



6 Things Worth Getting Hyper About

By Susan Saldibar

How often do you find yourself scanning the back of a church bulletin or leafing through one of those free local “weekly” newspapers? Not only have I done this, I once found a good contractor on the back of a church bulletin. And, at the risk of revealing my age to all the senior living community operators out there --- I’m your target buyer.

What made me think about all this was a blog I came across, written by Taigen Thorne, Director of Public Relations for [Sage Age Strategies](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner). The blog was about the importance of establishing a consistent “hyperlocal news” presence in addition to your digital marketing efforts. I decided to check in with Taigen to find out more about the topic which, I would assume, would be a no brainer, especially for senior living communities.

Everyone says they’re doing “hyperlocal”. But I’m not seeing it. Are you?

It turns out, according to Taigen, that most organizations are quick to say they have their local markets covered but, in reality, they aren’t doing it in a consistent way. “What happens is that, given the concentration on digital marketing, some obvious local channels get passed over,” Taigen told me. “And more people are turning on the radio and reading church bulletins than you think.” No kidding.

Just for the heck of it, I dug up an old church bulletin and a couple local weekly newspapers and thumbed through them. About all I could find was an ad for Visiting Angels and one about a special on hearing aids. Oh, and one for the local cemetery.

Go digital, but also go local.

For those senior living community operators who aren’t on the back of church bulletins and aren’t consistently leveraging local media to bring future residents through your doors, listen up. Here are six tips from Taigen to take to your marketing team:

1. **Think quality, not quantity.** It is better to spend a smaller amount on reaching a smaller community of, say, 300, with a 10% potential conversion than spending double that to reach 3,000 with a 1% conversion. Focus on smaller publications with highly targeted, local subscribers. “Small publications are often cheaper and more interested in working with you to secure coverage, versus larger, national

publications who are far less flexible,” says Taigen. So, instead of targeting, say, the Boston Globe, target their local version instead. That’s where your ad has a better chance of being noticed.

2. **Don’t shy away from a good radio ad.** Radio can be highly effective and more affordable than you think. If you want to know how to contact your local radio station, Taigen suggests using radiocator.com. With a simple entry of your zip code, up will pop all your local stations and contacts.
3. **Make it easy for editors to work with you.** Smaller publications typically have editors and/or publishers who wear more than one hat. Their time is limited. Make sure you give them exactly what they need, and in a format that is easy to publish straight from the source.
4. **Show that you know the “hood”.** When at all possible, make sure your topics and copy reference local areas, points of interest and reflect local culture. Structure your stories and press releases to be less generic and more custom to the area they serve. “Be specific with your story if you want to reach a specific type of consumer,” says Taigen.
5. **Be online, but be local.** Do you need to use social media and SEO to get leads? Absolutely! But there are rich local online communities out there, ripe to be targeted. Find them and focus on them. “Pay attention to the key influencers and engage online when you have something valuable to offer to the conversation,” says Taigen.
6. **Trust your media representative.** “They’ve already done a lot of your demographic work for you,” says Taigen. But, she also recommends that you provide them with a set budget that is about 10% under your actual budget. That will give you some wiggle room. As a marketer who places media in over 300 publication per year, Taigen knows how hard they will work for your business.

In all fairness, many senior living communities are doing at least some of the above. But the key, according to Taigen, is to keep your efforts consistent. And when you do those nationwide ad campaigns, choose an issue with a section geared towards seniors. Otherwise, Taigen warns, you’ll be paying for a huge cross section of people who are not your target demographic. “Proper targeting will help you reach your audience much more effectively, with less of a “spray and pray” approach,” she says.

Makes a lot of sense. And, one more thing. Whatever you do, don’t forget the back of those church bulletins. Baby boomers, like me, may be reading them.

You can read Taigen Thorne’s full blog [HERE](#).



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