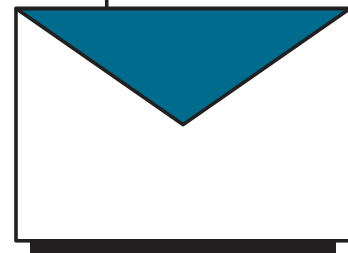
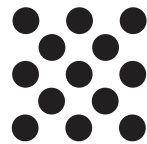


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The Complete Data-Driven eBook:
**Industry Benchmarking
for Optimum Investment in
Marketing Collateral Assets**

What is at the heart of marketing?

Many might wager it to be something like revenue, return on investment or dazzling metrics. The real answer is much more simple: people.

Honest, effective marketing relies on the interconnectedness of real people forming meaningful relationships that catalyze a mutual benefit. Nowhere is this truer than in the senior living sector. The very purpose of marketing is to serve aging people and enhance their quality of life while supporting and providing peace of mind to those they love.

Given what a monumental choice it is to select a senior living home, it is not likely that a potential resident or their family will make that selection based on seeing a digital ad, although such an ad can be a valuable touch point in a much larger tapestry of marketing interactions. Therefore, it is critical that genuine human relationships, rather than numbers and results, serve as the foundation of any senior living operator's marketing strategy.

Despite its innovations and resulting newfound reach, the age of digital marketing has come with a cost. Its ubiquity has led many to a point of diminishing returns, creating a noisy and overcrowded environment devoid of the human element that propels effective marketing. Indeed, digital marketing has advantages and is oftentimes a boon to a successful strategy overall, but as a standalone endeavor it is simply not viable.

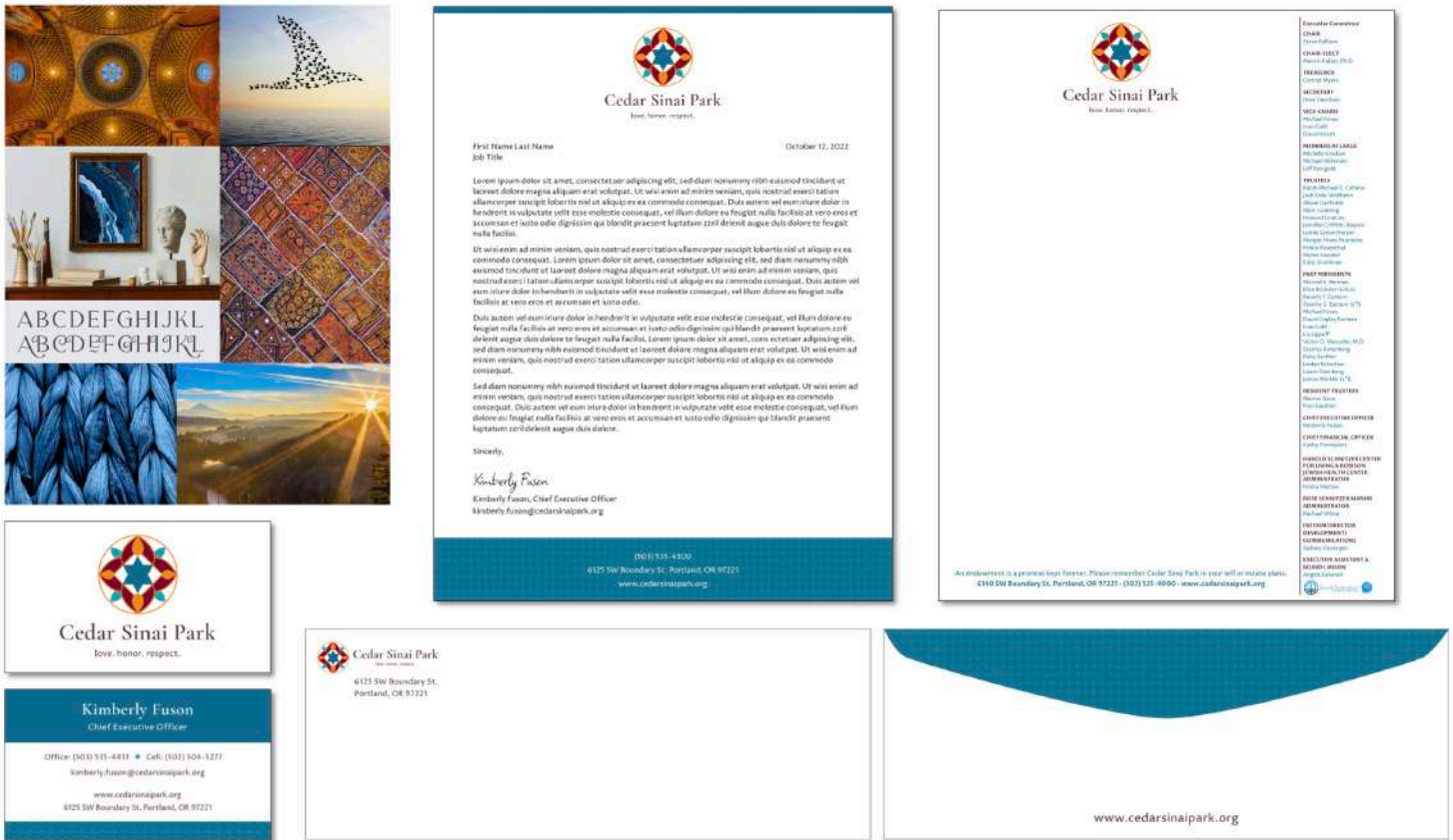
Nurture marketing is the key to forging fruitful relationships with prospective residents and families. This can be achieved with a healthy arsenal of marketing collateral. But are you investing in the right collateral, or are your investments diversified? How do you know you are allocating your budget to the development of the right collateral assets? Learn from the choices of fellow senior living marketers, and take their actions into consideration as you design your new marketing collateral strategy.

"Because collateral plays an important role in marketing, it can give people some sense of security and trustworthiness."

-Big Buzz survey respondent



WHAT IS MARKETING COLLATERAL?



Marketing collateral can take on many forms. Its high level of versatility is a double-edged sword; it proves useful in a vast number of situations, but the term can feel either vague or overwhelming. HubSpot's Jay Fuchs [defines marketing collateral as](#) "media or marketing materials that are typically more informative than conventional advertisements. The medium is generally designed to project authority, establish legitimacy and build trust with prospects to closely supplement sales efforts." This is why it is such a powerful tool in strengthening relationships with prospects.

"In creating marketing collateral, your first priority generally isn't to capture attention — it's to retain and enhance it," says Fuchs.

Well-designed and data-backed collateral is important in any marketing strategy, but especially so in senior living. The decision of selecting the right community generally entails a deep research process. Prospects are likely to have the names of many organizations echoing in their heads while forgetting the names of others by which they were not engaged. Those that are fully equipped with a suite of collateral designed to connect with prospects at various points of the consumer journey stand a much better chance of starting the conversations that ultimately lead to move-ins.

WHAT IS MARKETING COLLATERAL?

In a recent survey, Big Buzz asked a number of senior living marketers about the types of collateral employed by their respective organizations. They included:

Print Collateral	Digital Collateral
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Amenities overview handoutsBrochuresBusiness cardsCost calculator worksheetsDirect mail/postcard campaignsEvent flyersFoldersLevel-of-care handoutsMenusMission, vision, values handoutsPricing handoutsSignage/bannersStationary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community calendarsEmailsFloor plansInternal communications templatesSales toolsSocial media postsTraining resources

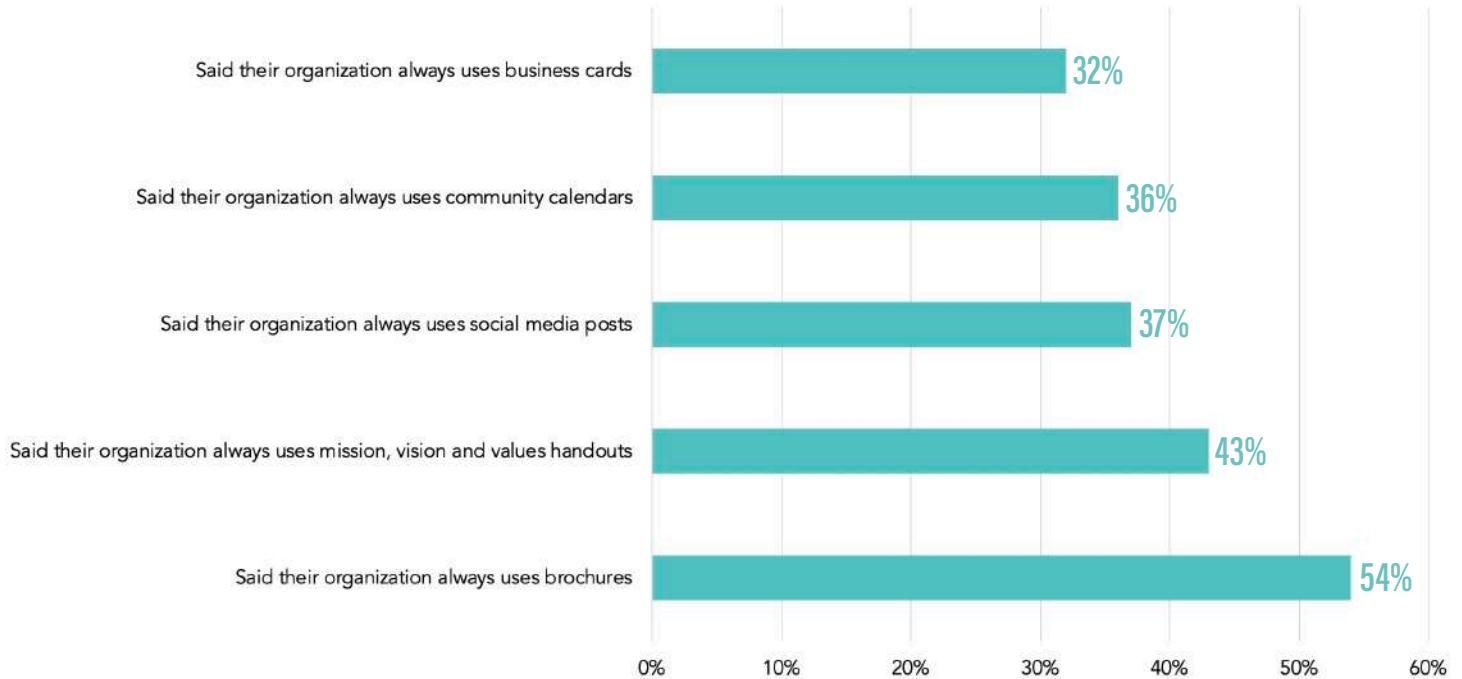
We then asked respondents about additional types of collateral, which included:

Print Collateral	Digital Collateral
<ul style="list-style-type: none">One-pagersPromotional cardsPromotional items such as pens, shirts, cups and lanyardsPublicity cars	<ul style="list-style-type: none">"About Us" pagesLanding pagesSales videos

WHAT IS MARKETING COLLATERAL?

Popular Forms of Marketing Collateral in Senior Living

Big Buzz's proprietary data provided a clearer look into the most popular varieties of marketing collateral employed by your peers in senior living.



Take a moment to consider whether your organization is employing these types of marketing collateral. To ensure that your organization can make the most out of these forms of collateral, we will explore each in a bit more depth.

Brochures

The most popular form of collateral among respondents, brochures are a time-tested marketing asset that can be put to many uses. They can be printed physically and used as a nurture tool when provided to families and individuals when they are taking a tour or attending an open house or event at your communities. Brochures can also be distributed to existing referrers, such as local hospitals or religious organizations, to keep your organization top of mind or to potential referrers whom you wish to engage.



WHAT IS MARKETING COLLATERAL?

Digital versions of brochures are also valuable. They can be featured on your website as downloadable assets in exchange for visitors' contact information, thus creating a new channel to generate marketing qualified leads (MQLs). They can also be used as sales tools for prospects that have yet to visit or do not live nearby.

When creating your brochures, make sure that they follow your organization's brand standards – both in terms of design and messaging. Use color schemes that are consistent with your brand and other assets such as your website. Do not cut corners on the design; a poorly designed brochure reflects poorly on your organization. Use consistent fonts and high-quality images while making sure pages are not too crowded or wordy. Include your organization's differentiators and key value adds so that readers will walk away with a better understanding of why they should choose you. Don't forget to include your contact information and a clear call to action that encourages readers to take the next step.

The image displays several pieces of marketing collateral for Sinceri Senior Living. On the left, a brochure titled "Welcome to the Family" features a photo of a woman and a staff member, with text describing the community's focus on family-like care. In the center, a brochure for "GRAND VIEW ALZHEIMER'S SPECIAL CARE CENTER" includes the Sinceri Senior Living logo and a map of the facility's location at 6210 N University Street, Peoria, IL 61614. To the right, a brochure for "Independent Living and Assisted Living" lists amenities such as private apartments, up-to-date appliances, shopping trips, sightseeing drives, dining at favorite restaurants, and an open-door policy for friends and family. Further right, a brochure titled "Assisted Living" details services like 24-hour care support, medication services, and a full-service beauty salon. On the far right, a brochure titled "Our Commitment" emphasizes the organization's dedication to honoring residents and their families, supported by 30+ years of experience and research-backed methods. The collage also includes photos of residents and staff members interacting.

Mission, Vision and Values Handouts

These types of assets are integral to relationship-based marketing. They provide prospects with a clearer understanding of the thoughts and beliefs of an organization, and can go a long way in helping yours stay at the front of their mind. They are also a great opportunity to employ [storytelling marketing](#), a powerful tool for evoking the feelings and eliciting the emotions that cut through the noise and forge deeper connections with those in search of a senior living solution.

Similar to brochures, these assets can be employed both physically and digitally. Be sure to follow the same conventions as far as design and brand consistency. It is also important that your mission, vision and values are up to date and properly conveyed. Take a look at our [vision statement guide](#) to learn more.

WHAT IS MARKETING COLLATERAL?

Social Media Posts

Consider your social media presence as an open house for your organization that is available to prospects 24/7. When people are weighing different senior living communities, they want to learn as much as they can about each option before contact with your team. Social media is a great opportunity to help them do so while keeping in touch with your audience. Be sure to conduct market research before annual or quarterly development your social media strategy. Conduct [voice-of-the-customer surveys](#) to get a better sense of where your ideal prospect spends time online and what kinds of issues are most pressing to them. This will inform you of which platforms to focus on and what kinds of content to share, eliminating time-consuming and costly guesswork.

Maintain a consistent posting schedule so that you will stay in people's feeds and new visitors will see that social media is being maintained.

Focus 80% of posts on education, addressing challenges and showcasing life in your communities.



Use the remaining 20% for promotional posts that encourage conversions such as scheduling a tour or contacting you



WHAT IS MARKETING COLLATERAL?

Community Calendars

The active and vibrant lifestyles available at today's leading senior living communities are a tremendous value add for potential residents and their families. Overcoming the stereotype that senior communities are dull, uneventful places has been a long-fought uphill battle in the industry. Showcasing your community's events with a calendar is an effective approach to overcoming this misconception.

Create a page for your website that features a current and regularly updated calendar of events. Since prospects are always looking to learn more about a potential new home, anticipate them by showcasing what is happening at your communities. This digital calendar can also be shared with your email database and on social media to create additional touch points. You can also keep printed copies at the ready to hand out to visitors or send along via local direct mail outreach to encourage attendance at events open to the public.

Business Cards

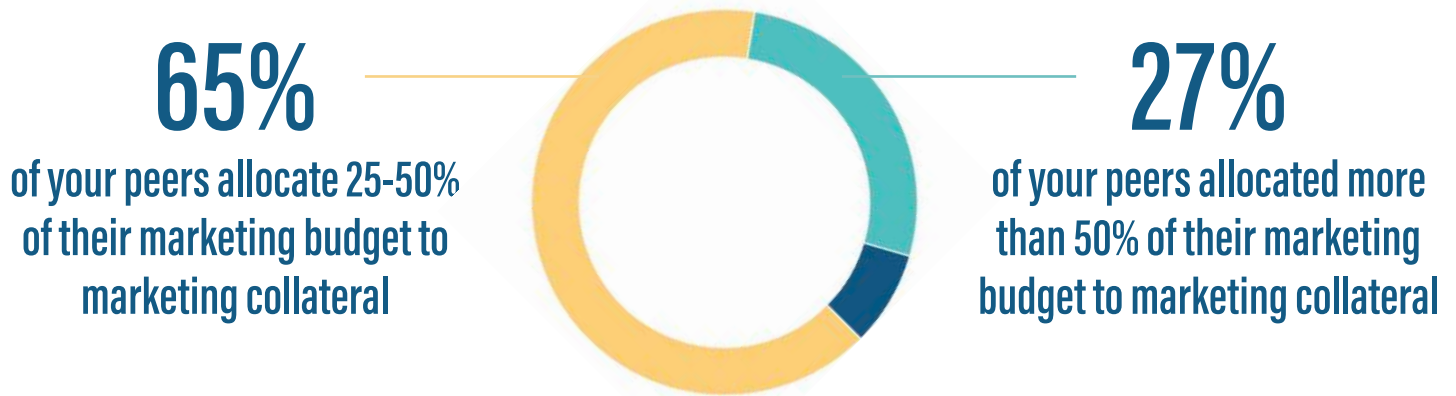
Another timeless marketing asset is the business card. They are an easy, convenient way to stay top of mind with those who receive them while showcasing your organization's brand. What's more, they serve as a physical reminder to stay in contact with your team. Ensure all team members offer their cards during tours. Encourage the marketing team to include the appropriate card with direct mail assets or as inserts in physical collateral like brochures and information packets. They can also serve a valuable function in staying top of mind with existing and potential referrers such as local health systems and community centers.

In addition to all the relevant contact information, your business cards should follow the organization's brand standards in terms of fonts and colors. Include a tagline and call to action for even more engagement.



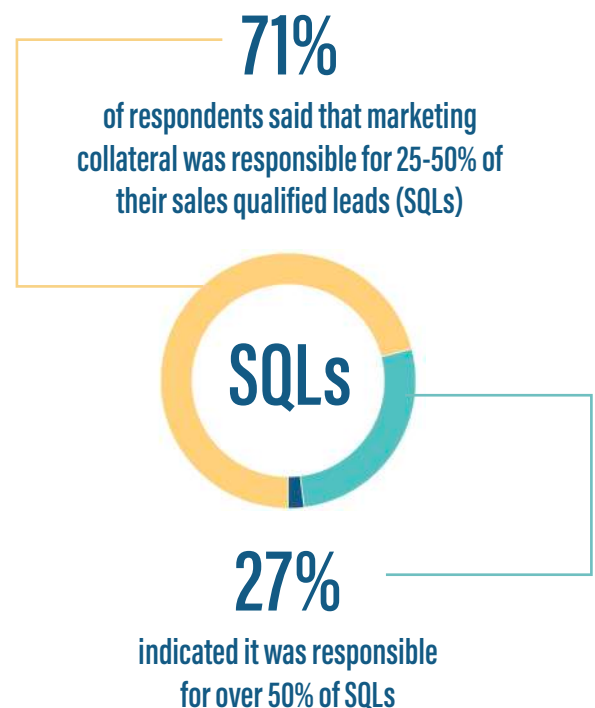
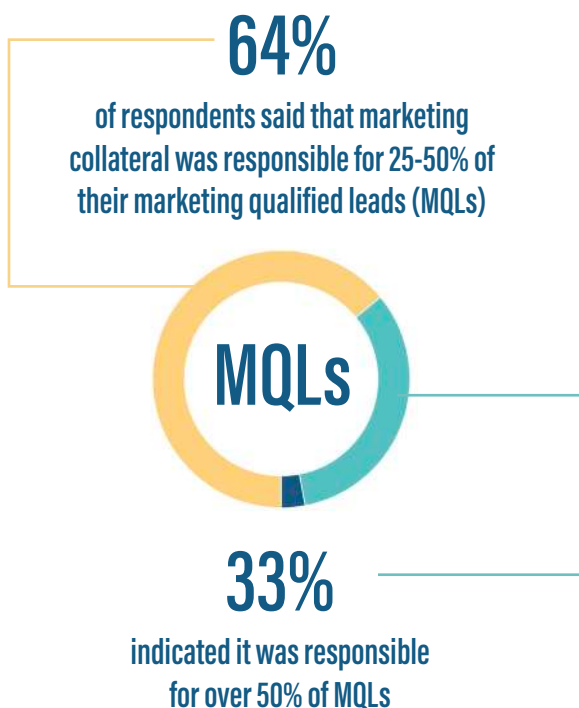
ALLOCATING A BUDGET FOR MARKETING COLLATERAL

The creation of marketing collateral requires an initial degree of investment. With its broad and varied nature, some senior living marketers may be unsure of just where to put their money, or how much. Here are a few noteworthy findings from our data:



Not a single respondent indicated that their organization did not allocate a part of their budget to collateral

These may seem like significant portions of the pie chart, but with good reason:



ALLOCATING A BUDGET FOR MARKETING COLLATERAL

With these figures in mind, you may be getting a better picture of how much to dedicate to marketing collateral and how it can pay off. However, these broad strokes are only a starting point. It is imperative that your organization spends its budget wisely, focuses on the collateral that generates ROI and invests in the collateral that performs best with your audience. Below are a few pointers on making sure your budget is put to the best use:



Conduct Voice-Of-The-Customer (VOC) Surveys

Survey current residents and families to glean a better understanding of how they chose your organization. Ask them what kinds of marketing collateral they are prone to pay attention to and which examples from your organization they recall seeing or receiving. By obtaining unquestionable confirmation of the types of collateral that proved most effective, you can more confidently decide where to focus.



Conduct Programmatic Surveys

Survey your ideal audience to determine what types of marketing collateral most engages them or what is most likely to grab their attention. The realities of marketing are often in flux, and what worked for current residents in the past may not be the same as what is working now. Tap into the community at large for a clearer picture of how to focus your strategy. Cross-reference your findings with that of your VOC surveys for a more clearly defined approach.



Continuously Measure Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs help to determine the ongoing success rate of your various marketing collateral efforts. Take stock at the end of every quarter while measuring KPIs so that you accumulate sound data and identify the patterns therein. At the end of a quarter, see how things can be tweaked or adjusted without abandoning ship on collateral tactics altogether. If another quarter reveals underperformance, then it may be time to start asking bigger questions about budget allocation.



Consider External Support

Such as that of a marketing agency. 91% of survey respondents indicated they had previously sought external support in creating marketing collateral, and 94% had plans to do so in the future. By entrusting this matter to a qualified senior living marketing firm, you can ensure that your assets will be produced by specialized marketers using proven processes and best practices. It also removes an undue burden from your internal team, thus freeing up time for other matters and reducing the chance of burnout.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAND CONSISTENCY

Your [organization's brand](#) is the singular value proposition that uniquely positions your organization in the marketplace, as shown by trends in differentiation from the perspective of your residents and families. It is the valuable tool in your marketing arsenal when it comes to capturing the minds of prospects and keeping them engaged as they move down the sales funnel. Your brand must uniformly appear to across all forms of marketing collateral, creating a memorable and recognizable experience across every asset. Further, your team must be completely aligned on the brand amplification process at every stage. When team members are siloed, using different processes or even simply improvising, your marketing collateral will be inconsistent and ineffective. Below are some illuminating datapoints from our research.

My Organization (check all that apply)...

Integrates current brand messaging when creating marketing collateral.

97% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their organization integrates current brand messaging when creating marketing collateral.

Has one process for the design of marketing collateral that is agreed upon by everyone on the team.

96% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their organization has one process for the design of marketing collateral that is agreed upon by everyone on the team.

Ideates and aligns as a team on the overall marketing collateral strategy.

77% of respondents said they ideate and align as a team on the overall marketing collateral strategy (types of collateral, distribution channels, design direction, assigned roles, etc.).

Completes research.

78% of respondents indicated that they complete research (review brand standards, gather survey data, review past marketing collateral initiatives, etc.).

The majority of your peers in senior living are prioritizing a collective approach to maintaining consistent branding across all forms of marketing collateral. According to Salesforce, it takes [between six and eight marketing touches](#) to generate a qualified lead. As these touches accumulate with prospects, you want your brand to stand out and remain memorable so that your organization becomes a known option in their mind.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAND CONSISTENCY

Conclusion

A collection of consistent, branded, data-backed marketing collateral is indispensable in your organization's mission to reach ambitious revenue goals. As one survey respondent put it, "It helps you market in any medium, to [your ideal] audience, at all stages of the funnel." In an era of digital marketing noise and oversaturation, one that demands a renewed focus on continued interpersonal relationships, what could be better than that?

Have concerns about the quality of your organization's current marketing collateral or wish to learn how it can be taken to the next level? [Get your marketing collateral audit now.](#)

"Most people are visual. Something visually striking that hits key points they are looking for in an organized easy-to-read format will help bring [residents] in."

-Big Buzz survey respondent



Big Buzz is a marketing agency delivering a steady stream of move-in-ready leads to teams serving the senior living industry. For more than 15 years, Big Buzz has helped senior living marketing and sales teams nurture leads to increase occupancy, grow and scale. CEO Wendy O'Donovan Phillips is the author of the book [Flourish!: The Method Used by Aging Services Organizations for the Ultimate Marketing Results](#), has been published in McKnight's, has been a regular contributor to Forbes, and has been quoted in The Washington Post, ABC News and Chicago Tribune. The Big Buzz leadership team regularly lectures in front of audiences ranging from 25 to 3,000 attendees, including at Argentum and various LeadingAge chapters. Agency awards and accolades include recognition for excellence by the American Marketing Association, Gold Key Award Winner by the Business Marketing Association, HubSpot Academy Inbound Marketing Certification, and Top Advertising and Marketing Agency by Clutch. www.bigbuzzinc.com

Yes, I want to connect with a Big Buzz marketing expert today so I can ensure all my marketing collateral:

- ✔ Includes senior living industry best practices in calls to action that engage people to connect
- ✔ Closely follows organizational brand standards for maximum differentiation from competitors and for maximum production efficiency
- ✔ Is aligned upon and appropriately used by everyone on the team from corporate to location levels for maximum return on investment
- ✔ Is amplified across all the right media for maximum amplification

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Additional Marketing Audit Services Available:

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