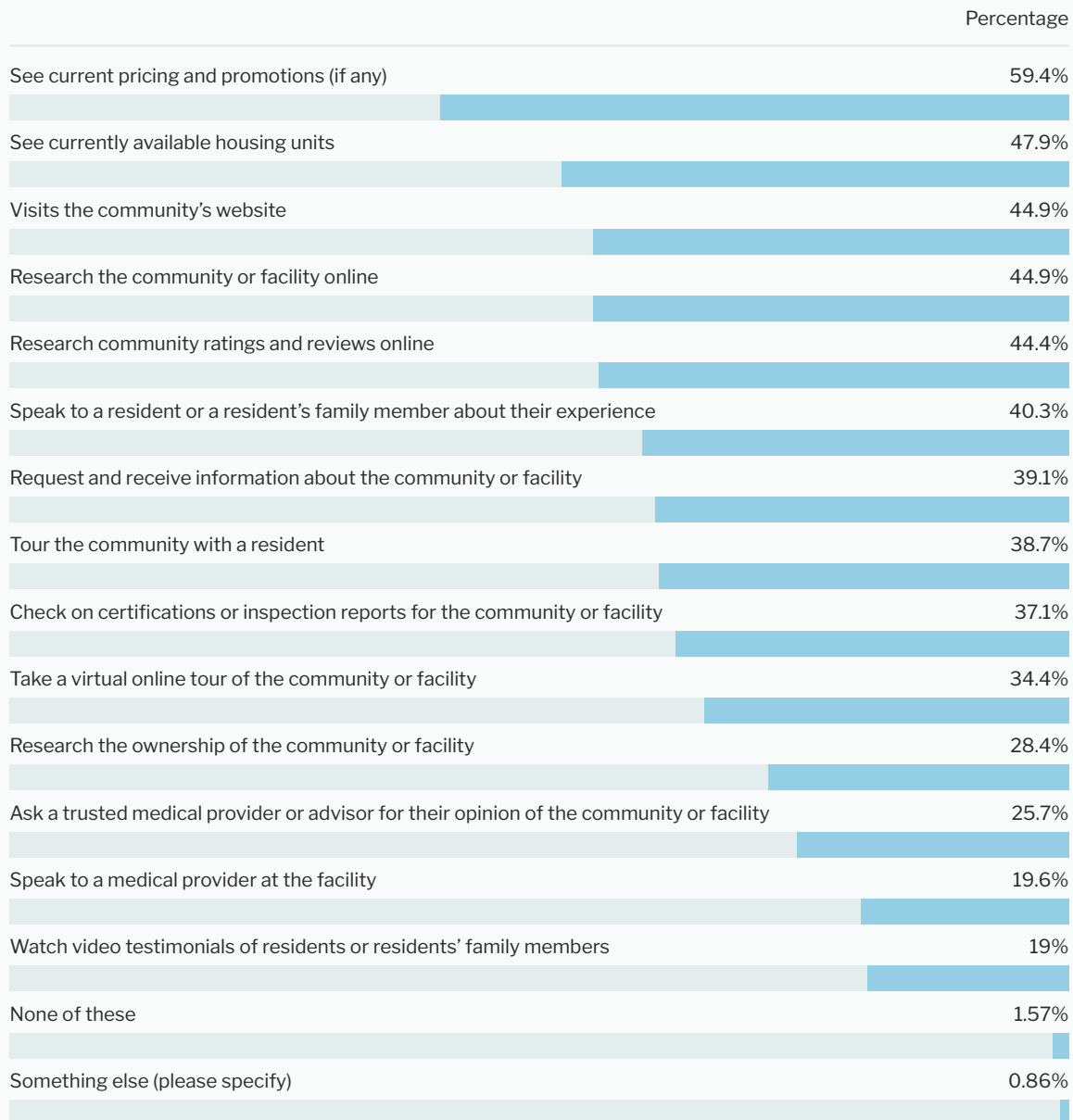
Insight for Leaders: You are often engaging with families in a moment of stress and urgency. Your marketing and sales processes must be designed for simplicity, clarity, and speed. Your website needs a clear, easily navigable path for someone who needs help now (even outside of normal business hours). This includes prominent contact information, a straightforward explanation of the steps to move in, and empathetic language that acknowledges the difficulty of their situation.

Mastering the First Impression: Why Your Digital Presence is the Most Critical Step in the Sales Journey

Before a potential resident or a caregiver ever picks up the phone or sends an email, they are conducting thorough due diligence online. The website is no longer a digital brochure; it is the primary arena where communities are vetted and eliminated. The top actions potential residents want to take BEFORE speaking with a sales representative are overwhelmingly digital:

1. See current pricing and promotions (59.4%)
2. Visit the community's website (44.9%)
3. Research community ratings and reviews online (44.4%)

If you were considering a particular senior living or retirement community or facility for yourself, which of the following would you want to do BEFORE speaking with a sales representative? Choose all that apply.



The study surfaced a frustration with a lack of transparency. Over half of the respondents (52.7%) agree that finding pricing on senior living websites has been challenging.

Insight for Leaders: Your website is your most critical sales tool. Without a positive web experience, prospective residents may disqualify your community before they reach out. A lack of price transparency is a major strategic error, as it creates friction and reinforces prospective residents' fears that your community is unaffordable. To win in this phase, you must provide clear pricing information, showcase authentic resident reviews and testimonials prominently, and ensure your website is easy to navigate and answers the most pressing (and specific) questions a family would have.

The Core “Must-Haves” and “Deal-Breakers”

When evaluating a community, consumers are weighing a consistent set of factors. Understanding these priorities is key to aligning your marketing and sales messages with their needs.

Top Factors for CONSIDERING a Community	Top Factors for DISQUALIFYING a Community
1. Cost similar to what I pay now (48.1%)	1. Cost is significantly higher than what I pay for housing now (49.3%)
2. Amenities I want (44.3%)	2. Poor reputation of the community (41.1%)
3. Good reputation of the community (40%)	3. Lack of desired amenities (39.7%)
4. Availability of benevolent care (28.6%)	4. Negative online reviews (34.1%)

Insight for Leaders: The decision matrix is a balance of the practical (cost), the personal (amenities, pets), and the emotional (reputation). Your value proposition should address all three. Reputation is not an abstract concept; it is actively shaped by what consumers find online. Proactively managing your online reviews and encouraging satisfied families to share their experiences is not a marketing “extra,” it is a critical core business function. Furthermore, the ability to bring pets is a significant emotional factor for over a quarter of the market and should be highlighted as a key differentiator.

The Human Connection: The Enduring Power of Social Proof

While the journey begins online, it is validated through human connection. The desire for authentic, peer-to-peer insight is a powerful force in the decision-making process.

- **Speaking with a resident or their family member about their experience** is one of the top pre-sales research activities (40.3%).
- Even when a sales tour is required, prospects still highly value **touring the community with a resident** (37.6%) and speaking with a resident about their experience (39.6%).

Insight for Leaders: The most credible and persuasive voice in your marketing arsenal is that of a happy resident and their loved ones. Your sales process must be designed to facilitate this connection. Move beyond staged testimonials and create a formal Resident Ambassador program. Offer to connect prospective residents with residents who share similar interests or backgrounds. This authentic social proof is the ultimate antidote to the fear and skepticism that define the start of the journey, transforming an intimidating decision into a welcoming, human experience.

What Consumers Truly Value: A Blueprint for Desirable Senior Living

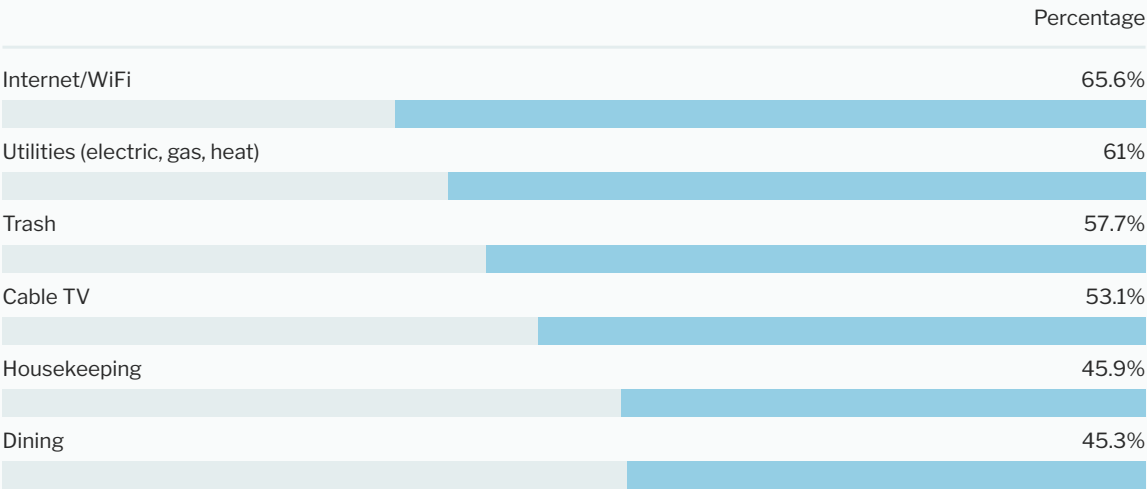
Once a senior or their loved ones move past the initial barriers and begins to evaluate specific communities, their focus shifts to a clear and consistent set of priorities. They are not looking for abstract luxuries; they are seeking a tangible enhancement to their quality of life. The data provides a detailed blueprint for what matters most, from the essential utilities included in a monthly fee to the specific amenities that foster community and the in-unit features that make a space feel like a true home.

The Foundation: Essential, Hassle-Free Living

Before considering lifestyle features, consumers want to know that the basics are covered. When asked which services they would want included in a monthly fee, the top priorities are not amenities but essential utilities that simplify daily life.

- **Internet/WiFi** (65.6%)
- **Utilities** (electric, gas, heat) (61%)
- **Trash** (57.7%)

Which services would you want to be included if you paid a monthly fee at a senior living or retirement community or facility? Choose all that apply.



Insight for Leaders: These are not “perks”; they are the expected components of modern living. In your marketing, frame these as part of the “hassle-free” lifestyle your community offers. By bundling these non-negotiables into a single, predictable fee, you reinforce the core value proposition: a simpler, more convenient life, free from the burden of managing multiple household bills.

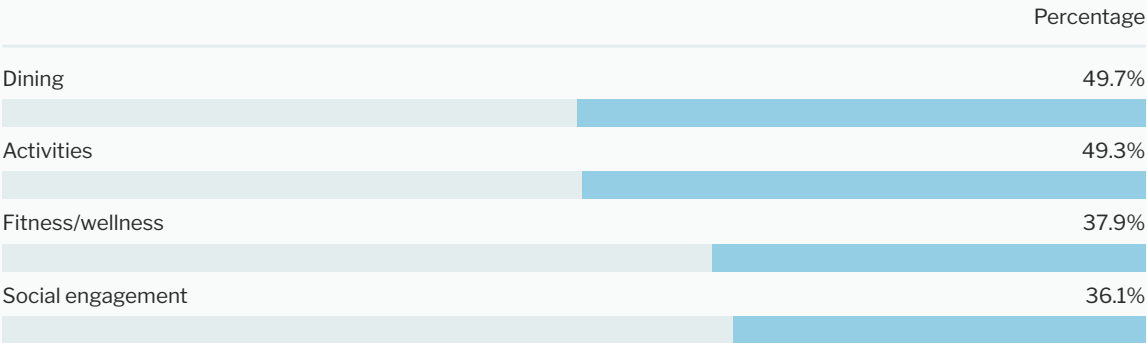


The Lifestyle: A Focus on Dining, Activities, and Social Connection

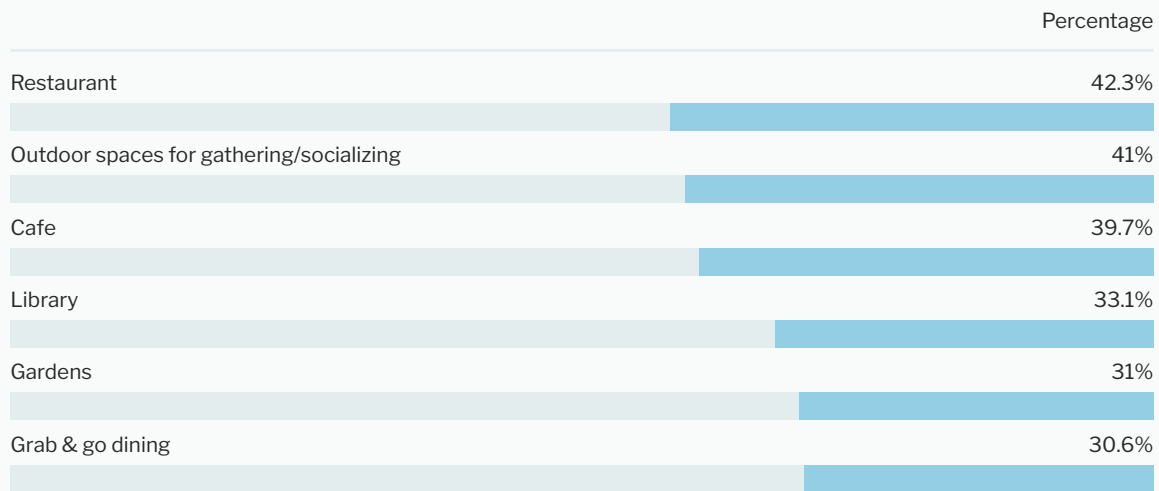
The data clearly shows that the primary appeal of community living lies in the opportunity for social engagement and a vibrant lifestyle. Consumers are looking for a built-in community to combat the isolation that can accompany aging.

- The most important services are **Dining** (49.7%) and **Activities** (49.3%).
- The most desired amenities are **Restaurants** (42.3%), **Outdoor spaces for gathering/socializing** (41%), and a **Cafe** (39.7%).

Which services would be most important to you in a senior living or retirement community?
Check all that apply.



Which amenities would be most important to you in a senior living or retirement community?



Insight for Leaders: You are not just selling housing; you are selling a social ecosystem. Dining is the centerpiece of this ecosystem, it's a daily social event. Your marketing (and tours) likely already (and should) showcase the variety and quality of your dining experiences, from formal restaurants to casual cafes. Likewise, "Activities" should be brought to life with photos, videos, and resident stories that depict a thriving, engaged community. These are the features that prove your community offers a richer, more connected life than aging at home.

The Private Space: Recreating the Comforts of Home

While community life is the draw, the private living space must feel like a sanctuary. The fear of losing the comfort and autonomy of "home" is a major barrier, and the features residents prioritize are all aimed at preserving that independence.

- **Internet included in the unit** (72.4%)
- **In-unit washer/dryer** (67.4%)
- **Fully-appointed kitchen** (61.1%)
- **Private balcony/terrace** (48.9%)

Insight for Leaders: The apartment or cottage is not just a room, it is the resident's new home. Features that promote self-sufficiency are paramount. A full kitchen allows for the independence of preparing one's own meals, and an in-unit washer/dryer removes the inconvenience of communal facilities. These are not just bullet points on a features list; they are powerful symbols of autonomy that directly counter the fear of becoming dependent. Market these features aggressively to show that moving to your community is not about giving up a home, but about gaining a more manageable one.

The Pet Factor: The Non-Negotiable Family Member

Across multiple data points, the ability to bring a pet emerges as a critical, emotionally charged factor. It is listed as a top reason to **consider** a community by **26.1%** of respondents.

Insight for Leaders: For a significant segment of your market, the question “Can I bring my pet?” is one of the first they will ask. A “no pets” policy is an immediate disqualifier for at least a quarter of prospective residents. Being “pet-friendly” is a major competitive advantage that should be central to your marketing. Go beyond simply stating you allow pets. Showcase your pet-friendly amenities like walking paths, dog parks, pet-washing stations, etc. Feature photos and stories of residents with their pets. This demonstrates a deep understanding that for many seniors, a pet is not just an animal; it is family.

Strategic Implications: A Roadmap for Growth in a Skeptical Market

The data presented in this report paints a clear picture of a consumer base that is resistant, financially anxious, and poorly informed about the senior living industry. However, within these challenges lies a powerful opportunity for senior living communities that are willing to adapt.

The path to growth is not about selling harder, it is about communicating smarter. It requires a fundamental shift in marketing and sales, moving from a product-centric pitch to a consumer-centric partnership. The following strategic imperatives provide a roadmap for bridging the gap and earning the trust of seniors and their loved ones.

1. Reframe the Value Proposition Around the True Cost of Aging in Place

The perception of unaffordability is the single greatest barrier to entry. The industry cannot win by hiding from the cost conversation. It must lead it.

- **Actionable Strategy:** Stop marketing a “monthly fee” and start marketing a “predictable lifestyle.” Develop a prominent **“Cost of Staying Home Calculator”** on your website. This interactive tool should guide prospects to tally their often-overlooked expenses: mortgage/rent, property taxes, utilities, home insurance, lawn care, snow removal, home repairs, housekeeping services, transportation costs, and the potential future cost of in-home care. By benchmarking this comprehensive, unpredictable total against your community’s fees, you transform the conversation from “cost” to “value and predictability.”
- **Insight:** You are not just selling an apartment; you are selling freedom from financial uncertainty and the burdens of homeownership as people age. This data-driven approach allows you to prove, not just claim, that community living can be a financially prudent choice.

2. Abandon Industry Jargon and Speak the Consumer's Language

The data is definitive: terms like “CCRC” and “Life Plan Community” are confusing and create an immediate barrier to understanding.

- **Actionable Strategy:** Purge your public-facing marketing materials, especially your website homepage and initial communications, of this insider language. Replace it with simple, benefit-oriented descriptions that resonate with consumer values. Instead of “Life Plan Community,” use phrases like “**A Community for Life**,” “**Worry-Free Living for Today and Tomorrow**,” or “**Active Living with a Plan for the Future**.” Focus on what the consumer gets (peace of mind, a vibrant lifestyle) rather than the complex financial model they must decipher.
- **Insight:** Clarity builds trust. Confusion breeds suspicion. By speaking in plain, accessible language, you remove a key point of friction and make your community feel more approachable and transparent from the very first interaction.

3. Embrace Radical Transparency, Especially with Pricing

The consumer journey begins online, and pricing is their top priority. Hiding this information is a critical strategic error that fuels distrust and leads to early elimination.

- **Actionable Strategy:** Feature a clear “Pricing” or “Costs” section on your website’s main navigation. You do not need to list every floor plan’s exact price, but you must provide **starting-at price ranges** for different living options (e.g., “Independent Living apartments starting at \$X,XXX/month”). This simple act of transparency satisfies the consumer’s primary research need and signals that you have nothing to hide. It pre-qualifies leads and ensures that when a prospect does contact you, the conversation can focus on value rather than basic cost discovery.
- **Insight:** In the digital age, transparency is a non-negotiable component of customer service. The communities that make it easy for consumers to get the information they need will win their trust and their business.

4. Build a Marketing Engine Fueled by Social Proof

The most credible voice in your marketing is not your own. It is the voice of a satisfied resident. The data shows that prospective residents are actively seeking this peer-to-peer validation.

- **Actionable Strategy:** Make resident and family testimonials the centerpiece of your marketing. Move beyond static quotes and invest in high-quality video stories that showcase the vibrant reality of your community. Create a formal **Resident Ambassador Program** and feature it on your website, offering to connect prospects with residents who share similar backgrounds or interests. During tours, make it standard practice to introduce prospects to residents and staff, transforming a sales tour into a welcoming social visit.
- **Insight:** Authentic stories are the antidote to fear and skepticism. They allow prospects to see themselves in your community and believe that a better future is possible. Social proof is the bridge from denial to consideration.

5. Align Your Message with the Reactive, Needs-Driven Trigger

While the long-term goal is to encourage proactive planning, the current reality is that many prospects are reacting to health-related matters.

- **Actionable Strategy:** Create a dedicated “Need Help Now?” or “Navigating Your Options” resource hub on your website. This section should be designed for a family under stress, featuring a simple checklist for evaluating communities, a guide to understanding care levels, and direct contact information for an “advisor.” This positions you as a helpful, empathetic resource first and a salesperson second.
- **Insight:** By meeting families in their moment of need with empathy and practical guidance, you build immediate trust and differentiate your community as a true partner in care, laying the foundation for a long-term relationship.

The Path Forward is Paved with Empathy and Transparency

The senior living industry stands at a critical crossroads, facing a market defined by a powerful paradox. On one hand, the data reveals a consumer base that wants to age in place and is deeply resistant to the idea of moving, with **76.2% of seniors having never considered a community** and **70.7% identifying as “Independents”** who believe they will not need future assistance.

On the other hand, for the small fraction who do make the move, satisfaction is overwhelmingly high. The gap between the perception of senior living and its reality is not just a challenge; it is the single greatest opportunity for growth.

This report has detailed the core reasons for this disconnect. The “Independent” mindset directly fuels a reactive, crisis-driven customer journey. This journey starts not with a phone call, but with a web search, driven by a deep-seated fear of unaffordability. This fear is validated in their minds when they encounter websites that lack the transparent pricing information they desperately seek. When they do evaluate options, their choices reflect a desire to mitigate the loss of their current lifestyle, prioritizing communities that allow them to **bring their pets, enjoy social dining, and maintain their independence** with in-unit amenities that replicate the comforts of home.

The path forward is not paved with more luxurious amenities alone, but with a fundamentally different approach to communication and relationship building. It requires a transformational shift in identity from a provider of housing and services to a trusted partner in one of life’s most important journeys. The strategic imperatives are clear, consistent, and mandated by the data:

1. **Shift from Selling a Product to Solving a Problem:** The modern senior living organization must reframe its role from that of a landlord or care provider to that of a trusted advisor. This means addressing the affordability question head-on with value-based comparisons, providing resources to navigate complex financial decisions, and empathetically acknowledging the emotional difficulty of the journey.

- 2. **Embrace Radical Transparency as a Non-Negotiable:** The digital “front door” is where trust is won or lost. Providing clear pricing ranges, showcasing authentic online reviews, and using simple, consumer-friendly language are no longer optional marketing tactics. They are the foundational elements of customer service in the digital age.
- 3. **Lead with Empathy and Human Connection:** The most powerful tool to overcome fear is authentic social proof. Stock imagery is not enough. Prospective residents crave authenticity. The voices of real, happy, thriving residents are the ultimate antidote to the negative preconceptions held by the market. By amplifying these stories, communities can transform an intimidating and abstract concept into a tangible, desirable, and achievable future.

The seniors and caregivers surveyed in this report have provided a clear and candid blueprint for engagement. They are not asking for the impossible. They are asking for respect for their independence, transparency in their transactions, and empathy for their fears. The operators who listen to this feedback who replace sales pitches with solutions and marketing jargon with meaningful conversation will not only bridge the great divide identified in this study. They will emerge as the trusted, sought-after, and undisputed leaders in the future of senior living.

Study Purpose & Methodology

Research objective

Whittington Consulting’s Senior Care Growth practice designed the 2025 Senior Living Sentiment Study to measure how senior adults and the family members who support their decisions:

- 1. Anticipate future care needs
- 2. Intend to finance those needs
- 3. Evaluate and talk about senior living communities as a potential solution

The end goal is to turn quantified sentiment into practical sales and marketing guidance for senior living and assisted living operators as seniors and caregivers seek options.

Sample framework

Respondent group	Unweighted base (n)	Gender mix	Notes
Seniors (65+)	560	60.7% female / 39.3% male	7% already live in a senior-living community
Family caregivers / decision influencers (Age 40-64)	140	57.1% female / 42.9% male	Defined as anyone age 40-64 who currently assists or expects to assist a relative 65+ with healthcare or housing decisions

Fieldwork

- **Mode:** self-administered online questionnaire (~10 minutes)
- **Field dates:** April 16-22, 2025
- **Panel supplier:** double-opt-in national consumer research panel
- **Quality controls:** attention-check questions, duplicate-IP suppression, and removal of speeders / straight-liners

About Senior Care Growth by Whittington Consulting

Transforming Senior Living Websites into Lead Generation Engines

Senior Care Growth by Whittington Consulting is a specialized digital marketing agency that serves as a strategic business partner for decision-makers in the senior living and skilled nursing care industry. We help marketing and sales teams transform their websites into powerful sales engines that attract new prospects, maximize conversion rates, and enable sales teams with advanced CRM systems and automation tools to significantly improve occupancy and move-ins.

As more seniors and their families turn to online research when seeking living and care options, your organization's website must serve as a primary lead generation source. We help senior living organizations reduce their reliance on expensive referral networks by developing comprehensive digital marketing strategies that generate high-quality leads directly through their own channels.

Our digital marketing expertise includes:

- **Lead-Generating Website Development:** Creating websites optimized for conversion and user experience
- **Marketing Automation:** Nurturing seniors and family members with information they need to make informed decisions
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** Ensuring your facility appears when families search for senior living options
- **Content Marketing:** Educational resources that attract and engage seniors and their adult children
- **Multi-Location Business Marketing:** Specialized strategies for organizations with multiple facilities
- **Digital Advertising:** Targeted campaigns that reach families actively seeking senior living solutions

Our website can be found at <https://seniorcaregrowth.com/>.

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